

South County Scrap Book

By Mary McNally



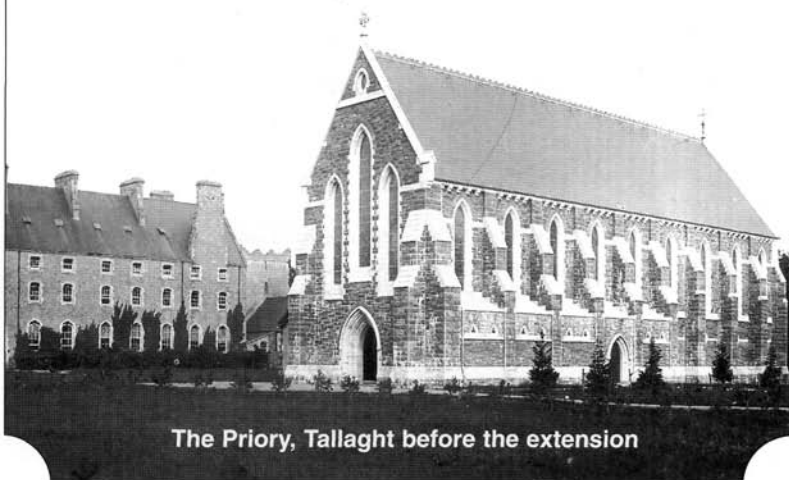
Tallaght Historical Society

with best wishes and many many thanks
Mary McNally

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By MARY McNALLY

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The Priory, Tallaght before the extension

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Leabharlanna Átha Cliath Theas

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Introduction

IN my lifetime, enormous changes have taken place in South County Dublin. There were farms, cottages and large private residences, there were fields bounded by Hawthorn hedges, and woods and beautiful trees here and there. Horses, cattle and sheep were part of the scene, as were in turn ploughed fields and the harvest gold of ripening crops. Now we have industries and houses almost to the County border.

Since David Kennedy of the Echo asked me to write the articles which are the main part of this book, many more large houses have gone and land has been swallowed up, but we should not forget the old days completely. There are still many people about with wonderful memories, and I appeal to the young folks to take their tape recorders and record those memories. I am not an historian, I am a storyteller and I apologise if there are any errors.

Mary McNally

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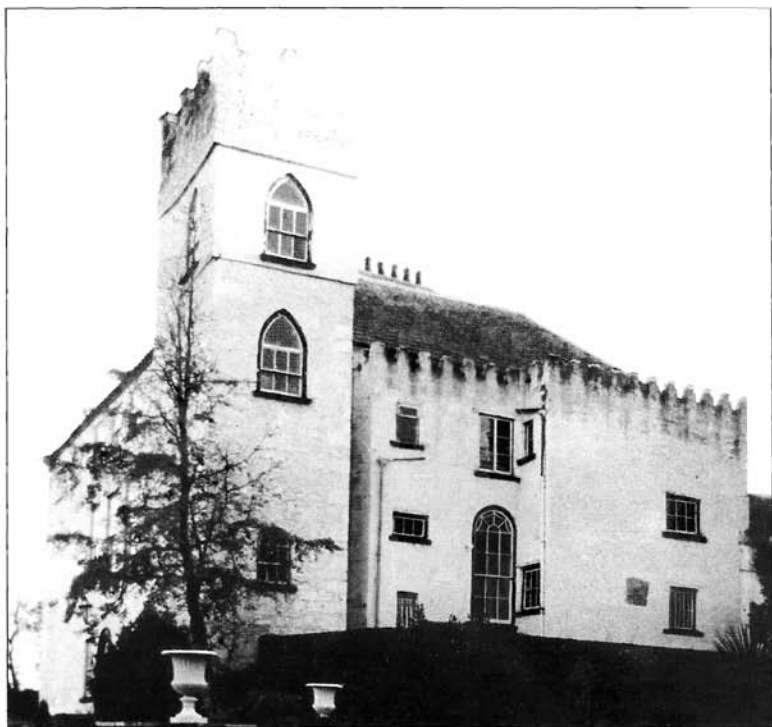
For my father Joe Sheil
1888 - 1930

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Belgard Castle



WHEN the Normans came to Ireland in 1166 with their army of Norman and Welsh soldiers, they were soon followed by crowds of land hungry people who had heard plenty of tales of good land in this country.

With their superior weapons and trained soldiers, they had little difficulty in dislodging the Irish from the area around Dublin. The Irish retreated to the hills and from there continued for hundreds of years to harass the invaders with sometimes one side winning and sometimes the other.

The Normans built a chain of castles and fortified houses all around Dublin to protect settlers and the settlers stock. Belgard Castle was one of the most important south of Dublin, commanding from its tower a wide view of surrounding countryside. The Talbot family became owners and by the fifteenth century had rebuilt the castle more or less as it is today. They were known as the Talbots de Belgard as their cousins in Malahide were known as Talbots de Malahide. Very soon they became leaders in the life of Norman English Dublin. In 1414 John Talbot (Lord Furnival) was King's lieutenant for Ireland for King Henry V, who later made him Earl of Shrewsbury. This suggests that the family had retained property on the Welsh Borders as well as what was granted to them in Ireland.

John's brother Richard was Archbishop of Dublin and Chancellor of Ireland. The family remained loyal to the Catholic Church at the time of the Reformation. Archbishop Bulkeley complained several times to the King that Adam Talbot was a staunch Catholic and Adam's son John fought against Cromwell and so for a time Belgard was given to the Loftus family at Rathfarnham. Cromwell stayed in Belgard and this enraged John Talbot who with his men tried to attack him but the Cromwellians were too much for him and he was lucky to escape with his life by jumping his horse over a wide stretch of the Tallaght Stream which was afterwards known as "Talbots Leap".

When Charles 2nd was reinstated in England John Talbot regained Belgard and his son (also John) fought at the Battles of the Boyne and Aughrim. But again in spite of being on the losing side he succeeded in keeping Belgard. He is buried in St. Maelruan's Graveyard. His daughter had married Thomas Dillon of Brackloun in Roscommon and they became owners and spent a lot of money improving the property and entertaining.

From the Dillons, the property passed to the Frants who later leased it to a Mr. Cruise who was also reported to have spent much money improving the grounds with trees and shrubs. After Mr. Cruise, Dr. Evory Kennedy lived there and there is a reredos to Dr. Kennedy's memory in St. Maelruan's Church.

Finally in the middle of the nineteenth century the Maude family bought Belgard. St. John's Church, Clondalkin has several memorials to the Maude family. Belgard Castle is now owned by Roadstone who have spared no expense to preserve this impressive building most of which is well over six hundred years old. It is interesting to add that a descendant of one branch of the Talbot family, Right Reverend Canon Talbot who was parish priest of St. Michael's and John's Church in Dublin when he died in 1946 was the last hereditary Freeman of the City of Dublin.



The interior of Belgard Castle.

The History of the Talbot Family

THE History of the Talbot Family goes back to the army of William the Conqueror landing in England in 1066 and earlier than that in Normandy. These early Talbots were granted properties in Spalding in Lincolnshire, in Hereford and Shrewsbury and by marriage became connected with all the most powerful barons and leaders in England. When Henry II landed in Ireland there were Talbots with him and they were granted land in various parts of Leinster from Wexford to Dundalk. Malahide became one of their principal fortresses and Belgard and Templeogue were little less important. The history of Dublin from that time on had many references to them.

In 1259 the Talbots of Templeogue endowed the Monastery of Holy Trinity in the city, where Crow Street Theatre later stood. In 1262 Richard Talbot became Archbishop of Dublin. Later he refused the offer of Archbishop of Armagh preferring to stay in Dublin and in 1414 John Talbot (Lord Furnival) was Governor of Ireland for the King. The Talbot loyalty to the Catholic Church was unquestionable, and members paid enormous fines to the Crown and some suffered imprisonment.

In 1586 Sir James Talbot of Templeogue House borrowed money from Sir Compton Domville (possibly to pay a fine). There were many who adopted the Protestant Church at that time with an eye to the estates of those who clung to the "Old Faith" and soon Sir James was outlawed and Sir Compton was granted Templeogue. The Talbots tried to have the property transferred to James' son but failed but they must have stayed in the neighbourhood as in Handcock's history, it mentions that in 1630 Archbishop Bulkeley complained that priests were maintained and Mass frequently said in the houses of Adam Talbot of Belgard, Barnaby Reilly of Timon and Mrs. Elinor and Mr. Henry Talbot of Templeogue.

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It is probable that the late very Reverend Canon Talbot P.P. SS Michael and John's belonged to this branch. The medieval castle of the Talbots was demolished about 1700 by Sir Thomas Domville and a dwelling house erected in its place. This was replaced about 1790 by the present house but the lower part of the castle had proved too strongly built and had to be incorporated in the present house. The wattle ceiling of the basement can still be seen. The grounds were beautifully laid out with very fine ornamental trees and shrubs and some magnificent oaks. The water gardens with the temple at the end near the road facing the house were unusual and very much admired. The water was diverted from the City Water Course which ran through the grounds and there is an amazing story about the watercourse. In 1738, Lord Santry, nephew of the Sir Compton Domville who was the owner, killed one of his footmen.

Contrary to what one would expect of the authorities of the time, he was charged, tried and when found guilty, he was condemned to death. His powerful relations tried every way they could to have the sentence quashed but they failed and as a last resort Sir Compton threatened to cut off the city water supply. The city fathers caved in and Lord Santry was released and his sentence commuted to exile for life. From then on the house seems to have had many tenants and owners. These included a Mr. Gogarty, who cut down many of the trees, the novelist Charles Lever, James Knighting, who having swindled the railway company out of thousands, was very generous to the poor. Later a Mr. Alexander lived there.

For some time it was part of the St. Michael foundation for handicapped adults, run by the St. John of God Order. They have since left and it is now owned by the County Council who are renovating it. An amazing collection of antique bottles was found by the Archaeologists advising the Council.

Drinnagh Castle

IF you have not visited Drinnagh Castle you would enjoy a visit. It is open on Sunday afternoons. Drinnagh and all the lands of Ballyfermot and Terenure were granted by King John to Hugo de Bernivale in 1215. The family later changed its name to Barnwell. The castle was built in the 15th century. It was occupied almost continuously from then to the 1960's, and so many alterations were made to suit the needs of successive



owners and tenants - the Barnwells, Loftuses and Lansdownes and finally from 1906 the Hatch family. Louis Hatch — the last of his family left the property to the Diocese of Dublin. New schools were needed for the growing population and the Diocese gave it into the care of the Irish Christian Brothers who lived

there for some years until a modern monastery was built for them. After that the castle fell into disrepair. It was badly vandalised. In 1986 a group of local people became interested and determined to save it and they deserve enormous credit for their achievement. They have lovingly restored doors, floors, stairs and balconies. The carved figures which support the roof trusses represent some of the volunteers who still work at their gigantic task.

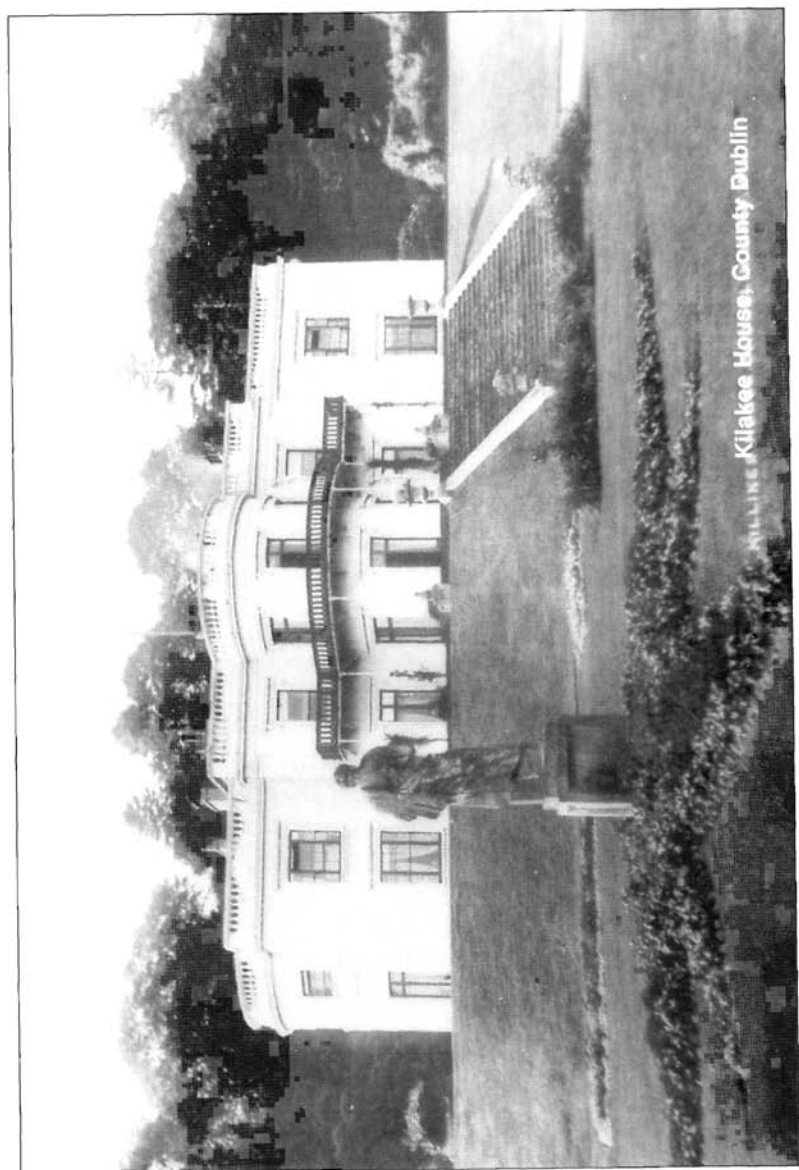
Drimnagh is the only castle in Ireland which has retained its ancient flooded moat and this too has been cleaned. There are swans and a variety of fowl including peacocks. The garden has been restored to 17th century style. To see a peacock with its feathers in full display adds to the picture and one can just imagine ladies and gentlemen in their formal stiff brocades and silks walking about. The view from the two look-out turrets extends from the Dublin Mountains to the Phoenix Park and a Lookout sentry there could warn occupants of the danger of raids from the O'Tooles, O'Byrnes and Kavanaghs. The name Drimnagh denotes a ridge, and the river Camac flows past on its way to join the Liffey at Kingsbridge, now Heuston Station.

Killakee House

Salute To A Brave Lady

THE steep road to Killakee and the Hell Fire Club brings groans from walkers and even motor cars find it severe, so what must life have been like up there when everything had to be carried up or brought by horse-drawn drays and carts. The building of the hunting lodge, which we know as the Hell Fire Club, for Squire Connolly of Castletown House must have been a tremendous operation, although he did make use of the stone of the ancient rath on the site. The building of the magnificent Killakee House only a few years later must have been a staggering undertaking. There is very little information about Killakee House in any of the local histories. It was built by Colonel White and later passed into the ownership of the Massy family. The grounds were extensive with gate lodges both on the Killakee Road and above Rockbrook on the Pine Forest Road.

During the reigns of Queen Victoria and King Edward VII the lifestyle was lavish and many famous people were entertained there. There is a photograph in the Lawrence Collection of a gathering during the last visit of Edward VII with the Viceroy and his wife and other dignitaries and officers. The Lord Massy who entertained him died in 1910. When his son succeeded to the title, the estate was heavily in debt. That Lord Massy married in 1919. The house was frequently raided by opposing sides during the Rebellion and later during the Civil War. One occasion when the Black and Tans raided, Lady Massy had just had a baby and Lord Massy begged them not to disturb her. He could not afford to repair the house or employ staff and thus house and gardens and the magnificent stables on the other side of the road became more and more



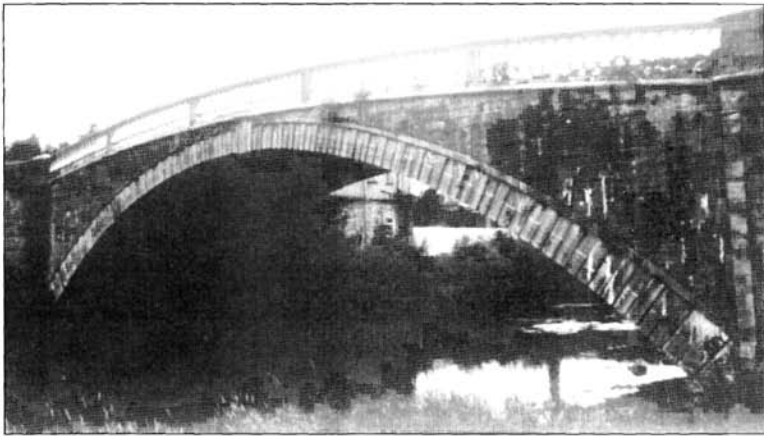
KILLAKEE HOUSE, COUNTY DUBLIN

dilapidated. In the end they sold the house and grounds to the Land Commission, retaining only the gate lodge at the Rockbrook end where they went to live. Money was very scarce and Lady Massy went to work in Hospital's Trust. Few people there knew who she was as she was known as Mrs. Massy. She walked down to Rockbrook for the bus every morning, transferring on to the No.18 Tram at Kenilworth. It must have been very tiring but she also did teas and snacks for hikers on Saturdays and Sundays. The family left the lodge in the 1950's.

If Lady Massy is alive today, she must be a very great age. When the Second World War broke out her son joined the British Army as a Private. He later became Batman to a senior officer. On hearing the name Massy this Officer said to him "When I was a young lieutenant I was on duty in Dublin Castle and I remember being one of a party accompanying King Edward VII when he visited a beautiful estate in the Dublin Mountains owned by a Lord Massy. When the Private told him "that was my grandfather", the Officer had him put on an Officer's training course. He must have survived the war as I have been told recently that he and his wife are running a business in Ireland. The Irish Land Commission levelled the house in 1939 and the stables on the other side of the road have been refurbished into an art centre and restaurant known now as Killakee House. It is said to be haunted and R.T.E. has done a programme about it.

Lucan Village

LUCAN, surely the prettiest village on the Liffey has existed since pre - Christian times. The Vikings penetrated past there to Leixlip, and the Normans were quick to appreciate its potential. Its big difficulty in early times was the river ford or crossing which became impassable when the Liffey was in spate. A number of bridges were swept away and it was only in 1814 that the present lovely bridge was built. There were a number of mills worked on the water power of the Liffey but eventually the really successful ones were the flour and animal food mills of the Shackleton family and the woollen mills of the Hill family.



In the eighteenth century the Grand Canal was built just a mile to the south of Lucan and the Royal Canal the same distance to the north of the town. Likewise, the railways in the mid-nineteenth century ran parallel with the canals with stations at Adamstown on the Newcastle Road and Coleblow on the Clonce Road. Thus it was possible for the town to develop

into a very prosperous unit. There was also the discovery of an iron spa in 1758 and soon afterwards a sulphur spa which became the principal one around Dublin in that era of popularity of spas.

The beautiful Spa Hotel was built to accommodate the many patients and visitors. In 1883 a steam tram began operation and this too added to the popularity of Lucan. In 1887 this was superseded by the electric tramway which continued until 1940. Until 1932, the line manufactured its own electricity, and various local houses were able to connect up to the excess supply but when trams were climbing the steep Chapel Hill, all power was needed and the light in the houses dimmed down completely.

Among the town's noted inhabitants was Patrick Sarsfield, Lord Lucan, one of the most brilliant Irish leaders in the Williamite wars. After the Battle of the Boyne, the Lucan estates and title were forfeited by the Crown and passed into other hands. For many years, Lucan House has been the residence of the Italian Ambassador. James Gandon, who designed the Custom House and many other fine buildings in Dublin lived at Canonbrook.

The Flight Of The Bremen

ON April 12th 1928 Air History was made at Baldonell when a German plane 'The Bremen' took off to attempt the hazardous flight from east to west across the Atlantic against the prevailing winds. The plane was not pressurised and the wheels did not retract as in modern planes. They had no radios. Seven unsuccessful attempts had been made in 1927. Five turned back for various reasons - engine faults and fuel wastage. Two planes with five men were never heard of again. In March 1928 another plane and crew disappeared. Captain James McIntosh and Captain James Fitzmaurice, Adjutant at Baldonnel had tried in September 1927 but were forced to turn back five hundred miles out because of engine trouble.

In Germany, led by Baron Von Huenefeld, there were many First World War aviators anxious to make the attempt. Baron Von Huenefeld put all his private means into the effort and the city of Bremen supplied the rest. The plane was originally a Junkers W33 flying boat to which an undercarriage was fitted. They arrived at Baldonnel, one man short. Their navigator had become ill, and knowing Captain Fitzmaurice's previous effort, Baron Von Huenefeld suggested he should join them, and of course he jumped at the chance. The third member was Captain Herman Koehl of the German Air Force.

As preparations went ahead there was great excitement in Baldonnel and all over the country. The day before they were due to go many people came to see the plane and wish them well. Patricia Fitzmaurice who was seven and myself aged six were lifted up by two soldiers to see in. It was full of dark blue barrels of aviation spirit. We were told they had only chocolate to eat.

April 11th — they attempted to take off but the runway was not long enough for the weight carried. All day long soldiers and volunteers laboured pulling down a hedge and fence, filling in a ditch and levelling the adjoining field and next morning at 5.38 they tried again and lifted off successfully. Jack O'Connor described to me, how, as a boy of fourteen, he cycled down in the dawn and waited breathlessly at the end of the extended runway, and watched the Bremen begin its run from the very limit of the extension and lift into the air just to the left of the hangars.

For nearly three days the country waited and prayed and

Then the great news!

They were safe!

They had landed on the ice on Greenly Island off the coast of Labrador not far from a lighthouse, from where the news was flashed along the coast. The crew had had a very bad time. Nearly all the way they encountered gales of forty miles per hour. The instrument panel lights failed and they went off their planned course, much further north, bringing them into fog and ice, after that a blizzard. When that cleared they sighted the Labrador coast and tried to find a safe landing. Their flight had lasted thirty-six and a half hours and their fuel was almost gone.

The plane was eventually dismantled and taken to Detroit, where it was reassembled and is on display at the Henry Ford Aviation and Transport Museum, Dearborn, near Detroit.

The three aviators were feted everywhere they went in America, a visit to the President and a ticker tape procession in New York. They returned for an enthusiastic reception in Dublin where Fitzmaurice was promoted to Major. After that

they flew from Baldonnell to Doorn in Holland to be received by the ex-Kaiser who had special gold medals to present to them. They went on then to Bremen to thank the people who made it possible. They were also received by Chancellor Von Hindenburg. Baron Von Huenefeld died the following February. Captain Koehl died in 1937 and Colonel Fitzmaurice in 1965. The three men each wrote his own account of the historic flight and they were published in a book called

'The Three Musketeers of the Air'.

I believe it is very difficult to get hold of a copy nowadays. It contained many excellent photographs.

BREMEN FLYERS VISIT CARDINAL IN NEW YORK



Katherine Tynan

Poet & Writer 1861 - 1931

CLONDALKIN and Tallaght both claim Katherine Tynan. Born in Ranelagh in 1861 she moved to Whitehall between Clondalkin and Tallaght in 1865 when her father Andrew Cullen Tynan inherited the farm from a Cullen uncle. The townland name on the map is Cullenswood or Kingswood. At the time it was in the parish of Clondalkin but the Dominicans had come to Tallaght in 1842 and already had a strong influence. In 1872 she and her sister Norah were sent to the Dominican Convent School in Drogheda. Some accounts say she was there six years. She was a voracious reader in spite of having very poor sight and she was already having poems published in "Poems and Ballads of Young Ireland". When she was only seventeen she published her first book of poems "Louise de la Valliere" and she soon began to meet other writers of the then emerging Irish interest — A.E. Russell, W.B. Yeats, Douglas Hyde, T.V. Rolleston, John Todhunter, Rose Kavanagh and others.

Her father built on an extra room to Whitehall so that she could entertain these and the friends she made through her membership of the Ladies Land League. Through the Land League she knew Anna Parnell, sister of Charles Stewart Parnell. With her father, she visited Michael Davitt in jail and brought him to Whitehall to recuperate when he was released. She also met the Fenian John O'Leary. John Butler Yeats painted her portrait while his son W.B. Yeats read poetry to her.

