A view of Kilmallock, 1820's,from the south east, by J.G. Mulvany. Reproduced by courtesy The Hunt Museum, Limerick.

THE STORY OF KILMALLOCK

Do Phroinséas, a chuir suas liom,
fad is a bhi an leabhar seo a scriobh agam.

THE STORY OF KILMALLOCK

by

Mainchín Seoighe

Kilmallock Historical Society
Cill Mocheallóg, Co. Luimnigh

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First edition published 1987.
Second edition published by Kilmallock Historical Society 2012.
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Printed and Bound by:
Carraig Print Inc. Litho Press, Cork - 021 4883458

Publications by Kilmallock Historical Society

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Kilmallock Dominican Priory – An Architectural Prospective
1291 – 1991 by Arlene Hogan (1991).

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CONTENTS

	Page
Author's Preface	ix
Foreword	xii
An Introduction to this Edition	xiv
Kilmallock District in Prehistory - and Later	1
Mocheallóg and the Monastery of Kilmallock	13
The Norman Town of Kilmallock	17
Medieval Kilmallock	24
Growing Importance of Kilmallock	36
Kilmallock, Town of the Geraldines	43
Geraldine Rebellion and Sack of Kilmallock	51
Kilmallock in Final Phase of Geraldine Rebellion	66
Kilmallock's New Charter	79
Kilmallock and the Nine Years War	86
Kilmallock in Early 17th Century	100
The Cromwellian Period	107
Jacobite Williamite War and Penal Laws	123
Wild Geese and Gaelic Poets	137
Cootes, Olivers, Travellers, Whiteboys, United Irishmen	152
Old Roads, Crofton Croker's Visit, Schools	167
End of Corporation, Old Rental, The Workhouse	179
The Famine, Eoghan Caomhánach, Executions	191
The Fenians attack Kilmallock Police Barracks	204
The Land League Period	219
Recovery, Labourers' Cottages, Hiring Fair, Rural District Council	235
Into the New Century	251
The War of Independence	256
The Civil War	287
The Story to Date	294
Relics of the Past	318
Some Lore and Songs of Kilmallock	335
Churches, Clergy, Members of Parliament	347
Placenames	353
Names from the Fiants	360
Some Notable Kilmallock Men	365
Early Enterprises, Industries and Organisations	371

List of Sponsors and Patrons 403
Source References 404
Index 424

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

Having already written books about my neighbouring parishes of Bruree and Dromin/Athlacca, I began, some years ago, to think about my native parish of Kilmallock. But the more I began to ponder on the historical importance of Kilmallock the more I felt unequal to the task of writing a book about it. However, as time passed, and as nobody else seemed likely to do so, I eventually decided to undertake the task. I might add that my interest in the history of Kilmallock was first awakened by the late Joe Gaffney, of Lord Edward Street, a man whose great pride in Kilmallock was matched by his knowledge of its past.

I have called the book *The Story of Kilmallock* rather than A History of Kilmallock, for while the book is, to a very large extent, a history of Kilmallock, it also contains some material such as one does not normally find in a history book. Anecdotes, and verses from poems and songs, are introduced from time to time. My main reason for choosing the title, *The Story of Kilmallock*, had to do with the fact that a booklet published in connection with the opening of a new primary school for boys in Kilmallock, in 1967, bore the title Kilmallock — A Town with a Story.

Because of the relatively small size of the booklet, the story of Kilmallock could only be hinted at in it, and so the story of Kilmallock still remained to be told in its entirety, or as near to entirety as would be possible. To tell that story is what l have attempted to do in this book. I am well aware that more remains to be discovered about the history of Kilmallock than what I have chronicled in the book. But I am glad I have written the book, for I think it will bring home to the people of Kilmallock, and to the people of Co. Limerick, and to the people in other parts of Ireland who may read it, just how important was this splendid Geraldine town, with its magnificent cut-stone mansions, and its towers and walls and gates, standing at what was once the crossroads of Munster.

I am grateful to the very many people from whom I have received advice or information while writing the book. For their constant and invaluable support and encouragement, I would like, first of all, to thank the members of the History Book Committee of Kilmallock Historical Society: Treasa Ní Dhochartaigh, Noel Collins, Michael Donegan, Christy Murphy, Seán Naughton and John O Leary.

And I would like to thank the following: archaeologists Margaret Gowan, Glenageary, and Christine Tarbett, Hospital, for information on the excavation of the Neolithic house site at Tankardstown; Professor

Breandán O Madagáin, UCG., Professor Tomás O Máille, Galway, and Diarmuid O Murchadha, M.A., Crosshaven, for their assistance in elucidating the meanings of certain Kilmallock placenames; Professor Pádraig O Riain, U.C.C., and Professor Seán O Cinnéide, U.C.G., for information on St. Mocheallóg; Liam Irwin, lecturer, Mary Immaculate Training College, Limerick, Professor Pádraig de Brún, Institute for Advanced Studies, Dublin, Gerard Lee, S.C., Dublin, Maurice Craig, Dublin, the late Dr. A.T. Lucas, Dublin, Walter Mac Grath, Cork, Siobhán O Doherty, Quarry Hill, Cormac O Riordan, Mallow, Ven. Archdeacon Brian Snow, Kilmallock, and Jim Meagher, Cobh, for information on various aspects of the history of Kilmallock; Dr. Dáithí O hÓgáin, UCD., for notes on the lore of Kilmallock; Dr. Eamon O hÓgáin, RIA., for information on the poet, Eoghan Caomhánach.

My thanks too to Chris O Mahony, Regional Archivist, Limerick, and to the following librarians: Gerard Lyne, National Library, Dublin, Muiris O Floinn and Aine Thornhill, of Limerick City Library, Róisin de Nais and Seosaimhin Nic Cába, of Limerick County Library, Nóra de Brún, U.C.C. Library. All were most helpful.

A very special word of thanks to John O Riordan, Gortboy, for permission to use the unpublished papers of his late father, Seán T. O Riordan, covering the War of Independence and Civil War periods. And thanks to Patrick Fitzgerald, Sheares St., Kilmallock, for the minute book of the Kilmallock Amalgamated Trades Society; to Mrs. Mary R. O Connor, Nenagh, for the diary of James W. Joyce, which had belonged to her father, the late Dan Mac Namara, Sheares St., Kilmallock; and to Micheál Ó Súilleabháin, Emmet St., for letting me see manuscript notes of Nicholas Gaffney.

Then there were the many people who supplied information on the Kilmallock of recent times, and to whom I am deeply gratefull; Timothy J. O Donovan, Gortboy, John Brazill, Beechlawn, Kilmallock Hill, Jimmy Ryan, Sheares Street, Christy Clifford, Millmount, Connie Hannon, Steales, Jim Hogan, Ballygibba South, John J. Carroll, Mountfox, Paddy Tierney, Dromin, Thomas O Doherty, Millmount, Very Rev. Gerard Canon Wall, P.P., Kilmallock, Rev. Fr. Mark Crowley, Kilmallock Hill, Rev. Fr. John Carr, Glenfield, Denis Crowley, Kilmallock Hill, Jackie Houlihan, Deebert, Jim Moloney, Sarsfield Street, Mrs. Dinah O Grady, Sheares Avenue, Mrs. M. Leahy, Sarsfield Street, Michael Barry, M.C.C., Railway Road, Kevin Carroll, Sarsfield Street, Mrs. D. Costello, Bruff, Mary Mulvihill, Millmount, Mrs. H. Noonan, Wolfe Tone Street, Mary Hayes, Emmet Street, Violet Bailey,

Grainganster, Tom Bailey, Graigarister, Mrs. N. O Grady, Sarsfield Street, Callaghan Mac Carthy, Glenfield, Máirin Ui Loinsigh. Steales, An tAth, P.B. Mac Cionaoith, O.P., Droichead Nua, John J. Mac Namara, CAO., Parnell St., Limerick, Fr. John Fleming, Rome, Mrs. N. Naughton, Emmet St. Kilmallock, Richard Moylan, Shortcastle, Mallow. Finally, I would like to thank Fr. John Leonard, C.C., Kilmallock, who wrote the Foreword for the book, and whose helpful advice was always available.

Níor thuigeas féin cé chomh tábhachtach is a bhí Cill Mocheallóg lá den saol go dtí gur thosaíos ar an leabhar seo a scríobh, agus go bhfaca mé go mbíodh se a lua tráth i measc bailte agus cathracha mar Chill Chainnigh, Luimneach, Chionn tSáile, Ghaillimh agus fiú Baile Átha Cliath féin. Baile Gaelach ab ea Cill Mocheallóg, ina mbíodh an Ghaeilge á labhairt ag Gaeil agus Gearaltaigh: ag Séamus Mac Muiris mhic an Iarla lá a ghéillte i bhfianaise na n-uasal Gallda; ag na filí Gaeilge a thaithíodh an baile; ag an muintir a bhaist na logainmneacha ar iliomad páirc, gort agus fearann sa pharóiste.

Ta áthas orm go bhfuil scéal Chill Mocheallóg, agus scéal a mhuintire, ríofa agam sa leabhar seo.

Seo, mar sin, scéal Chill Mocheallóg,
Baile álainn Gearaltach in allód,
Baile a creachadh is a dódh,
Baile spreag laochas agus bród.

Mainchín Seoighe
Baile Thancaird,.
La Fhéile Mocheallóg, 1987

FOREWORD

The development of towns in Ireland began after the Norman settlement in the later twelfth century. Kilmallock is one of these towns, and to this day retains the shape given it by its Anglo-Norman builders, notably its cross-linear street pattern and burgage plots, many of which appear to be undisturbed since they were first alloted. The one surviving town gate, Blossom Gate, and section of town Wall, date from late medieval times, but more than likely are on the site of the original gate and wall. Indeed, Kilmallock is one of the few North Munster towns still retaining a considerable section of its medieval defences.

The medieval parish church, Sts. Peter and Paul's, and Dominican priory, both much rebuilt, also date from Norman times. The Dominicans built their monastery outside the walls, possibly because by 1291, the date the monastery is reputed to have been founded, there was no longer sufficient land available within. It has been suggested that the present castle may have been one of the town gates of a smaller Kilmallock which was later extended. Another of the town gates, John's Gate, may at one time have been on the site of the present castle. Interestingly, the area north of the castle, present day Sheares Street, is known locally as Garryowen (i.e. Garraí Eoin, John's Garden), and in Limerick city the area outside John's Gate was also known as Garryowen.

Kilmallock had a long association with the Desmond Geraldines, being known as the 'chief town (of the Earl) of Desmond'. There is no evidence, though, of there ever having been in Kilmallock a complex of buildings worthy of an earl, as, for instance, at Askeaton and Newcastle West. The Civil Survey of 1654-56 refers to many buildings in Kilmallock as 'Castles', though these were built after the hey day of the Geraldines. Incidentally, the Survey is a mine of information on the town; it lists not only the houses but also the number of rooms in each. Kilmallock, despite its Norman origins, takes its name from the obscure seventh century saint, Mocheallóg. It is unlikely that the present ruin located on Kilmallock Hill, and reputed to be that of Mocheallóg's church, is in fact so, though it may well be built on the site of a previous church. There are no other visible remains of any consequence on the Hill that might suggest a monastic settlement. An aerial view of the site might show traces of long gone earthworks.

The round tower, which is part of the medieval parish church, and eleventh century references in the Annals to the monastery of Kilmallock, support the belief that the Normans built their church on the

site of an older Celtic monastery located on the side of the river and some distance from the Hill. This cannot be claimed with certainty until the date of the round tower is established beyond reasonable doubt. It is claimed on the one hand that it pre-dates the Norman period, and on the other that it was built at the time the parish church was built. An excavation may be needed to solve the problem satisfactorily.

In the following pages Mainchín Seoighe unfolds the story of this ancient town and its surrounding district. I am privileged and honoured to be asked write a formal introduction to this book which will become an enduring monument to Kilmallock and to the people who lived there. The author has done the work in a manner that meets the highest standards of scholarly research. He has given the whole life-story of Kilmallock in a study that is both broad and detailed, emphasizing the significant, omitting nothing that is relevant. He shows us how one town was involved in the events that make a nation's history. In the telling of Kilmallock's story he has made a contribution to Ireland's story also.

Ba mhaith liom, ar son mhuintir Chill Mocheallóg, agus ar mo shon féin, comhghairdeas a dhéanamh leis an údar, agus buíochas ó chroí a ghabhail leis, as ucht an leabhair thábhachtaigh seo. Táimid go léir faoi chomaoin aige. Guím beannacht Dé air, agus ar gach duine a chabhraigl leis chun an leabhar a chur i gceann a chéile, agus ar gach aoinne a léifidh é.

Reverend John Leonard, C.C.,
Kilmallock, 1st March 1987.

AN INTRODUCTION TO THIS EDITION

Is cuís mhór athais dúinn an t-eagrán nua seo de "The Story of Kilmallock" a chur ar fáil. Cuimhnímid ar údar an leabhair seo Mainchín Seoighe a fuair bás ar an 3 Luil 2006. Go gcúiti Dia a shaothar. Tá Cill Mocheallóg faoi chomaoin mhór ag Mainchín de bharr an éacht oibre a dhein sé chun on t-eolas go léir ata sa leabhar seo a bhailiú. Ní aibhéil a rá gur bíobla eolais "The Story of Kilmallock". Cuimhnímid chomh maith ar a bheancheile Proinseas, a leathbhádoir ins an obair seo, a d'éag tamall gearr ina dhiaidh.

It is with great pleasure Kilmallock Historical Society offers to the general public a re-print of Mainchín Seoighe's (Mannix Joyce's) monumental book on the history and cultural heritage of Kilmallock on this 25th Anniversary of the publication of the original book in October 1987. We remember Mainchín his scholarship and gentlemanliness, and whose passing on 3rd July, 2006, left a big gap in the promotion of a knowledge of history, heritage and culture, not only in Kilmallock but far and wide in the province of Munster. We also remember his wife and soulmate Frances who went to her eternal reward not so long after her dear husband. May God reward their work. Go gcúití Dia a saothar.

The "Story of Kilmallock" has proved to be a great stimulus to the cherishing of our culture and heritage in Kilmallock. The group which helped to fundraise for the publication of the book formed themselves into Kilmallock Historical Society and this group along with members who have come into the Society during the following quarter of a century have striven year after year to promote a knowledge and respect for the treasure trove of historic buildings which surround us in Kilmallock. The establishment of a museum is 1988 was possibly the most significant initiative of the Society and a house in Chapel Height, between the Castle and the Dominican Priory, provided an ideal location. During the period when Mainchín (1985-1987) was toiling away on the book, two members of the Society, Christy Murphy and Michael Donegan, created a scaled model based on a military map of Kilmallock drawn in 1597. This model measuring 8ft by 4ft along with an audio commentary spoken by Mainchín himself has been the centrepiece of the museum ever since. In 1989, the Society launched a history walking trail with plaques at 13 locations. In 1991, the Society celebrated the 700th anniversary of the foundation of the Dominican Priory and paid for the publication of the thesis on the architecture and stonework in the Priory by Arlene Hogan. 1992 marked the publication of the Shaffrey Report which outlined how

Kilmallock's heritage of ancient buildings be showcased for the good of the town. Limerick County Council and a number of other local organisations joined in the development of the heritage buildings and a plan entitled *Kilmallock Development Framework Plan* was published in 1994. This Framework Plan aimed at implementing the ideas of the Shaffrey Report in gradual stages. During the 1990's, the Historical Society hosted regular lectures at the Society Museum. In 1995 the society celebrated the 200th anniversary of the death of the famous Aindrias Mac Craith, better known as "An Mangaire Sugach" who was born near Kilmallock c.1708 and died in Kilmallock c.1795 and who is buried in the local cemetery. The pavements and streets of Kilmallock were dug up in 1999 and relaid in 2000 as part of a major Millenium Project. The foundations of many features such as the Market Cross, Ivy Gate and Water Gate were found thus confirming the information on the Museum model of the town. The Society concentrated in publishing historical journals from 2000 onwards, and during that time eight journals have been published, and one detailed guide to the interior of the church of St. Peter and St. Paul. The Society Museum in chapel Height has been refurbished during 2011 and 2012 and continues its work of giving information about Kilmallock past and present.

Many thanks, míle buíochas, to the Committees both past and present for their work and we hope that this reprint of Mainchín's great book "The Story of Kilmallock" will continue to inspire the work of presenting our ancient heritage both to ourselves and our visitors. Bail ó Dhia ar an obair.

Noel Collins
(Hon. Sec. Kilmallock Historical Society)
27th August 2012

1

Kilmallock District in Prehistory - and Later

Medieval Town

In its general layout the town of Kilmallock has scarcely altered since medieval times. To a very large extent it still lies within the narrow oblong area once enclosed by the town walls; and its medieval streets are also the streets of today, coping as best they can with the swelling tide of late 20th century traffic. A substantial stretch of the town walls, a town gate, a couple of old town houses, the citadel in the town centre, the collegiate church of SS. Peter and Paul and the Dominican priory still survive and impart a medieval flavour to the modern town. Still more, including some beautiful cut-stone houses, had survived up to the second decade of the 19th century, the whole effect of all this wonderful heritage of stone being sufficient to prompt one traveller to describe the town as "the Baalbek of lreland." [1]

Kilmallock, situated in the south of Co. Limerick, in Munster's famed Golden Vale, was one of the finest of Ireland's medieval towns, its inhabitants considering it the equal of Kilkenny. Its name is mentioned several times in the Gaelic annals, and figures numerous times in the English State Papers. To Kilmallock, over the centuries, came practically all the great ones of their time. Justiciars, lords deputies, captains of armies, provincial presidents, papal representatives, this one-time capital town of the Munster Geraldines received them all, some willingly, some unwillingly.

The town had its golden years of peace, prosperity and growth, but it was also to know wars and sackings; was to see fierce raiders scale its walls, and rampaging garrisons sally forth from its gates to devestate and terrorise the surrounding countryside. Above all, as we shall see, the story of Kilmallock is inextricably bound up with the tragic fate of the Munster Geraldines.

The story of Kilmallock to be told in this book will not be confined to the town itself, but will embrace the whole parish of Kilmallock. However, because of the far greater volume of

documentation concerning it that exists for long periods of its history, the town, naturally, will, at times, take up far more of the story than will the rural part of the parish.

The modern ecclesiastical parish of Kilmallock is much larger than the medieval parish, which was known as the Parish of SS. Peter and Paul. The townlands that formed this earlier parish were:

Abbeyfarm, Ardkilmartin, Ardyoul, Ashill, Ballycullane, Bawntard, Breesheen, Coolroe, Cullamus, Deebert, Fairyfield Glebe, Garrynoe, Glenfield, Gortboy, Graiganster, Kilmallock, Kilmallock Hill, Mountfox, Portauns, Proonts, Steales, Treanlewis.

In the early 1700's, when the Penal Laws began to operate vigorously against Irish Catholics, the Church authorities were faced with many grave problems, including a shortage of priests, and the inability of many of the existing parishes, because of their small size, to provide a living for their priests. As a result, the amalgamation of parishes began. A parish might be amalgamated with a neighbouring parish, or with two neighbouring parishes, or with a neighbouring parish and parts of a number of other parishes. In the case of Kilmallock, the old pre-Reformation parish of SS. Peter and Pauls was amalgamated with the parish of Tankardstown, and with parts of the parishes of Ardpatrick and Ballingaddy, the following townlands from these old pre-Refonnation parishes being added to those of SS. Peter and Pauls to give us the modern parish of Kilmallock:

From Tankardstown:	Ballygibba, Knocksouna, Tankardstown.
From Ardpatrick:	Mountcoote, Riversfield.
From Ballingaddy:	Ballingaddy, Ballygillane, Ballynahown, Ballynamoloogh, Flemingstown, Gotoon, Kilmihill, Millmount, Miltown.

Ancient Territories, Peoples.

In very ancient times the district in which Kilmallock is situated formed part of a large and important *tuath*, or petty kingdom, called Uí Fidhgeinte. This *tuath* was practically co-terminous with the present diocese of Limerick. About the year 950, apparently as a result of internal dissension, the people of Uí Fidhgeinte divided into two independent parts to form two *tuatha*, the eastern *tuath*, which embraced the Kilmallock area, becoming known as Uí Cairbre Aofa (later shortened to Uí Cairbre), and the western *tuath* becoming known as Uí Conaill Gabhra (later shortened to Uí Conaill, and subsequently anglicised Connello).[2]

It was customary for a *tuath* to take the name of the principal family

inhabiting it. The prefix *Uí*, occurring in so many *tuath* names, means 'descendants', being the plural of Ua (later Ó, as in Ó Briain, Ó Neill, etc.), meaning 'grandson' or 'descendant'. Hence Uí Fidhgeinte meant "descendants of Fidhgeinte"; Uí Cairbre, "descendants of Cairbre", and so on. To say that one was in Uí Fidhgeinte meant being among the Uí Fidhgeinte; to say one was in Uí Cairbre meant being among the Uí Cairbre. The boundaries of *tuatha* could contract or expand, depending upon the fortunes or strength of the families occupying them. Powerful *tuatha,* openly bent on expansion, or masquerading as protectors, might encroach upon their weaker neighbours.