She married in London in 1893 and lived there for a while but returned to Ireland when her husband was appointed Resident Magistrate for Mayo. He died in 1919 leaving her

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with three children and very little money. After a few years she decided to move to the Continent and later to London in search of somewhere cheaper to live. She produced well over a hundred novels, several books of reminiscences and much poetry, some of which has never been published. She championed humane conditions for shop girls and unmarried mothers and was against capital punishment. She worked for votes for women and with Lady Aberdeen, she attended the World Congress of Women in Rome in 1914. Katherine died in 1931. In Tallaght, in the Pocket Park in Main Street, a commemorative plaque was unveiled last year by Her Excellency, President Robinson and efforts are being made to have Whitehall preserved in memory of all the Irish literary figures who visited there.



Katherine Tynan Commemorative Plaque being unveiled by her Excellency President Mary Robinson in Tallaght.

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Her poem "Sheep and Lambs", set to music by Sir Hugh Robertson as "All in an April Evening", is sung by choirs all over the world. And when she wrote "The Aerodrome" bemoaning the destruction of some of her fathers fields in 1917, she expressed what so many have felt about the extension of towns and cities into the countryside:

*"Twas well he did not stay to know
Defaced and all defiled,
The quiet fields of long ago,
Dear to him as a child.*

*But when the tale was told to me
I felt such piercing pain,
They tore my heart up with the tree
That will not leaf again!*

Katherine's sister Norah Tynan O'Mahony was also a great writer. She was very interested in local affairs and was one of the committee of Clondalkin Parish Council.



Katherine Tynan (1861-1931)

The Fenians

WHEN I write my “bits” for The Echo, I’m always hoping that someone will write back and comment on them. I know in the past the Editor has said he would welcome a letters page on any subject. Some of you have parents or grandparents who have tales of their own to add. Comments like that would add considerably to the “Folk History of Tallaght”. I have always been very puzzled by the ‘Battle of Tallaght’ and here I repeat what I wrote about it for our book “Tallaght Trails, Tales and Walking Boots”.

The plaque erected on the Priory wall to commemorate the Fenian Rising was taken down some time ago. Hopefully it will soon be replaced to commemorate an extraordinary event. The Fenians in Dublin relied heavily on promises of money and arms from America but although some help did come, it was very little. The rescue of James Stephens from jail in Dublin by John Devoy and his supporters in 1866 had raised the hearts and hopes of many. Recruiting agents enlisted thousands of men. They instructed the recruits to go to Tallaght by varied ways, so as not to arouse suspicion. They were promised arms when they would get there but few materialised. The authorities in Dublin Castle were already alerted and well informed and when reports started to come in of large groups of men moving towards Tallaght, the constabulary were ready. It would be interesting to know where was John Devoy at this time? He was the local man (from Kill just up the Naas Road).

It is stated that over 3000 were arrested at the time. Many were arrested at various points on their way to Tallaght and John Devoy may have been one of them. Certainly, leadership was entirely lacking. The men were bewildered and could not understand what had happened. An old lady, who, as a child of six, saw some of the Fenians come back to Clondalkin, heard

her mother asking them what happened and their answer “We don’t know what happened, but there was no battle”. The RIC claimed a great victory and it has been written up many times since. It must have startled the Dublin Castle authorities to find that so many men were ready to leave home and work in



Tallaght Castle — St. Mary's Priory

cold wintry weather, at the beginning of March. Possibly its biggest impact and success was that the British Parliament under Gladstone began to consider Home Rule and Land Reform in Ireland. Students should find it an intriguing study, but although it appeared to be a fiasco, there were widespread repercussions and for that reason alone, it is to be hoped that the plaque will soon be replaced.

What did happen? Can anyone give information handed down by their families about those who died or the survivors. Surely if there had been a resolute leader he would have realised that guns took some time to reload at that time, and he and his men could have swamped the Barracks at that time. There's a lovely story told about a man who took refuge in the Priory. One of the monks kept him in his cell and fed him there until he could get civilian clothes and get him safely away. I wonder if the priest kept any notes of what the man had to say.

Christmas In Tallaght

BEFORE Vatican Two, midnight Mass was celebrated only in Order churches and very few others. In Tallaght, the Dominicans, knowing the limitations of the public part of St. Mary's Church, sent out invitations and on the night, lay brothers were stationed at the door to supervise entry.

Inevitably, people came without invitation and they were never refused so the congregation was packed like sardines. All through the evening confessions were being heard on both sides of the church. Then about a quarter to twelve, the priests left the confessionals and a great hush fell. As midnight struck, the organ played and the procession started with the monks chanting as they came. First a long line of altar boys, then the young postulants and novices followed by the brothers and finally the priests with the three who were celebrating the sung High Mass. Anyone who ever heard the joyous sound of more than seventy monks and brothers singing the Gloria, the Credo and the Sanctus and all the responses will never forget it. It was a wonderfid and inspiring beginning of the festival and after the long celebration was over, the congregation poured out into the frosty air, joyously greeting friends and neighbours.

Before motors became common, many came in ponytraps or on bicycles or walked miles to go to the Priory. At midnight, those at home had lit the Christmas candles and their tiny lights could be picked out all over the hills. The adults who had been to Mass crept back in so as not to disturb the children and after a hot drink and a discreet placing of Christmas presents, they retired to bed, but not for long!

The children who found it hard to get up on schooldays were bright as buttons opening their parcels and soon it was breakfast time and the big business of cooking turkey, ham and

plum pudding on old-fashioned ranges began. With neighbours calling with good wishes, the day went on in a way that was much more simple than nowadays, and yet seemed brighter and happier.



Interior of St. Mary's Priory before 1970.

Clondalkin Round Tower

If you have the opportunity to hear the lecture “The Round Towers of County Dublin” by Joe Williams of the Clondalkin Historical Society you should avail of it. There were five towers in the county, Clondalkin, Lusk and Swords are still standing. The base of the one at Rathmichael can be seen and believe it or not, there was one in Ship Street, close to Dublin Castle but following storm damage it was demolished about 1790.



Clondalkin Round Tower — Photo: Mr. Philip Taylor

Balrothery in the North County had a belfry tower attached to the ancient church, and in later times facsimile towers were erected at Portrane, Ireland's Eye and Glasnevin Cemetery. In all there are sixty-five towers or remains thereof in Ireland, most of them having many features in common, The size of the base was similar and they graduated to the top. Scholars believe many were the work of the same team so contractors were a feature of Irish Life even in early Christian times.

Clondakin Tower is different. Its base is smaller and the walls do not graduate but are completely perpendicular. It has a curtain wall at the base which does not exist in any other. No other tower is as near to a constant flow of heavy traffic and shows no apparent damage. In 1787 an enormous explosion occurred at the gunpowder mills less than a quarter of a mile away. The tremors were felt in Capel Street and chimneys fell at Usher's Island. Tremendous damage was done in the locality but the Round Tower merely swayed and it was not damaged in any way.

Brother Luke Cullen
1793 - 1859

Joe Williams has also written a short life of Brother Luke Cullen of the Carmelite Monastery of Clondalkin. He was born in Co. Wicklow in 1793. His history of the 1798 Rebellion in Wicklow relied very much on the personal memories of persons who had taken part. His work was very much praised by other historians of the period. He also wrote a local history and the life of Anne Devlin.

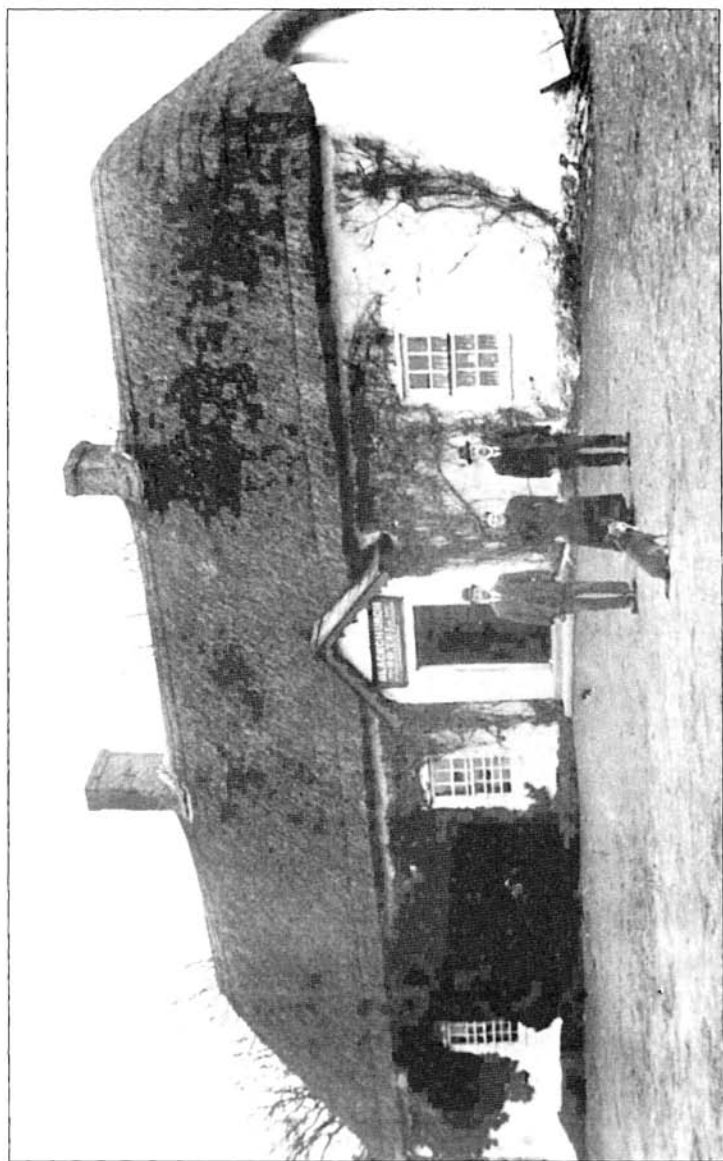
Blackchurch Inn

BLACKCHURCH Inn was one of the most picturesque buildings on the Dublin/Cork road. Sited beside a turnpike house, and with changes of horses available after the long uphill thirteen miles from the city, it was a popular and prosperous business. Just beyond it is the County Dublin/County Kildare border and at that point the road is stated to reach its highest point above sealevel between Dublin and Cork. The townland name is Steelstown, but that is only used on documents and maps.

As children, we were fascinated by the Thatcher "Crutch" Ward who came every second year to renew the thatch, which was very thick and stood out at least three feet from the walls. About 1934, a Heiton's steam lorry and trailer of coal was passing by when the trailer broke away from the lorry and the impetus carried it up the incline and the shaft pierced the inn wall just below the window of the public bar. It was then we learned that the walls were clay. After sometime the wall was repaired, but from then on no one lived in the front of the building but in a modern two storey annex at the back. The bar and lounge continued to be used in the old building.

At that time, Blackchurch was owned by the Vickers family and the family had very old account books showing what business was like two hundred years ago. They also owned a silver teapot inscribed:

"To Patrick Berry, Innkeeper, Blackchurch Inn in testimony of his apprehending a notorious highway robber and there by contributing essentially to the security of persons travelling this road to whose countenance and protection he is deservedly commended. This piece of plate is inscribed by the Rathcoole, Kill and Newcastle Association." (undated)



Blackchurch Inn — Dublin / Cork Road.

Patrick Berry was great-great grandfather of Daniel Vickers who lives nearby.

Colourful events, which took place there included a visit in 1932 of a stage coach and horses on their way to Limerick for the opening of the Savoy Cinema. The famous Prince Monolulu was one of the party. The following year there was a very big snowstorm and in those days before tractors, J.C.B.'s and diggers were used, it was a major disaster. Everything came to a halt for about ten days. Food was scarce and there was no school. Just a mile away hundreds of sheep were killed in the drifts and one poor man, trying to get home with food to his wife and children died in the blizzard. A large circus party with a number of big wagons was marooned at Blackchurch and many animals were accommodated in the fine farm outhouses. The most exciting thing we saw were the two elephants. Their Indian keepers had to make them kneel down to get in and out of the barns and then they took them across the road and down the snow covered field to a stream for water. They were there nearly a fortnight but one day we came home from school to find them gone.

In 1940, again during a snowstorm, Army units were deployed up and down the Naas Road. Some of the wartime internees (mostly pilots who had crashed here) escaped from the Curragh. Most of them were found quickly but one got as far as Rathcoole.

Through from Autumn to Spring, hunt meets both of the South County Dublin Harriers and the Kildare Foxhunt took place regularly and the old Inn was a picturesque background, but in the 1960's, one sad night, the clay walls crumbled away and Blackchurch Inn as we knew it was no more.

Not long after that the turnpike house on the opposite side of the road was knocked down in the road widening for the dual

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carriageway. In 1798 it was owned and worked by Felix Rourke, father of Felix Rourke a United Irishman who survived the 1798 Rebellion but was apprehended during Emmet's Rebellion in 1803 and hanged from the burnt out rafters of the priests house in Rathcoole. He had been a particular favourite of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who gave him one of his own horses.

* * *

A list of Saggart and Rathcoole men who joined the Irish National Volunteers in November 1913. Most of them took part in the gun-running at Howth in July 1914.

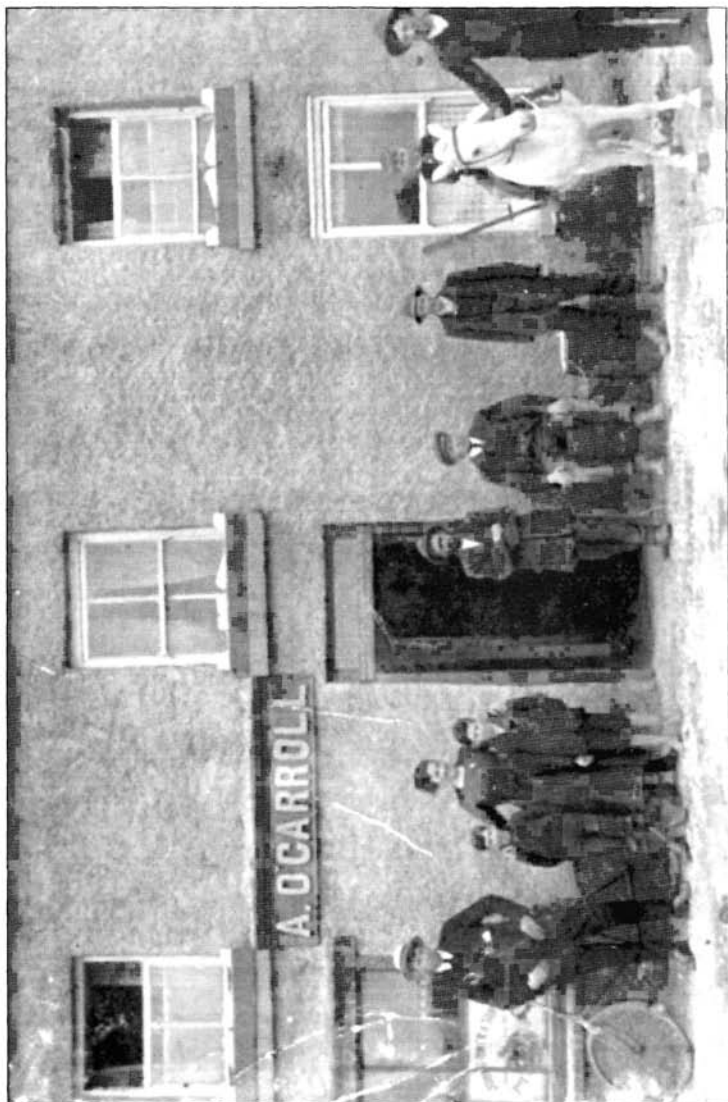
| | | |
|--------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| George Attley | Michael Walsh | Frank Pitts |
| James Coogan | Robert Bartlett | William Reilly |
| James Connolly | Patrick Cullen | Patrick Timmins |
| Christopher Cullen | Arthur Armstrong | Phil Whelan |
| Joseph P. Jacob | John Attley | Jim Boulger |
| Patrick Keogh | William Byrne | John Brett |
| James Mullally | Leo Carroll | Robert Barry |
| William McGuirk | Richard Flanagan | John Kearns |
| James O'Neill | Patrick Gray | Thomas Kearns |
| Laurence O'Neill | Edward Keogh | William Norton |
| George Pouche | Patrick McMahon | John Purdy |
| P. J. Sheil | Joseph Nolan | |

The Pubs of Rathcoole

ALTHOUGH the population of Rathcoole was small, the position of the village on the main road from Dublin to Cork meant there was a constant flow of carriages, carts and horse riders. Many of them stopped to refresh themselves and rest their horses, and the Inns and forge were always busy. The stagecoach stop was the Munster Arms Hotel, a large impressive building extending from the Dublin side of the entrance to the present Coolamber Road to McQuirk's house. The ruins remained there until about 1950 and part of the wall is still to be seen in front of Dr. O'Maille's house.

The coming of the railways spelled the end of the stagecoaches and by 1870 business had deteriorated so much that the hotel was closed down, but the two old ladies continued to live there until they died and the building itself burned down around 1900. Opposite to it was the 'Cosy Bar' owned by the Walsh family. They also owned a considerable amount of property in the district and some is still owned by their descendants.

At the corner of the Stoney Lane was Fyans' Public House with one of the oldest licenses in Ireland. It was a single storey thatched building and the Village Inn now occupies the site. The most interesting of all is the Rathcoole Inn, owned now by Kathleen and Jack Graham, which was for many years owned by the Senior family, who also owned a number of other properties in the village. Redmond's Garage belonged to one of the family - Mrs. Cromer and she ran the Post Office Telephone



The Poitin Stil around 1930.

Service for about fifty years. Her sister Mrs. Lacey, married to an R.I.C. sergeant, stationed at Killeel, lived just opposite, where Hanlons live now. They also owned the house where the late Mrs. Nora Dowling (R.I.P.) lived and four cottages on the Green.

The pub at the Kildare end of Rathcoole was once named "The Sheaf of Wheat", it is now "An Poitin Stil". For over a hundred years it belonged to the Carroll family. It had a colourful life as it was a cattle drover's Inn, with unusual licensing hours to suit the drovers. The field next door was called an accommodation field where the drovers turned in their charges while they themselves rested in the long building at the Kildare end. Carrolls owned quite a lot of land and were very interested in horse breeding. They prided themselves on always having an entry for Punchestown and even had an entry in the English Grand National on one occasion.



Rathcoole Village

Cheeverstown House

THE townland of Cheeverstown lies about a mile beyond Newlands on the Naas Road and extends to Fettercairn on the south side and Kingswood on the west side. There was an extensive farm there owned until 1980 by the Clayton family. On the farm, beside Cheeverstown House where the Clayton family resided, there was the ruins of Cheeverstown Castle, a fortress of the Pale. When it became a total ruin a Georgian House was built beside it and this became known as Cheeverstown Castle. Although part of the property of Cheeverstown House, it was let to various tenants. For many years it was a convalescent home for poor children but around 1932 the home moved to Kilvare House on Templeogue Road which became known as Cheeverstown House. It is now a home for mentally handicapped.

The castle was tenanted by various families after that but when Roadstone bought the entire property in 1980 and commenced quarrying, it was impossible to live there, and eventually Roadstone demolished it and the remains of the older castle as well as Cheeverstown House where Claytons had lived from 1908. The Claytons had owned Kimmage Manor, and it was when they sold that they bought Cheeverstown. They were a very well known family. In 1872 William J. Clayton had invented a telescopic fire escape ladder which is still the basic model. His son Thomas Clayton inherited the farm and his other son William G. Clayton was an architect who designed many churches and public buildings.

They were always very involved in the life of the community and the Point-to-Point Races of the South County Dublin Harriers were held on their land several times. They were also very active in Church of Ireland affairs in Clondalkin and Mrs. Thomas Clayton was one of the founders of the Mother's Union

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in St. John's Parish. The only building remaining is the Gate Lodge on the Naas Road and some years ago this was the scene of a sad murder when the gateman disturbed some "drop outs" in the ruined buildings. His wife lived on there until her death last month. It has been suggested that Roadstone may uncover the ruins of the old castle so that the foundations may be excavated.

Ballinascorney Lodge

ONE of the most picturesque roads leading out of Tallaght is the one turning right at the "Old Mill" public house, once upon a time it was Kennedy's, then Brigid Burke's and the present owners have revived the name of McDonnell's Paper Mills which was not far away.

Take the right fork at Bohernabreena Graveyard, and after passing over a bridge built at a sharp turn, you will pass the entrance on your left to Bohernabreena Waterworks on the Dodder. Climb the steep narrow winding road until you come to a left turn leading into the beautiful valley of Glenasmole (well worth a visit on another day). Climb a bit further and when you come to an old quarry on your left, turn and look back over Dublin. It's worth it.



Next you will come to the Ballinascorney Stone Cross. Nobody seems to know what it commemorates, but it is possible it was one of the number erected during a cattle plague. Continuing to the right you come to the forestry and on your left the ruins of Ballinascorney Lodge.

Built originally by the Dillons of Belgard Castle early in the eighteenth century as a shooting lodge, it was then known as Dillon Lodge. Around the same time, Connolly of Castletown was building his shooting lodge at Mount Pelier. It was later known as the Hell Fire Club. Connolly's Lodge was stark and tall and could be seen for miles away. Dillon Lodge was a more sophisticated house and it was occupied almost continuously until it was burnt down shortly after the death of the last owner, the late Professor Aodhgan O'Rathallaigh in 1987.

Among those who lived there were Gareth Lynch who was a retired Registrar of Equity in the Four Courts. After his death it was leased by Major Knox, owner of the "Irish Times". The style he kept up and the parties held there were legendary!

Most famous person to visit Dillon Lodge was Robert Emmet, when he was 'on the run' after the failure of his rebellion. The occupants at the time were Mrs. Rose Bagnall and her family.

On his first night in the district, Emmet had taken shelter in the cottage of John Doyle at Ballymeece. Next day they decided to make for Ballinascorney but someone accidentally dropped an incriminating document, and Doyle lost no time in taking it to the nearest constable. A local carpenter named Patrick Loughlin, sympathetic to the rebels, asked Mrs. Bagnall to give them shelter and although badly frightened, she consented and Emmet and fourteen followers stayed there the following night.

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They got word that the hunt for them was closing in, and Robert Emmet told the men to scatter and make their ways home, and he returned to Harold's Cross. Hancock states that Doyle, while selling eggs and butter in Harold's Cross caught a glimpse of Emmet and hurried to Dublin Castle to inform Major Sirr, and Emmet was arrested shortly afterwards.

Doyle got a pension of £40 a year and left the country for his own safety. The book "St. Maelruan's and Tallaght" contains extracts from the official records of Robert Emmet's trial with the evidence of Mrs. Bagnall and her workman, Duffy. The book can be purchased from Tallaght Youth Service.

The Crossley

WHEN the British were leaving Baldonnel they had a big auction and Uncle John and Uncle Willie bought a Crossley tender - the kind used by the Black and Tans. I wonder if it arrived in Hillview under it's own power? The deal to purchase the tenders included the British Army paying for a car body to replace the lorry body. These had to come from the Crossley Works in England.

My first memory of it was after they took the body off. The new body probably took a long time to come because it was brought to Liverpool by canal barge, and then across the Irish Sea on a cargo boat to the South Wall where it was again transhipped to a canal boat and eventually delivered to Hazelhatch. Dad took us down there in the old Ford Model T that he called 'Navan Lass'. Uncle John had borrowed a big two horse dray and Peter McDonnell met us there with some of the men and with the help of an old crane, the car body was lifted onto the dray and we three children rode back in state to Hillview. The paintwork was yellow and the collapsible hood and the beautiful leather upholstery were black. I think everyone for miles around us came to see it and eventually it was attached to the chassis, the engine was retuned and Uncle Willie set off down the village on it's maiden voyage and we all got trips in it for a time. But you know what happened - they found out that it used nearly a gallon of petrol a mile! And nobody was keen to take it out after that.

And there it stood, year after year in the middle of the big haybarn. When we children were in Hillview while the house at Castlewarden was being extended, it was a marvellous place to play. We thought we were driving to "far away places with strange sounding names". Edmund pinched one of Uncle John's cigarettes and matches and we tried to smoke, but I

coughed and coughed and we were found out and in trouble! When we went home, the Crossley was just left there and eventually the hens nested in it and all sorts of things were piled on top of it and there it stayed for over twenty years.