This seems to have happened in the case of Uí Cairbre. East of Uí Cairbre lay the *tuath* of An Déis Bheag, the Small Decies, occupied by a branch of the Déisí, and so called to distinguish it from the larger Decies area in what is now South Tipperary and Waterford. At some stage the Déisí pushed their borders westward to incorporate that part of Uí Cairbre in which Kilmallock and Bruree were situated. Bruff was also part of the Déisí territory, and the Irish form of its name, *Brú na Déise* (the residence of the Déisí) recalls the connection of the Déisí with this part of Limerick. Deise kings were ruling in Bruree for a few hundred years before the coming of the Vikings; Because of this redrawing of *tuath* boundaries, we find Kilmallock described at one time as being in Uí Cairbre, and at another time as being in An Déis Bheag. The name Déis Bheag ("Desbeg") occurs as late as the 13th century in a document in the *Black Book of Limerick*.

According to Ó Rahilly, the Déisí belonged to the Builg (the Belgae of the Continent), the second wave of Celtic invaders to come to Ireland.[3] The Builg were commonly called Fir Bolg, but were also known as Erainn. The first wave of Celtic invaders to reach Ireland were the Cruithin (Pritini); the second, as just stated, the Builg; the third, the Laginians; and the fourth, the Goidels, later known as Gaeil, or Gaels. [4] A branch of the Goidels called the Eoghanacht, were soon to come into prominence.

Before the advent of these Eoghanacht, the Erainn had been the ruling family of Munster, but the powerful Eoghanacht were to wrest the kingship from them. The Déisí of An Déis Bheag, as a branch of the Erainn, now found themselves in the position of a vassal people to the Eoghanacht; they were also to fill the role of fighting men for the Eoghanacht. [5] About the year 400, members of the Déisí crossed the Shannon into what is now East Clare. Centuries later, descendants of those Limerick Déisí were to burst into history as the Dál Cais, or Dalcassians, and, under their king,

Mathúin, win back the kingship of Munster. They would even go further, for Mathúin's brother, the redoubtable Brian Ború, would one day wrest the High Kingship of Ireland from all competitors and become the most powerful native monarch Ireland has known.

Fontmykill

So far we have seen Kilmallock — or the district in which the future town was to arise — described as being located successively in Uí Fidhgeinte, Uí Cairbre and An Déis Bheag. Then, for a brief period after the coming of the Normans, it was described as being in still another territory, the cantred of Fontymkill, which extended from just north of Kilmallock to the Cork border south of Ardpatrick and Kilfinane. [6]

The Liberties and Barony of Kilmallock

Later still we hear of the Liberties of Kilmallock. In the context of Kilmallock the liberties meant that part of Kilmallock parish (that is, the medieval parish of SS. Peter and Paul) that lay outside the walled town itself. This area was under the jurisdiction of the corporation of Kilmallock, and its inhabitants enjoyed the same privileges as their fellow parishioners in the town. The townlands comprised in the liberties were those already listed in this chapter as being in the parish of SS. Peter and Paul.

The area of that old parish of SS. Peter and Paul was, in the course of time, elevated into a barony known as the Barony of Kilmallock. The Barony of Kilmallock does not include all of the present parish of Kilmallock, as Ballygibba, Knocksouna and Tankardstown are in the barony of Coshma (Cois Máighe), and Ballingaddy, Ballygillane, Ballynahown, Ballynamoloogh, Flemingstown, Gotoon, Kilmihill, Millmount, Miltown, Mountcoote and Riversfield are in the barony of Coshlea (Cois Sléibhe).

Ancient Inhabitants; Neolithic House Site at Tankardstown

Because of the discovery of a Neolithic house site on Leddin's farm in Tankardstown South, in August 1986, we now know that man inhabited the immediate Kilmallock area between 4500 and 5000 years ago. The site was uncovered during archaeological monitoring of the construction of the new gas pipe line from Mitchelstown/Mallow to Limerick. The pipe line route, before and during the construction phase, was closely watched by archaeologists, and all archaeological features were fully investigated as they occured, this with the full co-operation of Bord Gais Éireann.

The Tankardstown house site is important in that only a small

number of houses (less than 10) of a similar Neolithic date (2500 B.C.), have ever been recorded or previously excavated. While the great megalithic tombs and stone circles (such as those at Loch Gur) give evidence of their having been built by a highly organised society, with craftsmen skilled in the art of building, little is known of the habitation sites of the people who raised these great structures. This is due to the fact that generally no evidence survives above ground that would identify them.

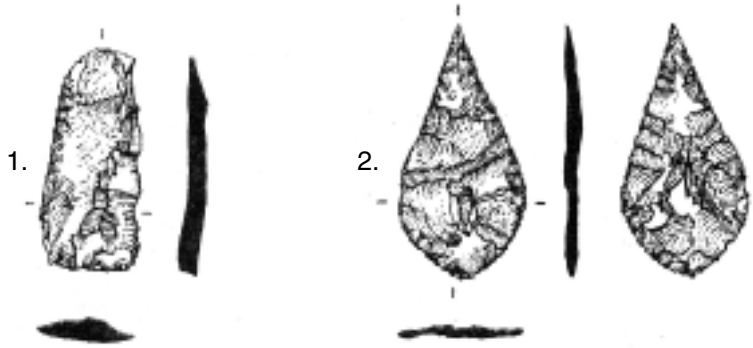
This was so in the case of Tankardstown house, where there were no indications on the surface of its existence until the topsoil was removed in the course of the pipe line construction. What first drew attention to the site were the large stones used to pack the foundation which, when they appeared in the subsoil surface, hinted at the possibility of this being a site of archaeological interest.

What survived of the Tankardstown house, as revealed by careful excavation, was the foundation trench, which gave an almost square outline to the house. The house measured 7.50m by 6.50m (say 24 1/2 ft x 21 ft.), and had evidently been burned. Burned clay of striking orange colour gave evidence of heavy burning. In contrast to the bright-coloured clay were the black charred remains of the timber uprights that survived within the trench. The house, it would appear, was constructed of vertical planks, with boulders rolled in at the base to secure them.

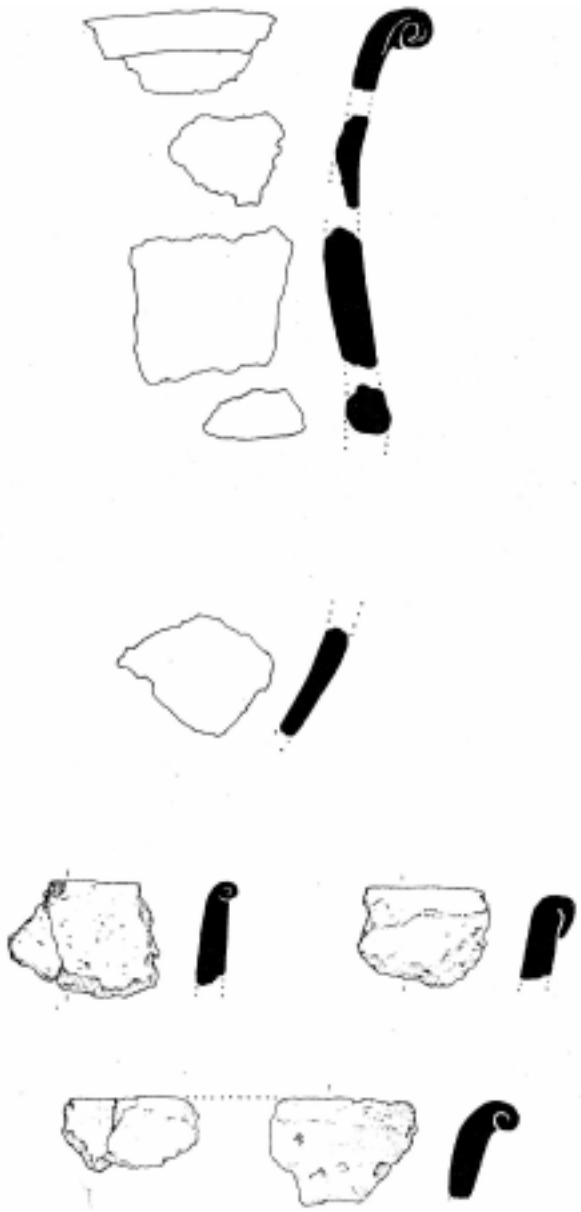
The house has been dated to the Neolithic, or Late Stone Age period by means of the artifacts that were uncovered from the foundation trench during the course of excavation. The artifacts included a beautifully worked lozenge-shaped flint arrowhead, 5 cms. long, and some fragments of round-bottomed, shouldered pottery, comparable in style to other pottery types occuring in a Neolithic context. Animal bones, and some charred seeds found in the soil samples, should, when fully identified, tell what animals, domesticated or wild, were around, and what kinds of crops the inhabitants of the house grew. It is quite likely that the sites of further Neolithic houses lie hidden beneath the soil in the area in which the Tankardstown site was discovered. *(Note: See Appendix at the end of this book for up-to-date report on the excavation).*

The discovery of the Neolithic house site at Tankardstown must lead to renewed speculation that the three great stones — one like a huge capstone — that lie piled together in the field at the rear of Kilmallock Catholic church, little more than a mile from the Tankardstown house site, are, in fact, the remains of a collapsed megalithic tomb. Such a tomb would date from the period of the Neolithic house, and could indicate the presence

Neolithic house foundation at Tankardstown, Kilmallock.



Finds at Neolithic house site, Tankard stown.
1. Flint implement
2. Flint arrowhead



Small fragments of Western Neolithic pottery discovered at Tankardstown site.

of a sizable colony in the area some 4500 years ago.

Knocksouna

It is of interest that the place in the parish of Kilmallock where evidence of the first inhabitants has been found, should lie within a mile of Knocksouna, which is the first place in the parish of which there is any mention in the early records. Knocksouna is a conspicuous round green hill lying at the western extremity of the parish, and rising 338 feet above an extensive plain. Under the date 4169 AM (equivalent to about 1000 BC) the Four Masters record the death of Sirna Saeghlach, king of Ireland for a century and a half, and list the battles he won. These included the battle of Samhain, Samhain being a shortened form of Cnoc Samhna, or Knocksouna. While one can be sceptical about the authenticity of the date of Sirna Saeghlach's death, and even more sceptical about the statement as to the length of his reign, the fact that Knocksouna is mentioned in such an early context shows that it must have been considered a place of great antiquity.

There are some further early references to Knocksouna, all of them concerned with battles fought there. We are told that Cormac Cas, son of Oilioll Ollum, King of Munster, engaged in battle with Eochaidh Abhrarua, Eochy the Red-Browed, at Knocksouna, and that Cormac was severely wounded in the head. He was taken to Dún Trí Liag (modern Duntryleague, near Galbally), where a fort was erected in the middle of a clear spring of water. A house was built over the spring, and three pillar stones were set up about it - hence *Dún Trí Liag*, the Fort of the Three Flag Stones. Here Cormac lay for three years, while his attendants poured water on his head. At the end of the three years he died, and was buried within the fort.

Another battle is recorded by the Four Masters as having taken place at Knocksouna in AD 241. That was when Cormac Mac Airt, High King of Ireland, attacked the men of Munster on the hill. In the battle fell Cian, another son of Oilioll Ollum. And a story in the Lives of the Saints in the *Book of Lismore* is woven around still another battle that was fought at Knocksouna. In the time of St. Fionnchu of Brigown, who flourished at the end of the 6th and beginning of the 7th century, Eochy of the Red Hand was king of Ulster. Eochy's wife, Moingfhinn, was constantly urging her husband to invade Munster and win that province for their sons. It was revealed to Fionnchu that the Northern king intended making war on Munster, and he fortwith sent a messenger to Eochy

warning him of disaster if he persevered in his intentions. But the urgings of Moingfhinn proved too strong to resist, and Eochy set out with his army for Munster, and eventually pitched camp at Ard na Ríoghraí — the Hill of the Kingfolk — by which name Knocksouna was then known.

At that time, Cathal, king of Munster, happened to be on a visit to Bruree, and when he and his company beheld the splendid banners floating in the air, and the tents of royal speckled satin pitched on Knocksouna, the king sent his spies to discover who were there. The spies returned and told him that the strangers were the king of Ulster and his men, and that they were seeking to take Munster for the Ulster king's sons. When Cathal heard this he decided to send for Fionnchu, who had promised help should the Munstermen ever be in dire straits.

Fionnchu, on receiving Cathal's message at his monastery in Brigown, near the present town of Mitchelstown, boarded his chariot, and travelled with all haste to Bruree; then, having consulted with Cathal, he went to Knocksouna, with presents for Eochy, whom he hoped to dissuade from making war on Munster. He wasn't successful in his mission of peace, and his gifts were not accepted. Returning to Bruree, Fionnchu set about preparing the Munstermen for battle. He then marched three times round them, crozier in hand, before leading them towards the Ulster encampment on Knocksouna. The Ulstermen charged down the hillside, but were broken on the slope by Fionnchu and his Munstermen. Eochy and his wife, with their sons, fell in the battle.

There may have been some historical basis for these accounts of the many battles stated to have been fought at Knocksouna, and it may well be that Knocksouna was one of the strong points in the line of defence around the royal residence in Bruree. In the early legends, and in *Leabhar na gCeart,* (the Book of Rights) it is mentioned with Bruree, Knockainy and Glenbrohane as being among the royal seats and territories of the King of Cashel, as the King of Munster was originally known. What may have been the remains of a bronze age burial was discovered some thirty years ago at the base of the hill, and aerial photography has revealed traces of earthworks on the summit of the hill.

The name Knocksouna derives from the Irish, *Cnoc Samhna*, meaning the Hill of Samhain. It was so called because of the solemn rituals, including the lighting of a huge ceremonial fire, that took place on the hill at Samhain, the festival we now equate with Halloween, or the 1st November. Similar ceremonies took place on Tlachta, now known as the Hill of Ward, near Athboy in Meath. The word Samhain itself probably

meant an *aonach*, an assembly or gathering together of the people of the *tuath* or petty kingdom.[7]

Samhain was the most important festival of pre-Christian Celtic Ireland, more important than Bealtaine or Lúnasa or Imbolg. The Celtic year was divided into two principal seasons, one running from Samhain to Bealtaine (lst May), the other from Bealtaine to Samhain. The old year ended and the new year began at Samhain, which was, according to one authority, the turning point in a pastoralist rather than an agrarian cycle. It marked the end of the grazing season, when, under primitive conditions, the herds and flocks were brought together, and all the animals, except those required for breeding, slaughtered. This provided an opportunity for unlimited feasting. [8]

Features of the celebration of Samhain — and this, in all likelihood, would have applied to Knocksouna — were the offering of sacrifices, [9] the practice of mysterious divinations to discover what the future held, and the relighting of household fires from a large ceremonial bonfire.[10] The great importance of Santhain is evidenced by the fact that in the ancient literature practically every event of note ascribed to the pre-Christian period, took place at Samhain. [11] Samhain was the time of the year when the temporal world was thought to be overrun by the forces of magic.[12] The sí-mounds, the abodes of the fairy folk, were thrown open that night, and the souls of the dead returned and became visible.[13] Knocksouna, *Cnoc Samhna*, was a centre of all that strange belief. It was a sacred place, a place of arcane ritual, a place apart. It was the great open-air pagan temple, where the white-robed druids chanted their mysterious incantations, and where, in that far distant past, the people of the *tuath* gathered to celebrate the feast of Samhain with all due rite and ceremony.

Its fame as an abode of the *sí* was to survive while Irish remained the predominant language over the greater part of Ireland. The hill is mentioned by Aogán Ó Rathaille in one of his poems, "Tionól na bhFear Muimhneach".

> *Gonuig síofraí Chnoic Samhna níor dhiomhaoin dom amhail dul*
> *Bíonn fíonta agus branda acu an iomad.* [14]
> (For one like me it would be no idle journey to visit the fairies of Knocksouna,
> They are wont to have wines and brandy in great abundance)

Bruree

As yet there was no sign of the appearance of Kilmallock on the scene. Politically, the most important place in all this part of what is now

Co. Limerick was Bruree, some four miles west of where the town of Kilmallock would one day rise. Bruree was the seat of power, and would continue to he so for many centuries to come. As we learn from the Irish form of its name, *Brú Rí*, it was a seat of kings, kings who, in the course of centuries, ruled over territories of varying sizes. Their designations varied with the extent of their territories: at one time they were kings of Munster: at another, kings of Uí Fidhgeinte or Uí Cairbre: at another, kings of Bruree. The King of Cashel (i.e. King of Munster) sent presents to the King of Bruree, which are enumerated in a quatrain in *Leabhar na gCeart*, beginning;

Seacht n-eich do righ Brogha-righ
Seven steeds to the king of Bruree,
Seven horns from which wine is drunk,
Seven swords, it is a happy engagement,
Seven serving-youths, seven bond-women,

And the gifts of the High King of Ireland to the king of Bruree are enumerated in another quatrain, beginning:

Tuairistol righ Brogha righ
The stipend of the king of Bruree
From the King of Ireland without sorrow;
Ten mantles, brown red,
And ten slaves without Irish (i.e. foreign slaves).

Ring Forts.

The whole area around Bruree, including the district comprised in the present parish of Kilmallock, was an area of great importance in pre-Christian and early Christian times. It is from those distant times that the earthen ring forts — called moats in this part of Co. Limerick — which are so numerous in the area, date. The largest of these are the old royal forts in Bruree. The Ordnance Survey maps show some dozen ring forts in Kilmallock parish, these being mainly concentrated in the west of the parish (Ballygibba, Tankardstown, Mountfox), and in the south-east, in the Ballingaddy direction. By far the largest fort in the parish is that at Portauns, which is a very impressive structure, being some 120 metres in diameter.

Each such fort was once a homestead occupied by a family, who kept some cattle and grew some crops, and who also, very likely, would have lived to some extent by hunting, fishing and the gathering of wild fruits. There were dwellings within the forts, these mainly constructed of wood, of which there was a plentiful supply in the surrounding forests. It

is thought that the people brought their livestock into the forts at night to protect them from wild animals such as wolves. The fort was almostly completely surrounded by a high bank or rampart, crowned by a protective wooden pallisade. Outside the rampart lay a deep trench, or fosse, filled with water. The surrounding ramparts have, in practically all cases, long since disappeared, the material of which they were made having gradually slipped away and fallen into the trench. The entrance to the fort was normally protected by a gate, or series of gates. These protective features must have given the inhabitants of the fort a sense of security.

Cnoc Samhna — Knocksouna

2

Mocheallóg and The Monastery of Kilmallock

It has been suggested that Kilmallock Hill, with Knocksouna and other strategic points to the north and west, may have been strong points in the line of defence around Bruree; and it has been further suggested that St. Mocheallóg may have founded his church on Kilmallock Hill to serve a garrison charged with the defence of Bruree.

Be that as it may, the story of Kilmallock really begins with the foundation of that church on Kilmallock Hill, about a mile north west of the present town. There, one might say, Kilmallock was born and christened, for that primitive church would grow into a monastery, and close to the monastery would grow a town that would take its name from the small church on the hill that the people called Cill Mocheallóg, the Church of (St.) Mocheallóg. The modern name Kilmallock, is of course, only an anglicised form of Cill Mocheallóg.

Very little is known about Mocheallóg, who appears to have flourished at the end of the 6th and beginning of the 7th century. It is said that he was a relative of St. Finnian of Kinnity, and that in his younger days he studied under St. Declan. He is highly spoken of in the early Irish calendars and martyrologies, and is sometimes described as being both an abbot and bishop. The ancient Féilire Óengusa styles him 'Mocheallóg of Cill Dácheallóg in Uí Cairbre of Munster'. His father, according to the earliest genealogy of the saint, was Tulodhrán; but in the *Book of Lecan* he is stated to be a son of Uibhleán, which would give him a Kerry connection. The name of the most westerly island of the Blasket group, Inishvickillane (at present owned by An Taoiseach, Charles Haughey), is thought to derive from Inis Mhic Uibhleáin, the Island of the son of Uibhleán; and it is considered very likely that the son of Uibhleán in question was the same person as Mocheallóg of Kilmallock, (See "Inis Mhic Uibhleáin", by Seán Ó Cinnéide, in *Feasta*, March. 1980) The contradictory genealogies of many of the lives of the early Irish saints

very likely represent the conflicting claims of different septs to kinship with the saints. Keating (*Foras Feasa*, iii, 136) states that Mocheallóg was a descendant of Conaire mac Eidirsceoil. Conaire, a Munsteman, is listed as one of the High Kings of Ireland. It appears that Mocheallóg was also known as Cillian, being identical with the Cillianus mac Tulodhráin, whose feast day is given in the martyrologies as March 26th, the date also given as the feast day of Mocheallóg [1]

Besides having established a church on Kilmallock Hill, Mocheallóg is also credited with having founded a church at a place called Cathair Mhic Connchaidh, stated to be near Lismore, some time between 639 and 656. Lewis, in his *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*, 1837, gives March 25th as one of the fair days of Kilmallock. The proximity of this date to the feast day of Mocheallóg, March 26th, probably indicates a connection between the holding of the fair and the celebration of the Saint's feast day.

The original form of the name Mocheallóg would have been Ceallóg. However, saints who were held in particularly high esteem by the people often had the prefix *mo* ('my') added to their names. In this way Cua became Mochua; Lua, Molua; Laige, Molaige, Íde, Míde, and so on. Less frequently, it was the profex *da* — old form of *do* — ("your") that was prefixed to the Saint's name. And there were instances where particular saints' names might sometimes be written with a "mo" prefix, other times with a "da" prefix. Lua was in this category. So was Ceallóg, as we know from references in the *Annals of the Four Masters* (1028), and *Féilire Oengusa*, quoted above, in each of which references the name of his Kilmallock monastery is given as Cill Dacheallóg, rather than Cill Mocheallóg, the more common form.