Just after the Second World War, somebody decided to make a film on the Black and Tan period at Ardmore Studios, and they started looking for a Crossley tender. Dudley Colley of Corkagh House was an expert on old cars and he remembered the Hillview Crossley and the Ardmore team came to Aunt Cis offering her any money for it. "Take it away" said she "I don't want anything for it. You are welcome to it". And so it went to Ardmore where they rebuilt the lorry body and succeeded in getting the engine to go too! It showed up well in the film *Shake Hands with the Devil* and when the film was made, the Ardmore people rang Aunt Cis and asked her did she want it back with the lorry body on or the car body which their workshop had restored. "Keep it" she said. "I never want to see it again". It may be there still.

* * *

Extract from Irish Daily Independent Monday 8th October, 1894.

Attendance at Parnell Commemoration, Glasnevin.

Rathcoole contingent —

T. Walsh, President, E. Sheil, J. O'Connor, A. Darcy, J. Carty, T. Egan, R. Harris, M. Kearns, T. McEntee, J. Lennon, J. Johnson, P. Johnson, C. Dowdall, T. Dowdall, J. Healy, J. Keogh, J. Connor, J. Walsh, W. Fyans, T. Fyans, J. Sheil, M. Murnan, E. Brady, E. Brady jnr., M. Byrne, J. Connolly, T. Connolly, P. Nolan, J. Nolan, W. Brady, J. Coogan, M. Mulvey, E.T.G. Sheil, J. Phelan, C. Cummins, M. Carty, T. Carty, J. McDonnell, T. Harvey, J. Harvey, P. McLoughlin, J. Sheil, M. Doyle, M. Finnegan, P. Dunne, A. Kelly, J. Mullally, T. Ward, T. Kelly.

Jack Quinn found this old paper. One can barely read it with a magnifying glass. We are told the group marched all the way to Glasnevin and back.

Kilteel

TO visit Kilteel, the best road is to come by Rathcoole. Turn in at the traffic lights and go right through Rathcoole and take the left hand fork below the Poitin Stil.

There used to be a sign at that corner reading “Come to Kilteel Public Health Gardens with fresh air straight from Heaven”. The sign is gone and there is a supermarket where the gardens used to be but the air is the same and the views are superb. Another more scenic way to go is to take the Blessington Road to Brittas. Turn right up the side of the Brittas Inn up a steep narrow road and keep going uphll for over a mile. The forest is on the right and the views on the left are worth bringing your camera for.

Just before the main forestry entrance, you will see about 150 yards away “The Famine Fields” — the ridges where potatoes were grown but never harvested because they were rotten. Keep left from the forestry corner for a quarter of a mile and then turn right and pause. You’ll get some idea of what the Central Plain of Ireland is like — mile after mile of flat lands.

Going on down the hill you will come to a crossroads where you join the road from Rathcoole and turning left climb to Kilteel. The lovely little church was opened in 1934 by the late Archbishop Byrne. His car was met in Rathcoole by a cavalcade of horses and horsemen who led the way to Kilteel. A short distance further on the left is Kilteel Castle.

Built by the Knights Templars in the reign of King John, it is well worth a visit. Some years ago the archaeologists of the Board of Works did a major investigation of the castle and the fields surrounding it and they discovered that the outworks of

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the castle had been very extensive. The name Kilteel comes from Cill tSiadhail — the church of Saint Sedulius who is considered the first of the great Irish scholars who won for Ireland the name of “Island of Saints and Scholars”.

I know you will want to spend some time there but on your return journey when you get to the crossroads, known as the Four Roads of Kilteel, come straight down towards Rathcoole. On your right you will see a very fine granite horseshoe surrounding the door of a onetime forge. Opposite that you may recognise the fields used for the racing and hunting scenes in the film “The Irish R.M.”.

The old house, Johnstown Kennedy where many scenes were shot, has been demolished and there is a golf club, Beechpark in the grounds.

The townland on the right is called Calliaghstown and there was a convent there before the Reformation.

Celbridge

OF all the villages and towns south of Dublin, Celbridge is surely the one with most to attract visitors. Besides that, it now has a special connection with Tallaght. When the first District Councils were formed about 1899 the area from Rathfarnham to Lucan and from Inchicore to Celbridge became known as 'Celbridge No. 2 District' and its offices and boardroom were in the Hospital Poor Law Institute in Celbridge.

The area was almost identical with that which is now in the charge of South Dublin County Council with headquarters in Tallaght. The name Celbridge is an Anglicisation of the old name Kildrought (Cill Droghid) the church of the bridge. Coming into Celbridge from Lucan or Newcastle you cross the Liffey bridge. Turn to the right for the main part of town. On the right are a number of old houses, most of them now adapted to business and with fine long gardens stretching down to the river. One of these, Kildrought House, opened in 1787 as Mr. Begnall's Academy to educate young Catholic gentlemen. Further along is the gate into Castletown House, rescued from demolition by the Irish Georgian Society who did much to refurbish and re-equip the house. It has now been handed over to the State and the Office of Public Works is continuing the good work.

Just outside the main gates, Lady Louisa Connolly in 1814 founded a free school where 'Catholics and Protestants were educated together, religious instruction given one day a week in separate rooms by their own clergymen'. If you take the left turn from Main Street, you will pass the old hospital / workhouse and about a mile and a half further on turn right and proceed cautiously (the road is poor). On your right is an amazing sight, the obelisk or 'Connolly's Folly' built by Lady

Connolly in 1739 to provide employment for the poor of Celbridge. It cost £400. The workers were paid 1/2d. per day (the Half Penny)! It was designed by Richard Castle and is 140 feet tall. Back to Celbridge Mill, known to have existed since 1217 and with many changes of buildings and industries it is still in use as an Amenity Centre and for many small firms. Then you come to the best known house in Celbridge, Celbridge Abbey, once home of the Van Homrigh family. Esther Van Homrigh, Jonathan Swift's 'Vanessa' lived there and he visited her there and walked with her in the grounds. Not far beyond the Abbey is what is now known as the Setanta Hotel but not so long ago it was the Collegiate School for Girls, founded by the widow of Speaker Connolly in 1732. It continued until 1972. There are a number of other fine houses in Celbridge, St. Wolstan's is now a school and Oakley Lodge, opposite Celbridge Abbey is a home for mentally handicapped children (St. Raphael's); there are also Donacomper House and Killadoon. All of them have interesting histories.



Connolly's Folly, Celbridge.

The Slade of Saggart

THE Irish word Slád means a big ditch and in the case of the Slade of Saggart refers to the rift valley from Judy's Pinch to Crooksling. The river, which runs through it is called the Camac and the word Cám means crooked. It rises in Crooksling and joins another stream just opposite Crooksling gate. The other stream originated in Aughfarrell quarries where five little streams unite into a strong flow. Originally they joined the Lisheen River, but over one hundred and fifty years-ago-the proprietors of Swiftbrook Paper Mills in Saggart changed that. A Sluice Gate was erected at Aughfarrell and the flow of water was diverted down by Gurtlum and through an area called Bog Larkin where the Brittas lakes and ponds were formed. Joe Dowling in Lake House has the original agreement complete with a big red seal, whereby his great-grandfather sold that area to McDonnells of Swiftbrook Paper Mills. Thus a strong flow of water was guaranteed to the paper mills. A water bailiff walked right up the side of the river to Aughfarrell and back each day to make sure no dirt got into the stream. That is why Swiftbrook were able to make first class notepaper, which gained many international awards. And it also ensured that the rift valley was kept beautifully clean — a joy to visitors.

The earliest mention of the Slade was in 458 A.D. The men of Leinster refused to pay their tax, or as it was called, borugha to the High King.

Laoghaire — the same Laoghaire who allowed St. Patrick to preach the Gospel, gathered his army and invaded Kildare, Laois, Offaly and Wicklow, taking cattle and horses to pay the tax. He decided to come back by the Slade, driving cattle and horses before him but the Leinster men were ready, hidden on the sides of the Slade and they caught his army and a battle was fought. Laoghaire and many of his army were killed and the cattle and horses repossessed.

There is another area just a mile further on behind Brittas called Sládmore - Big Ditch. This was where the ditch or boundary of the Pale was dug out in the thirteenth century by local labour working from six a.m. to six p.m., providing their own tools for sixpence a day!

There was no road between the Embankment and Crooksling until about 1820 when British Army Engineers made the present road. Before 1790 the travellers going from Dublin to Blessington, Carlow and Wexford turned left at Kiltalown Cottages and climbed the steep road over Mount Seskin joining the present road (N81) at Brittas. This was very hard on the horses and the authorities in Dublin decided to make a new road, leaving the present road just above Kiltalown across the fields to a point just above Saggart Schools. There the new road crossed over and went through the middle of the Slade, crossing the Camac at the beautiful four arched bridge which was christened the Downshire Bridge after the Marquis of Downshire who was a major landowner from Brittas to Blessington. The road then climbed a much easier gradient joining the road known as the Craddle. The Slade contained many beautiful trees but unfortunately these made great hiding places for highwaymen and during the thirty years the road was used, there were many many robberies. Many of the travellers returned to using the Mount Seskin Road. The most infamous of the robbers was named Hanlon, known as the Rapparee Hanlon, and it was reckoned that he must have a vast hoard of jewellery and money hidden somewhere. He was caught eventually and hanged in Blessington, but he was tortured first to get him to tell where he had hidden his 'takings'. Just before he died, he was heard to say something about a quarry. Well, from Brittas to beyond Blessington was full of sand quarries and for many years the quarrymen searched without finding anything. And then a strange thing happened. The other side of Blessington, back in the mountains, the other side of the present lake, a man working in



Girl Guides from Harrington Street with Saggart and Rathcoole girls picnicing in The Slade.

the granite quarries at Ballyknockan started to buy land and spend money. He moved into a bigger house and sent all his large family away to school, and as they grew up, bought farms for the boys in County Kildare and got the girls married to prosperous farmers and of course everybody said "He found the Rapparee's hoard".

In the 1800's, railways had been invented and towns and cities were being linked but how to link Dublin, Blessington, Carlow and Wexford was very difficult, eventually the Blessington Steam Tram was built in the 1880's linking Terenure, where the City Tram Line ended, to Blessington.

The people of Dublin soon began to enjoy the beauty of the Dublin and Wicklow Mountains and they discovered the Slade. It was so beautiful and such a short distance away and the Steam Tram even ran special excursions to the Slade at weekends. From 1890 on, the Slade became a favourite picnicking place. Where motorbike scrambles became popular, several competitions were held there every year with a special Fancy Dress meeting on St. Stephen's Day.

Lovely Saggart Slade

By John Meegan

*A roving blade mid storm and shade
I've travelled far and near
To Ballytore and sweet Lugmore and far away Cape Clear
And scenes most fair, both rich and rare
I viewed as I have strayed
But among them all there's none at all
Can equal Saggart Slade.*

*There trees sublime from every clime in wild profusion grow
And birds do sing from early spring
And rarest flowers blow
The hills so grand on either hand which nature has arrayed
With heather brown look sweetly down on lovely Saggart
Slade.*

*The rippling rills down from the hills
Pass through this glorious dell
Where sweethearts stray at close of day
Their tales of love to tell
And in this land there's not so grand
A spot for youth or maid
To tell their love neath stars above
As lovely Saggart Slade*

*Down by two brooks some cosy nooks
there most romantic lie
In those shady bowers some happy hours
I spent in days gone by
And as I stray on my lonely way
I often have delayed
To regret the day I went away
from lovely Saggart Slade*

Biddy Christian

HILLVIEW, in Rathcoole was the home of my father's family from when it was built in 1887 to the death of my youngest uncle in 1966. I had the job of clearing it out before it was sold. It is now a saddlery shop. I found many unusual things - some of which evoked memories, but there was none that touched me more than a little exercise book I found in my grandmother's desk. On the front was written —

*“Bridget Christian came to me as servant
This 9th day of August 1893
At a salary of £6 per year”.*

What memories it brought back, not just to me but to all the family and many other local people with fond memories of Biddy. She was a most unusual character full of independence with a deep voice that came up from her boots and she was only pint-sized. When we were children we were afraid of our lives to annoy her.



Bridget Christian came from Ardclough. Her family were very highly respected tenant farmers on the Cloncurry of Lyons estate. It is probable Biddy, as she was always called, worked in houses in the area of Kill to Straffan before coming to

Hillview when she was 29 in 1893. At that time she had inherited a small holding and cottage at Crooknadreenagh known as the "Rook" or "Keogh's" from her mother's brother. The holding was a tenancy of the Johnstown Kennedy estate and the notebook mentions the transfer of the lease in November 1893 when a fee of £1 was paid to Mr. Shannon, Solicitor! What would it be today? Rent is mentioned at irregular intervals. I wonder who collected it or had she to go to Johnstown Kennedy, now Beechpark Golf Club, to pay it. It must have been very small. In November 1893 £1.2s.6d. On 12th December 1898 it was £2. In December 1899 it was £2.3s.7 1/2d. In December 1901 it was £1.2s.0d. In March 1902 it was £3.5s.0d. so there must have been arrears, for in the following December it was £1.6s.0d. Rates are shown at various times as twelve shillings, 8s.3d. and again, twelve shillings. You will see from the pages shown the cost of items of clothes at that time. She mentions going to Saggart Fair when she spent two shillings. All the fun of the fair!!! And in November 1903 "Show on the Green" cost sixpence!

The account book mentioned Saggart Fair on 2nd June 1904 - £5. This was to buy a cow and calf. And all the entries after that are of household equipment because Bidy was getting married and going to live in her cottage at Crooknadreenagh, high on the hill above Rathcoole. In October 1904, Bidy married Thomas Phelan and they went to live in her little house. But sadly it was not a happy marriage. Thomas Phelan treated her very badly, stole from her, sold all her stock and beat her so badly he was sent to prison, and in 1908 she obtained a legal separation. I am indebted to the late Mrs. Kate Brady and her sister, the late Mrs. Elizabeth Gray for some parts of the story. They used to stay with her from time to time and even went to school to Saggart from her house. Walking, of course. It was a one roomed cottage with a lean-to shed for a cow and calf. People on the hill and other neighbours used to come in at night and they would play cards. When

Biddy won, she put the money back in the pool because she said she never had and never would take money from anyone without working for it.

Someone suggested that she should have one or two girls - nurse children they were called then - and Mrs. Rose Byrne, the relieving officer who arranged these all over this district, (then known as Celbridge No.2) knew Biddy well. She knew they would be well treated, but the house was too small. A second room was added and Biddy got one girl and then a second. I don't know how many she cared for in all. I only remember Betty Daly who stayed with her 'till she married. The maintenance was paid quarterly. Biddy took none of it for herself or for the girls' keep and food. It was all spent on their clothes or put in a post office book for them. Mrs. Brady told me Thomas Phelan wandered around the country working here and there. When he was down and out he came back to Biddy. He was never allowed in the house but she always gave him food and money and sometimes clothes. Eventually he got TB and was sent to Peamount where he died. Biddy had him buried in Saggart graveyard.

Biddy helped all over the hill, when there were illnesses or births or deaths, and she always kept in touch with Hillview. For many years she walked up and down and somebody would be sent up with any heavy messages, and the men from Hillview sent up to make hay and fence although she was a very hardy lady and did an awful lot for herself. I remember going with my father to Mr. Muldoon at Allenton House in Tallaght to collect a fox terrier pup for her. It was christened Muldoon and she had it for years. She always had several dogs.

Every Thursday morning she arrived at Hillview. Cleaning out the big American range was a tricky job and nobody ever did it but Biddy. We didn't put our noses in the kitchen that day. We had a healthy respect for Biddy and her deep voice,

and even the adults in the family would not cross her in any way, but they all loved her and she loved them. As she got older she only came down on Fridays for her pension and to have tea with them. If she did not come, someone went up to find out why. By then she had a donkey and tiny trap and used to take her time up and down. A good thing the golf club was not there then with all the cars! Gradually, the little cottages disappeared and it was very lonely up there. Her nephew Mickey Doyle from Blackchurch used to call and bring packets of tea and sugar, and another nephew, Wing Commander Grennan came from England to see her several times a year. He rang Hillview regularly for news.

On Sunday, Bidy came to Mass in Saggart, leaving her ass and trap outside Jacobs. When we moved to Saggart in 1945 she came and had dinner with us after Mass. The first day she came, she toured the house recognising items which had been in Hillview, but the thing that took her fancy was a big Willow pattern dish on the wall, and when she heard my mother had brought it from Wales with her, Bidy said "Well I have a Willow plate and I'll give it to you". And the following Sunday she brought it down, and she was so pleased next time she came and we had it, too, on the wall. I still have it.

She had her stock, but that's another story, a well-off neighbour, who has also gone to his reward, did a very nasty trick on her. Any of the people on the hill will tell that story. After that she let the land to Teddy Creggy who bought the holding from her heirs.

Bidy died quietly in her little house on 29th June 1954. With her were her nephew, Mickey Doyle and my uncle Dr. William Sheil, who was only a year old when she came to Hillview. She is buried in Saggart. We think she was some years older than ninety but her birth certificate could not be traced.

South County Dublin Harriers

FROM the earliest times, men hunted for food, at first with a primitive cudgel and then with a catapult. Finn MacCool and his army of followers hunted the wild boar and hares with their hounds, notably Finn's dog Bran. Their favourite hunting ground was the Curragh of Kildare and all the land from there back to Tallaght and Glenasmole. As time went on men and women started to hunt on horses with specially trained hounds to smell out their quarry.

In Britain and France it became fashionable to hunt the fox or the stag, and soon Ireland too resounded to the sound of the hunting horn. But some people did not like hunting and killing live animals and still they wanted the joy of the fast ride over fences and ditches. Some thought of laying a trail of scent — aniseed usually — and training the hounds to follow that. That is how the name 'drag-hunt' got its name and the hounds trained to follow it were "harriers" although that name really related back to when hares were hunted.

The Kildare Fox Hounds hunted in County Dublin occasionally and various land owners ran private packs of harriers, but not in a very organised way. Mr. Blackshaw from England started a private hunt after the First World War but was not very successful, and a group of county and city men got together to buy out his interest and his pack in 1926. The group included Mr. W.T. Cosgrave, his brother-in-law Mr. Flanagan, Mr. Masterson, Mr. Dunne, Captain Cyril Harty, Captain Ahern, Captain P.J. Sheil V.S.; Mr. Roche, Mr. Nugent, Mr. Gore-Grimes, Mr. H. Kellett, Mr. D. Kellett and others. The hounds were found to be in poor condition and new ones were bought from the Scarteen Hunt. By the Autumn of 1926, with the co-operation of farmers and landowners, the reorganised hunt was underway, still using the name Hillside Harriers.

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From the first it was very successful and popular and the turn out for the point-to-point races was splendid. For the first two years it was run on Baldonnel Aerodrome and then moved to Cheeverstown. After that, for years it was held at Old Bawn.

In 1932 the hunt was reorganised as a registered business as the 'South County Dublin Harriers'. Willie Harvey continued to be huntsman until he was injured in a fall at a point-to-point at Callery Bog. Then his brother Jack took over from him for many years and Jack's son Roger now has the job. But of course, with the spread of the city and suburbs, the hunt has had to look for new runs in Wicklow and Kildare and the 'point-to-point' is now held on Naas Race Course.



South County Dublin Hunt at Belgard Castle

Centre: Mr. Liam Flanagan, Surgeon; *Right:* Mr. Peter Dunn, Dentist, leading the hunt through Belgard Castle in 1941. Both men were joint masters of the Hunt from 1936/37 to 1947/48.

The City Watercourse

NOW that the days are getting longer, more people will go for walks and no one should miss the Firhouse Weir, now magnificent in the spate of flood waters, and the rebuilt footbridge. Be sure to bring your camera with you. The weir was built seven hundred and fifty years ago by the City of Dublin authorities because the city was very short of water.



The ancient city of the Danes and afterwards the Normans was entirely on the south side of the Liffey which was tidal as far as Islandbridge and therefore no use as a water supply. There were wells here and there and there was the Poddle — their main supply but this was not enough. The weir was built in 1244, a channel leading off to the side which carried the water down more than a mile to join the Poddle at Templeogue. Further down near Rialto the water was piped off in hollowed out Elmwood pipes to a number of fountains where the citizens

came with their buckets. Water was sold through the streets by men and women carriers with wooden yokes across their shoulders to carry two wooden buckets. The continuing growth of the city made more and more demands on the supply. The Camac, then a much smaller stream also contributed and when canals were planned in the eighteenth century the Dublin Corporation invested heavily with a view to augmenting the water supply. The Bohernabreena Reservoir was built in 1877 to supply the Rathmines / Rathgar area as well as the inner city.

Dublin was threatened with having its water supply cut off in 1738. Lord Santry was charged with the murder of one of his footmen, found guilty and sentenced to death. His uncle, Sir Compton Domville lived at Templeogue House and the Poddle ran through his grounds. So he threatened to cut off the supply if his nephew was not released. His threat worked and Lord Santry was freed on condition that he left the country.

Spawell

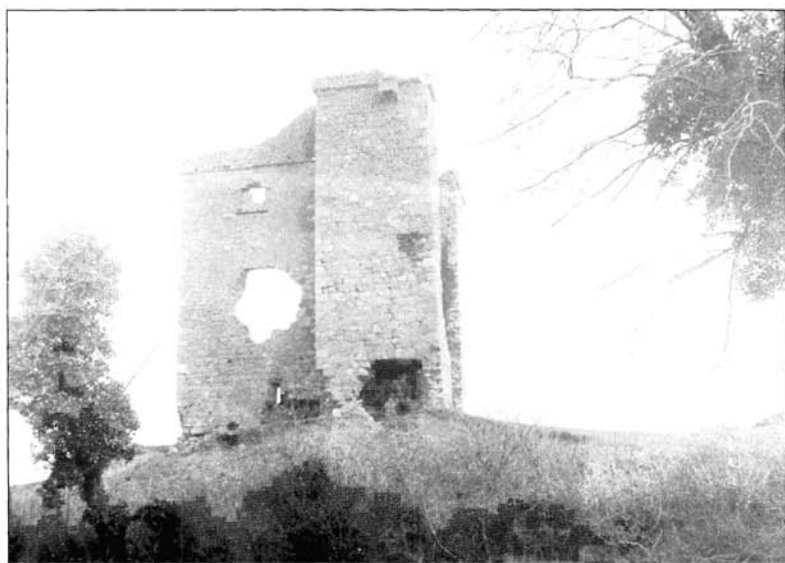
BEFORE Templeogue Bridge was built, all traffic for the Firhouse side of the Dodder had to cross at Rathfarnham, or by a ford in the river at a place called the Strand not far from Templeogue Graveyard. Near the ford there was an inn and a group of cottages. In the early seventeenth century, mineral springs had become very popular health centres all over Europe. A chalybeate spring was discovered just a little to the west of the ford and inn and overnight the wealthy and fashionable people of Dublin flocked to Templeogue Spa Well, and the name soon became merely — Spawell.

Besides drinking the waters, the patrons soon added entertainments, music and dancing, all under the eagle eye of a Master of Ceremonies, whose rule was absolute, just like the famous ones at Bath etc. There was also cockfighting, wrestling and prize fighting, especially on Sundays when the poor people came in crowds and entertainment was of a rougher nature.

The Spa even produced its own newspaper called the Templeogue Intelligencer, a few numbers of which are preserved in the Haliday Pamphlets in the Royal Irish Academy. The spa water was also bottled and sold every morning in city shops for two-pence a bottle. To start the day's treatment, clients had to be in Spawell at eight o'clock in the morning and this was a big effort for people who normally did not go to bed until about three o'clock in the morning after balls and receptions. However, all this came to an abrupt end in 1751 as the spring seemed to lose its potency and by 1800 a

visitor could only identify the site of all this activity by a “depression in the ground”.

The large three storey house, which had been built in the early eighteenth century with its quaint Dutch gables and roof, and high chimneys is still very much in existence. It is considered an architectural gem having many unusual features. For many generations it has been home of the Kennedy family.



Tymon Castle

Reminiscences of the late Cathy Dunne

I am indebted to Christine Quinn for permission to use her transcript of her interview with the late Cathy Dunne who died on 13th March 1995. Her wonderful memories and recollections of stories and people are sadly missed.

“I was born here in September 1902 and I had one brother, Pat. I have spent all my life here. During nearly ninety-one years I have seen many changes. I went to the old school (it was very new then). Mrs. Archbold taught up to 2nd class and Mrs. Lennon taught the rest. We were very well taught. We may not have had the wide curriculum they have today but I'm sure any child of that time could beat any of the present day ones in English, Irish, arithmetic, geography, history, cooking, singing and rural science.

At that time, Mrs. Hallissey taught the boys and Mrs. Dowdall, (then Miss Mulhare), taught the small ones. There were only outside dry toilets and when we wanted water we got it from the pump on the Green. I got First Communion in Saggart when I was seven and I was confirmed there too, by Archbishop Walsh. There were plenty of girls in the village and we played all the usual games. We knew about Rathcoole's history in the wars of long ago, as in 1641 when all the people hid on Tooten Hill from the soldiers and the soldiers set fire to the furze and those who weren't burnt were killed as they ran from the flames.

The next story after that was in 1798 when my great-grandfather was killed by the soldiers. Against his wishes they ate the hot bread from his bakery and drank ale and some of them got ill and blamed him. Also the parish priest Fr. James

Harold was arrested and sent to Australia for twelve years and the nineteen year old John Clinch from Rathcoole House was hanged in Newgate Prison. They said he was a rebel and he denied it. It's believed it was his cousin John Clinch from Hazelhatch who was involved in the United Irishmen. Five years later, Felix Rourke was hanged from the rafters of Fr. Harold's burnt out house. Nora Dowling's house was built on that site afterwards by the Senior family.



Cathy Dunne on her way to Mass in Saggart Church.

They owned all the side of the street nearly from where Fergie Redmond's now stands to the Green. The Seniors had three daughters who were allowed to serve in their public house, now the Rathcoole Inn until tea-time when their mother would say "Sophie, Jane and Beckie - all to your own compartment".

When the Irish Volunteers were founded in 1913, a lot of local men joined and a few of them took part in the Howth Gun Running. In 1914 some of them followed Redmond and joined the British Army. Several were killed and some were injured. Joe Whitethorn, Pat Timmons, Joe Phelan and Tommy Kearns died. Philip 'Badger' Whelan also served but he came home. So did Willie Harvey and then Easter Week happened. When we heard about it, Maggie Walsh and I went up to Bolgers Quarry and saw Dublin burning, the G.P.O. and O'Connell Street in flames. There was one Rathcoole man in the G.P.O., Peter McLoughlin, Maisie Carey's uncle; he was interned for a while and then he came home. He died in 1927. The British Army units had to march through Rathcoole on their way to Dublin from the Curragh. Rathcoole was full of soldiers and later the Black and Tans. Even though Rathcoole people were not involved in the war, the Tans would still pound on the door and if there was a young man in the house, they were liable to take him away.

In Saggart, two men were taken. One was McDermott. He was imprisoned for a short while but when he was released he ended up in Grangegorman due to the treatment he had received. The other man was also imprisoned for a short time and he died soon after his release.

During the Civil War, a young Free Stater was killed in Brittas. My cousin Cis Tynan and I went everywhere we could and when we went to a funeral of a man named Cotter in Glasnevin, we saw Terence McSwiney there. Not long after that he was arrested and went on hunger strike and died.

For getting to the city we had to go to Hazelhatch to get the train or to the Embankment to get the Steamtram. And then we got our first bus about 1920. It was like a big van with long benches inside and we had to get up on a chair to get into it. The first bus company in the country was the I.O.C. (Irish Omnibus Company). It started in Clondalkin. I didn't go to Michael Collins' funeral but the next day Cis and I went. There were huge crowds there and masses and masses of beautiful flowers.

The next big event I remember was the Eucharistic Congress just sixty-one years ago. After all we had gone through, nobody would have believed we could organise such a huge and successful event. Imagine getting two million people in and out of the Phoenix Park and home from Dublin and not a single person hurt. The organisation was superb. You couldn't do better today.

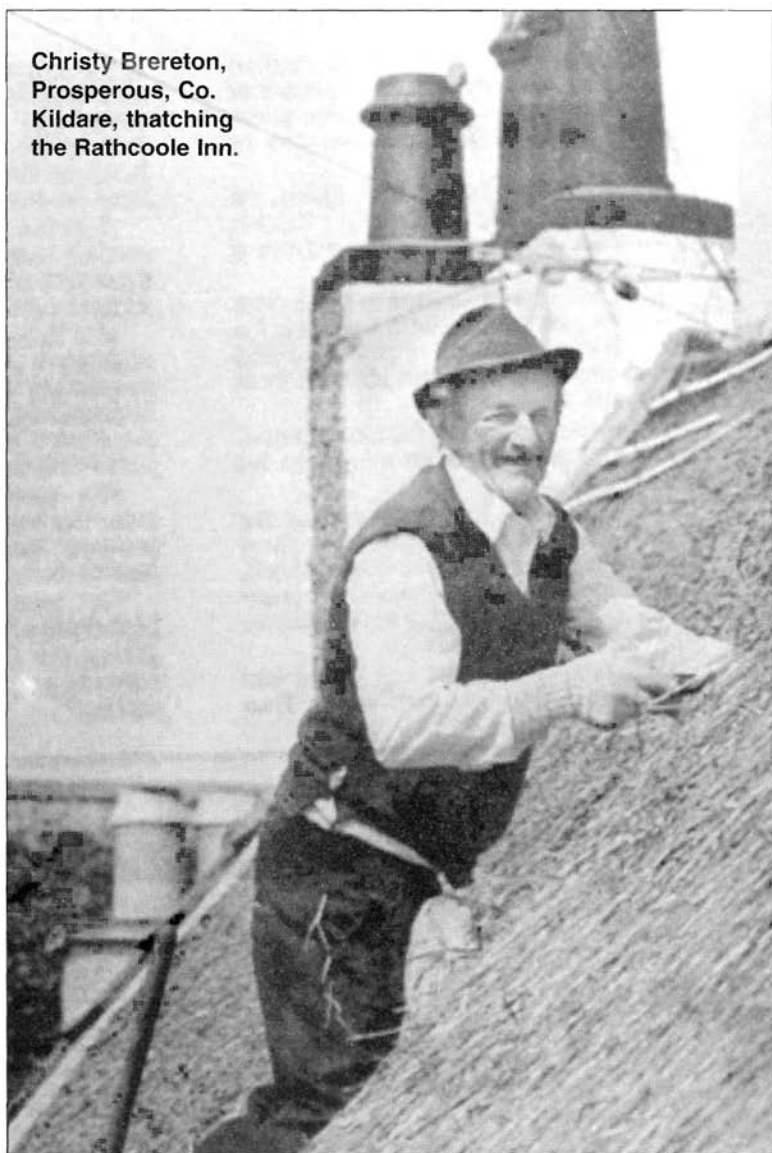
From the time it was opened in the twenties, the Library was the centre of everything. There was no T.V. and very few people had radios with earphones and we read everything we could get. There were concerts there too and lectures and when the Second World War came, we had First Aid and Civil Defence there. We got electric light just before the war but there were no power units like electric fires etc. and then there was a blackout and most of the buses went because of petrol shortage. After that, life became easier, more or less as it is today."

Family Trades

IT'S really not so long ago since everybody depended on horses for transporting themselves and for all their needs. Most districts depended on themselves for all the crafts which were vital to everyday life and many of these crafts were handed from father to son. We have many families among us who can be proud of the part their forebears played. For instance there was the Thatcher Ward who was in constant demand for the many thatched roofs. For the wooden wheels (bound with iron) used on farm carts the Mansfield's were the wheelwrights. The best known harness maker for the many miles around was old George Pouch. It was said the collars he made for work horses never galled them. Bradys were the shoemakers and Grahams the joiners who made the furniture.

The Proctor family are proud of the work their great-grandfather did as carpenter in the building of Saggart Church and each generation has followed the same trade. I have no names for builders, slators or stone masons, but I'm sure someone can supply them. The blacksmiths and farriers were the Flanagans. There were ploughmen like the Doyles, and the O'Connors were among the herdsmen, who in the days before veterinary surgeons had a huge responsibility for the health of their herd and flocks. For several generations Haydens were the butchers. I wonder who was there before them? Before the coming of the horse drawn bakery vans from the Dublin bakeries Fyans were the bakers and their ancestor paid with his life when British soldiers insisted on eating freshly baked bread with the local ale. Michael McLoughlin was the last of a long line of tailors and was always known as 'Tailor McLoughlin' and Mrs. Mary Hollowed (one of the McEntee family) was the last dressmaker to serve her seven years apprenticeship to one of her aunts. Her work was beautiful and she took as much trouble with a remnant of material for a poor

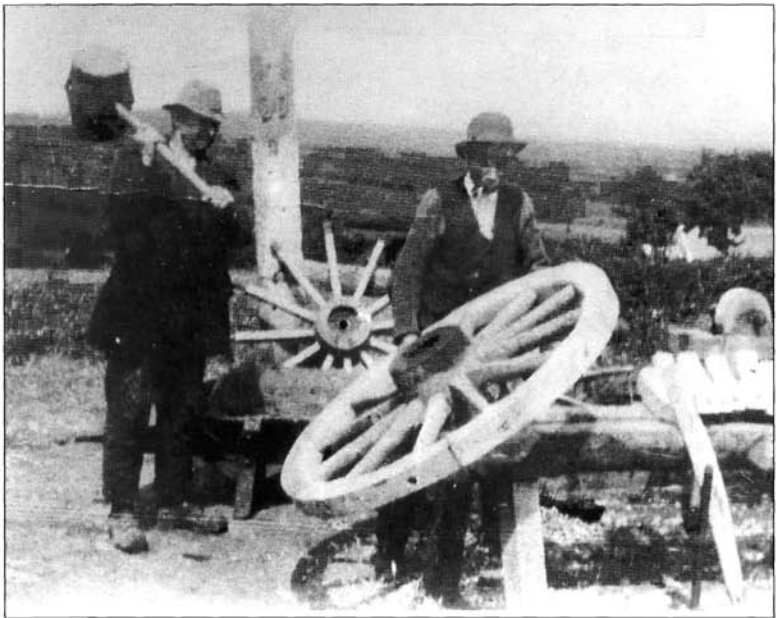
**Christy Brereton,
Prosperous, Co.
Kildare, thatching
the Rathcoole Inn.**



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person as she did with the rich materials for her rich clients. The late Cathy Dunne (R.I.P.) told me her Grandfather Dunne was the last local cutler. The Connollys were stone masons and the McEntees were part-time masons and farmers.

There were many other trades and if anyone can add to the list it would be very helpful. Does anyone remember the stonebreaker who moved around from one roadside heap of stones to another? He took a stone in one hand, studied it for a second for flaws, and one smart blow of his little hammer and it was in bits! Isn't it strange to compare the roadwork of today with the stones, tar and big steamrollers used well into the 1950's.



Timothy Mansfield and Charles Hollowed, Wheelwrights.

The Body Snatchers

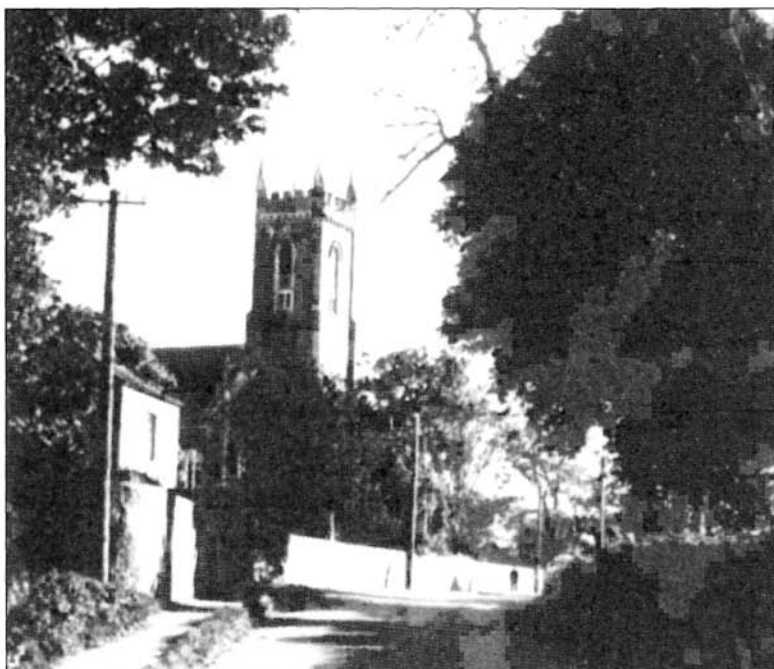
FROM earliest primitive times, people minded their sick companions and occasionally, by chance, discovered plants and herbs which cured their illnesses. As civilisation progressed more and more was found out about illnesses, and people gathered around others who had studied the human body, and so medical schools were founded. As the interest grew, students began to examine dead bodies and the study of anatomy became an absorbing interest. Sometimes bodies of poor people or dead criminals were given to the students but many people objected to this practice, considering it to be lacking in respect. But still the demand grew and a ghoulish business developed with corpses being sold to medical schools "and no questions asked". Business was so good that soon the body-snatchers as they became known, watched graveyards which were not close to housing, and dug up freshly buried remains. Various efforts were made to stop them with heavy weights on the graves etc. Eventually a law was passed in 1831 outlawing the "trade" but it took many years to die out.

The best known story of the Body Snatchers or Sack-em-ups is probably the Saggart one. A watch room had been set-up upstairs in what is now Jacob's Public House. The local men took turns at a window overlooking the graveyard. At that time there were no houses between Jacob's and the graveyard. One night, an alert watcher spotted a light. He was a good shot and there was a shout from the graveyard. Shouting to alert his companions, he rushed down towards the light, but hoof beats galloping down Garter Lane told them their quarry had got away!

Later they found that a young man had been mortally wounded. His name was Collis, already a well known name in Dublin medical circles and he was a student at Dr. Steven's

Hospital. He was taken out of the carriage at Red Cow and died in the Toll House opposite the Red Cow Inn. And to the end of the hospital Saggart and Rathcoole people were afraid to go in there!

Another story is told in "Malachy Horan Remembers". There must have been no vigilantes at the time. A widow from Boherboy (where West Park Estate is now) died and was buried in Saggart. That night her only son dreamt that she was moaning and groaning, saying "Why couldn't they leave me in my grave". Very upset and disturbed, he got dressed and went down to the graveyard and, sure enough, the grave was empty. The shock was too much for the poor man and he died shortly afterwards.



Rathcoole people were mostly buried in Colmanstown graveyard at that time. It is in a very lonely place on the north side of the Dual Carriageway on the Dublin side of Blackchurch. A young woman in Rathcoole was preparing her husband's dinner and watching for him to come home from work. It was dark. There was a knock at the door. When she went out she became aware of a horse and some sort of equipage or gig. She said "What can I do for you?" A voice from the driver's side said "My friend in the middle is faint and would like a glass of water". "Certainly, sir" she said and went in for a glass of water. When she returned the same voice said "Hold up the lantern so that the lady can see to give our friend a drink". The man on the nearside held up the light and to her horror she saw, propped up between them, the body of a man she had seen buried in Colmanstown that morning. The poor woman fainted. When she came round and tried to tell her neighbours, the robbers were well on their way to Dublin.

The story I like best is about Locktown cemetery, another very isolated one between Hazelhatch and Peamount. The approach is by a narrow winding lane to Brownstown and then right to Locktown. One night, a man was walking home from work when he heard horses hooves behind him. Aware of the narrowness of the lane he got down into the ditch to let them pass. Dimly he made out a long carriage with three men in front. With a fair idea of where they were going he followed them. He was right. They turned down for the graveyard. Two men went in and started digging. The third turned the horses and had them facing for home. One of the diggers came to the wall and said "It's heavy, come in and help us lift it over". Quick as lightening the watcher got to the horses and cut the traces attaching them to the carriage. Out came the three men with a coffin, loaded it up and climbed up on the front and the driver gathered the reins and gave the horses a whiplash. They started off at once. The driver fell between the shafts and he and the other two started to run after the horses but of

course they were soon out of reach heading for their stables. The watcher alerted the neighbours and they reburied the coffin and kept watch in the graveyard for the next four nights as it was generally thought the bodies were no use to the sack-em-ups when they started to decay. Nobody came to claim the carriage and it lay there in the ditch till it fell to pieces.

I am sure you would enjoy Dr. John Fleetwood's book "The Irish Body Snatchers" which describes the wider scene and ghoulish business of the "Sack-em-ups".

Corkagh House

LIKE Tallaght, Clondalkin has a sad list of demolished mansions and large houses. In the period when many of them disappeared between 1950 and 1975, the decline of religious vocations meant that less of the big houses were sought for seminaries; and the expansion of big businesses had not yet produced the new millionaires who have saved and reconditioned quite a few houses.



Corkagh House

Former home of the Finlay family (sadly demolished). The lands are now a beautiful park.

Photo: Mrs. V. Hone

One of the most impressive near Clondalkin was Corkagh House, off the Naas Road between Clondalkin and Kingswood. In the mid-sixteenth century a small farmhouse was built there, but about fifty years later, it was extended in the Queen Anne style by the owner William Trundell. In 1716 he rented it to a Scottish settler named Finlay and according to recent local history the Finlay family occupied Corkagh continuously from then until 1959.

Joyces history "The Neighbourhood of Dublin" states that the owner in 1783/87 was Henry Arabin. It says he was very wealthy and entertained lavishly especially mentioning the hunting parties. There was a gunpowder mill on the estate as early as 1733 when an explosion occurred. It is not clear if this was started in the Trundell period of ownership or by the Finlays. A derelict building, at the Kilmatead end of the estate was pointed out to me years ago as the site of the original mill. The later extensive series of powder mills on Moyle Park Estate and the Clondalkin end of Corkagh were jointly owned by Mr. Henry Arabin and Mr. William Caldbeck of Moyle Park, where the enormous explosion of 1787 occurred.

Corkagh House contained many fine rooms and needed a very large indoor and outdoor staff to keep it in order. I met an elderly lady who worked there for two years as a young girl and she described the routine and discipline of the staff as very severe. In later years when Clondalkin became more industrialised, it was impossible to get staff and in a way one could say the end was inevitable.

Mrs. Colley was the last of the Finlay family and she was followed by her son Mr. George Colley, who was a great authority on motorcar history and veteran vintage cars. After his death, his widow sold the property to Sir John Galvin and he demolished the house. For a time he let the gardens out to

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a market gardener and kept a large number of cattle on the grounds where many fine trees were cut down. Later Dublin County Council bought the estate and created a very fine park and recreation area, which is well worth a visit.

Oughterard

SOME of you may go for drives on Saturdays or Sundays and there are a number of extremely interesting places not too far away. For instance, I suggest that you drive up the N7 dual carriageway towards Naas. Just after you pass Blackchurch Inn - about one hundred yards further - take the right-hand turn for Castlewarden. The road goes almost straight for nearly two miles when you will reach a crossroads. Turn right and climb to a sharp right-hand turn at the top. Just beyond that you will see a lane to the left. You may leave your car in the lane and go on foot. About two hundred yards up the lane is the gate into Oughterard Graveyard.

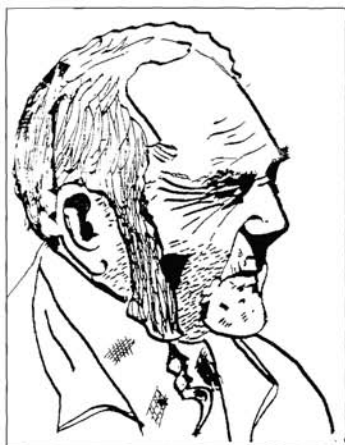
Here there is a round tower. There is also the ruin of an ancient church said to have been built about 1600. Within the church is the gravestone of the first Arthur Guinness and local people will tell you it was at Ardclough just the other side of the hill that the Guinness or McGuinness family lived and kept a small public house.

There are other interesting graves and the vault of the Wolfe Family of Fournoughts, the family for whom Wolfe Tone's mother worked and who paid for his education at Trinity College. A railed and hedged plot contains the graves of the Kennedy family. Edward Kennedy, brother of Sir John Kennedy of Johnstown Kennedy (just a mile behind Blackchurch) owned an estate called Baronrath near the Grand Canal and also acted as agent for Lord Clonmel who lived at Bishops court and owned the ground adjoining the graveyard. Lord Clonmel sold Bishops court to Edward Kennedy just after the First World War and Edward himself was famous as the breeder of the famous racehorse "The Tetrarch".

There are other interesting old stones as well, and if you climb the stile beside the Kennedy plot, you can see the remains of an old castle on your left. On the field in front of you, Daniel O'Connell fought his duel with D'Esterre. O'Connell had stayed at Bishopscourt the previous night with his friend Lord Clonmel. From the stile and the bank beyond it there is a magnificent view. In the foreground are the ponds of Clonoughlis, the old disused church of Ardclough and a long stretch of the Grand Canal. If you look beyond that you will see the spire of Maynooth Church and Connolly's Folly.

The River Liffey wanders around and flows through the rapidly growing town of Celbridge with Castletown House. On your right is the Hill of Lyons or Laighean where the early Kings of Leinster were crowned. When you return to your car you can continue for a quarter of a mile on the same road and turn left for Ardclough and Celbridge, or keep on straight for a mile and turn left down to Newcastle. Incidentally you will see a high estate wall on your left. When out stag hunting during her visit to Ireland, the Empress of Austria ("Sissy" of the film) jumped her horse across that wall to rescue a stag which was being worried by the hounds.

Malachy Horan Died at Killinarden *14th July 1946*



HE was born in 1847 just after the Famine on the "Night of the Big Wind" so his life spanned almost one hundred years of tremendous changes in Ireland and all over the world. Just seven years before his birth, penny postage began and not long before that, railways had started in 1825, and by the time he was 40 the motor car had been invented. Telegraphs and electricity had been invented too, and a completely new world was

emerging. And yet he lived for nearly a century in one house on Killinarden Hill. His people were farmers working with tools which are museum pieces today.

Like many of the people of his time, his parents looked down on the National Schools, begun all over the country in the 1830's and he went to a local "Hedge School". By then that term meant an unofficial private school for which the pupils' parents paid one penny or two per week and each child brought some turf or sticks for the fire as well. Some of the teachers were very good indeed and Malachy had nothing but praise for Mr. Byrne at Jobstown.

Killinarden was then in Saggart Parish and Malachy is buried in Saggart Graveyard, but for all practical purposes,

Tallaght was nearer and especially after the Blessington Steam Tram was inaugurated, the inclination of all the people near the Blessington Road was to go to Tallaght and even to get their groceries in Flood's of Terenure or from Thomas Street or Meath Street.

Malachy was a great storyteller, and Dr. George Little of the Old Dublin Society visited him many times making notes of his memories. In 1943 Dr. Little published the book of these memories "Malachy Horan Remembers". From the beginning it was a "best seller" and it has been reprinted three times. I think it is more than time for another edition — this time perhaps on better paper than the wartime variety of the earlier editions.

Newcastle Lyons

NEWCASTLE, just a mile and a half from Rathcoole is well worth a visit. It was a very important place in medieval times and still retains a number of historic buildings. It was an early Norman settlement and the mote, the defensive structure they erected before they built more permanent buildings, has been discovered behind Brian McEvoy's picturesque thatched public house. In the village too are the remains of two tower houses (at least four others are known to have existed) and there is one on the Lyons estate west of the village as well. The Hill of Lyons, or Laighean, dominates the village and it was there the early Kings of Leinster were crowned.

The village had its own market and was ruled by a royal official at first and then by the leaders of the local community. The finest building is the old parish church now the Church of Ireland. The tower, which contained the residence of the priest had four storeys like the one in Tallaght, and like Tallaght, the ground floor now forms the entrance to the church as it is used today. It is only part of the original church, which is believed to have been built in the fifteenth century. The east window is a spectacular feature, probably unrivalled in Ireland. In the adjoining graveyard there are very early Christian stones and outside the gate is a grove of ancient trees. Tradition has it that Dean Swift, in whose Deanery Newcastle was, stopped there regularly on his way to visit Vanessa in Celbridge Abbey.