It would appear that around Mocheallóg's church on Kilmallock Hill a small monastery grew up. There would have been cells, almost undoubtedly of wood, for the monks, and a refectory. Later, as the existence of a round tower there testifies, the monastery was to be transferred down to the valley of the Lúbach, less than a mile away, where the town of Kilmallock now stands. Perhaps the building of the round tower in the river valley only represented an expansion of the monastery, with the ancient church on the hill remaining as part of the monastery. St. Kevin's monastery at Glendalough, it will be remembered, had seven churches.

The hill-top church was certainly to continue in existence for several centuries later, as we learn from a list of churches in Limerick diocese, compiled, it is thought, during the episcopate of Cornelius O Dea

(1405 - 1426). In this list is mentioned: “The chapel of St. Mathologus (Mocheallóg), on the hill of Kilmallock, whose festival is celebrated on the 26th day of March”.[2] The centuries-old cult of Mocheallóg must have been greatly weakened in the district, when, under Norman influence, the parish of Kilmallock was dedicated to SS. Peter and Paul.

The ruins of Mocheallóg’s church can still be seen on the gentle slope of the hill. The walls are only about two feet high, and are nearly covered with earth and grass. The building would appear to have been about 221/2 feet long and l21/2 feet wide. The walls, of large unmortered stones, are about three feet thick. There is a small burial ground attached to the church, and some stones that jut up from the ground may mark burials. However, no burials have taken place there in living memory.

If it was not a question of growth and expansion, then there must have been some other reason for the transfer of the monastery of Kilmallock from the original site down into the nearby valley of the Lúbach. Could it have been for the practical purpose of being near the river, with the many advantages that such a site would confer? We do not know. Nor do we know when the move was made, but the existence of the round tower, incorporated as a belfry in the 13th century church of SS. Peter and Paul, pinpoints the location of the monastery on its new site. Nothing of that monastery now remains, apart from the round tower; but it can be assumed that the old church of SS. Peter and Paul, with the surrounding burial ground, marks the site, There is one 10th century reference, and three 11th century references, to the monastery of Kilmallock; it is not possible to say however to which of the monasteries, the hilltop one, or the river-side one, any of the references relate.

The first mention of Kilmallock is in an entry in the *Annals of Inisfallen*. The entry, under the date 927, states: *Ar nGall Puirt Lairge oc Cill Mo-Chelloc a firu Muman 7 la Gallu Luimnich*; that is:A slaughter of the foreigners of Waterford (was inflicted) at Kilmallock by the men of Munster and the foreigners of Limerick. The foreigners in question were the Danes, or Vikings, who had been established in Limerick and Waterford and other seaport towns. A year previous to the slaughter at Kilmallock — the slaughter obviously took place near the monastery, since there was as yet no town of Kilmallock — the Danes of Waterford had transported their fleet overland to Loch Gur *(Annals of Inisfallen)*, The Danes had been established in Limerick only since 922, when Tomar and his fleet sailed up the Shannon, and settled on Inis Ibhton, the island on which the future city of Limerick was to grow. From there they plundered the surrounding countryside, and the monasteries from Loch

Derg to Loch Ree, growing rich in the process. The Danes of Waterford, having become jealous of their opulent Limerick kinsmen, came to Loch Gur, in the hope of being able to share in the spoils. This, in turn, angered Tomar's people and the native Irish of the Loch Gur district, and they came together and, as stated, routed the Waterford Danes at Kilmallock, in 927. [3]

The next reference to Kilmallock, this also in the *Annals of Inisfallen*, informs us that in 1015 Cill Mocheallóg was plundered by O Donoghue, and by Dunadach, son of Conaing. Again, the reference is to the monastery of Kilmallock, for it would be another 200 years before there would be a town of Kilmallock. We do not know the reason for the plundering of the monastery. A.T. Lucas suggests that in prestige and personnel these early monasteries were so closely identified with the people in whose territory they were situated that they were potential targets for enemy action. [4] The plundering of a monastery, he says, did not necessarily mean the plundering of the actual building; it could also mean the plundering of the monastic lands, the driving off of the cattle and other livestock, the burning of crops. [5] Could it be, one wonders, that the monastery was still on Kilmallock Hill when it was plundered, and that it was after that the move to the river valley site took place?

There are two further references in the Annals to the Kilmallock monastery. Both the *Annals of Inisfallen* and the *Annals of the Four Masters* record the death of Flaithnia ua Tighernáin, lector of Kilmallock. However, they differ slightly as to the year of his death, the *Annals of Inisfallen* giving it as 1027 and the *Annals of the Four Masters* as 1028. The next entry, again in both the *Annals of Inisfallen* and the *Annals of the Four Masters*, is under the date 1050, and records the death of Conall, airchinneach and former lector of the monastery of Kilmallock. An airchinneach was the officer or steward who regulated the lands of the monastery and kept the church in repair. [6] After 1050 we hear no further of the monastery of Kilmallock, and how long more it lasted we do not know.

When, finally, it ceased to function, the monastic property would seem to have merged into the episcopal property of the diocese. [7] In the 13th and 14th centuries we find the tenants of many properties in Kilmallock paying rents to the Bishop of Limerick. Some 250 years after that last date on which the old pre-Norman monastery of Kilmallock was mentioned in the Annals, a new monastery, a Dominican foundation, would arise in Kilmallock, just across the river from the ancient foundation.

3

The Norman Town of Kilmallock

The Normans Come

The Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169 was to be the forerunner of a dramatic development in the story of Kilmallock, For a quarter of a century, up to his death in 1194, Donal Mór O Brien, last king of Thomond, succeeded in maintaining the independence of his kingdom against the Normans, but after his death the invaders rapidly established themselves in Limerick. In 1199, King John, who was then in Ireland, made a grant of several parishes in the south-western part of the cantred of Fontmykill, to the Norman, William de Burgh.[1] East of de Burgh's portion, in the same cantred, the king granted lands to Thomas Fitz Maurice. It was from this Thomas that the Earls of Desmond descended, Thomas being the great great grandfather of Maurice Fitzgerald, the first Earl of Desmond.

Fontymkill, as stated in chapter 1, embraced a considerable territory, extending from north of Kilmallock to the Cork border, south of Ardpatrick and Kilfinane. The lands granted to Thomas fitz Maurice were probably in the Kilfinane direction,[2] In the southern part of Kilmallock parish there is a townland called Kilmihill, *Cill Mhichil*, where, as the Irish form of the name indicates, there once was a church dedicated to St. Michael the Archangel. There is also in the townland a holy well dedicated to St. Michael, *Tobar Mhichil*. These names would seem to have a definite connection with the cantred name Fontmykill; indeed, the names Tobar Mhichil and Fontymkill are identical in meaning. If, as seems likely, the well gave its name to the cantred, it must have been well known, being perhaps a long-established place of pilgrimage.

In 1199, the year William de Burgh and Thomas fitz Maurice got their grants of land in Fontymkill, another important Norman personage, Geoffrey de Marisco, held the cantred of Any (Knockainy), the manor of Adare, and a number of episcopal lands, including those of Kilmallock.[3]

These lands at Kilmallock de Marisco held as a tenant from the Bishop of Limerick. Some time about the year 1200 King John ordered a complete inventory to be taken of the episcopal lands in Limerick, perhaps to forestall their alienation, or acquisition, by men like de Marisco. [4]

There is a record of a castle existing in Kilmallock in 1206. In April of that year King John ordered Meyler Fitz Henry, Justiciar of Ireland, to arrange that an Inquiry be made by liege men of the kingdom of Cork and the kingdom of Limerick as to whether the castle of Kilmallock, the cantred of Uí Cairbre Uachtarach, and certain other named territories belonged to the kingdom of Cork or the kingdom of Limerick,[5] Cairbre Uachtarach, or Upper Cairbre, is represented today by the deanery of Kilmallock; Cairbre Íochtarach, or Lower Cairbre, by the deanery of Adare. [6]

Beginnings Of Town Of Kilmallock

It can be assumed that the beginnings of the town of Kilmallock date from very soon after the Normans built their castle there. The military-minded Normans were quick to perceive the strategic value, and the value as a communications centre, of the old monastic site on the banks of the Lúbach. It lay in a narrow space, between a small lake (now gone) and the river, on the main line of communication between Cork and Limerick, and it guarded the passes lying between the Galtee and Ballahoura mountain ranges. Important routes also ran east and west from it. Great forests spread away from it to the south, and to the southeast and southwest. The site was carefully chosen, for Kilmallock was built to be a fortress town, strongly walled and protected, standing at a crossroads, in a remarkably fertile limestone plain, in the heart of the great oak woods.

The town was characteristically Norman in its linear layout: long wide main street, with short side streets. Plots of ground ran back from the rears of the houses, and these plots could be used as gardens or to keep animals in. The location of the strongly-built church of SS. Peter and Paul, in an angle formed by the wall, and away from the main street and market place, may have had something to do with defence; the early Norman churches in Fethard and Clonmel had similar locations.

Bishops As Lords of Ville

Kilmallock was well established by 1221 when the holding of fairs in the town was licensed. Geoffrey de Marisco, who was in possession of the vill of Kilmallock, as tenant of the Bishop of Limerick,

since as early as 1199, paid homage to Hubert de Burgh when the latter became Bishop of Limerick, in 1223, and promised to pay a yearly rent of 20s. for the Kilmallock property. However, some dispute subsequently arose between Geoffrey and the bishop, and Geoffrey was excommunicated. Hubert had large land possessions in the diocese, and was, of necessity, mixed up in secular affairs. [7]

The whole of the diocese would seem at this time to have passed completely under the sway of the Normans; even in the case of the church lands the names on legal documents were Norman or English. [8] Geoffrey appealed against his excommunication, and the bishop of Lismore was appointed by the Pope to enquire into the case. Geoffrey did not fare too well in the Inquiry, reliable witnesses having testified to the many injuries he had done the church, its property, its clergy and people. Among the findings of the Inquiry was that Geoffrey "in the name of the church of Limerick had received 100 marks by quit claiming the ville of Kilmallock: the annual income of said ville was 32 lbs silver and half a mark, and that for twenty years and more he detained said ville". [9] The result was that the Bishop of Lismore found that the sentence of excommunication formulated by the Bishop of Limerick was just, and he confirmed it. [10]

Geoffrey's son, William, subsequently murdered a priest named Henry Clement, before the King's gate at Westminster, for which he was outlawed. Later he became a pirate. Eventually, he was captured and executed. [11] On 14th November, 1236, Geoffrey, appealing against an action of the Bishop of Limerick regarding certain lands lately tenanted by William, represented to the king "that whereas William, his son, outlawed for the death of Henry Clement, held of Geoffrey the land of Kilmallock, Ireland, and Geoffrey held it of the Bishop of Limerick; the latter caused the Justiciary to seize the land as his escheat". [12]

Escheat meant the reversion of property to the fuedal lord in the absence of legal heirs or upon outlawry of the tenant. Geoffrey fared better in his appeal against the escheat than he did in his appeal against his excommunication, for it was found that the Kilmallock property "cannot, according to the custom of the country, be the Bishop's escheat, and as William did not hold it immediately of the Bishop, the King commanded Maurice Fitz Gerald, Justiciary of Ireland, to give seisin of the land to Geoffrey". [13]

In 1244, John Fitz Thomas Fitzgerald, son of that Thomas who had received a grant of land in Fontymykill, near Kilmallock, seems to

have held Shanid; by 1252 he was stated to have also held Corca Oíche in south-west Limerick. [14] So it would appear that the Fitzgeralds, or Geraldines, were gradually enlarging their estates and moving towards the position of dominance they would one day hold, not only in Kilmallock and very much of Co. Limerick, but in a very large part of Munster as well.

Robert Neil succeeded Hubert de Burgh as bishop of Limerick in 1251, and immediately after his appointment the new bishop instituted proceedings for the recovery of certain churches of the diocese, the control of which had passed to the prior of Athassel. The bishop of Cloyne was commissioned by the Holy See to conduct an Inquiry and decide the matter in dispute. A contemporary document informs us that the sittings to hear evidence took place at the church of Ballycahane, and "the great church of Kilmallock". [15] The church of SS. Peter and Paul, the remains of which occupy the old monastic site in Kilmallock churchyard, was therefore already in existence by 1251.

Growing Importance Of Kilmallock

The growing importance of Kilmallock becomes evident from now on, in its frequent selection for important inquiries, in the number of visits paid there by justiciars and kings' lieutenants deputizing for the English king, and in the fact that parliament sat there on a few occasions. It also would appear to have been granted a charter before the end of the 13th century. As well, its trade and commerce were expanding, and the growth of a rich merchant class was adding to its prosperity. Its fairs were attracting people from as far away as Cork.

On the 8th August, 1282, an inquisition or inquiry was conducted in Kilmallock on the order of the king, by Stephen, Bishop of Waterford and Justiciar of Ireland. The purpose of the inquiry was to decide what lands and tenements John fitz Thomas Fitzgerald, already mentioned in this chapter, held at the time of his death. Juries for the inquiry were provided by the sheriffs of Cork, Limerick and Kerry. John was found to have been possessed of properties in Kildare, Kilkenny, Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Kerry. [16] The foundations of Geraldine power had been well and truly laid.

From Black Book Of Limerick

Many documents from the valuable Latin medieval compilation known as the *Black Book of Limerick*, refer to Kilmallock. These documents, from the 13th century, relate to civil and ecclesiastical

matters, for the bishops of Limerick, holding large land properties in the diocese, were, of necessity, involved in secular as well as spiritual affairs. For example, we learn from the *Black Book* that in 1265 David de Barry, of Buttevant, quit claimed and surrendered whatever rights he had in the fair of Kilmallock to Robert, Bishop of Limerick, and his successors. And we learn that in 1272 William Fitzmartin granted to Gerald,who had been appointed Bishop of Limerick that year, one carucate of land near Kilmallock, to the east.

Also in the *Black Book* there is a most important set of deeds conferring certain rents in the town of Kilmallock on the bishop and chapter of Limerick. Unfortunately, the deeds are undated, but from internal evidence Begley would date them from the closing years of the 13th century, and Westropp from about 1280. [17] The documents are of particular interest in that they tell us the names of the streets, and the names of many of the citizens. Nearly all of the citizens' names have an alien look about them, being either French, or else very English in appearance. Few Irish, if any, were permitted to settle in the early Norman towns, racial exclusiveness being one of the hallmarks of these towns. Only a handful of the names survived and were to be found in later centuries in the town or its neighbourhood — Bluett, Prendergast, Fitzhenry, Bennet, Mey. The latter name, later to be written Meagh, derived from the Irish *Mídheach*, meaning a Meathman; it began to assume the present form Meade in the 17th century.

John Young was one of those who made a grant of the rents of certain houses and lands to the bishop and chapter. Twenty eight of the houses were in Main Street, now Sarsfield Street, but the names of thirty-two tenants appear in the deed, for in some cases the names of tenants occupying houses adjacent to particular houses mentioned in the deed are given for the purpose of identification. And so, because of the existence of the record in the *Black Book of Limerick,* we know that the following were occupiers of houses in Main Street, Kilmallock, shortly before the year 1300:

Walter Dug, John Fitzrodi, Letitie Seler, Nicholas Stopphil, Hugh Serston, Adam Flandr, William Pellipar, John Eoco, James Somerford, Adam Senchil, Henry Totomy, Rodi de Kilkenny, (2 stone houses), William Cantrell, John Arnold, Henry le Tanner, Henry de Lorn'y, Henry Bluet, William Fitzhenry, John Bluet, senior, John Fitzalan, John Neyl, Walter Kilfrys, John Fitzhenry Fitzjordan, John le Kene, John Bluet, junior, Henry Baiard, Elie le Machin, Richard le Hachim, John Baiard, Peter Pichard, Adam Husse, John Laudans, senior.

The other properties in Kilmallock, the rents of which John Young granted to the bishop and chapter were:

In Blapat Street (now Emmet Street): houses occupied by William White, John Neyl, Robert Neyl, Thomas Mey, the latter house "between town fosse and the tenement of Robert Wandreg"; John le Grey, David Fitzwilliam, Walens, William de Holde, and one tenement for which no name of occupier is given.

In Water Street (now Wolfe Tone Street): one tenement; no name of occupier given; in Fleming Street (now Lord Edward Street): house of William Fedem, "opposite the cross of John Fitzrichard, between king's highway and another way"; also, one tenement, with no name of occupier given.

Lands, the rents of which were granted:

One burgage of land in possession of John Hert, extending from Mona Mór on the south to the great water (*magnam aquam*) on the north ("burgage" was a medieval term relating to the tenure of land in a corporate town; it was the equivalent of the term "fee simple" which applied in rural areas).

5 acres of land bought by John Neyl from Henry Fitzjordan;

3 acres of land belonging to Henry Baiard called Gabli;

The land of Walter de Any, in length from the royal road (king's highway) on the south to the great water on the north;

One burgage of Gerald, son of Henry de Prendergast, in breadth ftom Botherbralmekeyn in the east to some lands in the west;

Half a burgage belonging to Jordan Fitzjohn extending in length from the king's highway leading to Emly on the south to Martyn's lake on the north, and in breadth from the land of Martin Bluet in the east to that of William le Long in the west:

One burgage belonging to Thomas le Wrey, in length from Hokytlack on the south to Martynstown lake;

One burgage belonging to William Benet, in length from Fontislac on south to the road which leads to Ardmachyllen on the north;

One burgage belonging to Adam Fitzjohn.

One burgage belonging to John le Grey;

Land in Main Street belonging to William Cantrell;

Among the witnesses to the deed in which all the aforementioned properties were set out was Nicholas Stoppil, Provost of the town. The post of provost in Kilmallock was akin to the later post of sovereign, and could, to some extent, be compared to that of mayor.

A second deed gives particulars of the properties the rents of which were granted to the bishop and chapter by Philip Fitzjohn Fitzthomas. These were the houses of Sandyr le Harper and Thomas

Smith in Water Street; the houses of William le Long and William Mareschall in Fleming Street; the tenement of Philip of the Mills, the location of which is not given; one burgage of land called Folisland, held by Adam Fitzjohn.

A third deed gives particulars of the properties in respect of which a grant of rents was made by William Ruffus:
The house of John le Marche in Main Street;
The houses of Thomas Smith and Adam Elys in Water Street;
A burgage held by Henry Baiard, in length from the king's highway which leads to Hakenys on the south, to the great water of the new mill on the north, and in breadth from the road which leads to the new mill on the east, to the land of Thomas Stope on the west;
Half of a burgage held by Symon Fitzjohn, in length from the royal road which leads to Arroldishyl on the south, to Martynslac on the north;
Half a burgage held by Adam White, in length from Hokedlak on the south, to Martynslac on the north.

Another grant made by Thomas Stoke granted to the bishop and chapter the rent from a house held in John's Street (now Sheares Street) by Henry Husse.

The final grant of the set recorded in the Black Book was made by Adam Fitzjohn Fitzgeoffrey; it was for 20 pence silver being the rent of the houses of Reginaldo Pellipor and Maurice Tesler, both in Blapat Street. This grant was made in a different year from the preceding ones, as it was witnessed by a new provost, Alexander Elys. [18]

It is not possible now to identify some of the places and features mentioned in the deeds. But others that may present problems at first can be identified. Ardmachyllen is now known as Mountcoote — the derivation of the original name is explained in the chapter on placenames in this book. Mona Mór was the now-vanished lake that, up to the middle of the last century, lay a short distance outside the town walls in the direction of Ash Hill Towers; it was called Monaghmore in the Civil Survey of 1654, in the section of the survey introducing the parish of SS. Peter and Paul, Kilmallock.

It is not clear what bodies of water are being referred to under the description Martynslac or Martynslake, and "the great water", which had a new mill on it. A map of Kilmallock, dating from about 1600, shows two large expansions of the river Lúbach near the town, one at Watergate Bridge, at the end of what is now Wolfe Tone Street, the other a short distance upstream from the North Bridge, at the site of the White Knight's castle of *Cúirt an Ridire*. Perhaps these constitute Martynslake and "the great water"?

4

Medieval Kilmallock

Strangers Unwelcome.

The merchants of Kilmallock, it would seem, were not too well disposed towards outsiders who came to trade in their town, for on 22nd April, 1287, King Edward I authorized the mayor and bailiffs of Cork to proceed against John Silvestre, Alan le Rede, John Pikard, Nigel Fitz Richard, John Clon, David Nel, John Husse and James Minour, all of Kilmallock, they having impeded the citizens of Cork "in fully buying and selling by wholesale or retail their merchandise in the said town of Kilmallock.[1]

During 1289 and 1290, John, Archbishop of Dublin, who had been appointed Keeper of Ireland after the death of the Justiciary, Stephen, Archbishop of Tuam, in 1288, made journeys to various parts of Ireland to parley with the Irish and Normans who had been threatening revolt. He was in Kilmallock on Wednesday, 29th June, 1289, the feast of SS. Peter and Paul, and also on the following day. He was again in Kilmallock on Sunday, 30th July. For his first visit to the town the Keeper claimed 76s. 5 1/2d expenses, and for his second visit 65s. 1 1/2d. [2]

Establishment of Dominican Monastery

The year 1291 was a notable one in the story of Kilmallock, for it was in that year the Dominicans established their monastery just outside the walls of the town. There is a certain amount of uncertainty about the circumstances leading up to the foundation of the Kilmallock monastery. Some accounts say that the friars came of their own accord, and bought a piece of land on which to build the monastery from one of the burgesses of the town, a man named John Bluet.

The normal practice was that a monastery was founded by a rich patron, either Norman or Irish, who invited the friars to come, and endowed them with lands; and popular tradition ascribes the foundation of the Kilmallock house to Gilbert Fitzgerald, ancestor of the White

Knights, the Fitzgibbon branch of the Munster or Desmond Geraldines. Lending very strong support to that tradition is the fact that Gilbert's tomb occupies the place assigned to a founder at the gospel side of the altar, and that the White Knights continued to be buried in the monastery up to the death of the last White Knight in 1608. Despite whatever connection John Bluet may have had with the coming of the Dominicans to Kilmallock, the weight of evidence leans towards a Geraldine foundation for their monastery there. A Geraldine foundation would be a further indication of the growing influence of the Geraldines in Kilmallock at that time, since they certainly would not have sited a monastery in an area they did not control.

Although papal authorization had been got for the establishment of the Kilmallock priory, the permission of the bishop of Limerick, who was feudal lord of Kilmallock, had not been sought, and six weeks after their arrival the friars were expelled by the bishop's men, and their buildings pulled down. The action taken by the bishop probably resulted from his wish to protect himself against the penalties that would be incurred by breaking the law of Mortmain. This was a law passed in 1279 which forbade all alienations of property in favour of any corporate body, ecclesiastical or secular, under pain of forfeiture. [3]

The friars appealed for redress to the English king, and on 3rd October, 1291, the King wrote to William de Vescy, Justiciary of Ireland, stating that he had been informed by the Dominican friars of Ireland that, having by grant of the King, so far as he could grant, and by protection of the Sheriff of Limerick, entered a piece of land in the vill of Kilmallock, given them by a burgess of that vill, they were ejected therefrom and their houses destroyed by the clerks and servants of the bishop of Limerick, chief lord of that vill, and by his orders. [4]

The king commanded the justiciary to inquire by oath of twelve men of the vill (Kilmallock) and its neighbourhood, by whom and by whose authority the friars had been expelled, whether the land owed any rent or service to the lord of the fee, and whether the residence of the brothers there would tend to the prejudice of the king, of the lord of the fee, or any other person. [5]

The Inquiry was held in Cashel on the 31st December, 1291, by the following jurors from Kilmallock: Henry Bayard, Ralph Picard, Walter Housse, Richard Mereston, William Bromfield, Adam Fitzjohn, Robert le Flemeng, William Long — these all burgesses of the town; Thomas de Berkeleye, William the Liye, Walter Kemeys, John Mor,

David Mutun, John Laurence, Hugh Cran, Simon the Wyta. [6]

Incidentally, two of the family names of those 13th century jurors from Kilmallock still survive in townland names in the Kilmallock district: Flemingstown and Ballincrana, the latter deriving from the Irish, *Baile an Chranaigh*, Cran's townland.

The Inquiry found that the piece of land in question owed no rent or service to the bishop as lord of the fee, and that the residence there of the friars would not tend to the prejudice of the king, the lord of the fee, or any other person. [7] So the Dominicans were able to return to their plot of ground and build there that noble monastery, which today, even as a ruin, is one of the architectural glories of Kilmallock. With regard to the name Bluet, which figures at the very beginning of the story of Kilmallock Dominican priory, it might be mentioned that bearers of the name are still fairly numerous in the Kilmallock district, and that numbers of them have answered the call to the religious life, to become priests, nuns and brothers.

Church Taxes

In 1198 a general law was made by the kings of France and England imposing a tax on their subjects of one tenth of the value of their movables and annual income for the relief of the Holy Land. As years went by this impost was limited to the clergy. [8] The taxes (set out in marks, one mark equalling l3s. 4d.) leviable on the various churches, within what is now the parish of Kilmallock, for the year 1302, were as follows:

Church of Kilmallock	Value:	20 marks	Tenth:	2 marks
Vicarage of same	..	10 marks	..	1 mark
Church of Ballingaddy	..	£10	..	£1
Vicarage of same	..	£2	..	4s.
Church of Ballytankard (Tankardstown)	..	6 marks	..	8s [9]

The taxation returns for the year 1306 also survive, and in connection with these the *Black Book of Limerick*, referring to Kilmallock, says: "The Church of St. Mary, Kelloc (Kilmallock) belongs to the maintenance of twelve vicars of the cathedral church". Commenting on this statement, Begley says: "This should evidently run as follows: The church of Kilmallock belongs to St. Mary's cathedral for the maintenance of twelve vicars . . . the rectorship of SS. Peter and Paul's

parish, which is Kilmallock, belonged to the chapter of the cathedral". [10] The taxes leviable on the churches in the area of the present parish of Kilmallock, for the year 1306, were as follows:

Portion of the Vicarage of Kilmallock	Value:	£5	Tenth:	l0s.0d,
Ballingaddy	..	£10	..	£l. 0s. 0d.
Balitancard (Tankardstown)	..	4 marks	..	5s. 4d [11]

In 1308, the Justiciar of Ireland granted the right to collect murage to the burgesses of Kilmallock, this being a tax or toll levied for the enclosing or strengthening of their town by walls; [12] but the town being already walled, the murage must have been for the rebuilding or the strengthening of the existing walls.

Highway Robbers

Crime obviously did not pay in the Kilmallock district. Some time in the year 1311, Richard Carragh was charged that he waylaid Thomas son of Geoffrey and Peter le White on the highway near Kilmallock and robbed them of two afers (horses) worth 20s. and two loads of fish worth a mark. It was further charged against Carragh that he was a common robber. It was stated that he had no chattels and no free land. He was sentenced to be hanged. [13]

Highway robbers could make travelling to Kilmallock or other towns a rather risky undertaking at that time. In a court case in Cork in 1313, Adam, son of William de la Court, was charged that he "together with other malefactors, feloniously slew Henry de Cadewely, merchant of the town of Cork, as he was going to the fair of Kilmallock, and robbed him of ten marks of silver, a horse worth l0s. and of all his clothes, worth half a mark..." Adam was sentenced to be hanged. [14]

This is the second instance we find in the surviving documents of the time, of Cork merchants travelling to Kilmallock, so there must have been very considerable commercial links between the two centres. And it would appear that the fair of Kilmallock was well known and was an important occasion for buying and selling.

Taking of Silver

The Kilmallock Dominicians, especially in their early years, do not seem to have been very fortunate in their relationship with bishops, for we learn that in the year 1318, William, Bishop of Emly, was

accused of having taken a box of silver out of the church of the Friars Preachers in Kilmallock. [15]

The White Knights

Mention has already been made of the White Knights in connection with the foundation of the Dominican priory in Kilmallock. The White Knights belonged, as stated, to the Fitzgibbon branch of the Geraldines. Maurice Fitzgibbon, the first to bear the title, was, it is said, knighted by Edward III in the year 1333, after he had distinguished himself at the battle of Hallidon Hill, near Edinburgh. It is also stated that two cousins of Maurice were also knighted on that occasion: John, who was dubbed the Black Knight, and Maurice, who was dubbed the Green Knight. According to the traditional account, they received their unusual titles from the colour of their armour. The Black Knights subsequently became known as the Knights of Glin, and the Green Knights as the Knights of Kerry.

These hereditary knightly titles, borne by branches of the Desmond or Munster Geraldines, were not in accordance with the usages of the feudal system, under which knighthood was not inheritable. It would seem therefore that these titles were transmitted by Irish usage, the Desmond Geraldines having adopted the customs, and having assumed the distinctive rights, of Irish chieftains. [16]

Maurice, the first White Knight, built a castle outside the walls of Kilmallock, on the right bank of the Lúbach, a short distance upstream from where the river turns left to flow under the North Bridge. The Castle, *Cúirt an Ridire* (the Knight's Court), anglicised Courtaruddery, is shown on a map of Kilmallock, from about 1600, which is preserved in Trinity College, Dublin.

On the death of his wife, Maurice gave himself up to piety and devotion and took on the habit of St. Dominic in the priory of St. Saviour in Kilmallock. He later moved to the monastery of Youghal, where he died in 1357. He was, however, buried in the Kilmallock monastery, beside his wife, in a tomb which he had erected for her during his lifetime. [17]

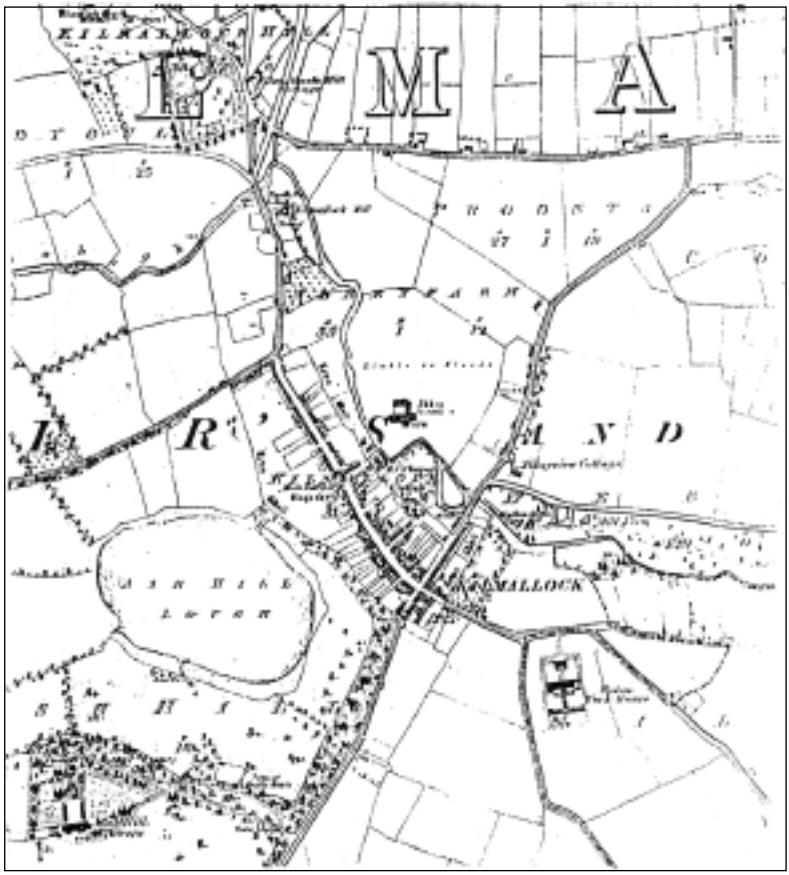
The very extensive lands of the White Knights lay east and south-east of Kilmallock, and extended into the counties of Cork and Tipperary. Mainly they lay to the south of Knocklong. The names of the following townlands and villages, selected from the eighty or so townlands they held in Co. Limerick, will give an idea of the extent of the territory once owned by the Knights in the county: Ardpatrick, Ballinscaula, Darranstown, Elton, Ballyfaskin, Cush, Ballylanders, Spittal, Cullane, Curraturk, Mitchelstowndown, Glenbrohane. The 1600

circa map of Kilmallock describes the road leading east from the town towards Emly as “Road to White Knight’s Country” this was the king’s highway, or royal road, of the *Black Book of Limerick*. The White Knights later removed from *Cúirt an Ridire* and went to live in their own domains: the Cúirt was a ruin by the mid 16th century.

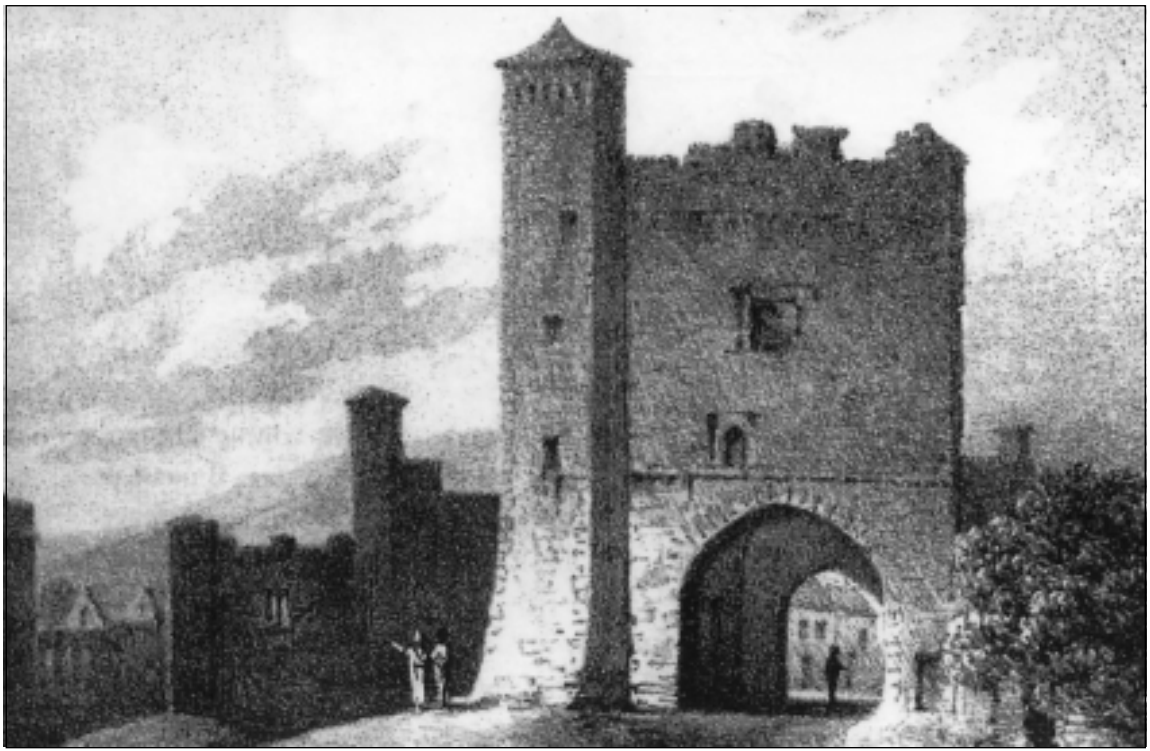
Fitzgibbon

Fitzgibbon Coat of Arms

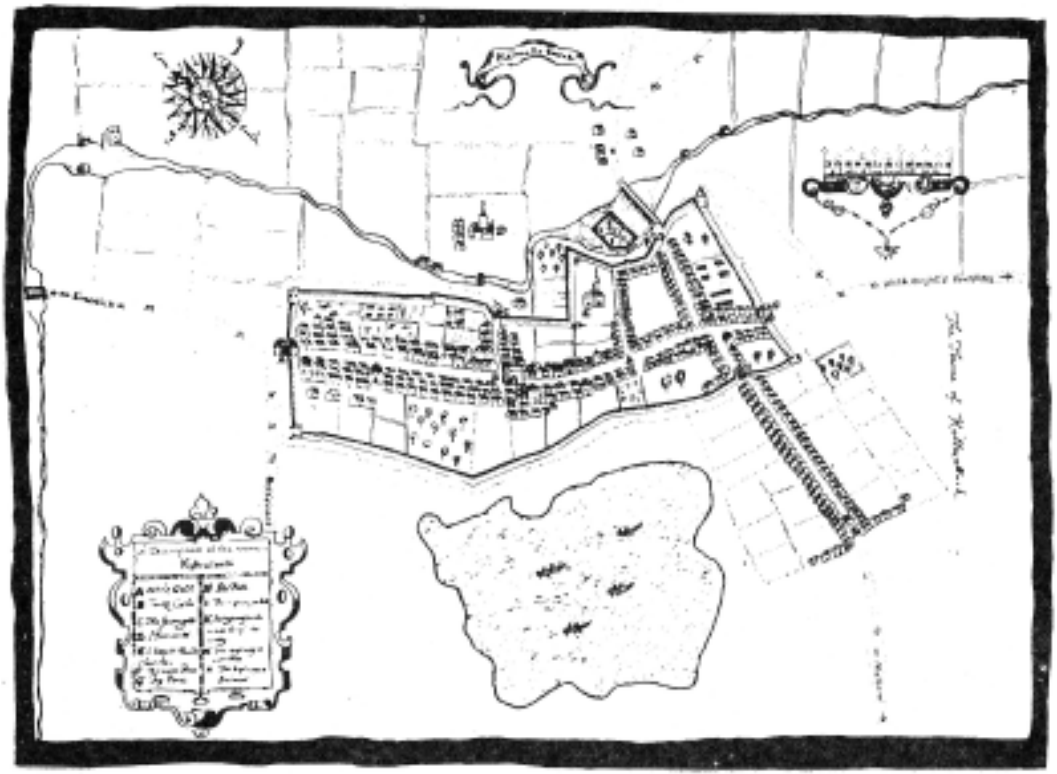
Map of Kilmallock Parish, showing townlands comprising the parish



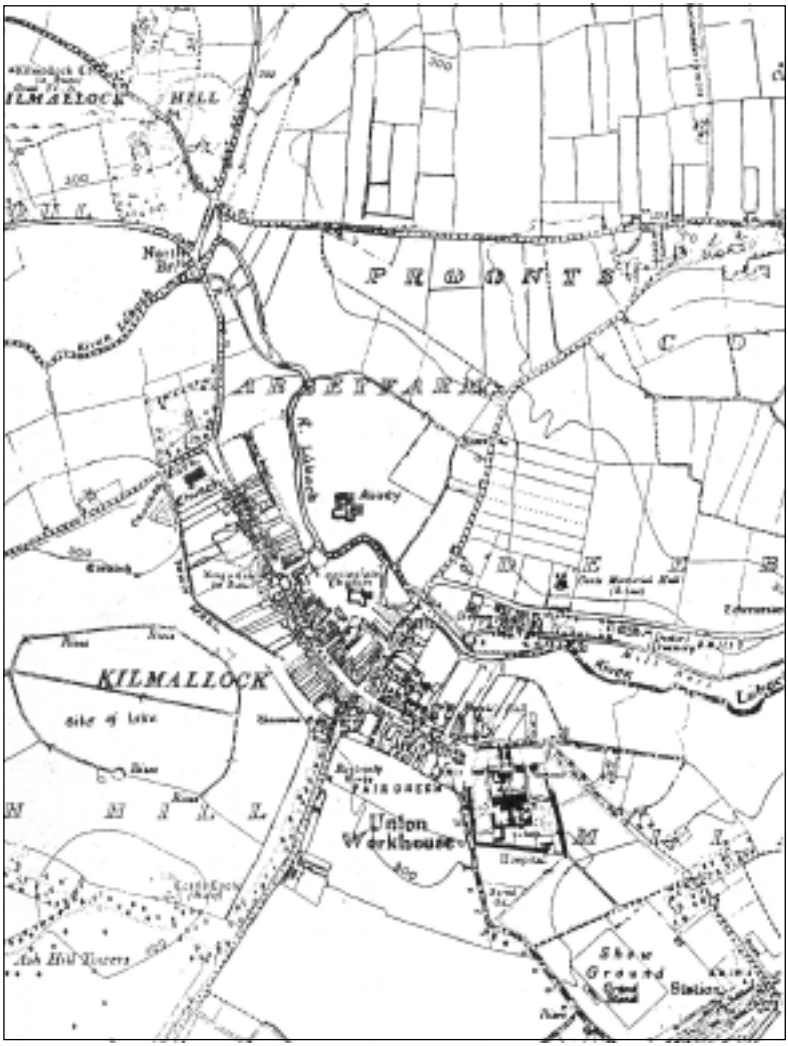
Kilmallock and District, 1840. Based on the Ordnance Survey by permission of the Government (Permit No. 4762)



St. John's Gate, Kilmallock.(North Gate)



Map of Kilmallock c. 1600. Original in Trinity College, Dublin.
A, St. John's Gate
B, John's Castle
C, the Friars' Gate
D, Dominican Priory
E, Collegiate Church
F, Water Gate
G, Ivy Gate
H, Blossom Gate
I, K, M, N, Highways out of Kilmallock.
Market Cross shown as triangle in Sarsfield St.



Kilmallock c. 1920, Based on the Ordnance Survey by permission of the Government (Permit No. 4762)

High Street, (Now Sarsfield Street), Kilmallock.

5

Growing Importance of Kilmallock

First Earl of Desmond

In 1329, Maurice Fitzthomas Fitzgerald was created first Earl of Desmond, the first in a line of powerful Geraldine chiefs, who would gradually extend their sway over most of Munster, and who would make Kilmallock the chief town of their realm. In 1346, as if setting a headline for his successors, the first Desmond began to behave like an independent prince, clashing with English royal authority, refusing to attend parliament and raiding neighbouring territories. [1] The government forces moved against him, and his castles at Askeaton and Castleisland were taken and he himself had to seek refuge among the Irish. Desmond subsequently surrendered and was pardoned. He was appointed Justiciar, or king's representative in 1355, but died the following year. [2]

Parliament Sits In Kilmallock

Some of Desmond's lands in Tipperary and Waterford had been confiscated as a result of his revolt against the English Crown, and at Kilmallock, on 20th August, 1346, Englishman John Morice was ordered to take inquisitions as to felonies and transgressions committed against the inhabitants of these lands after they had come to the king's hands. [3] Thus we see Kilmallock continuing as a location for inquisitions, as it was also to be for the launching of military campaigns, and for occasional sittings of parliament. Amory de St. Amand, Justiciar of Ireland, accompanied by chancery, the treasurer and other officials, visited Munster about the middle of 1358. This, the effective government, sat at Cork, Kilmallock and Limerick at various times up to early July. [4] The reason for the visit to Munster at this time probably had to do with the fact that Desmond's lands were still in wardship, because his heir was a minor. [5]

Sittings of parliament in centres outside Dublin took place in the most convenient church of chapter house.[6] So we can visualise the

Kilmallock sittings as taking place either in "the great church" of SS. Peter and Paul, or in the Dominican priory where a general chapter of the Dominican Order had taken place in 1340.