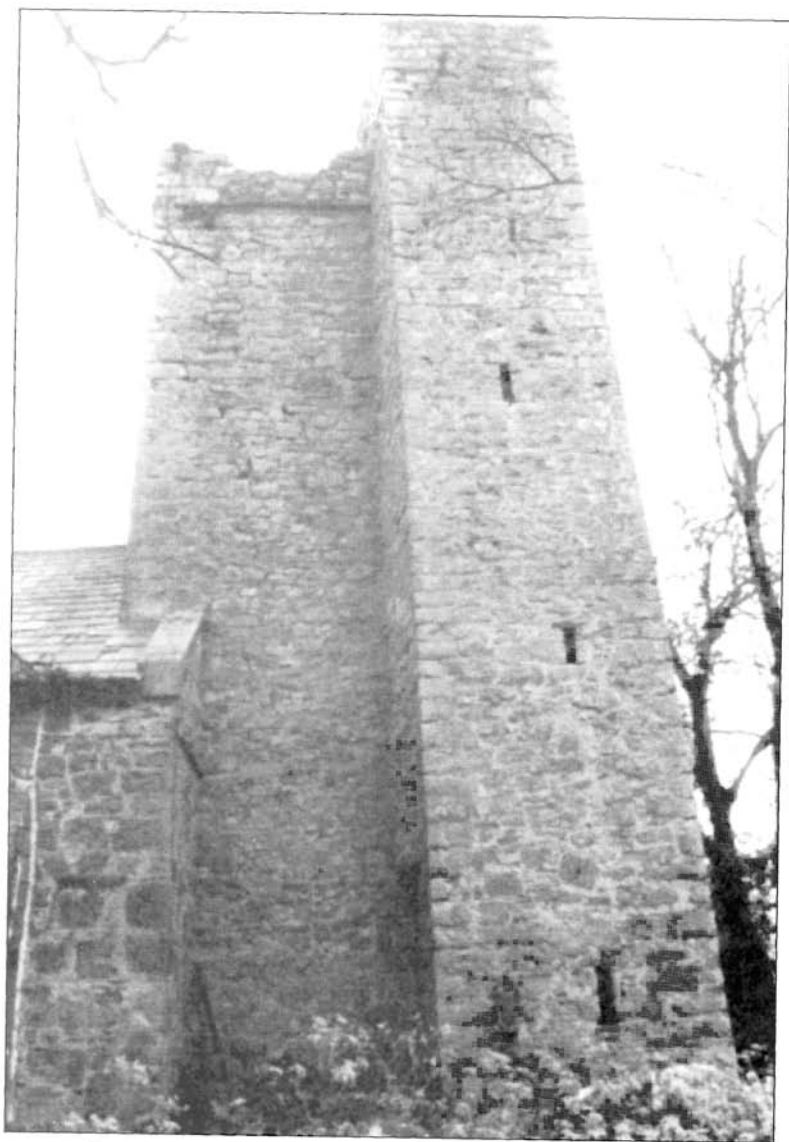
Close by is the Glebe House, once the Rectory built in 1720. This is a protected building and it is opened to the public once

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a year. There are two other fine houses in the village, Newcastle House and Newcastle Lodge. The Catholic Church at the Dublin end of the village was among the earliest Catholic Churches built after the Reformation, being built about 1813, largely financed by the Bagot family of Castlebagot near Baldonnel and there are memorials to them in the church. The small two storey house at the Church gate was the village school until 1928.



Newcastle School, 1948.



Tower House, attached to the Church of Ireland, Newcastle.

The Eucharistic Congress of 1932

HOW many people remember the Eucharistic Congress in June 1932? I was ten at the time, at Naas Convent Primary School and in April, along with about two hundred other girls and boys, I had been confirmed. In those days we wore white dresses and veils and we wore them again for the Congress.

Special trains were coming from all over the country for the Children's Day on the Saturday, but to get from Blackchurch, where we lived to the Railway Station in Naas to travel with our own school was out of the question. My aunt asked Mrs. Lennon, head of the Girl's School in Rathcoole, if we could go with her pupils and she kindly agreed. So on the Saturday morning my younger brother and myself in my long white dress and veil joined the others at the old Rathcoole School to await the private (or pirate) bus Mrs. Lennon had booked. After a long anxious wait it arrived and we packed in, wild with excitement.

Down the Naas Road we went to Inchicore. At The Black Lion Inn pub, we were directed to the right-hand road, — Emmet Road, and then on by Kilmainham, Mount Brown, James' Street, Thomas Street, High Street, Cork Hill and left to Capel Street Bridge. We knew we were supposed to go to the Phoenix Park by the Ashtown Gate. I knew the roads south of the Liffey but the North Side was strange country to me.

Every house in the country was decorated for the big event. Rathcoole had flags and buntings everywhere, but we didn't know what decorations were till we saw the Dublin streets especially the back streets. Every corner showed a new and



Eucharistic Congress of 1932

wonderful vista. The colours were brilliant. The buntings were from side to side of the streets at every level from the tall roofs down. Flags were everywhere and right down the middle of each street hung banners, special embroideries of reproductions of holy pictures and of the Papal Flag, every window was outlined with bunting and dressed with flowers, with statues or with big holy pictures for centre pieces. It was past belief. I will never forget it.

It seemed that many of the Gardai on duty had been drafted in from country districts and had little knowledge of the city, so we were directed everywhere but the right way; and the poor bus driver was getting frantic because he had to go back for another load. But in the end we got into the park and he set us down on the main road to walk across to the Fifteen Acres where the Eucharistic Altar had been erected. The sections were well marked and Mrs. Lennon had done her homework so we were soon in the right places in a throng of girls in white and boys in their best suits. Stewards and Scouts were on duty everywhere and the loud speakers were alternately playing hymn tunes and traffic instructions.

Mrs. Lennon's girls were well taught and as she identified a fresh hymn tune she would say "turn to page 18 girls" or similar. The minute that one ended and a new one started, she switched them to that. Then the Mass started. High Mass with beautiful singing and music and a short lecture from His Eminence Cardinal Lauri, the Papal Legate, then Benediction and Cardinal Lauri was driven up and down through the ranks of children in an open car.

My memory of the Cardinal was of a hand raised in blessing and a wide brimmed hat. I was much more interested by the two Papal Knights who accompanied him in their medieval dress and ruffs. They looked much more important. Then it was all over and we streamed down the main road to the big

park entrance and eventually to our bus and home again through those wonderful streets, so many of which have been knocked down now. If we had another Congress it would be completely different, wider streets perhaps but little of the colour and involvement with which the poor people of the Dublin tenements did honour to God.

I wonder how many of that bus load of girls are still around and how their memories agree or disagree with mine; and what the highlight of their day was?

Mount St. Joseph Monastery, Clondalkin

FOR one hundred and twenty five years the Monastery was the centre of life in Clondalkin. Established in 1813, a large tract of land on the east side of Clondalkin was made over to the Brothers of the Third Order of Our Lady of Mount Carmel for the purpose of funding and supporting a religious community and schools.

It is said Daniel O'Connell took a great interest as he did in so many religious projects of that period and Clondalkin people are proud to say the Monastery bells were the first to ring to celebrate the Act of Emancipation. A school for poor boys had begun in 1813 and soon had over two hundred pupils. The Brothers were great farmers. They killed their own beef cattle and harvested and milled their own wheat and oats. The boys were well fed and clothed and provided with books. The monks also ran a coach works, a bakery and lime kilns, all of their operations giving employment. They also ran a rest home for old gentlemen.

We all think of the Famine as the one big cause of death and disaster in the 19th century but there were others. In 1832 cholera took a terrible toll on people and the good monks tended the sick and buried the dead. A vault was built by the wall of the graveyard and remains were guarded there by the Brothers for some days before burial in order to defeat the efforts of the *Body Snatchers*. This service was not confined to the parish of Clondalkin. Mourners brought their beloved dead from all around Inchicore, Tallaght, Lucan, Newcastle and Rathcoole. My great grandmother Frances Sheil was buried there in 1854.

Education was still the main interest of the community and in 1833 they had enlarged their buildings and started a boarding school. At the same time, day pupils came from far and wide in pony traps, some came on ponies and there were even donkey carts. A field was provided and rows of conveyances lined the driveway with much jockeying for good positions for a quick getaway and of course races took place! The monks tried to stop that and let them away spaced at three minute intervals. That certainly didn't work for the Rathcoole contingent who waited for each other at the top of the Boot Road and the races started from there!

Many eminent men of the time owed their education to the Monastery. With the advent of the National School System the primary and secondary departments became separated. In the 1930's the number of boarders had decreased and was greatly exceeded by the day pupils. The average age of the Brothers was high and there were some living semi-retired lives. One of the younger men was widely expected to be the next Prior but unwisely, he said something about making great changes.

The community was of an unusual independent nature and 3rd Order really meant laymen living and working in community. They came together and voted to dissolve the foundation and in 1938, the secondary and boarding school closed. The primary continued on the premises for many years. Some of the Brothers joined the Rosminian Order and some left. An auction was held and people were very upset when they found even the contents of the chapel were included. The late Father Wright of Terenure College bought the entire chapel contents and then distributed them to any church needing them.

The America organ went to Kill. I don't know what happened to the other things but new churches were being built around Dublin. The buildings were requisitioned by the Government for the period of the Second World War and then,

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that Order sold them to the Little Sisters of the Assumption in 1945 and the Order remained there until 1980. After that the buildings were used by the Eastern Health Board but a fire in 1986 destroyed much of them and by 1988 the buildings were demolished and a housing estate is there now. The graveyard, though much vandalised, is still there but in a very sad state of decay.

Willie Harvey

WILLIE Harvey was born in 1892 at Colemanstown near Blackchurch. Second son in a farming family, he learned to ride early in life and to do all the varying jobs on the farm. He was fascinated by the army horses he saw passing on their way between Dublin and the Curragh and he ran away several times to join up but each time his father brought him back. Finally he was allowed to join a yeomanry regiment which meant he could live at home and train several days a week. In August 1914 he was called up and landed in France soon after the First World War had started. He survived through many battles. He said afterwards it was because he would not accept a Commission.



Willie Harvey riding to victory at the stone wall jump at the RDS Horse Show about 1935. the horse is "St. Patrick's Day" belonging to Miss Maude of Belgard Castle.

One of the strange things about that war was the life behind the "lines". There were horses everywhere, no tractors then, and the officers organised gymkhanas with different regiments competing. Willie was a splendid rider. Besides that he was a good judge of horses, and he would quietly train one of the Cavalry horses and on the day beat all the young officers, who even went round the French farms buying horses. It got in the end to the officers saying "What has Harvey got this time?"

When he came home he kept the same interests and rode in jumping competitions and gymkhanas all over the country. He won many prizes at the Horse Show. When the Hillside Harriers was formed in 1926 he became "hunter" in charge of the hounds and he continued this until he had a very bad fall at a Point to Point races at Callery Bog behind Bray in 1938 when he almost lost his life. He never rode again and his younger brother Jack took over as hunter.

Willie never married, he lived alone in a house he built himself, did all his own cooking and made his own wines. He was a brilliant shot and supported himself shooting game for the Dublin poultry and game shops in Grafton Street and Moore Street, riding in on his racing bicycle (built by himself). He invented stirrups that would not trap falling riders. During the Second World War he made his own shotgun cartridges, including the gunpowder, and made the shot by sprinkling molten lead into sump oil.

He continued to live his independent useful life until he was ninety five, still cycling to Dublin whenever he liked but arthritis had set in and in the last year of his wonderful life he was very crippled. He died in 1990 aged ninety eight.

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6, Cavendish Row,
Dublin.

Hillside Harriers Point to Point Races
Baldonnell, February 16th, 1927.

Dear Sir or Madam,

We beg to acknowledge receipt of your entry
for *Hillside Race. & Heavy weight.*

| | |
|---------------------------|-----------|
| (1) Amount of entry fees | £ 4. 5. 0 |
| Cheque received | £ 4. 5. 0 |
| Entry fee to be forwarded | £ _____ |
| Balance of entry fee due | £ _____ |

(2) Hunting Certificate for horse. } =

(3) Certificate that subscription is paid. }

~~(4) Railway forms for return of horse by rail.~~

Your particular attention is also directed to
enclosed circular.

Yours faithfully,

C. M. GORE-GRIMES)

H. O'LEARY)

Hon. Secretaries.

Kilininney Tower

KILININNEY Tower, near Allenton, is the church of the daughters of the Chieftain Maclaar — a monastic settlement as old as Saint Maelruan's Church in Tallaght. I took this photograph in May 1990. Just four years later in April 1994, the tower fell during a storm. The County Council promised to save the stones and rebuild it, but the developers cleared the stones away and there are houses built there now.



Kilininney Tower, May 1990.

Rathcoole House

TO write the story of Rathcoole House is to write the story of Rathcoole Village. Situated as it is on the natural roadway from the South to Dublin, everyone who could be listed in Irish legend and history passed through Rathcoole.

Finn MacCool, Brian Boru, Henry II, Strongbow, the Fitzgeralds and the Butlers, Cromwell, Dean Swift, King William, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Wolfe Tone, Daniel O'Connell, Parnell — their routes all led through Rathcoole and many of them stayed at the large Munster King Inn which dominated the south side of the village. The village was incorporated in the reign of King John and was ruled by a portreeve and the Manor of Rathcoole is mentioned as early as 1271. The Scurlock family were the chief family from 1470 on and it was probably during their ownership the original manor house was built, and in 1750 the Georgian house was built attached to the older one, the owners at that time being the Clinch family who had extensive property at Hazelhatch and business interests in the City of Dublin.

The entire house at that time was a very busy industrious unit. It contained all the usual dairies and still rooms and there was a milling room, the mill being operated through a system which involved a blindfolded pony or donkey being led around a turntable outside the house wall at the west end. I do not know if this is still in existence under the rubble. It was shown to me about 1943.

The Clinch family's period of occupation ended in the early 1800's after the tragic execution of John Clinch, aged 18 in 1798. The parish priest of Rathcoole at that time was Father James Harold. He was a member of the well known Harold

family of Templeogue, Harold's Cross, Harold's Grange etc. He had been educated and ordained in Belgium and was a very popular outspoken person.

When the 1798 rebellion occurred, it had very little impact on the people of Rathcoole with one noted exception, Felix Rourke, who was known to be friendly with Fr. Harold. The local Yeomanry, egged on by the military in Dublin moved about searching houses and persecuting the people. In the opinion of Fr. Harold, who knew his parishioners, this was completely unnecessary. Because of his continental education at the time of the French Revolution, the authorities suspected Fr. Harold of sympathising with the Rebel cause, and when he preached a sermon condemning the Yeomanry for "harassing his peaceful people" he was in trouble. He was warned that he was to be arrested, and he went into hiding. For some months, he was hidden in different houses, Clinch's at Hazelhatch, Newcastle House and Newcastle Rectory among them.



Rathcoole Pipe Band lead the St. Pattick's Day Parade.



Most of his hosts were Protestants. A Catholic named Walsh was an informer and each time his hiding place was revealed, he was hurriedly moved to another house. Eventually, he was moved to Rathcoole House where there was a Priest's Hole or secret hiding place. His house and church had been burned down but he dared to come out on Sunday to say Mass in a thatched cottage on the opposite side of the road (where Maple

Grove houses now stand). He was barely back in hiding when the Yeomanry arrived. The occupants of Rathcoole House at the time were Patrick Clinch frail and elderly, his wife and daughters, and his youngest son John. The Yeomanry started to bully the girls. Fr. Harold came out and gave himself up. The Yeomanry started to arrest Patrick Clinch for harbouring the priest, but young John said "no, don't arrest him. It was my fault". They took him away and three days later with the merest excuse for a military trial he was condemned to death and immediately hanged in the corridor outside the room where Lord Edward Fitzgerald lay dying. The Duke of Leinster's protest at this action is on record. Father Harold was put on board a ship in Dublin Bay. His family used all their influence to get him released and the Lord Chief Justice, Viscount Kilwarden granted a Habeas Corpus, but the captain of the ship refused to accept it saying that he was not subject to the jurisdiction of the Dublin Courts.

Fr. Harold was shipped out to Australia as a convict and Patrick Clinch died shortly afterwards. His other sons wanted nothing to do with Rathcoole. His wife and daughters moved to their Dublin house and the land was set to Patrick Sheil of Coolmine, who in 1831 bought the entire property. His family resided there until 1962. The whole house, Elizabethan and Georgian continued to be used until the very early part of the 20th century. After that the older part was allowed to fall into ruins and in 1933 it was demolished. During the demolition, the priest's hole was located and in it was found Fr. Harold's Penal Cross. His smaller pewter chalice had been found in the rafters of the cottage where he said his last Mass before he was captured. After twelve years in the Penal Colony of Botany Bay he was released and three years later returned to Ireland. After some time he was appointed curate in Clontarf and he was responsible for building the first church at Fairview. Then he became parish priest of Kilcullen and died in 1830 aged 83. He is buried in Goldenbridge.

Apart from the 1916-22 period, Rathcoole was very peaceful from then on and Rathcoole House too enjoyed peace and prosperity. Up to the Second World War, the first Sunday of every month was "At Home" day there and especially during the summer months there could be up to sixty or seventy people entertained. Outdoors there was tennis, croquet, archery, putting the shot etc and indoors cards and bagatelle. Sadly the war and rationing ended all that and the family were getting older.

There is however one other item to record. In 1948 Reginald Sheil was doing some work on the Dublin side of the house in the yard when the ground gave way. He and his two workmen Paddy Pouch and Johnny Timmons pulled away stones and earth and found they were looking down a set of steps. They found the steps descended about twelve steps and then the ground continued on a downhill slope. They were afraid to venture far but sent for Liam Ua Broin a local historian. He came with a ball of string and some candles and a compass. He went down the steps and disappeared. He was away for over half an hour and they were worried about him but eventually he came back as his string had given out. He said the passage continued downward for a bit, then levelled out for a further spell and then upwards again. His compass led him to believe the entrance was at Coolmine. And about three years ago the entrance was in fact relocated at Coolmine. Both ends are now filled in.

Rathcoole House is now derelict. It is the subject of a dispute between the County Council and the developer of the surrounding Beechwood Lawns estate. It has been systematically vandalised with a view to its demolition but the structure is basically strong and it will cost either side a lot of money to demolish it.

Old Houses

THE Tallaght Historical Society had its usual lecture on the second Tuesday of the month — November 8th — and it was an exceedingly interesting one given by Gerry McCarthy of the Naas Historical Society. His subject was the old houses of Ireland and particularly of Kildare. He had almost one hundred splendid slides. He started by showing some of the earliest tower houses, then the larger less fortified Elizabethans, the beautiful Palladian and Georgian houses of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and then the massive Victorian mansions. Then he concentrated on the various houses of County Kildare, some of them like Castletown and Carton still beautifully kept but so many falling into dilapidation. In too many cases he showed old pictures of beautiful buildings, and then an up to date picture of ruins of the same building.



Kilnamanagh Castle

In the basement of Castletown House there used to be an exhibition of photographs of houses that had disappeared. We have more than our share of those in County Dublin. All around Clondalkin and Tallaght there were fine buildings. Corkagh and Cheeverstown are gone from the Naas Road, Milltown and Raniskey, Nangor and Deansrath, Clondalkin Monastery and Collinstown, Ballyowen and Milltown and of course Newlands.

There were also Clonburris and Castlebagot and so many others. On the Tallaght side there were Ballymount House, Springfield, Kiltipper, Ballinascorney, Johnstown Kennedy, Rathcoole House, Old Bawn House, Old Court, Tallaght Rectory, Allenton, Willington and Delaford. The list is a great deal longer than that. The latest victim is, of course, Old Bawn Farm, which had become known as Old Bawn House after the developers knocked down the old mansion. Nobody seems to care, least of all the County Council who are supposed to protect the assets of the county.

Where will it end?



Whitehall, the one time home of the poet Katherine Tynan, now owned by the Irish Rugby Football Union is in danger.

Old Bawn House

THERE seems to be no record of any building of importance at Old Bawn until 1630 when Charles 1st granted the lands to the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin, Lancelot Bulkeley and in 1635 he built a magnificent mansion there for himself, his wife and son and other relations. In 1641 it was burnt down but he got a grant of £3000 and rebuilt even more elaborately than before, and it remained the largest house in Tallaght for all its lifetime.

The grounds were spacious and well laid out. The entrance was just beyond where Ahern's Public House now stands and the gatehouse there was a gem in itself, and was occupied up to 1973 when it was demolished as the area was developed for housing. The drive, bordered by an avenue of trees led straight to an inner gate leading into the pleasure grounds which were



Old Bawn House

beautifully laid out with ornamental trees and shrubs and to each side were orchards and plantations of trees. The house which must have been about one hundred yards to the north of St. Martin's Church, Aylesbury, was in the shape of an H with the back filled in. An ornate doorway led into the splendid hall with its fine fireplace. There were two large rooms on each side and the domestic quarters were behind. The fireplace in the dining room to the right of the door was carved wood showing in finest details the building of the walls of Jerusalem with all the craftsmen and their tools. The fireplace can be seen in the National Museum.

The building was three storeys high and must have housed a large number of people between family and staff. One can imagine butlers, footmen, maids of all descriptions, cooks, scullions, brewers and dairy maids, chandlers, laundry maids and so many others. Archbishop Bulkeley is said to have entertained on a magnificent scale and that meant not only the visitors themselves but their coachmen, outriders and footmen, personal valets and maids. Their horses had to be looked after too so there were grooms, blacksmiths and yard boys in the stable yard on the north side of the house. Behind it was the dairy yard and the barn for storing grain etc. Hay stacks were made in the open and thatched. In fact there was quite a village of workers dependent on the estate. A herd of reindeer was imported at one time but the weather was too mild for them and they died out. The Archbishop's son Sir Richard died in 1710 and the estate passed to his daughter Lady Tynt and she let it to a succession of tenants. Eventually, around 1830 it was bought by the McDonnell family who established a paper mill behind the house, the water supply being taken from the Dodder by a millrace beyond Kiltipper. The mill race then flowed on to join the Bolbrook stream and eventually rejoined the Dodder but it powered several other mills on the way down including Haarlem Mills (where Seskin View is now) and Bolbrook Packaging and Cardboard Mills.

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Mr. Hancock in his History of Tallaght describes visiting Old Bawn House about 1874. He mentions the fine proportions of the house and the beautiful antique furniture. The McDonnell family continued the Paper Mills there for many years and won several international awards for the quality of the paper. Eventually, however, their whole operation moved to join their other mills at Saggart, and Old Bawn Mills became a ruin. I do not know who, if anyone occupied the house after that.

The Remarkable William Russell



ALTHOUGH until twenty years ago it was a scattered rural community, Tallaght had produced many outstanding personalities. Probably the most famous woman of Tallaght was Katherine Tynan, poetess and novelist, but the most famous man was unquestionably William Howard Russell who was born at Jobstown in March 1820. The house where he was born was "Lilyvale" behind where the Whitestown Industrial Estate now stands. It belonged to his mother's father, Captain Jack Kelly who was master of the Tallaght Fox Hounds. The Kelly's were Catholics but William's father was a Protestant and after

the custom of the time William and his brothers were brought up as Protestants and their sisters as Catholics. Perhaps this is what gave him his wonderful capacity of seeing both sides of his stories.

Neither side of the family appears to have been very well off, and when his father's business failed, William was left with his grandfather Kelly while the rest of the family moved to Liverpool. He loved "Lilyvale" and the surroundings of fields of horses and a yard full of foxhounds. Throughout his life he looked back on Jobstown as home and he returned there whenever he could but not to "Lilyvale".

Grandfather Kelly went bankrupt and everything was sold and William was sent to live with his grandfather Russell in Baggot Street. For a time he attended Dr. Wall's School in Hume Street and later that of Dr. Geoghegan and after that he entered Trinity College but he left there without a degree when he got the opportunity of reporting on elections for the Times of London. This was his vocation! His reports were highly praised and soon he was reporting in the House of Commons. In 1844 he was sent back to Ireland to report on Daniel O'Connell's campaign and after that the harrowing Famine years. His reports on the Famine aroused feeling in Britain and secured some aid for starving people. He also covered the Young Irelander period and John Mitchell's Trial. He was called to the Bar but shortly afterwards, the Times sent him to report on the Schleswig-Holstein Dispute. Later he was to write an account of the funeral of Duke of Wellington in 1852.

In February 1854 he was sent to report on the Crimean War and his reports from there of the terrible conditions of the troops caused Mother Clare Moore of the Irish Sisters of Charity, St. Vincent's Hospital, Dublin and some of her nurses (all nuns too) to go to their aid. Florence Nightingale also travelled there and when she saw the work of the Irish nurses, she wanted to train with them in Dublin as there was no proper training for nurses in England at the time. Mother Clare had to explain to her that her Order could only train nuns and so Florence Nightingale set up the first training school in London herself.

But causing that action was not all Russell did. His fearless criticism in his reports from the battlefields of how the ordinary troops were equipped and treated caused concern and consternation in Britain, and eventually brought down the Government. After the Crimean War he was sent to India where he made some marathon journeys in search of the truth. His reports were again controversial as he highlighted the

tyrannical behaviour of some of the officials and prophesised that unless this was corrected, Britain would lose India and one hundred years later they did. After India, Russell went to America to report on the American Civil War and his reports of the first Battle of Bull Run incensed the Northern forces and he had to leave America. He also spent some time in South Africa.