The Earl of Ormond succeeded St. Amand as Justiciar in March 1359. This was the period of Gaelic resurgence which almost undid the Norman conquest. The country was very disturbed, and there was disunity among the Normans themselves, many of whom had become Gaelicized, or were in the process of being Gaelicized. Ormond took vigorous action to promote the English interest in Ireland and to receive the submission of the Irish chiefs. After campaigning in the south-east and the midlands he turned his attention to Munster, where, in April, 1360, there was a campaign based on Kilmallock. [7] The Ormonds (Butlers), for long bitter rivals of the Geraldines, were, unlike the latter, to give almost continuous support to the English Crown.

Lionel of Clarence, son of Edward III, was appointed King's Lieutenant in Ireland in 1361, and arrived in Dublin with his army. He was active in many parts of the country, but not very effective, using his large army to provide local garrisons instead of fighting spectacular campaigns. [8] He and his followers were no doubt shocked by the partial assimilation of the Anglo-Norman, or Norman-Irish, to the Irish. [9] This was the process of Gaelicization which the statutes of Kilkenny would vainly endeavour to halt. On the 20th May, 1366, Lionel was in Kilmallock with a large army, and appears to have launched a campaign from there. [10]

Six years later Munster again seemed to be slipping from government control, and the Earl of Kildare, then acting Justiciary, set out for the south with government at the end of April, 1372, the government remaining in the south all during the summer, principally at Cork, Limerick and Kilmallock. [11] There can be no doubt as to the importance of Kilmallock, chief town of the Geraldine territories, at this time.

William of Windsor was appointed King's Lieutenant in March, 1369, and arrived in Ireland with a strong army to support him. He campaigned in various parts of the country before being recalled in 1372. In April 1374, he returned to Ireland as Governor, or Keeper, accompanied by 200 men-at-arms and 400 archers. His critics were later to allege, among other things, "that on his arrival in the spring he sent 120 horsemen to Kilmallock, who remained for a year "living on the poor commons and paying little or nothing . . ." [12]

Kilmallock Corporation

Kilmallock had a corporation by this time, for the corporation is

recognised as already existing in a charter granted to the town in the 49th year of the reign of Edward III, who became king in 1327. The corporation may have been created by an earlier charter, or may have been one by prescription. [13] The charter of Edward III granted to the Provost and Commonalty of the town tolls and customs of certain commodities coming to the town to be sold, or passing through it for sale, for a period of ten years, towards the rebuilding, repairing and fortifying of the town. Fortifying the town would have involved the strengthening of the town walls.

King's Representatives in Kilmallock

The procession of King's deputies and other high-ranking English officials to Kilmallock continued. In the late summer of 1391 we hear of John de Stanley, the Justiciar, being in Munster, "testing letters at Kilmallock". [14] Justiciars, or representatives of the king, were appointed only for short periods; and on 24th July, 1392, the Earl of Ormond was appointed to that office. It was another period of great disturbance in most parts of Ireland, with the Gaelic chiefs rising out against the Norman lords. As the king's representative, Ormond marched into Munster; and Otway-Ruthven says: "It seems to have been now that the royal service was summoned to Kilmallock, and there was certainly an expedition to Munster." [15]

Justiciars or chief governors, as well as having the power to make war, also had the associated right to proclaim the royal service, that is, to summon the tenants-in-chief to serve or pay scutage. [16] Scutage was a payment exacted by a lord from his vassal in lieu of military service.

In the early 15th century English influence in Ireland was still at a very low ebb. The new English king, Henry IV, found himself occupied with problems in Wales and France, and was reluctant to commit himself to any great extent, either militarily or financially, to dealing with affairs in Ireland. However, other methods were tried. In 1407 it had been argued in the English parliament that the duty of defending areas of the king's dominions under attack should be discharged by those who had lands and possessions in those areas. [17] This reflected earlier English policy "of attempting to force Irish-born residents in England to return to their own country or, at least, make them pay for the privilege of remaining in England. [18]

The effect of this policy was still being felt by one individual, a Kilmallock man, at least as late as the year 1410. In that year, Robert Sygyn, born in Kilmallock, complained to the King, Henry IV, that he was

still suffering harshly because of his failure to accompany Richard II in his expedition to Ireland in 1394. He had been brought to England originally at the age of fourteen, and had subsequently acquired a holding of ten acres in Yorkshire, where he had now been living for forty years. Because of his failure to go to Ireland he was fined one-third of a mark each year, as if his lands had been forfeited to the Crown. His petition to the King proved successful, and he was left in undisputed possession of his property.[19]

Kilmallock Gets New Charter

Kilmallock received a charter from Henry IV in 1409. By this charter the King granted to the portreeve and burgesses of Kilmallock certain customs, therein mentioned, for the space of twenty years. The portreeve was the equivalent of provost or sovereign, being chief officer of town.

Duel in Kilmallock:

The *Annals of the Four Masters*, the *Annals of Innisfallen* and the *Annals of Loch Cé* record the death at Kilmallock, in 1412, of Ead Léis and the son of the Earl of Kildare, who fell by each other's hands. Ead Léis, to give him the Irish form of his name appearing in the Annals, was a member of the famous Norman family of de Lacy, branches of which were settled in Bruree, Bruff and Ballingarry. He belonged to the Bruree branch of the family, and would seem to be identifiable with Odo de Lacy of that place, who was married to Elizabeth, daughter of Nicholas, third Lord of Kerry. Though the Earls of Desmond were the most extensive landowners in Co. Limerick, that other branch of the Geraldines, the Earls of Kildare, also held lands there, principally at Tobernea, Rathcannon, Croom and Adare.

Coins and Coiners

The references to Kilmallock are very scant in the 14th and 15th centuries. During that time the Anglo-Irish were in retreat, and government was largely in the hands of people like the Kildares, so scarcely any records survive. However, we have a couple of interesting references from the end of the third quarter of the 15th century. A mint had been established in Kilmallock some time prior to 1472, [20] and this was one of the mints from which German Lynch issued coins of deficient weight, for which he was indicted in 1472. German Lynch was not the only one giving trouble to the authorities, for in the year in which he was indicted, there was passed an act of Parliament which stated:

"There being divers coiners in the city of Cork, the towns of Youghal, Kinsale and Kilmallock, viz. John Fannin, John Crone, Patrick Martel, William Synott. Mortagh O Haurighan, Nicholas Rewy, and others, who make false coins without authority . . . to the great damage of the said city, towns and counties, it is enacted, if the said coiners do not appear before the deputy in parliament the first day of the next prorogation or adjournment, that they shall be attainted as traitors, and their lands, tenements, goods and chattels forfeited; and that it shall be lawful for James Earl of Desmond, the Mayors of Cork and Youghal, and the sovereigns of Kinsale and Kilmallock to apprehend them, and execute the law on their persons as traitors attainted, and that nobody shall maintain support, harbour, or succour them, under the penalty of forfeiting their goods and chattels, lands, and tenements to the king, their bodies to be at his will; and all letters patent shown by the said coiners to be void." [21]

But these dire warnings did not suffice, and three years later it was found necessary to close all the mints of Ireland except those of Dublin, Drogheda and Waterford.

At this stage we leave the coiners and turn our attention to ecclesiastical matters, noting some late 15th century appointments to benefices within the area of the modern parish of Kilmallock.

Church Appointments.

In 1475, Philip O Ronayn (Ó Rónáin), canon of Limerick diocese, as principal and private person, bound himself to the Apostolic chamber in the name of Thomas O Ronayn, priest of the diocese, for the first fruits of the deanship, value 60 marks, and the rectorship of Ballingaddy, value 24 marks, vacant. A mandate was issued providing Thomas with both beneficies. [22]

The first fruits, or annates, was a tax promised and made payable to the Holy See by all incumbents of such benefices as were reserved to the Holy See. This levy amounted to one half of the first year's revenue from the benefice. It was payable once only, and that six months after the incumbent had got possession of the living. [23]

There are records of a number of other church appointments to benefices in Kilmallock, or in the Kilmallock area, during the late 15th and early 16th centuries. In 1478, John Offaelen (Ó Faoláin), cleric of Limerick diocese, principal, bound himself to the Apostolic chamber for the first fruits of the perpetual vicarage of the parochial church of Kilmallock, value 20 marks, vacant by the death of William Akhbard, formerly vicar of the church. [24] The appointment in Limerick diocese of clerics with names such as Ó Rónáin and Ó Faoláin, rather than clerics

with Norman or English names, as had been customary since the Norman conquest, is evidence of a certain Gaelic resurgence in the ecclestiastical affairs of this period, But Norman names would still keep cropping up in the appointments, for in 1480, we find Thomas Cantulinn binding himself to the Apostolic chamber for the first fruits of the perpetual vicarage of the parochial church of SS. Peter and Paul, in Kilmallock, value 60 marks, silver. [25]

Another Charter Granted

Another charter was granted to Kilmallock on February 15th, 1482. This was during the reign of Edward IV. It would appear that the town had recently suffered from many attacks, for the charter began by stating:

"The King, considering the many losses, hazards, burnings and other grievances which the town of Kilmallock and his liege inhabitants thereof had sustained from his Irish enemies and English rebels whereby they were so impoverished, they could no longer defend themselves or keep the town, unless relieved and enabled by the Government". [26]

The charter continued; "Therefore for the better government and defence thereof, his Majesty grants a licence to the Burgesses and their successors yearly to elect from among themselves, on Monday after 29th September, with the consent of twelve of the better and chief Burgesses, or the major part of them, one of the burgesses to be sovereign . . . The Sovereign and Burgesses are hereby created and incorporated a lawful and representative body and one community". [27]

The post of sovereign could be likened to that of mayor. Some 200 years earlier the holder of the post equivalent to sovereign in Kilmallock had been described as the provost of the town; later still as the portreeve.

Under the 1482 charter, a grant of customs, leviable for ever, was made to the Sovereign and Common Council of Kilmallock, for the purpose of building and keeping in repair the stone walls round the town; and power was given to the Sovereign and Council to assess the inhabitants from time to time, to pay the salary or stipend of the sovereign and other expenses for the common good of the town. [28] Also in 1482, a royal mint was re-established in the town. [29]

Perhaps it was the fact that they now had a mint of their own that made the citizens of Kilmallock so choosy that they found themselves in currency trouble in 1483! Anyway, in that year, by act of Parliament, a

penalty of £20 was ordered to be inflicted on any inhabitant of Kilmallock or other towns of note, who should refuse a certain coin of Richard III then current; it was also ordered that the burgesses should lose their franchises, until they made fine to the King for such contempt. [30]

The surname Miagh (from, as already explained, the Irish, *Mídheach*, a Meathman), which later became Meade, was closely associated with Kilmallock for many centuries, the Miaghs being an important merchant family. In 1487, we find a William Miagh, a priest of Limerick diocese, binding himself to the Apostolic chamber for the first fruits of the perpetual vicarage of the parochial church of SS. Peter and Paul at Kilmallock, value 20 marks, vacant by the death of Thomas Cantelon, its former vicar. [31] The latter must have been the same person as that Thomas Cantulinn who bound himself for the first fruits of the vicarage of Kilmallock in 1480.

Tankardstown, though now part of Kilmallock parish was, as already stated, at one time a separate parish, and its church was still in use in 1510 when James Radimund Maurice de Geraldinis, canon of Limerick, bound himself for the first fruits of the deanship and the vicarage of Baile Tanckard (*Baile Tancaird*, i.e. Tankardstown) united, value 70 marks, "vacant in a certain manner". [32]

Fitzgerald Coat of Arms

6

Kilmallock, Town of the Geraldines

"No" To Kilmallock

The rebellion of the Kildare Geraldine chief, Silken Thomas Fitzgerald, in 1534, was to send ripples into Munster, where O Brien and the Earl of Desmond were suspect by the English. A communication dated 22nd August, 1536, from the Council of Ireland to Thomas Cromwell, right-hand man of Henry VIII, told of the capture of the O Brien castle of Carrigogunnel in Co. Limerick, and how it had been proposed "to advance the army and ordnance over the water (Shannon) for the destruction of O Brien's country, but that the army refused to go further without wages". Since there was no prospect just then of any money to pay the men, the Council in their communication say: "we offered unto them to leave them in the cities of Limerick and Cork, and the town of Kilmallock, in which places, upon our bonds and securities, they should have meat (food) and drink until the King's money had come". But the offer of the Council was rejected by the soldiers. [1]

The Great Desmond Territory

The harsh fate of Silken Thomas, and of his five uncles, who were executed at Tyburn on February 3rd, 1537, and the ruthlessly effective policy of conquest being pursued in Ireland, on the orders of Henry VIII, must have made James, 12th Earl of Desmond, rather fearful for his position. On July 8th, 1537, he wrote to the King from Kilmallock, stressing the faithfulness of his family, and offering, with 300 men, to reduce all Munster to obedience to the English crown. [2]

By this time the great Desmond territory in Munster "had become an organised state where feudal and Gaelic customs merged into each other in an elaborate pattern of relationships, with the Earl of Desmond sovereign lord of Norman vassal and Gaelic sub-chieftain alike". [3] For all practical purposes the Desmonds were independent sovereigns. [4]

The Earl of Desmond was entitled to certain revenues and privileges in his capital town of Kilmallock, A 16th century document tells us that:

"The Earl's accustomed duties in Kilmallock is 4d. for every colpe by the quarter, and a horse load of wood of such as bring sale wood to the town. Also he is wont to have his lodging with the sovereign of the town for the time being, and to be served there with bread, ale, *aqua vitae*, candlelight, house-hold stuff, and bedding, upon account of the said colpe money; and likewise if his horse or horse grooms do take any horse meat or man's meat, the same also to be allowed out of the said colpe money for the first night. Item, he is wont to have carriage there at all times in his journey upon the like account". [5]

A colpe (from Irish *colpa*) was a unit of land which would provide grazing for a specified number of animals; for example, six sheep or eighteen geese. [6] The word "meat" of course meant food.

Poets of the Desmonds

An earlier Earl had brought members of the scholarly bardic family of Ó Dálaigh (anglcd. O Daly) to Connello, as West Limerick was generally called in the 16th and 17th centuries. Here they were settled on extensive lands as the official poets of the Geraldines. Like any important native Irish chief, the Earls of Desmond wanted to have a Gaelic poet of their own, a poet very learned in the Irish language, and in his art, who would compose fitting poems for all occasions requiring them: a laudatory *caithréim* for victory in battle; a gracious epithalamium for a marriage; a traditional *caoineadh* for a death to be lamented. Their employment of the Ó Dálaighs as their official poets was a measure of the Gaelicization of the Munster Geraldines.

The Ó Dálaighs were later to establish a bardic school at Killogholehane, near Broadford; but all the time they continued their hereditary role of providing poets for their Geraldine patrons. Disparagingly described in English State papers as "rimers", the Ó Dálaighs held lands extending from Templeglantine westward towards Abbeyfeale, and across the Limerick border to Brosna in Kerry. The Earls of Desmond enjoyed certain rights in the Ó Dálaigh territory, as a late 16th century document informs us:

". . . when the Earl doth cross the mountain or make his journey betwixt Kerry and Connello the foresaid rimers are wont to bear the charge for a day and night coming and going". [7]

Income of The Earl of Desmond

The annual income from their properties, in money and kind, that the Earls of Desmond enjoyed, was very large. Out of their lands in Connello alone, they received from their tenants the following payments: Every May, 320 beeves (adult cattle reared for their meat), with £213.6s.8d: and at All Saints, £213.6s.8d. without beeves. The chief rent of Connello was £40.2s.0d. and other rents upon the freeholders amounted to £15. [8] Because of the falling value of money the figures quoted here would represent vastly larger sums at today's money values.

Kilmallock A Rich and Splendid Town

Comparative prosperity reigned in the towns at this period. And this was true not only of the large cities like Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Galway, but of a place such as Kilmallock, in the Geraldine heartland. [9] Kilmallock was surrounded by magnificent walls, at each angle of which there was a tower, and in which there were four impressive gates: Blossom Gate (still standing in what is now Emmet Street); Ivy Gate (which stood in what is now Lord Edward Street, at the railway side of the present Allied Irish Banks building), Water Gate (which stood near the bridge, at the end of what is now Wolfe Tone Street) and John's Gate (which stood at the entrance to what is now Sheares Street, almost directly opposite the present Catholic church). The town had many elegantly built houses of hewn stone, two or three storeys high, crowned with battlements, and entered by spacious semi-circular arches, richly moulded. The houses had square compartmented windows, with hood mouldings, and large carved chimney-places. [10]

In the year 1600, according to L.M. Cullen, Dublin was not much larger than Galway, and possibly Limerick; only double the size of Cork and Waterford, and less than three times the size of Kilmallock. Dublin in 1600 had a population of not less than 5000, Galway of less than 4200, Limerick of between 2400 and 3600, Waterford and Cork of about 2400. [11] By a deduction similar to that by which the foregoing figures were arrived at, the population of Kilmallock would appear to have been about 2000 or a little less. As stated, these figures relate to the year 1600, when Kilmallock had already passed the hey-day of its power and importance by some quarter of a century. But what held for the town in 1600, with regard to size and population, would also have held for it at any time during the half-century prior to 1600.

The calculation of the population figures quoted, was based, L.M. Cullen says, on the study of contemporary maps, and assume an

average household of six persons. He goes on: “The fact that within their walls Irish towns tended to about 300 houses suggests that medieval towns were likely to have had a population of about 2000, in the assumption that suburbs outside the walls were, without exception, small, and seems to corroborate the suggestion that towns originally varied little in size”. [12]

Tudor Pressures — and The Reformation

A number of happenings in Kilmallock in the year 1541 were indicative of coming great changes; changes in the fortunes of the Desmond Geraldines, changes in the fortunes of Kilmallock, changes in the fortunes of Ireland as a whole. For long, the Earls of Desmond had ruled their territories like independent princes, and were resentful of interference in their affairs by the English crown. If anything, the Desmonds had been traditionally anti-monarchical. [13] But now the chill shadow of the Tudors began to fall on them.

In 1541, the Earl of Desmond accompanied the Lord Deputy, St. Leger, to Kilmallock, “where”, he told St. Leger, “I think none of your Grace’s deputies came this hundred years before”. [14] Desmond treated the Lord Deputy hospitably. If no high officials of the English crown had visited the Geraldine town of Kilmallock in the previous hundred years, that would not be the case in the future.

Two other significant events that took place in Kilmallock in 1541 were connected with the Reformation, the tenets of which were now being vigorously promoted by the authorities in Ireland, not least in the Desmond territories. In 1522, John Quin had been appointed Bishop of Limerick. The name of the bishop was sometimes written Coyne, and this, very likely, was due to the distinctive pronunciation of the letter “i” in Decies Irish, where the name Ó Cuinn (the Irish form of Quin) would sound somewhat as if spelt O Coyne in English.

The new bishop had been a Dominican friar in the Kilmallock monastery, and was remarkable for his learning and virtue. In 1538, he accepted the tenets of the Reformation, renounced the authority of the Pope, and recognised Henry VIII as head of the reformed church in England and Ireland. The action of the bishop was to influence many of the clergy. James Fitz John, Provisor of the collegiate Church in Kilmallock, returned to Kilmallock on the 16th January, 1541, he, too, having accepted Henry VIII as head of the Church. His fellow canons in the Kilmallock church were in agreement with him; so the Collegiate church had to score out the Pope’s name from the liturgical books. [15]

Bishop Quin and Dean Creagh (who also had accepted the Supremacy) united the rectories of Downgadmond (Dún Gadmoinn) and Donyrish (Dún Uí Ruis) in the old parish of Particles, south of Ardpatrick, and the rectory and vicarage of Ballingaddy, for the upkeep of the collegiate church of Kilmallock, this being done on the petition of the supreme council and committee of Kilmallock, and by consent of the chapter house of Limerick. They also united to the collegiate church, by consent of the supreme council, the chantry of the Blessed Virgin Mary (in Effin?), and the office of the Holy Water clerk of Kilmallock, with all lands and rents, for the upkeep of seven chaplains for the singing of Divine Service in the collegiate church, as set out in the letters of the bishop and chapters. As the revenues were not sufficient to provide for the service, John Fitzgibbon, the White Knight, bestowed on the collegiate church the patronage of the parish church of Athnanessy (Béal Átha na nDéise), with the consent of the bishop of Limerick and the chapter. This was confirmed about 1544 by William Casey, Dean (and future bishop), with the consent of the chapter. [16]

The third significant event that took place in Kilmallock in 1541 was the suppression of the Dominican priory, when, at a session held in the town, sundry jurors, "true and lawful men", took over the monastery with its cloister, cemetery and other buildings, for the sum of 6s. 8d; a water mill, for 53s. 4d; also some cottages and twelve acres of land, the whole amounting to £4.2s.0d. [17] On the face of it, it seemed that the Reformation was being accepted and that the old religion was on the way out in Kilmallock at this stage. But time was to prove otherwise.

Raid on Kilmallock

One of the Munster chiefs who accepted the Reformation and acknowledged Henry VIII as head of the Church, was Donncha Ó Ceallacháin. Donncha, who embraced the reformed religion in 1543, died in old age in 1577. A poem in Irish, boasting about the exploits of Donncha, and called *Caithréim Dhonncha Mhic Thaidhg Rua* (The Triumph of Donncha, son of Tadhg Rua), lists- scores of places Donncha is supposed to have raided, and from which he is stated to have taken *creacha* or cattle spoils. Numerous places in Co. Limerick are mentioned in the poem, including Kilmallock -

O Chill Mocheallóg do bhain
creach is córa do mhaíomh;
dar linne ba bhlagh gan bhéim
crá na Cille ina chaithréim [18]

that is:

> From Kilmallock he took
> spoil 'tis right to boast of;
> we think twas fame without blemish
> the triumphant plundering of Kilmallock.

Donncha's plundering of Kilmallock — or of the district round about it —possibly took place about the year 1550.

Another Charter

Edward VI, who succeeded Henry VIII, and had a relatively short reign (1547 - 1553), granted a charter to Kilmallock in 1550. The charter set out the guidelines for the election of the sovereign and burgesses forming the corporation of Kilmallock, and it specified the customs to be charged on goods exposed for sale in the town. These customs, and various penalties or fines for infringements of the corporation's bye-laws, were, according to the charter, all to be expended on the wall and fortifications of the town. A sovereign accepting that office and refusing to act was to be fined £5; persons insulting or injuring the sovereign were to be punished by a fine; no person was to sell or export grain out of the town without the leave of the sovereign and council; no person was to make *aqua vitae* (i.e. *uisce beatha*, whiskey) within the town contrary to the prohibition of the sovereign; no person was permitted to have a dung hill or heap on the streets from one Saturday to another, under penalty of three pence for each offence. [19]

Changing Religious Loyalties

In 1550, the already-mentioned Bishop Quin of Limerick (former Dominican friar in Kilmallock) refused to distribute the Book of Common Prayer in the diocese, and steps were taken to have him removed from office and replaced. The bishop, sensing how things were going, resigned and appointed a cleric of the diocese, another John Quinn, as his procurator, empowering him to arrange with the authorities the details of his resignation. The documents was drawn up at Kilmallock, and dated 9th April, 1551. [20]

James, Earl of Desmond, had also embraced the new doctrines, and was empowered by the Crown to nominate Bishop Quin's successor. He chose William Casey, member of an influential family, who resided close to Kilmallock, at Rathcannon. The fluctuating state of adherence to the one religion or the other at this time is well illustrated by the fact that the Earl James died a Catholic. [21]

Edward VI died in 1553 and was succeeded by Mary I, daughter of Henry VIII. Her short reign ended with her death in 1558. Mary was a Catholic and made strenuous efforts to restore the old religion. This made things awkward for such clergy as had accepted the Reformation. Bishop Casey hastened to Rome, where he pleaded earnestly, but in vain, for recognition as Bishop of Limerick.[22] And in 1554, Dermot MacCorymyler, guardian, and the college chapter of SS. Peter and Paul, in Kilmallock, presented a petition to Cardinal Pole, adviser to Queen Mary, asking him to regularize their position and to absolve them. In a document dated 12th October, 1555, their petition was granted and all and sundry were absolved. [23]

In 1556, happy in the knowledge that all had been forgiven them, the provisor and vicar of the church of SS. Peter and Paul, were seeking permission to accept or acquire certain lands and tenements in Kilmallock, and had forwarded their petition to do so to the Queen. On July 18th, 1556, the Queen acted on their request, as we learn from a contemporary document, which states:

"The Queen to the Lord Deputy and the Chancellor, stating she had received a petition from the provisor and vicars of the Church of St. Peter in Kilmallock, in which it was declared that several charitable persons of the town, in charity for maintenance of God's service, and augmentation of the living of the ministers, bestowed certain lands and tenements upon them, and that other godly-minded persons were willing, for similar considerations, to give more, but which could not be done without licence of the crown; her Majesty, therefore, requires the Lord Deputy and Chancellor to consider the petition, and to grant a licence under the great seal as desired, or else certify the reason". [24]

Another document, undated, refers to the petition of the provisor and vicars of the church of St. Peters (this should be the church of SS. Peter and Paul), in Kilmallock, to the Queen (Mary) and to the offer of certain parcels of land and tenements by several well-disposed persons. It is more specific than the first-mentioned document in that it states that the petition is one for "a licence to purchase and acquire lands to the yearly value of £20 over and above the lands which the church possessed before its conversion into a college". [25]

Assembly on Kilmallock Hill

Some time about 1540, John Fitzgibbon succeeded his grandfather, also John Fitzgibbon, as White Knight. John, the grandson, was son of Maurice Fitzgibbon, who had died during the lifetime of his

father, and had therefore himself never been White Knight. Maurice had three brothers, John Óg, Thomas and Gibbon, and they may have been a little jealous when their nephew succeeded to the title.

John, the new Knight, proved a headstrong and vindictive character, treating his uncles and others of his kinsmen very harshly, and forbidding any of his people to entertain them or give them a night's shelter. David Fitzgibbon, of Ballylanders, who entertained the Knight's uncles, despite their nephew's instructions to the contrary, sought to reason with the Knight and pleaded with him to treat his relatives fairly. Shortly afterwards the Knight and his uncles met; there were hot words, swords were drawn, and the Knight was slain by his uncle, John Óg. [26]

Hearing of this, the Earl of Desmond was very angry, and sent word to David Fitzgibbon to meet him on the Hill of Kilmallock with the chief followers and inhabitants of his country. At the gathering on the Hill the Earl said it was his wish to elevate David to the title of White Knight. David, who had lost an arm in the service of the Earl, declined, saying the Earl needed as a supporter and defender a White Knight who suffered from no physical disability. [27] John Óg eventually succeeded to the title; the exact year is not known, but it would appear to have been some time after 1543 and before 1560. [28] He later antagonised the authorities by his opposition to the promotion of Protestantism. He is buried in the Dominican monastery in Kilmallock.

7

Geraldine Rebellion — Sack of Kilmallock

Gerald 14th Earl of Desmond

Kilmallock was the fortress town of the Earls of Desmond, and owed its great importance to that fact. In a way, the story of the Desmond Geraldines is also the story of 15th and 16th century Kilmallock. This is particularly true of the final tragic chapter of the story of the house of Desmond, which began in 1558 when Gerald Fitzgerald succeeded his father as fourteenth Earl of Desmond. It was Gerald's misfortune to come to power at a time when the winds of violent change had begun to whistle ominously through the protecting shelter of the old half-Gaelic, half-feudal order of things to which he belonged. It was also his misfortune to have as rival Black Tom Butler, Earl of Ormond and favourite of Queen Elizabeth.

Gerald got off to a bad start, as far as his relations with the Crown were concerned, by opposing the new laws against Catholicism in the parliament of 1560. His unexpected opposition was a serious obstacle to the progress of Protestantism, since he was overlord of huge territories stretching from Kerry to Waterford, and comprising well over half a million acres. He now became a suspect in the eyes of the Crown. [1]

At the time of Gerald's accession, the control of central government counted for little over the greater part of Ireland, where Gaelic chiefs and Norman lords such as the Desmonds, ruled their territories almost like independent potentates. The Tudor monarchs in England decided that this state of affairs could not continue. As Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh has written:

"The powers of the local lords — in such areas as legal jurisdiction, the raising and quartering of private armies and the levying of taxes and other exactions — were increasingly seen as intolerable in an age when the nation-state was becoming more cohesive and centralized in its administration. The powers enjoyed by these great lords seemed incompatible with good and uniform administration, with a sensible and

effective system of state revenues, or with the paramount issue of state security". [2] And so, a close eye was kept on the great lords. Reports were sent to London that a plot against Queen Elizabeth was being hatched by the Earl of Kildare, head of the Kildare Geraldines, and Desmond, and both were summoned to London. Kildare went; Desmond did not. [3] Soon afterwards, the old feud between the houses of Desmond and Ormond flared up anew concerning border lands, and the rival earls were summoned to London to have the dispute adjudicated by the Crown. Desmond was a Catholic and Ormond was a Protestant and, as stated, a favourite of the Queen. Desmond therefore felt that the scales were tilted against him, and he dallied for a month before replying to the summons. When he did go, in May 1562, he was accompanied by a great retinue.

In London he acted very independently, showed scant deference to the Queen, and refused to apologise for his behaviour. Elizabeth retaliated by ordering him to be imprisoned for two years in the Lord Treasurer's house. Before he was released he had to promise to pay his feudal dues, maintain order in Munster, and put down such Gaelic instutions as the Brehon Laws, bards and rhymers. He also had to promise to give up his Irish mode of living and conform to English usages. [4] The threat to the semi-independent world of Desmond was becoming clear.

Maurice Fitzgerald of the Decies, a first cousin of Ormond, was one of Desmond's tenants, but had refused to pay his rents. Desmond proceeded to recover by force, but Fitzgerald, hearing in advance of Desmond's intentions, had appealed to Ormond for protection. Ormond advanced with a strong force and found Desmond's men collecting the rents. A fight between the rival forces took place at Affane, and Desmond was wounded in the thigh and captured by Ormond. [5]

On hearing of the engagement, Elizabeth wrote angry letters to the two chief combatants and summoned them to London. At the court Ormond used all his influence to prejudice the case against his opponent, and the Queen was prompted to remark that whereas the house of Butler had been ever faithful to the English Crown, the Geraldines had been constantly disloyal. [6] However, thanks to rival Court factions, Ormond did not have things all his own way, and Desmond was allowed to return to Ireland in January 1566 — but not until he agreed to several restrictions and renewed the promises made on a former occasion. [7]

In July 1565, while Desmond was still in England, a new Lord Deputy, Sir Henry Sidney, had been appointed the Queen's representative

in Ireland. Sidney set out to impose a uniform system of law and administration throughout the country, and to curb and ultimately break the almost princely powers of the great lords in such areas as raising and billeting private armies and collecting revenue for themselves. [8]

Desmond greatly resented this growing interference by the English administration in his affairs, and was determined to maintain his inherited authority in his own half-Gaelic, half-Norman territories. Besides, he had no enthusiasm for the promotion of the Reformation in these territories. Desmond clearly was set on a collison course with Tudor policy in Ireland.

Ormond continued his vendetta against Desmond, representing to the Queen that the latter was intriguing against her, and harbouring outlaws, and that he exacted coyne and livery (money and food for men and horses without reimbursement) — though this latter practice was freely allowed to Ormond himself. Furthermore, his kinsmen and friends were being encouraged to annoy and resist Desmond, who now found himself harried on every side by open and covert foes. He struck out occasionally, only to have his actions magnified out of all proportion. [9]

Desmond Arrested in Kilmallock

Sidney, the Lord Deputy, observing the way things were going, was humane enough to insist on fair dealing, but for this he was accused by the Queen of favouring Desmond. [10] The Lord Deputy, realising the delicacy of his own position, marched into Munster in January, 1567, met Desmond by appointment at Carrick, and commenced immediately to investigate the charges made against him by Ormond. The party moved to Waterford, and from there to Cork, still discussing the charges. When it became obvious to Desmond that the decisions being given were invariably in favour of Ormond, he showed his displeasure, and determined to leave the company. But Sidney would not permit him to depart, and appointed a secret guard to watch over him. [11]

Finally, they came to Kilmallock. Here Desmond decided to escape, and towards that end, secretly organised a rescue party; but fearing the consequences of such an act, the Earl's brother, Sir John, and Hugh Lacy, Catholic bishop of Limerick, informed the Lord Deputy of the intended escape. Sidney acted immediately, and Desmond had to suffer the indignity of being made a prisoner in his own chief town. [12]

Sidney and his army set out with their prisoner for Limerick, where he was indicted on, among other charges, the treasonable charge of

levying war against her majesty's representative. Sir John, the Earl's brother, was appointed by Sidney as seneschal and ruler over his brother's estates. From Limerick the Earl was taken to Dublin, where he was kept in custody. A little later the Queen ordered that the Earl and his brother John should be sent to England. John was therefore seized, and he and the Earl arrived in London at Christmas 1567, after experiencing much hardship on the journey from sickness and lack of money. They were then confined in a room in the Tower, without fire or light. [13]

Their trial began in January, 1568. All the old charges were again brought forward, and were supported by the testimony of interested witnesses. Things were going so badly against him that the Earl, in order to save his life, had to throw himself at the feet of the Queen and surrender his estate into her hands, leaving it to her majesty to restore to him such parts of his territories as she should see fit. Their lives thus saved, the brothers were returned to their confinement in the Tower. [14]

James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald steps into History

On the arrest of Sir John of Desmond, the Desmond estates were left without an administrator. It was at this point that the remarkable man, who was to occupy the centre of the stage in Irish affairs for the next eleven years, and who was to be closely associated with Kilmallock, swept into history. James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald stated that he had been appointed leader of the Munster Geraldines by the Earl, who was his first cousin. Though having appointed Fitzmaurice Captain of Desmond, by a warrant, the Earl was jealous of his cousin's marked abilities; and both he and the Countess were convinced that Fitzmaurice's ultimate object was to usurp the Earldom. [15]

The recommendation to have Fitzmaurice officially recognised as ruler of Desmond is mentioned in a letter dated 19th March, 1568, which Lord Justice Weston forwarded to Queen Elizabeth. The State papers give a summary of the letter:

"Eleanor Countess of Desmond, and Hugh Lacy, Bishop of Limerick, to the Lords Justices. Thanks for letter, and for his care for the Earl of Desmond's lands, tenants and followers. Beseech their lordships' approval of James Fitzmaurice to rule in the Earl's absence." [16]

Approval was granted, and Fitzmaurice was appointed ruler of Desmond by the government, and the Countess and Bishop Lacy were appointed to assist him. In that same year of 1568, Fitzmaurice's position was further strengthened when a gathering of the Fitzgeralds and their

supporters acknowledged him as their captain. He strove to exert his authority over the Fitzgerald collaterals in Kerry and elsewhere, and maintained the old order which rested ultimately on the traditional force of the MacSheehy gallowglass and other Desmond retainers. [17]

Fitzmaurice was a young man when he assumed control of Desmond, and was described as a good Catholic and a brave captain. Canon Begley (quoting *CSP*., Rome, Rolls Service), says: "He had manifested at one time an inclination to enter a religious order, or, at least, to quit Ireland and to live in some Catholic country; but by the advice of some good prelates and Catholic religious he elected to remain at home for the good of the country". [18]

The news that Desmond had surrendered his great estates to the Crown spread rapidly in England, and resulted in "one of the most extraordinary episodes in the whole history of the conquest of Ireland." [19] There was a wild scramble to possess the Geraldine lands by English West Country gentlemen — Chichesters, Carews, Grenvilles, Courtneys and Raleighs. All of them had, in their time, commanded privateers and had grown rich on the fruits of piracy. These restless, ambitious, land-hungry Elizabethans planned to take over and occupy the Desmond estates, despite Irish resistance. They would till the soil, build towns and castles, fish the seas, build roads and harbours — and pay the Queen a fair revenue. They would deal appropriately with the rebel chieftains and people, and with the clergy who still adhered to Catholicism. They would act as a garrison for the Queen, and would ensure that no Spanish landing in Ireland would ever pose a threat to England. They intended "to carry England into Ireland". [20]

Cecil, the Lord Treasurer, hesitated to approve the scheme in full, but suggested that the parties should begin their experiment in Co. Cork. That was in 1569. Straightaway, Sir Peter Carew, Sir Warham St. Lager, Sir Richard Grenville, Humphrey Gilbert and others set sail for Munster, taking with them a large number of retainers, craftsmen, artificers and labourers. They settled on Desmond and MacCarthy lands. [21] Sir Peter Carew then did a very foolish thing. He laid claim to some of the Butler lands in Kilkenny, marched in, ejected the tenants — who happened to be brothers of the Earl of Ormond — and quartered his own men on the property. The Butlers, always loyal to the English Crown, were furious, and drove out Carew's settlers, burned their houses and seized their cattle.

The actions of these Elizabethan adventurers, who planned "to carry England into Ireland", caused alarm among the Irish chiefs and

Norman lords. The Munster chiefs and lords were summoned to a meeting by James Fitzmaurice, the Geraldine leader. Fitzmaurice was now rapidly becoming a national figure; soon he would be an international figure. Brian Fitzgerald says of him: "He was indeed one of the outstanding Irish personalities of the 16th century. He was an idealist, a man enthusiastic in temperament. But he was also extremely practical, a scorner of luxury and ease, and had a marked preference for the bare ground to a bed after a hard day's fighting." [22]

Fitzmaurice Revolts

Now Fitzmaurice was to proclaim his intentions across Ireland. He held out for native rule against the Tudor policy of centralizing all authority in the crown. Native rule he made synonymous with the hereditary powers and privileges of every lord and chieftain. [23] All Ireland, he said, should unite against the invaders. Help was to be sought from Spain, and it was also agreed that the Irish crown should be offered to a prince of the Spanish blood. [24] Maurice Fitzgibbon, Archbishop of Cashel, was chosen as ambassador of the confederates to the court of Spain and the Vatican.

A fervent Catholic, and a man of the Counter-Reformation, Fitzmaurice articulated clearly, for the first time in Ireland, the powerfully unifying idea of Faith and Fatherland. He denounced the Act of Religious Uniformity and the Oath of Supremacy by which the Established Church of England was established in Ireland. [25]

On the 3rd July, 1569, the municipal authorities at Kilmallock had reported to the Lord Deputy that Fitzmaurice had exacted an oath from them that "they would use no other divine service but the old divine service used by the Church of Rome". [26]

Fitzmaurice acted swiftly to deal with the situation that had arisen in Co. Cork. Calling his people to arms, he dashed southwards, joined up with MacCarthy Reagh, and drove out the English colonists who had settled on Desmond and MacCarthy lands. Town after town opened its gates to Fitzmaurice, and the Desmond rents were levied in kind as before.

Eventually he arrived outside the walls of Kilmallock and demanded the surrender of the town. Its safe citizens, like the citizens of all towns, placed more value on their business interests than on rebellion, and would have wished the rebel leader and his men far away; but, in the circumstances, they had no choice but to open their gates to him. He extorted a ransom of £160 from them. From Kilmallock he travelled westward and took possession of the lands of the late Knight of Glin,

which had for some time been in the hands of the government. [27]

The Earls of Clanrickard and Thomond had now rallied to the Geraldine banner, and the Earl of Kildare was waiting to see how the scales would turn. Even Ormond himself had intimated that if the lands of the ancient owners were to be seized by strangers he would join the rebellion. [28] Fitzmaurice had put the spark to a huge tinder-box of dissatisfaction that now seemed likely to set the whole country aflame.

But though Fitzmaurice's men had overrun Munster, and were experienced skirmishers, they were incapable of sustained siege or field operations. [29] The mainstay of the Irish battle line had long been the *gallóglaigh*, a name later corrupted to "gallowglass". These were originally mercenary troops who had been recruited from the Western Isles of Scotland: hence the name *gallóglaigh*, foreign troops. The gallóglaigh or gallowglass were armed with a shirt of mail, a skullcap of steel, and a scian or dagger; the weapon they most favoured was the battle-axe, which had a six- foot long handle. [30] Fitzmaurice's famous gallowglass troops consisted of the Mac Sheehys and MacSweeneys, but principally the MacSheehys who had their castle at Bailyallinan, between Rathkeale and Knockaderry. Formidable and frightening as they were in battle, the gallowglass were helpless against musketeers and pikemen. Fitzmaurice himself had acquired his military skills in France, but was able to adapt these skills so as to compensate for the shortcomings of his men. [31]

Fitzmaurice laid siege to Cork, but had neither the troops nor the artillery to breach the walls. Sidney, the English Lord Justice, advanced to the relief of the city, causing Fitzmaurice to break off the siege and withdraw into the woods. From Cork Sidney pushed northwards, taking the castles and ravaging the lands of Fitzmaurice's supporters. Sidney formed the opinion that Fitzmaurice would not retreat indefinitely, but would stand and fight somewhere between Cork and Limerick.[32]

And Fitzmaurice did stand. Richard Berleth tells the story:

"On a direct line from Cork to Limerick, Kilmallock was the key to the West. This fortress town, astride the east-west axis of Munster, was the one place Fitzmaurice had to hold, and the place Sidney had to capture . . . Kilmallock stood at a crossroads in great Kilmore Wood . . . and commanded a wooded defile through the Ballahoura Hills. It was a strong town, built and walled in grey stone, a flourishing centre of trade until the Desmond Wars. In September, 1569, Fitzmaurice occupied Kilmallock in strength, and there Sidney found him and attacked him without delay. The struggle continued for several days in high winds and

heavy rain, and in the end English firepower and the disciplined ranks of the English pikemen decided the issue. Through Kilmallock Sidney broke into the West, and behind him left Humphrey Gilbert to garrison the town and neutralize the neighbourhood." [33]

For the next one hundred and twenty years or so Kilmallock would be rarely without a military garrison, and numerous warring armies, far more often English than Irish, would beat a path to its gates.

Sidney further punished Kilmallock by suspending its liberties. And as for Gilbert's "neutralizing the neighbourhood" . . . "he pursued a course of pacification which grew monstrous even in the eyes of many of his countrymen. Visitors to his headquarters at Kilmallock were greeted by impaled heads lining the path to his door". [34] Gilbert was half-brother to Sir Walter Raleigh.

John Óg Fitzgibbon, the White Knight, who had supported Fitzmaurice, and to whom reference was made at the end of the previous chapter, died in Kilmallock in 1569, and was laid to rest there with his forebears, in the monastery of St. Dominic. Two years after his death he was attainted of high treason and proclaimed a traitor. His son Edmond was the last White Knight.