Thus was made his reputation as the "first great War Correspondent", respected and liked by Royalty and commoners all over the world. On May 10th 1895 he was knighted for his services. His other decorations included Knight of the Iron Cross (Germany), Chevalier of the Legion of Honour (France) and Chevalier of the Order of Franz Josef of Austria, also the Turkish War Medal and India War Medal and South African War Medal and many more. He was appointed Honorary Secretary of the then Prince of Wales (later Edward 7th).

He died on 11th February 1907 at the age of eighty seven. Two years later he was commemorated by the erection of a bust in St. Paul's Cathedral. Tallaght should have a memorial to him too!

Blessington Got Its Name In A Strange Way

THE Archbishop of Dublin at the end of the 12th century was John Comyn. He gave a grant of land to one of his nephews and with the mixture of Norman settlers and Irish, the town became known as Baile Comyn or Bailecomine. As 'Comaoine' in Irish means blessing the name was anglicised as Blessingtoun or Blessington. The town, as we know it, with its wide main street was built by Archbishop Michael Boyle in 1667 and it became a borough in 1669 under King Charles the Second.

Archbishop Boyle's mansion was on the Glen Ding Road where the bungalow estate was built some years ago, but it was destroyed by fire about 1760. The Boyle family died out and the town became the property of the Marquis of Downshire.

Blessington developed as an important market town serving a large area from the mountains to the plains of Kildare. Courts were held in the impressive Court House and the stage coaches and private coaches heading for Carlow and Wexford passed through. There were a number of important residences nearby, chief among them being Russborough, the seat of Lord Milton, also Tulfarris, Baltyboys House and the Manor of Kilbride.

The famine years had a terrible effect on the surrounding countryside and a poorhouse was built. The best description of that period is in the 'Diary of Elizabeth Smith' of Baltyboys House. She tells of sincere efforts to help the destitute but also tells of all the assisted passages to America and the better

distribution of land (as she saw it) and better life style of those who were left. Mrs Smith also mentioned the building of the Embankment Road, which made it possible, with a good pair of horses, to drive to Dublin in the morning, shop and return the same evening!

The next big development was the Blessington Steamtram, and that really made a dramatic change in the lives of middle class and poor people. Besides that, the cattle trucks took the animals from the monthly fairs right into Dublin. Although the steamtram route ended at Terenure crossroads, they had the concession of continuing on the Dublin United Tramway lines across the city during the night hours, right down to the docks.

By the time the steamtram was discontinued at the end of 1932, motor transport had taken over and Blessington was open for development thus the town has grown considerably. The flooding of the Liffey Valley brought many tourists to the area and boating, fishing and rowing, and many other activities attract the crowds.

St. Mary's Church of Ireland with its dominating position in the town was built in 1682, has six magnificent bells and the church clock is claimed to be the oldest public timepiece in Ireland.

In 1997 I was in Scotland and visited Fort William. On a tourist brochure it stated that the town had been re-named after the Duke of Cumberland after Culloden but that the original name was Killcommin after an Irish Saint Commin, one of the monks who came to Iona with Colmcille. Could that be the origin of Báile Comaoin?

St. Maelruan 'Bright Son of Ireland'

TALLAGHT got its name from the dreadful plague which wiped out nine thousand Partalonians, three thousand years before the birth of Christ, but it owes its later fame to St. Maelruan. He founded his monastery there in 769 A.D. on land granted to him by the King of Leinster, Ceallach, son of Donnacha. Ceallach is said to have been buried in the church in Tallaght in 771. In the sixth century other monasteries had been founded in the area, Kilnamanagh by St. Kevin of Glendalough and Kilnasantan by St. Santain.

From the beginning, St. Maelruan set out to tighten the rules of the religious life. In spite of opposition by a number of other church leaders, the "Rule" which he composed became known and respected as far away as Lindisfarne and some of the continental monasteries. The "Rule" detailed the feast days and fast days of the year and the code of conduct to be observed by the monks. He decreed the diet of the community to be — bread, thick milk, honey, butter, kale, fish beastings, cheese, apples and gruels. Wednesdays and Fridays were fast days when all the monks got was a mouthful of bread and a pannikin of whey water. A sick monk was allowed twice that. No ale was allowed in Tallaght although it was allowed in some other monasteries. One rule said: "Do not eat until you are hungry; Do not sleep until you are sleepy; Do not speak without cause".

Penances were very strict, of ale St. Maelruan said, "as long as my rules are observed in this place, the liquor that causes forgetfulness of God will not be drunk here". Listening to music was also forbidden. St. Maelruan encouraged frequent confession and the penances were severe. Wealth was not to be accepted by the monks except to pass it on to the poor. He was joined in Tallaght by St. Aengus, already known for his sanctity

and the severity of the penances he performed. In this period which could be called “The Glory of Tallaght”, they composed some very important ecclesiastical records which have survived to this day — the Martyrology of Tallaght, the Festilogium of St. Aengus, the Feilire of Aengus and the Stowe Missal described as “a small book that a priest could easily carry which contained everything necessary to enable him to perform his sacred functions”. It has also been stated that the first recorded mention of the Immaculate Conception of Our Lady was in a Tallaght writing of this time. St. Maelruan died on 7th July 792. In July 1992, that will be twelve hundred years. It is to be hoped that suitable celebrations to mark such a great occasion will be arranged by religious and civic leaders.



At the Lamb — the stop for Manor Kilbride and Kilbride Camp. The last remaining tramstop — It was knocked down about three years ago.

The Blessington Tram

BLESSINGTON, in spite of the difficulty of access to the town from Dublin, was a very important trading town in the nineteenth century. Farmers and cattle dealers gathered for its famous monthly fair and business was brisk. Travelling salesmen set up their stalls, and country people from the mountains, from Carlow north to Baltinglass, and from the plains of Kildare came there for all their needs. The big problem was getting cattle, horses and other goods to Dublin afterwards for export or resale. Mostly they were walked the eight miles to Harristown station on the branch railway line from Sallins to Carlow.

As railways developed all over the country various proposals were put forward, in 1864, 1865, 1880 and finally 1887 when the British Government granted permission for a light railway from Terenure to Blessington, running by the side of the road, a distance of 15½ miles. In August 1888 the service commenced. Passenger stops were officially at Templeogue, Tallaght, Embankment, Crooksling, Brittas, Tinode, Crosschapel and Blessington and soon there were others at Bushy Park, Spawell, Bathampton and Jobstown, as more and more people availed of the service. An extension to the line from Blessington to Poulaphuca opened in 1895 and proved very popular especially with excursions at weekends and in the summer months. Excursion rates were also created to the beautiful Slade of Saggart and the public houses on the route especially Templeogue, Tallaght, Jobstown, Embankment and Brittas did a roaring trade.

At night when the City Tramway system stopped, the cattle trucks operated on the tramlines right down to the docks. There was another side too. Because the line was open and

unfenced, it was very dangerous and many accidents occurred. The noise of the engines frightened horses and ponies and they ran away and overturned their drivers and passengers. So it became jokingly called the longest graveyard in the world because of all the crosses and memorials.

The quarry at De Selby and the sand quarries between Brittas and Blessington and the large army camp at Kilbride made great use of the line. There were many incidents when the steamtram went off the lines and the soldiers who had been passengers would get out and lever it back on! It is said there were up to twelve thousand soldiers in Kilbride during the First World War, but after that, numbers were reduced until they left altogether in 1922, a tremendous loss to the steamtram. And of course from then on motor cars and lorries were increasing so the steamtram was losing money and in 1932 Dublin and Wicklow County Councils reluctantly made the decision to close it down, and on 31st December 1932 the last tram returned from Blessington to Terenure at 11.20pm.

The Transport Museum at Howth has a wonderful eight minute film of the route from Terenure to Blessington in 1927. It is well worth seeing. They have several other artefacts also.

*“But yet I have a feeling, when the world’s come to an end,
That the steam tram will come stealing like an old and trusted
friend,
When we’re standing round in billions trying to get across the
Styx,
And the cars are lined in millions, and we’re really in a fix,
When the buses cannot shift on, and the traffic’s all a jam,
Perhaps we’ll get a lift on . . . THE OLD-STEAM-TRAM.”*

by Barry Tynan O’Mahony

The Blessington Tram

*I'm but a poor cobbler that dwells on the Coombe,
As good as they're made, I may safely presume,
I frown not for riches nor seek not the "dole",
I'd rather be striving to save your poor sole.
From early till late for to patch and repair,
I toil the whole week yet I never despair —
On Sunday I'm off like the good sport I am,
For a bona-fide "stunt" on the Blessington Tram.*

*We first hit on Jobstown where Toomey resides,
There's Ceád Míle Failte for all bona-fides,
You many safely indulge in good porter galore,
While "ould Killinarden" keeps guard at the door.*

*We bathe our ould gums for a half hour or so,
Till the thirst-quenched Conductor his whistle does blow:
Then we're off with a sandwich of bread and cowl'd ham,
To amuse our ould jaws on the Blessington Tram.*

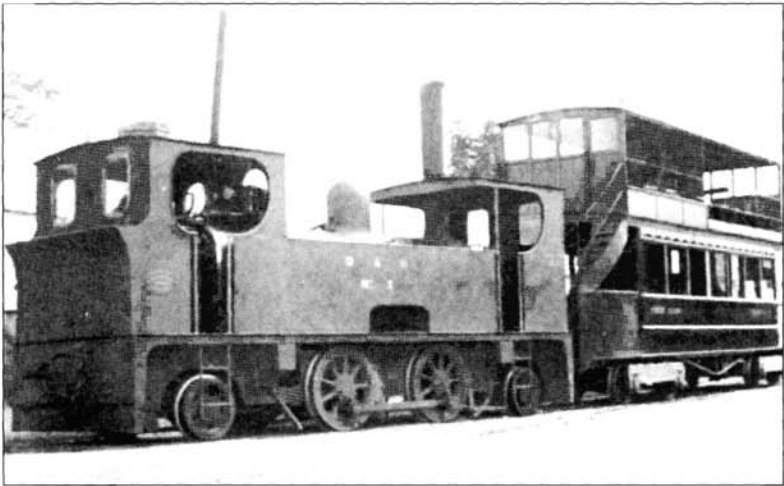
*We stop at the "Bank" for our engine's run dry,
While bould Patsy Brien gives us the "glad eye",
And Conaty views his rich store on the shelf,
Where every "good drop's" stowed away for himself.
For he-males and she-males of every degree,
And ould lads with whiskers right down to their knee,
You would ne'er meet the equal from here to Potsdam,
Of the bona-fide crowd off the Blessington Tram.*

*Refreshed and elated we dance and we sing,
Nor heeds not the Guard yelling, "On board for Crookslin",
Sure the company's good and we can't drink enough,
For listening to Patsy give out his ould "guff",
At last we're announced with a terrific roar,
"The tram's on the move!" — there's a rush for the door,
Sure the battle of Ypres was only a sham,
Compared to the charge for the Blessington Tram.*

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*The resolve to condemn, it's now knocked on the head,
I believe they became overwhelmed with dread,
Count all the stone crosses, which tell you quite plain,
Of some who attempted to stop it in vain,
Back home to ould Dublin we now do retire,
Lord send us an encore's my prayer and desire,
All week I'll be careful on tea, bread and jam,
To save up some cash for the Blessington Tram.*

*The big-wigs declare it's a horrible sin,
The way we do squander our hard-earned "tin",
Sure had they the will, like a poor wretched ass,
They'd drive us through life on cowl'd water and grass.
They "thump their ould craws" and proclaim as good boys,
All them they can wind like mechanical toys,
I'll have while I live, let them all go be —
My bona-fide "stunt" on the Blessington Tram.*



Locomotive No. 2 (No.10 after 1915) entering Terenure Terminus.

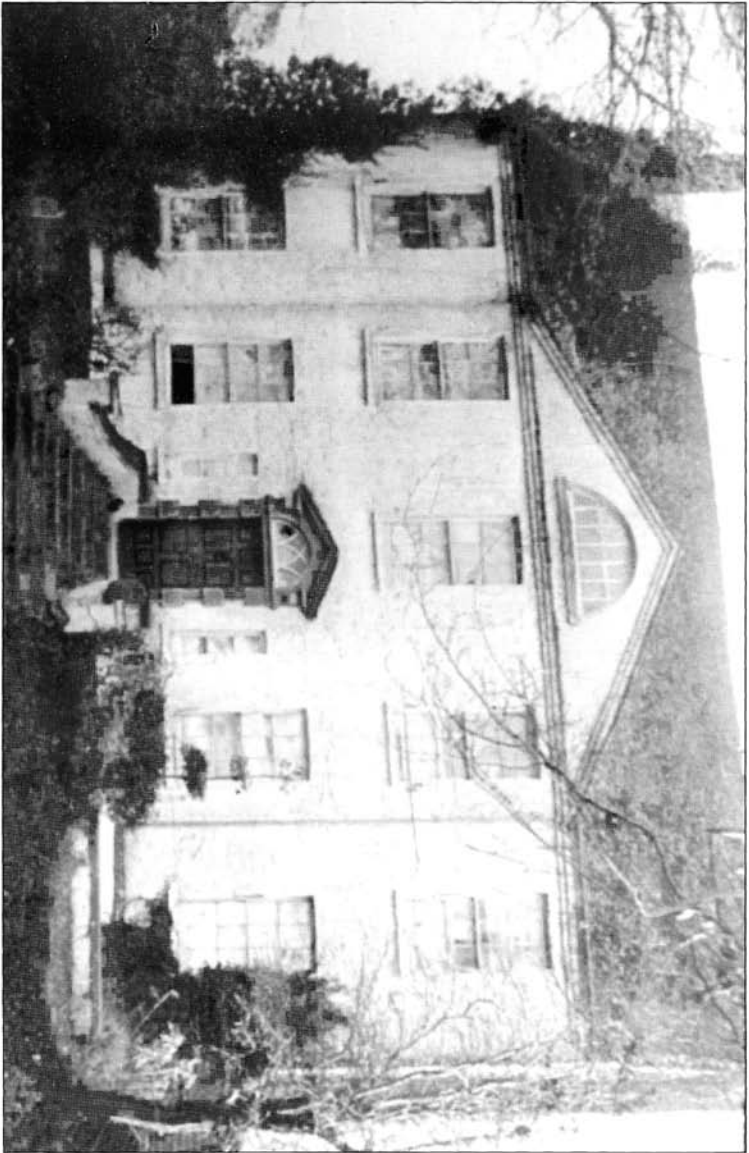
Allenton House

RIGHT beside the ruined Killininy Church was a very fine house called Allenton House after Sir Timothy Allen who was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1762 / 63. Earlier the property had been owned in turn by the Norman de Ridelford family followed by the De Merisco family and after them the Ashbournes. When Sir Timothy Allen died in 1771 he was buried in St. Maelruan's Graveyard, Tallaght. A monument dedicated to his memory was erected in the old church and when that was demolished it was re-erected in the new church built in 1829. There was also a marble slab in the church recording that Sir Timothy had improved the church.

Allenton itself was considered one of the finest houses of its period and it was occupied up to 1980 by Mr. Muldoon, a very popular farmer and horse breeder. He also bred fox terriers. I can remember going there with my father to collect a terrier (afterwards called Muldoon). I was fascinated by a number of beautiful young horses in a field just by the yard. Mr. Muldoon was very old when he died. A nephew of his, named Kirby inherited the property. He had no interest in maintaining the house and left it open for anyone who liked to help themselves to furniture, or worse still, to historical documents and records. It was well known he was seeking permission to demolish it. Despite being a building listed by the Board of Works for preservation, a bulldozer moved in on New Year's Day 1983 and ripped the front of the house.

Tallaght Historical Society and An Taisce got an injunction to stop further demolition but too much damage had been done and the County Council had to demolish it in the interests of safety in August 1984.

Allenton House



The Courthouse Rathcoole

FOR many years after 1798, when the priest's residence and the church next door were burnt down by the Yeomanry, the site was vacant. Then the Senior family who owned the Rathcoole Inn got possession and built a house on the site of the priest's house and some of the family lived there, but the church site remained unused. The local Magistrate's Court (now the District Court), the Petty Sessions (now the Circuit Court) and the Assizes (now the High Court) were held in a very large room over Jacob's big general shop (now divided into smaller units, including Nuala's Flower Shop).

In the early 1900's, some local people became dissatisfied with that arrangement and thought a separate courthouse would add prestige to the village, while others became aware of the substantial grants available from the Carnegie Trust to erect libraries. The library in Clondalkin was one of these.

A general meeting was held. The Parish Priest was leader of the group wanting a courthouse and, of course, his side prevailed. As such a building involved Government grants, the Department of Justice decided who should get the contract, and it went to a relative of the Seniors, John Cromer, Contractor, of Lucan, who built the building which we know today. It was said all over the South County that John Cromer could not build a chimney which "drew". And this proved true! The Courthouse was opened with pomp and ceremony in 1911 and Magistrates and Judges sat in judgement. But it was in an atmosphere of smoke and coughing litigants! Protest after

protest was made and various remedies were tried, but the problem could not be solved and by 1918 the Judges refused to sit there and all Rathcoole's legal business was transferred to either Lucan or Kilmainham. The building remained closed for nearly seven years and was then re-opened as a library only.



The Courthouse, Rathcoole

Rathcoole Library

WHEN the library was opened in 1925, Miss Mary Frances Sheil was appointed Honorary Librarian and Mrs. Coogan became caretaker. Every day the library was opened to the public with all daily and evening papers, weeklies and periodicals, including Farmer's Journal and Good Housekeeping. Meetings of all kinds were held there, also dairy and craft classes. A local girl, Lily Dowdall, took first place for butter-making at the Belfast Show in 1926.

Concerts were held there regularly, including one in 1927 when Jimmy O'Dea led a group of entertainers and singers, in aid of the building of what is now Newcastle Old School. Mrs. Dowdall, local teacher, organised school and adult concerts. Rory O'Connor, the famous Irish stepdancer, was there too. We have newspaper reports of a concert during the First World War when it was the Courthouse and a Troops Entertainment during the Second World War. First Aid Classes, Scouts, I.C.A., A.R.P., Local Defence — the Library housed them all and in the 1950's the Rathcoole Players, directed by Martin Dempsey and Sean Tunney T.D., put on many highly successful plays and shows. And it was there the Rathcoole Residents Association was born, later to become the Community Council.

The Library itself was very popular, with plenty of up-to-date novels, a splendid children's' section and a very extensive technical side with books on engineering, motor mechanics, carpentry, building etc., including sets of Local Government approved plans and specifications to encourage the young men to build their own homes.

In the smaller room to the side — originally the Judge's robing room — a large bookcase, glass on top, held a very comprehensive range of reference books. The enclosed cupboard below contained all the most precious books, many



donated by local people, some of them we have been told were sent to the National Library when the Rathcoole Library was closed down in 1963. Books for students were procured from the Central Library long-period loans. In fact, the Librarian responded to every need or request, including crafts and cookery. When she died in 1962 the library was closed down and since then a mobile book service is all that is available to this rapidly expanding community, who have to go to other libraries in Clondalkin, Walkinstown, Ballyroan, Tymon North, Tallaght and the Ilac Centre. Surely the Library should be restored and extended.

On the 5th July, 1998 An Tánaiste Mary Harney unveiled this monument to commemorate the Rathcoole Men of 1798. The stone was designed and carved by a young Tallaght stonemason, Eamon Brennan of Jobstown.

Newlands House

WHEN the Archbishop Bicknor of Dublin moved his residence to Tallaght in 1340, it was perhaps the beginning of better off people acquiring residences or building them outside city limits. All around Dublin, north, south and west, large houses appeared, some with large acreage and others with just what was necessary for the keep of a few horses and cattle. The Tallaght neighbourhood grew and so did Clondalkin and Lucan and by the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, the roads, such as they were, must have been busy. Some houses were described as 'gentlemen's residences', others like Handcock's description of Whitehall, Katherine Tynan's Home, as "Strong farmers".

Newlands was one of the finest. Various owners are listed and the house was always a great social centre with a magnificent ballroom which contained a beautiful Bossi fireplace. One of the most famous occupants was Arthur Wolfe, Lord Kilwarden, who was chief Justice of Ireland and known as the "Justest Judge in Ireland". Lord Kilwarden was one of the Wolfe family, of Founaughts, Kill, Co. Kildare. In his time, Newlands was famous for lavish entertainment and gatherings of important politicians. It was from the Wolfes family Theobald Wolfe Tone got his name. It is believed that his mother worked for the family, and that it was the Wolfe's who paid for his education in Trinity College.

Lord Kilwarden was a friend of Sarah Curran's father and the Emmets and so it was a very shocking tragedy when, being mistaken for the "Hanging Judge" Hugh Carleton, he was pulled from his carriage by an unruly mob of Emmet's followers, in Thomas Street and killed. After that, Newlands

passed through many rich and well known owners, the last being John Hawkesby Mullins, who sold the property to Newlands Golf Club. Sadly this beautiful house was demolished to make way for the present clubhouse but the splendid Bossi fireplace was saved and can be seen in the Clubhouse.



View of Newlands Demense House, County of Dublin.

Jimmy Mahady



IF I go to Lucan via Clondalkin, over the railway bridge and down by Neilstown, I pass where the lodge of Neilstown Farm stood, and I think again that there should be a plaque on the wall saying "Jimmy Mahady was born here in 1887". Neilstown was a very well run farm, owned by Mr. Smith, an Englishman who was a model farmer. Jimmy Mahady's father was his ploughman. Jimmy was the eldest of eight children. His father became an invalid when he was only eleven and his youngest sister just a baby. He had been going to the Monastery School until then, driving his sister and younger brothers up and down in a donkey and cart, leaving his sister at the Convent.

The Carmelite Brothers had a field where donkeys and ponies were unharnessed and grazed while their owners learned their lessons. Some of the Rathcoole families sent their boys there; the Carrolls, Haydens, Dunnes, Sheils, Jacobs, Callaghans and others drove in their traps while the McCanns of Keatings Park, Harveys of Colmanstown and Vickers of Blackchurch trotted to Naas C.B.S.

Jim left school and went to work at Neilstown so that his mother could keep the lodge. His hours were long and the work hard but Mr. Smith was a good teacher and he had a splendid pupil. Jim stayed at Neilstown till he was in his early twenties.

Then romance entered his life and he needed more money. So, he gave up farmwork and went to work in Clondalkin Paper Mills and got married to a beautiful redhead - Brigid Kelly. At the same time, his mother moved to one of the little houses by the mill. Things went well until, following a strike, the mill closed — a lock-out. There were bad times for many in Clondalkin. By then Jim and Biddy had several children and there was little work to be got and no dole so things were pretty desperate. They were living in an extension to the Grandmother Kelly's house at Esker.

My father married in 1919 and went to live at the Grange, just beside the 12th Lock. One day, in 1922, he saw Jim walking on the road from Clondalkin to Lucan and gave him a lift and then heard all his troubles. It was a good day for both families. My father decided this was the workman he wanted and took him on at a rate much beyond the rate of farm pay at the time, but my father knew what he was doing. In his veterinary work, he was frequently frustrated by people who could not follow an instruction accurately. He took Jim with him on such cases. Jim was intelligent and soon learned to co-operate skilfully. My uncle was on the County Council and with his help, the Mahady's got a cottage at Beaumont. We had moved to Somerton just after I was born in 1922, and all my early memories there contain "Ma'dy" as we called him. In the vegetable garden which was his kingdom, or in the orchard or the yard, where one day my brother started throwing turnips around, Ma'dy came running from the cowshed, undoing his belt, Edmund took to his heels, in the back door, up the stairs and in under his bed, where he remained in fear and trembling, with Ma'dy laughing quietly but occasionally yelling threats, Edmund took care none of his pranks upset Ma'dy's work after that.

When we moved to Castlewarden in November 1926 Ma'dy didn't come at first, but eventually he came and for a while, life was back to normal, but in January 1930, Dad died and nothing

was the same. Except Ma'dy, that it. He was a tower of strength. My mother knew nothing about farming and a small farm was all we had, but we had Ma'dy. He carried on going from one job to the other as days and seasons progressed, first class at whatever he took on. He cycled up from Lucan every morning arriving promptly at 8 o'clock, eight hard miles, and he headed home soon after six, having lit and primed his carbide bicycle lamp (no electric batteries in those days).

Some months later, the maid we had living in left, and a local farmer's daughter, Rosie Behan came daily. Ma'dy stayed at night after that, going home on Friday night with the wages and again after Mass in Newcastle on Sunday till milking time. I never knew him to be late returning. Rosie was only a few years older than ourselves and she was game for any fun and Ma'dy looked after us all.