Fitzmaurice retreated from Kilmallock into Kerry, and though now deserted by many of his allies he was still a force to reckon with. During October and November Sidney received the submission of the Earls of Thomond and Clanricard and of numerous petty chieftains. The loss of Kilmallock and the progress of the English army into the West, effectively ended the Geraldine confederacy, and Sidney returned to Dublin in triumph.[35] But the campaign was not decisive, and early in 1570 Fitzmaurice advanced on Kilmallock and surrounded it, with the intention of starving out Gilbert and his garrison. According to English accounts, Fitzmaurice had 1500 foot and 60 horse, but Gilbert sallied forth with 100 men and put them to flight.

While his men garrisoned Kilmallock, Gilbert marched through the wilds of Connello (West Limerick) and Kerry, and took thirty or forty castles without artillery. He told Sidney in a letter: "I slew all those from time to time that did belong to, feed, accompany, or maintain any outlaws or traitors; and after my first summoning of any castle or fort, if they would not presently yield it, I would not afterwards take it of their gift, but won it perforce, how many lives so ever it cost, putting man, woman and child to the sword". [36]

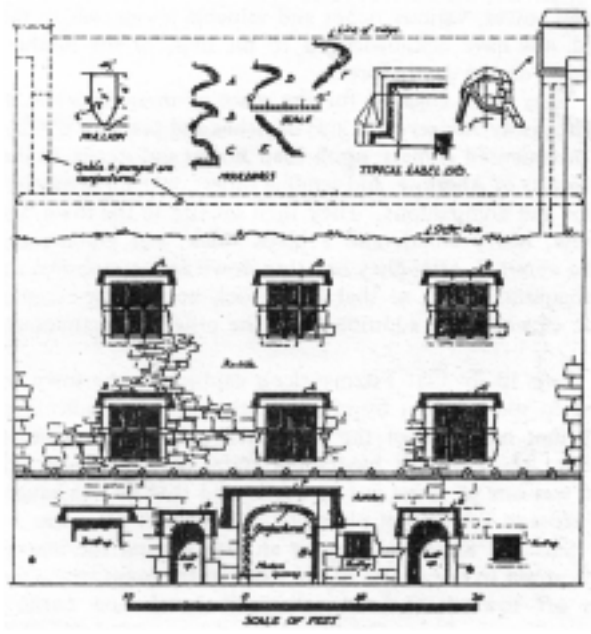
Blossom Gate (Bláth-Porte), Kilmallock.

King's Castle, (John's Castle), Kilmallock.

Old town house, Sarsfield Street, Kilmallock; originally had three storeys.

Remains of 17th century house at rear of right hand side of Sarsfield Street, as you proceed from John's Castle to cross in centre of town.

Part of the old town wall, Kilmallock. (Photo: Pat McCarthy)



Conjectural restoration of Sarsfield's House, Sarsfield St., Kilmallock -- from Journal of Cork Historical and Archaeological Society.

Fitzmaurice Captures and Sacks Kilmallock

Gilbert, having "pacified" rebel Munster, returned to England early in 1571, but was not back there more than a month when Fitzmaurice struck again. Having gathered a new force the Geraldine leader swept westward from Aherlow with his men, including the redoubtable gallowglass troops of the MacSheehys and MacSweeneys, They arrived at Kilmallock, scaled the walls and took the town. It was a great prize. The Four Masters give a graphic account of the attack:

1571: *Séamus Mac Muiris do gabháil Cill Mocheallóg . . .*

"James Mac Maurice took Kilmallock not from a desire of its riches and various treasures, though its riches were immense, but because it had always been the rendezvous and sally-port of the English and Geraldines against him. Before sunrise in the morning those who had gone to sleep happily and comfortably were aroused from their slumber by a fierce attack made by the warlike troops of the Clann Sweeney and Clann Sheehy, who were along with James Mac Maurice: and they proceeded to divide among themselves its gold, silver, various riches and valuable jewels, which the father would not have acknowledged to his heir, or the mother to her daughter, on the day before.

They were engaged for the space of three days and nights in carrying away the several kinds of riches and precious goods, as cups and ornamented goblets, upon their horses and steeds, to the woods and forests of Alrerlow, and sending others of them privately to their friends and companions. They then set fire to the town, and raised a dense, heavy cloud, and a black thick, and gloomy shroud of smoke about it, after they had torn down and demolished its houses of stone and wood; so that Kilmallock became the receptacle and abode of wolves, in addition to all the other misfortunes up to that time."

It is likely that Fitzmaurice's capture of the town was facilitated to some extent by sympathisers inside, an indication of this being that only two of the townsmen were put to death after its capture. [37] Perrott's biographer states that the sovereign of the town was one of those put to death, and that he was hanged at the high cross in the market place. [38] The market place was in what is now Sarsfield Street, occupying an area around the market cross, which stood in the centre of the street at the point where Orr Street leads off towards the old collegiate church and burial ground. Almost directly facing Orr Street, on the opposite side of Sarsfield Street, breaking the line of houses, there was an opening or laneway, so that there was a fairly large open space where the market cross stood. It was probably a tall structure, similar to that in Kilkenny,

and was still standing up to at least December 1777, when it is mentioned in the minute book of the Kilmallock corporation. Its location is indicated in a map of the town (c. 1600), which is preserved in Trinity College, Dublin.

Perrott in Kilmallock

Some time previous to Fitzmaurice's capture and sacking of Kilmallock, Queen Elizabeth's advisers had been suggesting to her that a President of Munster should be appointed, who would devote all his time and attention to the administration of "that unruly province". [39] The man appointed was Sir John Perrott, and he was given very wide powers, especially in military matters. Perrott landed in Waterford on the 1st March 1571, and learned that a very short time previously Fitzmaurice had sacked and burned Kilmallock, because it had been used as a sally-port of the English against him. Perrott went first to Dublin. then proceeded to Kilmallock with two companies of foot, besides 200 Irish soldiers of kern and gallowglass, and his own troop of horse. Captain Ashlow, who accompanied him, commanded as many. [40]

At Kilmallock, Perrott lodged in a half burned house. After a few days he made a proclamation that as many of the townsmen as fled should return home. This they accordingly did, and began to build their gates, to repair the town walls and re-edify their houses as best they could in so short a time after so great a spoil. [41]

On hearing that a party of rebels had raided Lord Roche and taken away many of his cattle, and that they were now in the vicinity of Kilmallock, Perrott set off in pursuit. He caught up with the raiders near Knocklong, killed fifty of them and cut off their heads. His men carried the heads with them back to Kilmallock, and hung them about the high cross in the market place. [42]

When Kilmallock was rendered defensible again, Perrott, after he had comforted the townsmen, took leave of them and departed for Limerick. For the next two years he was to devote all his energies to tracking down and capturing Fitzmaurice, whom he described as " . . . a man very valiant, politic and learned as any rebel hath been of that nation for many years". [43] Perott summoned the Lords Barry, Roche and MacCarthy to join him. The campaign against the Geraldine, though vigorous, was not very successful, as Fitzmaurice eluded his enemies again and again, keeping to the numerous great mountains, appearing and disappearing as suited his tactics. [44] Perrott, growing weary of the campaign, did an extraordinary thing: he challenged Fitzmaurice to single

combat, hoping thereby to bring the war to a speedy end. [45] Fitzmaurice accepted the challenge, and it was arranged that the fight would take place at Emly.

On the appointed day Perrott and his party arrived at the arranged spot. They waited long, but there was no sign of Fitzmaurice. Instead, he sent his poet, Conchúr Rua Ó hEarnáin (anglicised Connor Rua O Harnan) with a message saying that he, Fitzmaurice, was not afraid to fight, but that "If I do kill the great Sir John Perrott, the Queen of England will but send another President into this province: but if he do kill me, there is none in Ireland to succeed me, or to command as I do now", [46] Perhaps the real reason for Fitzmaurice's failure to come was that at the last minute he suspected treachery.

Ó hEarnáin, Fitzmaurice's Poet

The extent of the Gaelicisation of the Munster Gearldines is clearly evident from their employment of members of the Gaelic *literati* to be their official poets. Fitzmaurice's poet, Conchúr Rua Ó hEarnáin, was a member of the distinguished literary family that in the 18th century would produce the Tipperary poet, Liam Dall Ó hIfearnáin, for Ó hEarnáin is but a variant of the name Ó hIfearnáin, a name that has been anglicised as O Heffernan or Heffernan.

There is a list of the numerous properties held by the White Knight in 1590, and in it we find the following: "Ballenvestelladon, in the tenure of Conoher Roe O Hernan". [47] The tenant here is surely none other than Fitzmaurice's poet, Conchúr Rua Ó hEarnáin. Ballenvestelladon (Baile Mhistéala na dTamhan) is today known as Mitchelstowndown, and lies about two miles south of Knocklong. The name of the townland appears as Mitchelstown in the Civil Survey of 1654. The name of the proprietor then was given as James Heffernan; he is described as an Irish Papist, and he owned 527 acres of land. [48] This he lost at the time of the Cromwellian Plantation. Underlining the connection between Liarn Dall O hIfearnáin's family and the Co. Limerick townland once owned by Conchúr Rua O hEarnáin is a very definite family tradition, the most recent reference to which occurs in a collection of poems, *The Liam Poems*, by Thomas Heffernan, published by the Dragon's Teeth Press, Georgetown, California in 1981. A note in the collection says " . . . it is recorded that Liam Dall's stepmother had him rock the children's cradles and grind the family quern. The family mill near Knocklong at Mitchelstown had passed by confiscation into other hands. . ."

Perrott, still smarting from his humiliation at Emly, scoured Munster for Fitzmaurice, and spent two years "fighting, capturing and hanging some 800 Irishmen of one kind or another". [49] He then laid siege to the castle of Castlemaine. Fitzmaurice determined to relieve the besieged garrison in the castle, and in the early summer of 1572 marched north, where he collected a force of 1200 Scots mercenaries. On his way southward he joined up with the Connacht Burkes, and burned Athlone. He was just too late to relieve Castlemaine, which fell after a three months' siege. [50]

Eventually Perrott concluded that the best way to break the power of the elusive Fitzmaurice would be to liberate the Earl of Desmond's brother, Sir John of Desmond, who had been confined with the Earl in the Tower of London since 1567. During that time the Earl's wife had taken up her abode with her husband in the Tower, and while there had given birth to a son, who was christened James. His was to be a life of great sorrow, and one of its saddest moments would be in Kilmallock, on an October day in 1600.

Fitzmaurice Submits in Kilmallock

By the beginning of 1573, Fitzmaurice was coming to realise the hopelessness of his position. Deserted by practically all of his former allies, and with no immediate prospect of aid from Spain, he finally accepted the offer of a surrender on honourable terms. The submission took place on the 23rd February, 1573, in the church of SS. Peter and Paul, at Kilmallock, in the presence of the nobility of Munster, and of various high-ranking English officials. Fitzmaurice was led into the church with a halter about his neck, and had to kneel at the feet of Perrott, who held a drawn sword towards his breast. He then had to lie prostrate on the ground and utter the words of his submission:

> "This earth of Kilmallock, which town I have most tratorously sacked and burnt, I kiss, and on the same lie prostrate, overfraught with sorrow upon the present view of my most mischievous past." [51]

A note in the State Papers says: "This very humble and florid submission was pronounced by him in both the English and Irish tongues. Signed by his own hand." [52]

8

Kilmallock in the Final Phase of Geraldine Rebellion

Release of Earl of Desmond

Almost immediately following the submission of Fitzmaurice Gerald, the Earl of Desmond, and his brother, Sir John of Desmond, were released, after six years of captivity in London. They arrived back in Dublin on the 25th March, 1573. Prior to his release, the Earl had agreed to certain conditions laid down by the English authorities. The principal conditions related to religion, the Earl having to promise that all laws established for the maintenance of the Protestant religion would be observed in his territories, and that he would maintain its bishops, ministers and preachers. He also had to promise to live in peace with the neighbouring lords. [1]

In Dublin the Earl was again detained, while efforts were being made to make him accept new conditions. Gerald succeeded in escaping from Dublin, and made his way to Limerick, where he was received by James Fitzmaurice, and great numbers of his retainers, including Maurice MacSheehy, his *marascal* or marshal. [2] Bonfires blazed on the hills, and the whole country celebrated the homecoming of its chief. At his castle at Loch Gur the Earl and his Countess discarded their English dress and appeared before the followers in Irish costume. At the close of the festivities at Loch Gur, the Earl issued a proclamation that no sheriff or constable or agent of the English law should execute office within his territory. He further ordained that ecclesiastics and men of learning should be restored to the possession of their privileges, and he re-established the religious orders in their respective places. [3] He spent the remainder of that year in Co. Limerick, mainly in his castle at Askeaton.

English Garrison in Kilmallock

It must have greatly annoyed Gerald that in his own town of Kilmallock there was now an English garrison under Captain Bourchier, and that this fortress town in the heart of his territories was intended by

the English to be used as a sallyport against him and his Geraldines, whenever the need should arise. Gerald was reported to the government to be marching up and down the country at the head of 800 armed men, and it was suggested to him that he should disband his forces. But in a letter written by Justice Walsh to the Lord Deputy, on 21st December, 1573, it was stated that: "Desmond refuses to put away his great numbers till Captain George Bourchier shall leave Kilmallock." [4]

Reports about the Earl to the government were many in the January of 1574. Patrick Sherlock, Sheriff, reported to Burghley, the Lord Treasurer, that "Earl of Desmond refused Sir Edmund Butler's good advice"; [5] Lord Deputy Fitzwilliam reported to the Privy Council: "No answer from the Earl of Desmond nor any hope of conformity"; [6] Justice Walsh reported to the Lord Deputy: "Castlemaine taken by Desmond party . . . Ladders made for taking Youghal or Kilmallock". [7]

Matters came to a climax in the spring of 1574 when Gerald captured Bourchier and handed him over to his enemy Fitzdavid. The Lord Deputy Essex, and the Earls of Ormond and Kildare, negotiated on behalf of the government with Desmond, and sought to induce him to submit to certain conditions. Desmond was prepared to accept only some of the conditions. The government next sought to wean Fitzmaurice and Sir John of Desmond from their allegiance to the Earl, and endeavoured to undermine his authority among his blood relations. Becoming aware of this, Desmond adopted the most prudent course in the circumstances. He made his submission to the Lord Deputy at Clonmel, surrendered all his castles, and agreed to disband his forces. [8]

In the summer of 1574 the English garrison at Kilmallock was having supply problems. On May 2nd, Captain Holmes reported to Thomas Sackford that Captain Bourchier's man, coming to them from Dublin, was "spoiled of all he had". [9] Another message from Holmes to Sackford, on the 27th May, has a note of extreme urgency — "Distress for provisions" [10] In June, Sackford had to inform Burghley that "Wheat sent to relieve Kilmallock spoiled by Edmund M'Rudderie (i.e. Mac an Ridire), the White Knight's son".[11]

The papal excommunication of Queen Elizabeth in 1570 meant that Catholic resistance to the Queen had assumed the nature of a crusade. It was also to add a European dimension to the Geraldine revolt. Gearóid Ó Tuathaigh says:

"The Desmond rebellion is part of the story of Catholic Europe in the age of the counter-reformation, a complex story with its centres of entreaty and intrigue in Rome, Paris and Madrid, or along the Atlantic

ports". [12] As for James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald "a zealous Catholic of strong religious convictions", he "was fully in tune with the political dimension of counter-reformation Catholicism in Europe." [13]

Fr. David Woulfe, Papal Nuncio, had come to Ireland in 1560 to collect information on such matters as harbours, fortresses and cities, as well as on the spiritual and temporal welfare of the people. He was captured and lodged in Dublin Castle, from where, however, he managed to escape. He is thought to have met Fitzmaurice after the latter's submission, and left Ireland for Spain in September, 1573. Fr. Woulfe's extraordinarily detailed report was presented to the Spanish king, Philip II, who was favourably impressed. [14]

In Madrid, Fr. Woulfe met Fr. Patrick O Hely, an Irish Franciscan, who had just completed his studies at the University of Alcalá with marked distinction. Fr O Hely, later to be Bishop of Mayo, was fated to die on the scaffold in Kilmallock in 1579. Fr. Woulfe was given a large sum of money from the Spanish authorities for Fitzmaurice, to help finance his cause.

Fitzmaurice sails for the continent

On 28th February, 1575, Fitzmaurice, accompanied by his wife, son and two daughters, as well as some friends, sailed from Glin for France. Arrived in France, Fitzmaurice visited the French court in Paris, and obtained an interview with the king. The Geraldine leader, who still cherished the hopes that had sent him into revolt for Faith and Fatherland in 1569, considered his interview with the French king satisfactory. An invasion of Ireland by the Catholic powers was now his objective, and towards that end he and his friends bent all their energies. Patrick O Hely, consecrated Bishop of Mayo in 1576, was the chief agent in Madrid, and travelled between there and Rome. In 1577, Fitzmaurice had a number of interviews with the Pope, Gregory XIII, who warmly received him and gave him letters to take with him to Madrid and Lisbon.

Despite his tireless traversing of the continent, nothing really worthwhile came of Fitzmaurice's efforts. The Catholic powers were waiting and playing safe. In the end, practical help came only from the Pope, who helped fit out a small fleet carrying 600 soldiers and arms for 3000 men. The fleet was given into the charge of an English Catholic, an adventurer named Thomas Stukely; but instead of going to Ireland, Stukely went to fight the Moors for the King of Portugal.

Fitzmaurice returns to lead fight

Dejected, but still not despairing, Fitzmaurice chartered a number of small vessels, with a small number of troops, and accompanied by Dr. Nicholas Sanders, the Pope's Legate, set sail for Ireland from Ferrol, in north-west Spain, on the 17th June, 1579.[15] They arrived at Smerwick, on the Kerry coast, on the 25th July. And, of a sudden, we are told, Ireland was shaken "as with an earthquake", at the news that Fitzmaurice and a Legate from the Pope had actually arrived. [16]

Fitzmaurice brought ashore the banner the Pope had given him, which had embroidered upon it a representation of Christ crucified, and the words *In omni tribulatione et angustia spes nostra Jesu et Maria*. He immediately set about sending letters in Irish and English to various lords and chiefs inviting them to join him. To Alexander MacDonnell, a captain of Gallowglass, he wrote:

Beatha agus sláinte leat a scribhinn chun Alasdruinn Chiottaigh Mhic Dhomhnaill óna charaid agus a chompánach féin .i. Ó Shéamus Mac Muiris mhic an Iarla. Et bíodh a fhios aige mise do theacht slán go hEirinn maille cumas, d'éis a bhfuair mé d'aistear is de shiúl coigríoch . . . [17]

(Life and health go with you letter to Alexander Ciottach Mac Donnell from his own friend and companion, James Fitzmaurice son of the Earl. And let him know that I have returned safely after all I have had of travel and foreign journeying . . .)

Fitzmaurice went on to state the reason why Mac Donnell should join him: they were fighting for their religion and defending their lands. He also stated that no lord was ever in so good a position to pay his troops, "Buíochas do Dhia Mhór na Trócaire dhá chionn agus . . . don mhuintir do bheir an cumas sin dom fá Dhia . . ." (thanks to the Great God of Mercy for that and . . . to those who made it possible for me to do so).

Fitzmaurice sent a letter to Gerald, Earl of Desmond, telling him now was the time to come forward and vindicate the traditions of the Geraldines. [18] Desmond was in a dilemna. If he joined the rebellion and the rebellion failed, what hope had he of a second pardon? But if he held aloof and the rebellion succeeded, then the earldom would surely pass to James Fitzmaunice. [19] Eventually Desmond decided on his course of action: he forwarded Fitzmaurice's letter to William Drury, former Lord President of Munster, now Lord Justice of Ireland. Drury, on hearing of Fitzmaurice's landing, marched south from Dublin with all his forces, and was joined by the Earl of Kildare, and Malby, President of Connacht, at Limerick.

Desmond's brothers, Sir John and Sir James, rallied to Fitzmaurice's banner, bringing with them as many of their followers as they could muster: and with Fitzmaurice they marched into Co. Limerick, to the woods of Claonghlais in the south-west of the county. At this stage, the Earl of Desmond was persuaded to meet Drury at Kilmallock. Drury, determined to force the Earl to submit to English authority, came with his entire marching force to the meeting. Desmond, according to one commentator, rode into the lion's mouth at Kilmallock, for, once there, he was held in custody for a week, until he promised to aid Drury against his brothers. Desmond agreed only on condition that Drury would guarantee the inviolability of Desmond's lands. Drury agreed. [20]

Death of Fitzmaurice

At Claonghlais Fitzmaurice separated from the main body of his followers, and set off with a small detachment, his intentions being, first to visit Holy Cross Abbey in Tipperary, and then cross the Shannon into Connacht. Desmond, hearing that Fitzmaurice was marching eastwards, pursued him as far as Castletown Mac Eniry, five miles west of Bruree. After that Fitzmaunice's party proceeded without further interference until they came to Ballyvorheen, [21] near Cappamore, in East Limerick. What happened at Ballyvorheen is not clear. It is said that Fitzmaurice's men seized some horses belonging to the Burkes, and that this led to a fight. Another version is that the Burkes, who had sided with Fitzmaurice in his earlier revolt, but had since submitted to the English, were now bitterly opposed to him, and that, finding him in their territory, they attacked him in force. Whatever the cause of the clash, the result was devestating to the Geraldine cause. Fitzmaunice was killed.