He organised his day methodically. Feed the cows (there were twelve to fourteen), then in for a cuppa and to scrub up for milking. He was scrupulously clean and Mum never had a complaint from the dairy company while he was with us. When he had let out the cows and hosed the shed (in those days, with buckets of water to carry) he had his breakfast. Then out came the horses and they were harnessed for whatever season's job was on.

We grew wheat, oats, turnips and mangolds and the fields were beautifully done. Fortunately, we had plenty of machinery, when those around us had little, so there was always an exchange of work for machinery lent (with Ma'dy of course) to till other neighbours fields or save their hay. He kept the horses well, and the machinery in perfect order, and he was a leader in our little community. He planned well ahead, each year a section of hedge was cut and laid. Fencing in thirty sheep and their lambs and attending to them was another task. Stacking hay and corn and managing the big day of the

threshing — he did it all. On one occasion when the mowing machine bar broke, and a major crisis loomed with good weather being wasted, and no replacement to be got, he felled a straight young ash, sawed and planed it down, positioned all the metals plates, and was back working next morning.

Our garden was a credit to him. We had vegetables no one round about us had, cabbage, potatoes, turnips and cauliflower were grown in the fields, but in the garden there were onions, white turnips, carrots, parsnips, peas, broad beans, French beans, celery, sprouts, radishes, lettuce and red cabbage and of course black currants, gooseberries, loganberries, raspberries and even strawberries.

At night by the kitchen fire he heard our Catechism. We didn't realise he could hardly read — he knew it all by heart and never passed a mistake. When it rained, a chair went out to the garage and the local boys lined up for haircuts at sixpence a time! He was an expert and when Mum got a new scissors and clippers for his birthday, they were minded like precious jewels. Aunt rooted out old bikes for us to ride. He mended and patched them at night, with liners in worn tyres and every other device he could invent to keep them mobile.

And when all that was done, Ma'dy took out his old melodeon and entertained us all. Needless to say, he was in great demand for all the local parties, weddings and wakes. He gave up all his wages at home and only had what he made on hairdo's and music for his tobacco money. It was a tremendous excitement when he got an accordion.

The pipe laying for the Poulaphoca water scheme was being done and there were many men around in digs anywhere they could get so one very enterprising lady turned her haybarn into a dance hall and her 'resident' band consisted of Ma'dy with the accordion, Jim O'Mara with his fiddle and Paddy Smith with

his banjo and the 'Jazz-Effex'! That was a great year and the accordion was paid for in record time.

By 1938 we were all away in school. Mum was working in Hospital's Trust, Rosie had gone to work in Swiftbrook and most of the time Ma'dy was on his own. He was just fifty and I think he was lonely, so he left us and went home and got a job in St. Edmundsbury, where he worked on until he was nearly eighty. They had better horses there, and he won the County Dublin Ploughing Championship.

He was in great demand all around Lucan as a gardener and when he finally left St. Edmundsbury, he was never short of work. He died when he was eighty-nine after a sudden short illness. We will never forget him. I often wonder if he had been born fifty years later what he would have achieved.

The Rathcoole Branch ICA

THE papers I handed to Miss Gahan in 1967, which she mentioned in articles published in 1970 and 1986, included two letters from the Honourable Mary Lawless to my aunt, Mary Frances Sheil, a copy of the original rules of the organisation and instructions on how to set up a dry lavatory! The last may seem amusing now, but in those days of poor water supplies and hygiene, frequent epidemics of diphtheria and scarlet fever, and the ever present Tuberculosis, instruction leaflets like that were basic to the expressed ideal of the United Irishwomen - to improve the lives and health of the women of Ireland. The original rules forbade alcohol at any meeting. The founders considered drink a serious problem among the poor at the time. That particular rule was removed in the 1960's.

The Rathcoole - Saggart - Newcastle Guild was set up in 1910 with the Honourable Mary Lawless as its first President. The Honourable Mary was very good to the poor and maintained a herd of cows to supply free milk to needy families. My aunt was Honorary Secretary. According to her, most of the early work was of a practical nature, such as the dry lavatory. Lecturers came from Dublin to speak on various subjects, cookery, housekeeping, needlework, poultry keeping and butter making. With the coming of the First World War, First Aid was added. Saggart boasted a weekly 'Country Market' for eggs and butter. I have failed to ascertain where it was held.

Unfortunately, the War, Rebellion and Civil War upset the work considerably, but the final blow to the Branch was the untimely death of the Honourable Mary and the Branch faded out in 1918. However, my aunt kept in constant touch with the

SOUTH COUNTY SCRAP BOOK

Central Committee which was based in the Merrion Square Headquarters of the Irish Agricultural Organisation. In 1932, the Rathcoole Guild restarted under the new name of Irish Countrywomen's Association. Meetings were held in the Library, and in the years before the Second World War, much was achieved, but in 1942 transport had become extremely difficult and the Library was taken over by the Irish Red Cross and the Local Defence, and for a second time the Rathcoole Guild ceased to be. Presidents during that period had included Mrs. Mary Lennon, Mrs. Catherine Bergin, Miss Eileen Murray, Miss Kitty Hayden and Mrs. Winifred Sheil.

In 1967, Mrs. Una O'Brien and a few of the survivors of the old Guild, together with new residents in the village restarted the Association in Rathcoole and it has continued to the present day.



The Old Millhouse by the Camac at the Mill Bridge.

Annmount

IN writing about the Carmelite Monastery at Clondalkin, I mentioned that the Brothers were members of the Third Order of Carmelites, a community of laymen bound together by temporary vows renewed after a period of years.

The First Order was that of the Carmelite priests and the Second Order, the nuns as at Firhouse. A community like that of Clondalkin set up in Glenasmole about a half mile from Glassamucky at about the same time as Clondalkin. With the help of the local people they built their small monastery and school and soon all the children of the valley were being educated there. The monks relied on subscriptions and the guest house which they ran also helped to maintain the school. There is a monument in St. Santan's Graveyard which reads "Erected by a few friends as a token of respect of Maurice Collins who was for 44 years Prior of St. Anne's Monastery, who died 31st January 1865 aged 94 years and of his religious brethren

Andrew McQuirk Died 13th November 1842 aged 46,

John Farrell Died 27th January 1854 aged 67,

Patrick McQuirk Died 16th October 1867 aged 69,

Matthew Kelly Died 22nd January 1873 aged 68,

John Steward Died 12th April 1887 aged 93".

Brother Steward had succeeded Brother Collins as Prior and held that office for 16 years. He was succeeded by Brother Kearns who kept the school going until 1894. By then, a National School had been erected in the glen. It is interesting to note that the historian Eugene O'Curry visited Glenasmole in 1837 and he was deeply impressed by the high standard of education throughout the valley community. The only Brother left, Brother Reardon reverted to layman and married a local girl. Many of their descendants still live in the area.

Moyle Park

MOYLE Park was built in the mid eighteenth century by William Caldbeck, whose influence on parochial and social affairs in Clondalkin was enormous. He and Henry Arabin of Corkagh House were partners in the foundation of Clondalkin Gunpowder Mills. The buildings and stores were spread over both estates and gave good well-paid employment for many. For sometime it was the sole supplier of gunpowder to the English garrisons but in 1787, through, it is thought a fight on the premises, an explosion occurred, the two men concerned died and many were maimed for life. The force of the explosion was so great that it was felt as far away as Ussher's Quay where a mill chimney collapsed, and way up into Co. Kildare on the other side. The damage to property was enormous and the mills were not rebuilt.

Mrs. Elizabeth Caldbeck opened a girls school in the lodge in 1810 and it ran until 1840. When she died she left £2,000 (a large sum in those days) for the foundation of the Presentation Convent. Her son William Caldbeck was a prominent member of the Church of Ireland community, but he was very generous to everybody, with food and fuel and he donated any fines he levied as Magistrate to the poor. He even had water piped to some of the village houses. After his death in 1879 the property passed to his cousin Dora Caldbeck and then to her son William Roper Caldwell who sold it. Several different owners followed before the Nugent family bought it about 1919 and they eventually sold the house to the Marist Brothers who founded Moyle Park College. The Brothers retained the house itself as a residence. Much of the land had been sold for development. There is an interesting story told about one of the bedrooms. It is as follows.

During the ownership of Moyle Park by a non Catholic family, a Catholic maidservant was dying and wanted a priest and was refused. One cannot associate this story with the Caldbeck family who were so generous and ecumenical, so it must have related to a later owner. At any rate, the room in which the servant died became haunted and no one could sleep in it. The rector was called in and did a service of exorcism to release the uneasy spirit, and with a diamond, he cut slits in the window. The slits were about half an inch wide by about one and half inches long there were two rows of them, but they failed to solve the problem. Later, when Nugents bought the house, the parish priest, Reverend Canon Baxter celebrated Mass in the room and on the anniversary of that date every year, the Nugents had Mass offered for the deceased servant. There never was any recurrence and the daughters of the house slept peacefully in that room.

Story Tellers of Old

THE storytellers and bards of the ancient Celtic world were very important people. They were the poets and singers but most of all they were the historians. Part of their complicated and lengthy training involved learning older stories by heart and during the dark ages of oppression by Danes, Normans and English, their tradition lived on to an amazing degree. Just one hundred years ago, Celtic scholars in West Kerry and West Mayo took down from old men the Táin Bó Cúilgne and the two were almost identical. Such was the training handed down from father to son for nearly two thousand years.

Some of the stories woven into the "Táin" were obviously made up but the central characters and principal story were historical. In our own province of Leinster the chief story line centred on the Fianna - an elite corps of fighting men maintained by the High King of Tara. Their training was rigorous and nobody could join them without passing stringent tests of agility, daring and endurance. Their most famous period was in the reign of King Cormac Mac Airt who reigned from A.D. 254, only two hundred years before St. Patrick came to Ireland and the great literary age of scribes and illuminated manuscripts commenced.

Each province provided a division and very often they did not agree with each other. The Leinster men or Clann Baskin and the Clann Morna of Connaught were bitter enemies. Cumhal was the leader of the Clann Baskin and he was killed by the leader of the Clann Morna when his son Finn was only a child. The Clann Morna and other enemy agents did their best to find Finn and kill him and many stories grew out of his

escapes. These stories are largely centred on Glenasmole and the surrounding hills; and when he grew up and passed all the necessary tests to join the Fianna and assumed the leadership, Glenasmole was still his sanctuary where he hunted and relaxed when his official duties allowed.

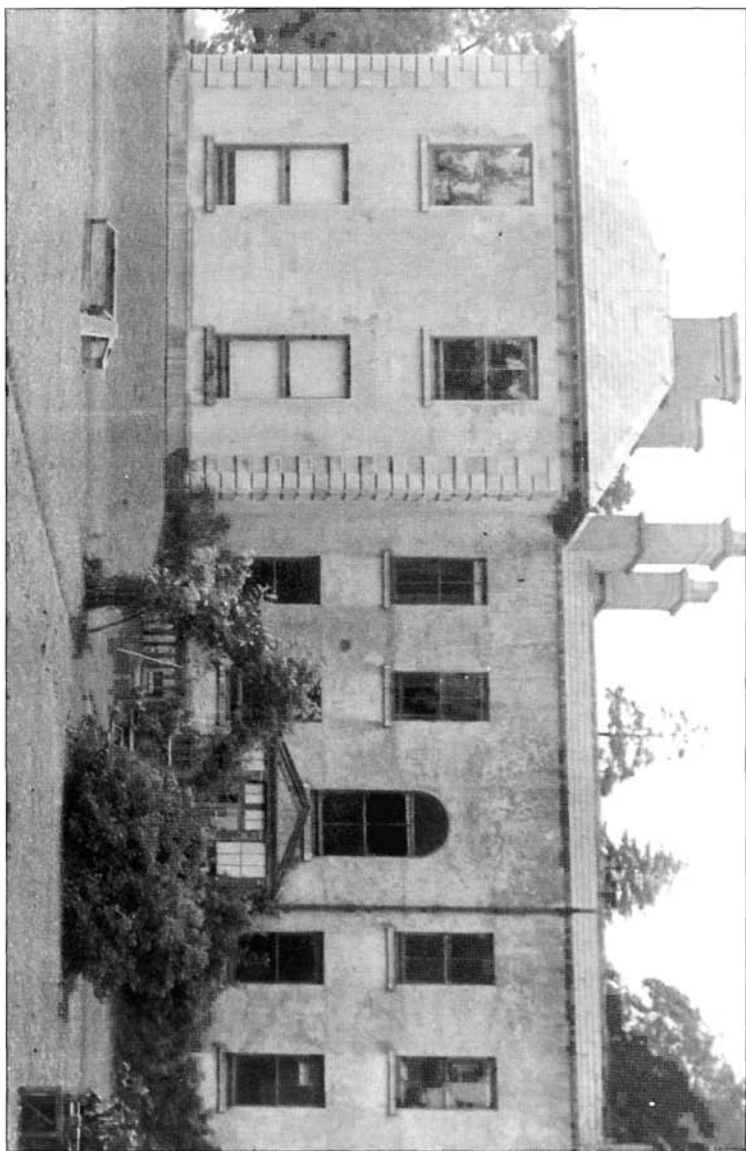
The Hill of Allen may have been his official residence but here, where we live, was his homeground. In this age of athletic prowess I wonder how many of the youth of Tallaght and Glenasmole could pass the Fianna's tests of running, jumping and hunting skills with weapons, etc.?

Tassaggart House

IN the late eighteenth century, the O'Byrne family were substantial owners of land at Saggart but in 1821 they had been superseded by Mr. Smith who built a large house at Tassaggart, and by 1840 he had sold out to the Verschoyle family who enlarged the house.

They added considerably to the estate when lands held by Church of Ireland were sold off (Church Temporalities Act) for very low prices. For example, the land where Airmotive stands cost them five shillings an acre. They also gained on Tallaght Hill and the Slade and soon Tallaght Hill (which Eugene O'Curry, writing in 1837, thought was more the origin of the name Tallaght than the present Tallaght Village) became known as Verschoyle's Hill.

The estate adjoining Tassaggart House gained when they bought in O'Connors farm on the triangle of land between Saggart, the Mill Bridge and Garter Lane. Near the back of the house stood the remains of the old Norman castle. I am told that at one time it housed a considerable collection of old uniforms but unfortunately there was a fire there in 1910, and I cannot ascertain if any of the collection was saved. Next to the castle were the stables with coach houses, etc, and beyond that the gardens, first the rose garden, then the large kitchen garden neatly laid out with boxhedge edgings. It contained a large greenhouse and there was every kind of fruit, but the pride of the place was a giant fig tree which fruited profusely every year. Beyond the kitchen garden was the prettiest garden of all — the Ladies' garden. And all around the house to the north and east were the pleasure gardens with flowering shrubs, tennis courts and walks. For many years the only



Tssaggart House, West Side

occupants were Colonel and Mrs. Verschoyle Campbell, with just two maids to look after them and the big house, so of course it became neglected.

Outside there was a gardener and three farm workers and neglect became widespread. The Colonels niece Mrs. Alexander lived there for some years, but her interest was entirely in horses and when the gardener retired nobody took his place.

Some years ago, Mr. James Mansfield bought the estate and the changes he has made show how old houses can be brought into the modern era. The entire house was refurbished and refitted. Central heating was installed and beautiful antique furniture completed the interior. At the same time, the grounds were also getting a new look. Walls were repaired, and the old castle was completely rebuilt. An ornamental pond was created and new shrubs and plants augmented the survivors of the past. Next the new owner called in expert advice and a golf club was laid out. A new club house was built in a grove of trees near the old front drive, and the drive and lodge rebuilt. The clubhouse has been furnished magnificently and the entire house is now a showplace. Doesn't this demonstrate how many of our lost mansions could have been saved?



Rebuilt Norman Tower House

Tallaght And The Leinster Trophy Motor Races

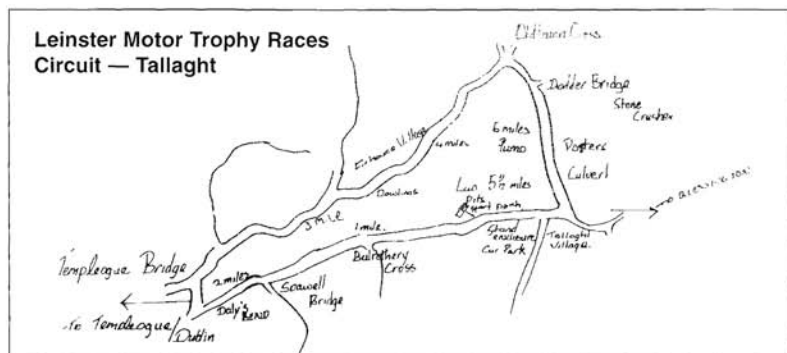
THE Leinster Trophy Race is now held at Mondello Park. The inaugural meeting on 4th August 1934 was at Skerries, but the circuit there, which was already popular for motorcycles, was not suitable for motorcars. In July 1935 the race was moved to a new circuit at Tallaght. The course started on the main road opposite the Bank of Ireland, (the pits were in Iceland car park and there was a fine stand for spectators where News Extra is now). The race ran down the Blessington Road to Templeogue Bridge, right again up the twisty Firhouse Road across Bridget Burkes (or Kennedy's of Old Bawn as it was called then). There it turned right up the Old Bawn Road and back to Tallaght village — a six mile course so there were seventeen laps.

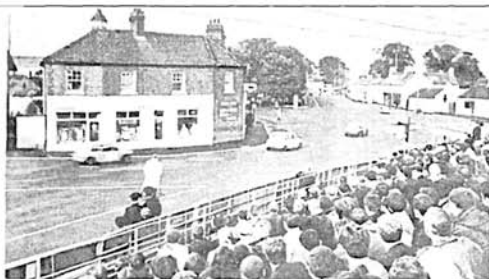
The interest and excitement was tremendous. The Government Ministers and many other important people attended. Famous international drivers took part. There were competitors from Britain, France, Italy and Prince Bira of Japan. Some of the makes of cars are unheard of now. There were Alfa Romeos, Mercedes, Bugattis, Rileys, Sunbeams, Triumphs, Adlers, Vauxhalls, M.G.'s, Frazer Nash and of course a number of home built specials. Chief among these was the U.S.R. of Redmond Gallagher of Urney Chocolate Factory on the Belgard Road. U.S.R. meant Urney Special Racer. Redmond's brother-in-law Dermot O'Clery also took part. Other local heroes included Willie O'Riordan, who led the way several times to end with a spectacular crash, Dudley Colley of Corkagh House, Charlie Manders and Stanley Woods who was better known on his motorcycle at the T.T. Races. The road was of course narrower and more twisted than today.

In spite of that, lap speeds were over 70 miles per hour and in 1938 Tony Rult achieved a speed of 83.53 m.p.h. Belfast man Ernie Robb won the 1939 race and then there was none until 1948 when the winner was Mike Hawthorn. After that the race moved to Mondello. In 1995 it was sixty years since the race was first run in Tallaght. If a commemoration race was staged on the old course, now so much improved, I wonder what speeds could be reached? Motorcycle races were held on the same circuit with famous riders, Stanley Woods, Charlie Manders, Ernest and Alan Lyons and many others.



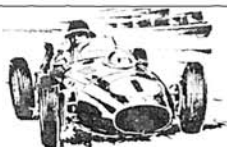
Race starting point near Glenview traffic lights.





DUNBOYNE '67

With the sole exception of the Phoenix Park, full scale road racing is regrettable a thing of the past in Ireland. The races at Dunboyne were perhaps amongst the most memorable road races in this country, but it's now ten years since the Co. Meath circuit reverberated to the exciting sound of open exhausts. Pictured above is a scene that captures some of the unique atmosphere of Dunboyne, showing a gaggle of hot Minis racing through the village during practise for the last ever race there in 1967.



MIKE HAWTHORN

Britain's Mike Hawthorn was a great supporter of Irish motor racing, having won the Leinster Trophy at Wicklow in 1961 driving a pre-war Riley. He rapidly made it to Formula 1, driving for Ferrari and with the great Italian team he won the World Championship in 1958 (above). Mike retired from racing after winning the title, but regrettably this very popular young man died in a road accident in early '59. When full scale racing was revived at Phoenix Park in the late fifties it was on the Hawthorn Circuit, named in honour 1958 World Champion who never missed an opportunity to either compete or spectate at Irish road races of a bygone era.



WICKLOW '53

Bobby Baird in his Ferrari V12 sports car, - the popular Belfast driver was killed at Snetterton in this car only a few weeks later, and Irish motor racing lost one of its greatest supporters ever.



TALLAGHT '38

The late Sean T.O'Kelly, former President of Ireland, placing the victory wreath over the shoulders of D. McCracken, winner of the 1938 Leinster Trophy, while J. J. Sheil, the then President of the Leinster Motor Club, looks on. Was this the last appearance of a President of Ireland at a motor race, if so, why not to-day?

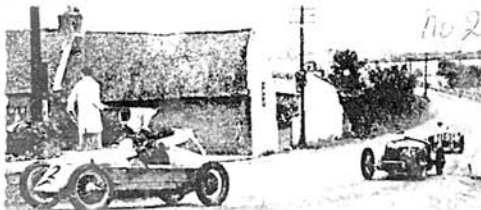


DUNBOYNE '58

Group at the prizegiving includes, left to right: Brian Naylor, who set the fastest lap; Willie Walsh, Chairman of Meath County Council; Nat Lepler; the late Mike Hawthorn, World Champion in '58; Jim Byrne of Radio Eireann and Leinster MC, who died last year; T. P. Nolan and Tom Weir.

TALLAGHT '38

On the right, Tommy Graham and Bill Riordan in Rileys leading the CMY Special of Davey Youl into Tallaght from the Old Bawn direction in the 1938 Leinster Trophy. To-day, Tallaght / Old Bawn are a huge built-up area, but the character of this corner is still recognisable.



"The Good Olde Days!"

Memories

MY father was a veterinary surgeon and he died when we were very young. He had been gassed in the First World War and his lungs were rotting away, and I think he knew time was running out. He kept us with him as much as he could and he taught us so much. We had lessons from a local teacher from five to seven every day and the rest of the day we were free. We knew the back gate of every farm in South Dublin and North Kildare, and in between his farm visits he would take us out of the car to point out interesting buildings and views, and he told stories all the time – Finn MacCool, Glenasmole, Hell Fire Club, the Wonderful Barn at Leixlip, and Connolly's Folly at Celbridge, and so many more.

When he had to go to Dublin there was a routine, in through the Phoenix Park to see the deer and out by Kilmainham to see the old soldiers at the Royal Hospital and on to the Canal bank to see the barges. Sometimes, in the Summer if Dad was free, we went to Donnybrook to Mass and out to Silver Strand to paddle and have a picnic, but more often, we went to Newbridge with High Mass in the College and then to a nearby stud farm, Rickardstown, owned by Dad's cousin John Sheil O'Grady, known to the family as "John S". My memory is of a long, single storey house behind white gates, so warm and comfortable always with piles of lovely food. One evening, when we left Rickardstown, we were stopped and questioned by soldiers. Dad wasn't pleased and asked "Why"? but we got no answer. And from then on – all the way home to Lucan, we were being stopped and questioned – and Dad was getting more and more incensed. "Why would nobody tell him what was going on?" and Mum, afraid of her life he'd be arrested for being obstructive, saying "Don't Joe, Don't". As soon as we got home Dad rang his

friend in Baldonnel, Captain Fitzmaurice and he explained. It was the July 10th 1927 and Kevin O'Higgins had been assassinated.

Another Newbridge memory was of the excitement of a new foal. Among the visitors for lunch in Rickardstown that day was Father Harrington, a well known Dominican, and afterwards the whole party did a tour of all the fields viewing the horses and mares and in the end we got to the field where the mare and new filly foal were. And John S. turned to Father Harrington and said "There you are, Father, yours is the privilege of naming the filly". With that the College bell rang out the six o'clock Angelus and Father Harrington said "There's your answer "Dominic's Belle"! And Dominic's Belle had many successful foals herself, including Dominic's Bar which won the Irish Grand National. We came home that evening just after dark and I remember seeing fine rain like a halo all round John S. as he opened the white gate from the house to the drive. We never saw him again. He caught pneumonia and died, and with him our visits to Rickardstown.

Our lessons were shared with Patricia Fitzmaurice, only daughter of Captain James Fitzmaurice and his wife and we were in and out of Baldonnel frequently. Usually one of the young officers brought her down to Somerton, Lucan and either her father came for her or Dad took her home. The officer's houses were wooden bungalows, very pleasant inside and there always seemed to be people coming and going with a lot of laughter and fun. We went to Malahide strand just before Captain Fitzmaurice and Mr. Mackintosh made their attempt on the Atlantic. I can only remember that the plane was dark blue and the two men waving from the door before it took off. Well, that one failed but from then we heard more discussion about it and Dad pointed out the route planned on the old battered globe of our geography lessons. The wide pale blue space fascinated me — all water — and what if they came

down? "Oh, the ships will be keeping a lookout for them". We were used to the Mail Boat so we accepted that answer and Pat was happy.

Then the Bremen arrived with Baron Von Huenefeld and Captain Koehl and "Fitz" was delighted to be asked to join them. There were parties in the Camp the day before they planned to go and we were there running around with Pat. The Baron was very quiet and shy but Captain Koehl was all smiles and swung Pat and me around in circles. We went up to the hangar and there seemed to be great activity with soldiers keeping people away but we were allowed to go close and Edmund climbed into the cockpit himself and two soldiers lifted Pat and me up to look in. All we could see were barrels and barrels (of aviation fluid we were told) and Pat asked "what are they going to eat?". "Chocolate bars" was the answer "Where are they?" said Pat eagerly and her Daddy answered from the back "Where you won't get them". Next morning Dad came in while we were having breakfast and Mum said "Well?". "They couldn't go, the runway was too short so they are working madly to level a ditch to try again tomorrow". And of course, next day they just managed to clear the buildings and were off! For nearly three days, everyone waited, getting more and more worried — and then the great news. They had landed on Greenly Island on snow and ice and rocks.

Embankment

EMBANKMENT is the name most often used for the area where the new Westbrook housing estate is being built. This name was used by the British Army Engineers who built the Blessington Road from Jobstown to Brittas as it is now, and a very good job they made of it if you consider how little maintenance it gets, and the hundreds of thousands (possibly millions) of tons of sand and gravel transported along it every year, and the large volume of general traffic. The old names, Boherboy — in Irish Bothar Buidhe (Yellow Road) is used on the Saggart side and Corbally — in Irish Corr Baile (a few houses) to the east and south. It is a peaceful area now but in the early eighteenth century it was a great hide out for robbers and highwaymen. If you look to the left as you go towards Blessington, opposite Embankment Public House you will see a road leading off to the left and circling round and rejoining the main road. It was in that area there were quite a lot of houses and an inn called the Red Cow Inn.

In 1717 a noted highwayman known as Captain Fitzgerald had his headquarters near there and he and his gang terrorised everybody even as far away as Tallaght and Crumlin. They made a big raid on Tallaght and got away with a lot of loot and horses and they also took some prisoners as hostages. Although there was a Danish regiment stationed in Tallaght, they were not able to catch robbers. In desperation, the local people banded together and with more knowledge of the surrounding countryside, caught the highwaymen and got back the horses and hostages. After that, Captain Fitzgerald was quiet for a while but he got bold again and resumed attacking coaches as they went over Tallaght Hill.

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Then they raided the Red Cow Inn and took the proprietor and guests prisoner. One young man jumped through a window and got away to raise the alarm. A company of soldiers arrived and a battle ensued but eventually the highwaymen ran out of ammunition and were taken prisoners. It is said crowds lined the road to see them brought to Dublin for Trial and sentence. And after that, peace reigned in Boherboy and Corbally.



An aerial view of Swiftbrook Paper Mills, 1935.

Glenasmole Lodge

AS you look south to the mountains from Tallaght you will be struck by the beauty of the valley of Glenasmole, (the Valley of the Thrushes). There are many ways of exploring the valley. One way is to walk or drive past Bohernabreena Church, then turn right and at the next junction go right again. Another way is to go up Ballinascorney Hill and turn left. The best way of all is to go up through the Waterworks. For this you will need a permit from City Hall. All these ways converge at the head of the valley, and hidden away there on the left is an old house with a long history. In 1755 the Protestant Archbishop of Dublin leased to his son Thomas Cobbe the lands of Glasamucky, Ballyslater, Kilnasantan and Castlekelly.

Thomas Cobbe leased the land at the head of the glen to George Grierson, the King's Printer in Ireland and he built the original house which he called Heathfield Lodge and there he entertained lavishly during the shooting season. Although he received £100,000 from the crown at the time of the Act of Union, he was in debt when he died leaving the house to his three daughters. These ladies travelled very extensively and brought back many rare plants, which flourished in the sheltered valley.

They also brought back many curios. They altered the house to resemble a Swiss chalet with a deep thatched roof and a beautiful carved balcony. Their brothers often visited them and John Grierson had an unusual vehicle constructed for going up and down the dangerous road. The ladies were loved by all the people and it was a very sad day when the house was completely destroyed by fire. After that apparently the land

reverted to the Cobbe family who rebuilt the house with a slate roof and so it became known as Cobbe's Lodge. It has changed hands many times since then. Soon after the Second World War a Dutch industrialist bought it and spent a lot of money modernising and beautifying the house and grounds. When he died very suddenly in 1973, his widow sold the house, by then known as Glenasmole Lodge.

THE HILL OF KILLINARDEN
(By Charles B. Halpin)

*Though time effaces memory, and grief the bosom burden,
I'll ne'er forget, where e'er I be, that day on Killinarden.
For there while fancy revelled wide, the summer's day flew over me,
The friends I loved were at my side, and Irish fields before me.*

*The road was steep, the pelting showers, had cooled beneath us,
And there were lots of mountain flowers, a garland to enwreath us.
Far, far, below the landscape shone with wheat and new mown
meadows,
And as o'erhead the clouds flew on, beneath swept on the shadows.*

*O friends, beyond the Atlantic's foam, there may be noble mountains,
and in our new far western home, green fields and brighter fountains.
But as for me, let time destroy all dreams, but this one pardon,
A barren memory long enjoy, that day on Killinarden.*

Brittas

IF one mentions the name Brittas, people, even in Tallaght, think one is speaking of Brittas Bay, County Wicklow. But it was not always so. In the days of the Blessington Steamtram, Brittas was a very important stop on the line. Many Dubliners got off there and went walking in the Slade Valley to the east, the Mount Seskin or Augh Farrell Roads on the south, or up Sliabh Tuathail to the west. Wherever they went, the views were superb. And for the antiquarian there were many prehistoric sites to be visited.

Up by the side of Crooksling there is the Long Stone. In the forest behind the forester's house is a very ancient grave and there are several others on Sliabh Tuathail. The Brittas' Ponds are extensive artificial lakes flooded nearly 200 years ago to augment and control the water supply to Swiftbrook Paper Mills which is less than two miles further down the valley. Alas, Swiftbrook is no more, but the ponds are stocked by an angling club and they are also a nature reserve.

Geraldine Stout, Board of Works Archaeologist, maintains that Bog Larkin, the ancient name of the site of the ponds was a lake in earlier times and that the small island is, in fact, the only crannóg in County Dublin. Before the Embankment Road was built, the coaches bound for Baltinglass and Wexford left the present Blessington Road by Jobstown Cottages and went up Mount Seskin and joined the road at Brittas. For a time, this route was abandoned in favour of an easier gradient off to the right, opposite the same Jobstown Cottages and going through the Slade. The Downshire Bridge, now listed for preservation, was built to take the road across the Camac. Where the Slade Road joins the Blessington Road, on the site of

'Mrs Redmond's Bungalow', was the changing stage for the tired horses and, presumably, some sort of inn to accommodate the travellers. The activities of the highwaymen forced the coaches back onto the tougher climb of Mount Seskin. I wonder where they changed horses on that route?

All the roads met at the Brittas Inn which has grown considerably in the last 30 years as transport became easier and more people want to live in this beautiful place. A pamphlet by the late Liam Ua Broin (of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland), entitled 'The Mountain Commons of Saggart' gives most interesting details of the field and place names of long ago.

And it is good to see that some of these names are being used by the owners of the new houses.

Dispensary Treatment Long Ago

SOME years ago the Tallaght Historical Society were given a number of interesting artefacts and curios by Mr. Leo Swann. They include the bellows of the old Tallaght Forge, churns, butter making equipment, farm implements and numerous other items. They are now in the care of the County Council who hope to put them on display in the Art Centre which is in Virginia Cottage. The society also has a large collection of photographs which we hope to put on view.

Recently we were very pleased to receive Board of Assistance registers dating back to 1878 and many other things pertaining to the old dispensary. Among them the "red ticket", reproduced here. Each dispensary district was divided into a number of areas presided over by a "warden". A warden was an unpaid local person who was supposed to know all the people in his or her area and to be able to vouch for their entitlement or not to

Form F 2.

TICKET FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE PATIENT'S HOME.

To
 Dr. *O'Riordan* Medical Officer,
 of *annamole* Dispensary District,
 in

Sir,

You are hereby directed to visit and afford Medical Advice and any necessary Medicine, to *Henry Nolan* aged *65* residing at *Ballinacrowl* in the above Dispensary District, who is by occupation a *none*

Dated this *11* day of *Nov* 19 *44*

(Signed)..... *Joseph Leahy* Warden
 Member of County Board of Health, Assistance Officer, or Warden, as the case may be.

[See the back of this Ticket for instructions as to presenting it.]

ALLY, YREON & CO., LTD., PRINTER: DUBLIN.
 Number in Register.....

INSTRUCTION AS TO PRESENTING THIS TICKET

This ticket may be presented to the Medical Officer at the Dispensary, within the hours of his attendance there; or may be presented to him, or left for him at his residence; or may be presented to him personally anywhere. The ticket should be presented as soon after it has been obtained as practicable, with such information as can be given regarding the nature of the case. A Member of the Board of Health, Warden or Assistance Officer, before issuing a Ticket, shall exercise due diligence in ascertaining whether the applicant is a "Poor Person" and entitled to gratuitous Medical Relief.

dispensary service. I can only speak with knowledge of the Rathcoole Dispensary. My aunt Mary Frances Sheil was warden for Rathcoole itself, the hill area up to Brittas and back to Blackchurch. John Bergin of Ballinakelly was warden for Newcastle, Hazelhatch, Peamount and 12th Lock areas. Walter Walsh for Kingswood and Baldonnell and Mrs. Mahon for Saggart, Boherboy and Jobstown. When Mrs. Mahon died her nephew John Kelly took it over. John Bergin sold his farm and left the district and my aunt was asked to take on his area as well. Later Walter Walsh decided the cares of his business (Power's Distillery) and his farm made it impossible for him to continue and this too was added to my aunts commitment which was further extended when John Kelly too gave up.

Morning after morning there would be a queue of people at the door. She had the unenviable task of asking each one if he or she was employed; what their wage was; if they were married; how many children; did they own their house? And

depending on their answers, she had to decide if they were eligible for free treatment. The 'ticket' reproduced was called a pink ticket entitling them to a visit at home from the dispensary doctor, and a green ticket entitled the holder to free treatment at the dispensary. It was a horrible job but she kept at it because she sympathised so much with the unfortunate patients.

If she made a mistake, she could be charged with the cost of their treatment! One example I have never forgotten happened about 1940. A man came on his bicycle from near Peamount. His wife was ill and he wanted the doctor to come to the house. His wife was a ex T.B. patient. They had four children and she was expecting another. He worked as a farm labourer in Peamount. Statutory wages were paid there, at the time, about thirty shillings a week. My aunt signed the pink ticket and the man went to the dispensary. Later in the morning, there was a phone call from the dispensary doctor to say that the man concerned had a good job and was well able to pay for a doctor's visit and that the ticket had been cancelled. Furthermore, that if my aunt gave him a ticket again she would be charged for the treatment. Such was life fifty four years ago. My aunt reported the matter to the Board of Health, but beyond an acknowledgement of her letter, there was no comment.

Orlagh or Footmount

ON the west side of Mount Pelier, just below the Hell Fire Club is Orlagh or Footmount as it was called originally. Sheltered from the east wind and with magnificent views across country (on clear days one can see the Mountains of Mourne). This beautiful mansion was built about 1790 by Lundy Foot. He was a barrister himself, but because of his great wealth he did not practice.

He belonged to a family of snuff merchants and wholesalers in Westmoreland Street and Essex Street. Mr. Foot had the Ballycullen Road improved and extended right up to his gate and he planted many trees and shrubs. Probably the best thing he ever did was to propose and encourage the building of the beautiful Bridge at Poulaphuca, but in local history he is remembered for a very different reason. In 1816 a steward or gamekeeper named Kinlan was murdered on the adjoining estate of Mr. Ponsonby Shaw. Lundy Foot was the magistrate who condemned to death three members of the one family for the murder. The three, father and two sons were executed near the Kiltipper Road and near Old Bawn Bridge. Three gallows were set up there and a very harrowing scene took place.

There was an attempt on Lundy Foot's life afterwards but he recovered and sold Orlagh to Carew O'Dwyer, a lawyer who was a great friend of Daniel O'Connell. Mr. O'Dwyer extended the house and entertained O'Connell and many others including the whole Dublin Corporation! Later Mr. O'Dwyer went to live in England and a Scottish family named Brodie lived in Orlagh. Lundy Foot went to live on his estate at Rosbercon in Co. Kilkenny where he was later murdered. At first it was thought the crime was committed by relations of the Kearneys but a young man from Rosbercon was convicted.

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In 1872 the estate was purchased by the Augustinian Order for a Noviciate, and so it continues to this day. Outside the gate at the top of the Ballycullen Road is St. Colmcille's Well. Devout local people had tended it for hundreds of years and it is now cared for by the Augustinians and local people.

The feast day is on June 9th. Every year on the Sunday nearest that date, a festival is held beginning with Benediction, followed by a concert of Irish music. Traditionally the water of the well has a cure for sore eyes. Pdraig Pearse went there frequently and brought his students from St. Enda's College.

The Royal Garter Stables

MANY times I have been asked how did 'Brown's Barn' (The Royal Garter Stables), the old building facing the City West Business Complex get its name and I did not know. But now I do. For 'Brown' read 'Bian' short all over Ireland for Bianconi, the man who revolutionised transport in Ireland in 1815 when he started his first "long car" service from Clonmel to Cahir carrying mail in the centre of the extended jaunting car. It could carry six people on each side and the fares were only a fraction of that charged by the mail coaches for a much slower service.

Soon the service spread to other towns and within a few years was operating all over Ireland. In "Seventy Years Young", Lady Fingall describes the Galway to Clifden service when she was young. And they became known as the 'Bians'. He set up his principal depot at the Royal Garter Stables and you can still see the round windows (like wheels) on the western end of the main building. A building with hay barns and forge on the City West side of the road was demolished when the Dual Carriageway was developed around 1970.

From humble beginnings when he arrived in Ireland from Italy pedalling prints of Italian painting, his story is extraordinary and inspiring. After a number of failures, he found vocation in organising his huge empire of transport but that was by no means all. He was Mayor of Clonmel, a Magistrate, a Grand Juror (when few Catholics were) and Deputy Lieutenant for County Tipperary, for which service he was presented to the Lord Lieutenant by Viscount Lismore and Lord Cloncurry and he was a great friend and supporter of Daniel O'Connell. The 'Bians' lasted for forty-two years. Railways had taken over by then.

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I understand the present owners of the building are anxious to start a restaurant and hotel and if they do I hope they will always preserve the wall with Bianconi's round windows. I hope too that somewhere "long cars" may be found (or perhaps a FÁS group reconstruct some from old pictures) and make a feature of the development. Foreign visitors would love Charles Bianconi's life story and I believe there is a wealth of documents available. He died in 1875 aged eighty-nine years.



The Royal Garter Stables on the Naas Road.

The Sheil Family of Hillview

THIS being the Centenary Year of Local Government, I have been pressurised by a good friend into writing about my own family. My great-grandfather William Sheil was on the committee for the building of the National School at Saggart, and for the building of the Parish Church. My grandfather Edward was on the committee for Rathcoole School and a number of other local projects and so it was natural that he should be elected to the first County Council for the South County — the Celbridge No. 2 Council. Peter Tynan O'Mahony kindly gave me a Photostat of a County Council list of the attendances that year. Out of a possible forty-one attendances, his grandfather Andrew Cullen Tynan came first with thirty-seven and my grandfather had thirty-five. Sadly my grandfather died in March 1901 and for the time being, there was no further representation.

My father Joseph Sheil followed in 1911 - 1912 and then my uncle John took over when the County Council got going again in 1919 after the War. He remained on the Council until 1938. The belief which was fundamental to our family was "Good local Government makes good National Government". In the nineteen thirties party politics were brought into local Government. Our belief always is that one can't keep one's integrity and be a member of a political party. Both the main parties tried to persuade my uncle to go for the Dail but he said he would better serve the people of County Dublin by remaining outside party politics. He was Chairman of Dublin County Council from 1931 to 1938 and Dublin Opinion was rarely without a cartoon of him. One I remember showed missiles being hurled at him from both sides!

One of the saddest moments to him was when, as Chairman, he had to sign the death notice of the Blessington Tram. By then he was Chairman of the General Council of County Councils and I have his invitation to be a bearer at the Eucharistic Congress in 1932. You can see his tall person just behind John McCormack in the picture. He was also on the Council of the R.D.S., the Royal Irish Academy, the Leinster Motor Club, the Knights of Columbanus, the Bohemian Musical Society, Royal Dublin Golf Club and perhaps other bodies I cannot remember.

In 1938 he had succeeded in getting a resolution passed for a technical school to be built in Saggart. It was not built for many years later because of the emergency and then it was built in Rathcoole not Saggart. He also sponsored the first County Council Tenant Purchase Scheme which came in in 1942. He lost his seat on the County Council in 1938 and a long serious illness in 1940 finished his public activities.

The most important person in the family after him was my aunt Mary Frances (Cissie) Sheil. She took a tremendous interest in all her brother's work and in Sir Horace Plunkett's Agricultural Society, and in 1910 the foundation of the United Irishwomen meant a tremendous lot to her. She assisted the Honourable Mary Lawless in the foundation of the Rathcoole, Saggart, Newcastle branch that year, and when it had to cease operations because of the National Struggle she continued to be a member. In 1932, having changed its name to Irish Countrywomen's Association, it restarted as a public body and the Rathcoole, Saggart, Newcastle Branch was soon active. I have written about that elsewhere.

From 1925 on, my aunt had been Honorary Librarian at Rathcoole and her next project for the parish was to get a District Nurse - Jubilee Nurse as they were called then. It took a lot of organisation getting a house for her and equipping it and getting regular donations to pay her wages. She also had

to be provided with a bicycle, later a moped. Our third nurse was Sheila Halligan (later Mrs. Desmond Murray) a wonderful nurse who will always be remembered by everyone in the district. My aunt also organised the Irish Red Cross and the Soldier's Comfort Fund.

A dressing station in Fyans' Public House, now the Village Inn, had volunteers coming to make up dressings and pack them for the Irish Red Cross. The youngest of my father's brothers is the one remembered with most affection. He was a very brilliant doctor, but a very shy man except with his patients. Night or day meant nothing to him. He was always available. Money never worried him except when he had to recommend expensive treatments. He went to wholesale chemists and got tablets, ointments and other medicines which he passed on at cost. His cough bottle was famous. A doctor who settled in Saggart at the time of his death in 1966 said to me "Your uncle spoiled the people".



At the same time, he kept up with all the latest developments and had a flair for diagnosis. The Master of Holles' Street Hospital, Dr. Barry said to Mrs. Bermingham of Saggart "It was a tragedy for Dublin that Willie Sheil did not set up in Merrion Square", but like the rest of the family, he loved the local people. He was brilliant at engineering too, but radio was his favourite hobby. I don't know how many sets he made up and gave away in the days of aërials, dry and wet batteries, etc. The first crystal set he made was in 1919. A lady said to me years later "You need never pray for the doctor, he's on every prayer list in Rathcoole".

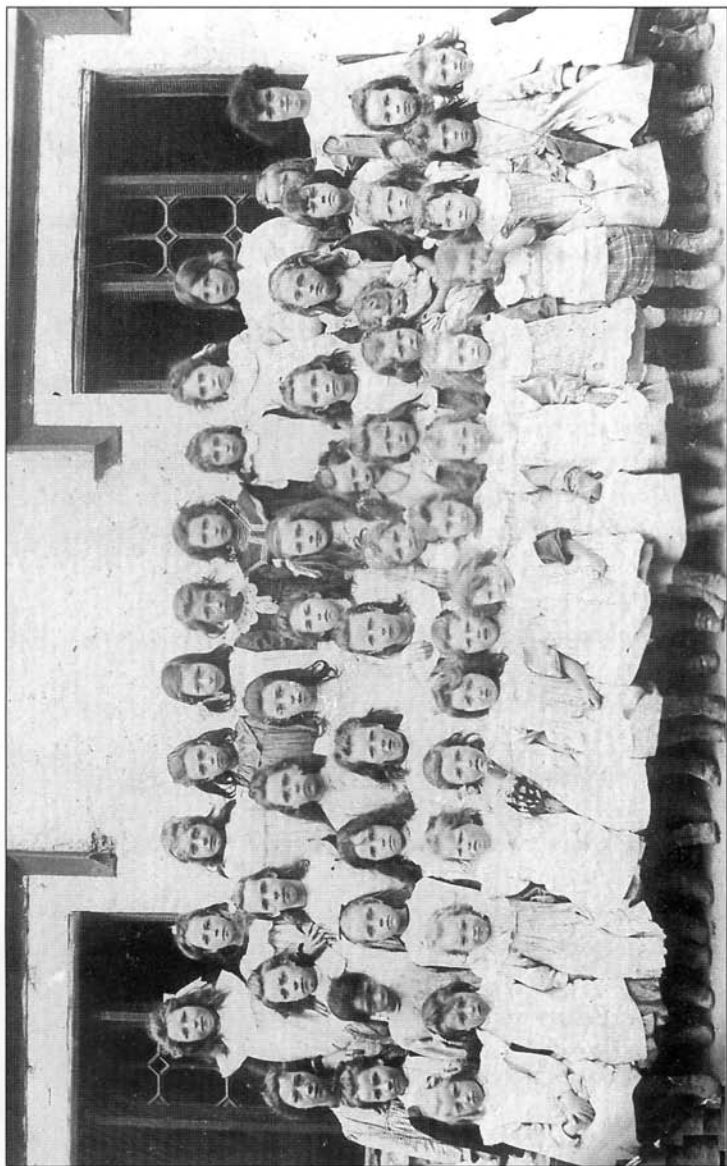
My eldest uncle James was rate collector for the South County from 1900 to 1927. He did his rounds on a high green bicycle (he was 6ft 6in tall) and never had a debt on his books because he was prepared to make any number of visits. If a small farmer offered him five shillings off his debt, he never refused but went back again and again.

Transcript from My Father's Obituary in the Leinster Leader

The late Captain Sheil's early death was attributable to his service in France, where, as an officer of the R.A.V.C., he served in the most advanced positions close to the front line. While on horseback one day, Captain Sheil rode into a German gas attack and never fully recovered from the effect of the poison.

The late Captain Sheil took an absorbing interest in the welfare of the smaller class of farmer and did marvellous work in encouraging co-operation among them, particularly in the matter of milk supplies for the City. He had just built up a wonderful organisation among the farmers when his devotion to the heavy calls of an increasing professional practice, brought on an illness which terminated fatally. Apart from the great grief of a wide circle of friends, his untimely demise was a severe blow to farming interests in Co. Dublin and the adjoining counties.

Note: The organisation he founded was the Leinster Milk Suppliers Association.



St. Mary's Girls National School, Tallaght, 1905.

LOVELY SAGGART SLADE

*A roving blade mid storm and shade I've travelled far and
near*

*To Ballytore and sweet Lugmore and far away Cape Clear
And scenes most fair; both rich and rare I viewed as I have
strayed*

*But among them all there's none at all can equal Saggart
Slade*

*There trees sublime from every clime in wild profusion grow
And birds do sing from early spring and rarest flowers blow
The hills so grand on either hand which nature has arrayed
With heather brown look sweetly down on lovely Saggart
Slade*

*The rippling rills down from the hills pass through this
glorious dell*

*Where sweethearts stray at close of day their tales of love to
tell*

*And in this land there's not so grand a spot for youth or
maid*

To tell their love neath stars above as lovely Saggart Slade

*Down by two brooks some cosy nooks there most romantic lie
In those shady bowers some happy hours I spent in days
gone by*

*And as I stray on my lonely way I often have delayed
To regret the day I went away from lovely Saggart Slade*