His body was taken by the English to Kilmallock and hung on a gibbet, so that the soldiers could gratify and amuse themselves by shooting at their dead enemy. Such was the fate of James Fitzmaurice, a man who, in the previous ten years, had drawn the attention of Europe on himself and his cause, the man whom Pope Gregory XIII called James Geraldine of happy memory, and whom Pearse was to number among the Separatists of Irish history. [22]

Martyrdom of Bishop O Hely and Fr. O Rourke

Another happening that took place in Kilmallock in 1579 is still frequently recalled. This was the execution of Bishop Patrick O Hely and Fr. Conn O Rourke, the latter a son of the house of Breifne. Both had arrived in Ireland from the continent about the time that Fitzmaurice landed, and had travelled to Askeaton, where there was a Franciscan friary which had been founded by the Geraldines. They had expected to

receive hospitality from the Earl of Desmond, who had a large castle in Askeaton; but the Earl was absent, and it was the Countess who received them. She extended a warm welcome to them.

Later, they set out for Limerick, but as soon as they had departed, the Countess notified the authorities, as she feared that the news of her having received two Catholic ecclesiastics just arrived from the continent, might compromise her husband. The two were promptly arrested, and lodged in prison in Limerick. Fifteen days later, when the Lord Justice came to Kilmallock, they were sent out to him. Both were closely examined by Drury. Bishop O Hely said his purpose in coming in Ireland was to exercise his episcopal function. [23]

They were then asked what they knew about the intentions of the Pope and the King of Spain with regard to plans to invade Ireland. Drury, not satisfied with their answers, ordered them to be cruelly tortured, after which they were condenmed to death as traitors. They were immediately taken to the place of execution, a small mound, still known as Crochta, situated just outside the town walls, at the rear of the present Catholic church. There they were hanged with the girdles they wore as part of their religious habit. [24]

The Rebellion Continues

In September 1579, Drury, who had ordered the torture and execution of Bishop O Hely and Fr. O Rourke, was to suffer a crushing defeat at Gort na Tiobraid (Springfield) near Dromcollogher, at the hands of Sir John of Desmond, the Earl's brother, who had succeeded Fitzmaurice as leader of the Geraldines in revolt. Drury's forces, composed of 500 seasoned troops, had marched out of Kilmallock, where Drury himself was encamped. Richard Berleth visualizes their setting out:

"The English pikemen who filed out of Kilmallock that second week in September left to the beat of the marching drum and the skin of bagpipes. For Gerald (the Earl) had sent his promised gallowglass, and since they knew Kilmore better than the English scouts, they led the columns of infantry, wagons and light cannon into the shadow of the trees. Within a hundred yards of Kilmallock, the forest swallowed the companies without a trace." [25]

It is not generally realised today how densely forested much of the country around Kilmallock was at the time of the Geraldine Wars. So

close were the woods to it that the town has been described as standing at a crossroads in the great Kilmore Wood. Indeed many parts of Co. Limerick were under extensive forests at that time, great oak forests all of them. The name Kilmore, already mentioned a number of times, is an anglicisation of *An Choill Mhór*, the Great Wood. The Great Wood of Munster extended along the Cork-Limerick border from Kilmallock to where the modern town of Ráthluirc (Charleville) stands.

There were further woods extending from Feenagh to Broadford and up the slopes of the Mullaghareirk Mountains. Here was Clonghlais (Clonlish in Elizabethean documents), one of James Fitzmaurice's retreats and gathering places; and it was also in this neighbourhood that Sir John of Desmond defeated Drury. Woods stretched northwards from Newcastle to Loughill and Shanagolden; and from Rathkeale a forest spread eastwards to link up with the forest that occupied the valley of the Maigue. South of Kilfinane were the oakwoods of Darragh (Darrach); and east of these woods lay the forest of Aherlow, another of the chief fastnesses of the Geraldines. And there were further extensive woods in northeast Limerick, in the Slieve Felim country. [26]

So it was through the woods of south and south-west Limerick that Drury's men marched to their defeat. Drury, who had been in ill health for some time, was shocked by the outcome of the Gort na Tiobraid battle, and was carried back to his camp in a state of collapse. Malby, President of Connacht, now assumed temporary command at Kilmallock; [27] and Drury was conveyed by cart to Waterford, taking with him, as hostage, James, the young son of the Earl of Desmond. James, who was born in London, while his mother, the Countess, was voluntarily sharing the hardship of prison life with her jailed husband, would re-appear, briefly and pathetically, in Kilmallock, almost exactly twenty-one years later. Drury, whose health daily worsened, died in Waterford.

After his victory at Gort na Tiobraid, Sir John of Desmond led his men into the heart of Co. Limerick, and at Manister, near Croom, on the 3rd October, 1579, accidentally encountered Malby, President of Connacht, with a large army. A battle took place, and after a fierce and bloody contest, during which the issue for long lay in doubt, the Geraldines were routed with very heavy losses. Casualties among the gallowglass troops of the Mac Sheehys and Mac Sweeneys were particularly heavy. Immediately after the battle, Malby turned his guns on the venerable Cistercian abbey that gave Manister *(Mainistir an Aonaigh)* its name, and battered down its walls, after which his battle-crazed soldiers swept through the breaches, slaughtering everybody they found

inside, including the monks, and men, women and children who had sought shelter there from the fury of the battle.

Malby next marched to Askeaton, and imperiously demanded admission to the castle where the Earl was in residence. When this was refused he set fire to the town: attacked the Franciscan monastery, burned it, and slew some of the friars. He also wrecked the Geraldine sepulchral monuments in the monastery. Desmond complained about Maiby's conduct in Askeaton, and was summoned by the new Lord Justice, Sir William Pelham, to meet him at Fanningstown, near Croom, to discuss the complaint. Desmond refused to attend.

Desmond goes into Rebellion

Desmond was then ordered to surrender "that papistical, arrogant traitor, Dr. Sander" [28] the Papal Legate, who had accompanied Fitzmaurice from the continent. He was further ordered to deliver up the castles of Askeaton and Carrigafoyle, and was instructed to submit to the Lord Justice and unite his forces with those of the Crown, and fight against his rebellious brethern. Desmond was placed in an impossible position. For one thing, he had never even met Dr. Sanders, and did not know his whereabouts. When he refused to submit himself to the Lord Justice Pelham, the latter publicly proclaimed him a traitor at Rathkeale, on the 2nd November 1579. Pelham then placed his army in garrison in various centres, including Adare, Croom, Loch Gur and Kilmallock.

Now with a price of £1000 on his head, Desmond had no choice but to join his brothers and fight for his existence. He captured Youghal, an English settlement, and burned it; returned to Co. Limerick, to Newcastle, on the 29th November, and invited all the Irish chiefs to rally to his standard. On the 6th December, his enemy, Ormond, entered south Limerick and marched westward to Newcastle, burning and spoiling the country as he went. [29]

Ferocious Warfare

Early in March, 1580, Pelham and Ormond spent two days marching through Connello (the large barony that comprised practically all of Co. Limerick from the Maigue westward), wasting and burning the country, the people with their cattle flying in all directions before them. By far the most atrocious incident of that hurricane of fire and slaughter was the massacre of more than 400 people who had sought refuge in the wood of Clounleharde, a short distance west of Shanid. The official report says: "There were slain that day by the fury of the soldiers above four hundred people found in the woods, and wheresoever any house or corn was found it

was consumed by fire". [30]

The plight of the ordinary people, especially the poorer people, at this period must have been appalling. Fear, famine and death stalked the land. Even at the best of times life was grim for the generality of the people. They lived in miserable cabins, and usually ate only once a day, their principal food being butter and oaten bread; their drink, sour milk. Meat they ate only on special feast days. They were accorded few rights, and could be said to be regarded as the mere chattels of their lords. One strong bond however they had with the old established lords, whether Gaelic or Norman, was the bond of a common language and culture. And there was also, of course, the bond of a common religion.

Kilmallock is mentioned frequently in the State Papers for the spring and summer of 1580. On the 12th April we find the Earl of Ormond writing to Lord Justice Pelham and enquiring when he will be in Kilmallock. [31] Twelve days later, Edward Waterhouse, Chief Secretary, was reporting to Francis Walshingham on the success of the garrisons placed at Askeaton, Adare, Kilmallock and Cashel. [32] On the 19th May, Wallop acquainted Walshingham of the assembly of the nobility in Kilmallock. [33] On the 29th June, the Countess of Desmond wrote to the Privy Council pleading for fair treatment for the Earl. She mentioned Malby's attack on him, and the rejection of his complaints by Ormond and Pelham, and also stated that his messengers had not been permitted to go to England. Finally, she reminded the Privy Council that the Earl had given his only son as a hostage to Drury at Kilmallock.

The war in the Desmond territories was conducted with unbelievable savagery. Pelham stated that no one was to receive mercy who did not come with bloody hands, or who had not slain someone more important than himself. [34] The campaign against the unfortunate Desmond was to be prosecuted with the utmost vigour. Ormond, active with Pelham, marched with an army of 800 men from Limerick to Kilmallock. Next day he marched into Co. Cork. In July, 1580, the Earl's brother, Sir James, was captured, taken to Cork, and hanged and quartered.

Early the following month, the Earl's other brother, Sir John, and Dr. Sanders, had a narrow escape near Kilmallock, when a patrol of soldiers from Sir George Bourchier's garrison in the town came on them. They were in the company of the soldiers for over an hour, and talked themselves out of a very dangerous situation by exhorting the soldiers, in English, to slay the Irish. [35]

Dr. Sanders, the Papal Legate, an Englishman, had attended the

Council of Trent. A refugee on the continent from Elizabeth's Protestant England. he was a man of great practical force and ability. He was the most enthusiastic preacher of a Catholic crusade, and proved a very valuable recruit to the Geraldine cause. [36]

Because of the systematic burning of the harvest, the feeding of the English garrisons in Munster was becoming a very big problem. In this connection we find recorded in the State Papers, under the date 18th August, 1580, a communication stating: "Corn to be sent from the Severn, Bristol and London to serve the garrisons at Limerick, Cork, Kilmallock, Youghal and other places, for six months." Meantime, the war dragged on. Pelham's term as Lord Justice was coming to an end, and on the 7th September, he handed over to his successor, Lord Grey de Wilton. The fact that the Desmond rebellion still had a European dimension was demonstrated when, shortly after Lord Grey's installation, a force of some seven or eight hundred men, composed of Italians, Spaniards and a small number of others, mostly Irish exiles, put ashore and occupied a fort known as Dún an Óir, which overlooks Smerwick Harbour in Kerry.

While they waited to make contact with the Geraldine forces, and move inland, they set about fortifying the fort. Grey moved swiftly, and on the 7th November, 1580, began a siege of the fort, in which some local women and children had sought refuge. The garrison surrendered and laid down their arms on the 10th. After that came Grey's notorious act, the massacre of the unarmed garrison, and all others who were within the fort, with the exception of the officers, who were kept for ransom. Grey reported the massacre as follows: "Then put I in certain bands who straight fell to execution. There were six hundred slain". [37] It was a savage war, and atrocities were committed by both sides, but the massacre at Dún an Óir was to be remembered as the blackest deed of all.

In the spring of 1581, Dr. Sanders, who had shared the great hardships of life with the Geraldine forces, took ill and died in the woods of Claonghlais, in south-west Limerick. The Geraldine forces were still active, with the Earl and Sir John of Desmond, raiding Butler territory. In the meantime Grey continued his pithess campaign of fire and sword, taking great preys of cattle, and burning the harvests, so that, according to the Four Masters, "the lowing of a cow or a voice of a ploughman could scarcely be heard from Dun Chaoin (in the extreme west of Kerry) to Cashel".

A letter from Captain J. Dowdall to Wallop, on 21st June, 1581, is summarized in the State Papers as follows: "Arrival in Kilmallock on midsummer day. Killed 40 of the Senaschal's followers and took 200

cows". [38] The senaschal was John Fitzedmund Fitzgerald, uncle of the Earl of Desmond.

Early in January, 1582, Sir John of Desmond, Desmond's elder brother, was killed in Co. Cork. His body was hung in chains in Cork, and his head was sent to Dublin, and put on a spike above the Castle. Many of the other leaders were captured, or submitted. The Earl himself, a rebel by force of circumstances, knew that for him there would be neither pardon nor mercy. He was hunted relentlessly from place to place.

The matter of supplies for the English garrison at Kilmallock continued to be a serious problem, Wallop and Waterhouse writing to Burghley on the 2nd July, 1582 stating: "There is no manner of provision for feeding the garrisons of Kilmallock and Ardarte". [39] Later that month the garrisons of Kilmallock and Clonmel met at Bansha "to beat the wood of Aherlow" in search of rebels. [40] On the 21st October, Captain Thomas Norreys wrote to the Lords Justices explaining to them "the difficulty he will have to keep Kilmallock for want of victuals" [41]

On January 27th, 1583, the Earl of Ormond informed Burghley that he was unable to place garrisons at Kilmallock and other places of service; [42] these very likely were meant to be extra garrisons to augment the existing garrisons, for on the 24th February, G. Fenton reported to Burghley that the garrisons of Kilmallock and Limerick had attacked the Seneschal's men at Aherlow. [43] The Kilmallock garrison must have, in the proverbial phrase, eaten the citizens of Kilmallock "out of house and home", for on June 4th, 1583, we find David Meagh and Richard Verdon, agents for the town, petitioning Burghley, the Lord Treasurer, for the payment of a sum of £5156 - 15 - 8, for which they had received captains' tickets to the amount of £1299. [44]

The Earl is slain

In June 1583, the Earl of Desmond and the Countess had a narrow escape from a night attack by the garrison of Kilmallock. The bed in which they had lain was found warm by the soldiers, into whose hands the Countess's gentlewoman and others fell. A fog had covered the flight of the Earl and the Countess; but cattle, plate, jewels and wardrobes were all captured. [45] Desmond fled to Kerry, and there the end came a short time later. He was found sheltering in a hut at Glennageenty, five miles east of Tralee, by a band of the O Moriartys, once his trusted dependents, but now his mortal enemies. They struck him down, cut off his head, and sent it to Ormond in Kilkenny, He, in turn, dispatched it to England, to the

Queen, who ordered it to be spiked and exposed on London bridge.

Desmond, at the time of his death, was only about 45 years of age; however, as a result of the wound he had received at Affane some 20 years earlier, he was somewhat incapacitated, having difficulty in mounting and dismounting from his horse. He was not as strong a character as his cousin Fitzmaurice, or his brother, Sir John.

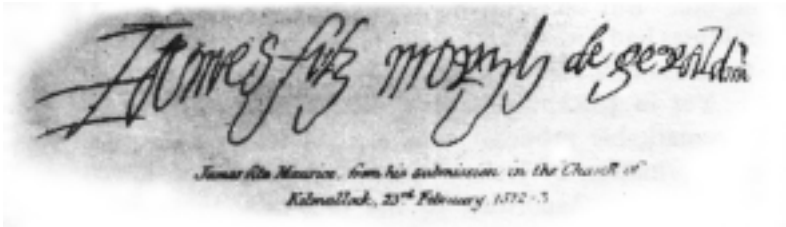
The Desmond Wars had taken a terrible toll. Desmond was dead; so were his brothers Sir John and Sir James, and the Captain of Desmond, James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald. Desmond's only son was confined in the Tower of London, and was being brought up an Englishman. Thousands had been slaughtered in the wars, whole countrysides had been laid waste, and tens of thousands had died of famine. And now the vast Desmond estates were to be confiscated, to be broken up, and divided amongst Englishmen. It was the end of an era, the destruction of an entity, a way of life.

Thousands of acres were to go to such planters as Raleigh, Spenser and Courtenay, and to lesser celebrities such as Henry Oughtred, Edward Fitton, Sir George Bourchier and George Thornton. In all, 577,000 Desmond acres fell to the Crown. Many of the Desmond underlords, however, were left in possession of their lands: de Lacys of Bruree, Bruff and Bahhingarry, MacEniry of Castletown Mac Eniry, Fitzgerald of Claonghlais, the Knight of Glin, etc. But the great house of Desmond was gone; the Munster Geraldines had lost everything, and the role of Kilmallock as capital of the Desmond territories had come to an end.

Yet in 1583, a new role was being visualized for Kilmallock in a remarkable proposal contained in a document, "Discourse for the Reformation of Ireland", which is found in the Carew papers of that year. According to the proposal, the seat of the Lord Deputy and the law should be transferred from Dublin to Athlone, the centre of Ireland; and the Lord Deputy should have two Presidents, one in Munster, at Kilmallock; the other in Ulster, at Lifford.[46] So Kilmallock still remained a very important town in so far as the implementation of English policy in Ireland was concerned.

One effect the Geraldine rebellion, especially the Fitzmaurice phase of the rebellion, had, was to bring the *Seán Ghaill* or "Old English" — who might, perhaps, be more accurately described as the Norman Irish — very much under the influence of the Catholic Counter-Reformation. This, according to Margaret Mac Curtain, "was a quickening influence which gave both a dimension and a dynamism to the insularity of their habits". [47] To ensure that the religion of their children would be

safeguarded, these Norman Irish, or Old English, sent them to the continent for their education. During the closing decades of the 16th century Latin schools were conducted in Limerick, Kilkenny, Kilmallock, Clonmel, Youghal and Waterford, mainly under Jesuit direction, and these schools sent to colleges on the continent boys who were trained in the classical tradition. [48]



Signature of James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald on his submission in Kilmallock. 23rd February, 1573.

9

Kilmallock's New Charter

Food Shortage in Kilmallock

The provisioning of Kilmallock, and its English garrison, continued to be a problem through the second part of 1583 and into 1584. In July, 1583, David Meagh and Richard Verdon, agents of the town, were petitioning the Lord Treasurer, Burghley, for supplies. The first request, on July 20th, was for 100 qrs. of wheat, to be exported from the port of Gloucester; [1] the second request, on July 21st, was for 300 qrs. of wheat and 200 qrs. of malt and barley. [2] On the 12th December, Burghley authorised the officers of the port of Gloucester to transport 100 qrs. of wheat, free of custom, for the town of Kilmallock. [3] In March, 1584, the sovereign and burgesses of Kilmallock petitioned Queen Elizabeth for a licence to import 1000 qrs. of corn; [4] and on May 27th, 1584, there was another petition for the transportation of 1000 qrs. of grain, addressed this time to Burghley; this petition was by Richard Verdon, agent for the town. [5]

Verdon had a second petition; it was: that the charter for Kilmallock be renewed without the postillations of the Lord Justices. The original application for a renewal and enlargement of their charter had been made by the inhabitants of Kilmallock prior to this, and the charter had, in fact, been drafted before Richard Verdon addressed his petition to Burghley. The new charter, which bore the date 10th January, 1584, and which was granted under the Queen's letter, on 15th April, 1584, took cognizance of the new situation that obtained in Kilmallock since the overthrow of the Earl of Desmond.

Charter of 1584

The important charter of 1584, which was addressed to the Sovereign and Burgesses of Kilmallock, laid down rules for the election of the corporation, and defined its powers and functions. The burgesses were to meet annually after the feast of St. Michael, and to elect from themselves a sovereign by assent of a majority of twelve of the best

burgesses, or the greater part of them, being the council of the town. The sovereign and burgesses would comprise one body corporate, to be known as "The Sovereign and Burgesses of the Town of Kilmallock". The acts and ordinances of the council, so long as they conformed to reason and common law, were to be binding on all inhabitants.

An interesting insight into the merchandise being offered for sale in the town at that time is provided in the list of articles and commodities for which the corporation was entitled to charge tolls, for ever, for the purpose of fortifying the town:

For every dozen of English cloth 2d; a horse load of iron 1d; a horse or cart load of salt 1d; a horse load of corn 1/2 d; 2 bushels of meal, or wheat, barley or bere, 1/4 d; a horse ld; cow or ox ld; a pork 1/4 d; a fresh hide 1/4 d; a salt hide 1/2 d; a blanket or caddow 1/2 d; 6 ells of Irish cloth woollen or linen 1/4 d; a horse load of boards 1/4 d; a chest, great or small 1/4 d; a horse load of vessels 1/4 d; 2 stone weight of soap 1/4 d; a horse load of fish ld; a barrell of wine 4d; a pipe of wine 2d; any other ware of value of 12d, 1/4 d.

The fact that so many commodities were assessed by the horse load indicates that goods at that period were mainly transported on horses, either in panniers or otherwise.

The sovereign and council could rate the inhabitants for the common works and utility of the town, and for the sovereign's salary. The sovereign was entitled to fix the price at which grain or other foods could be sold. No person was permitted to remove from the town, without the licence of the sovereign and council, grain sold there, except for his own use. With regard to hygiene and sanitation, no man was to suffer his heap or muck hill in any street or lane from one Saturday to another, on pain of 6d. No merchant stranger was to retail cloth, or keep a tavern in the town, for more than 40 days. Handicraftsmen were liable to be punished for fraud in their trade. Unlicensed makers of spirits were to be fined. There were various other regulations concerning the conduct of trade and commerce in the town, with penalties specified for the contravening of the regulations. Income derived from such penalties was to be spent on the walling and fortifying of the town.

Kilmallock was to have a fair annually on the vigil of Pentecost, and for five days following, the sovereign and council being directed to appoint four men, barons to the fair, to hold court of piepowder. There was also to be a hundred court in the town every fifteen days, the jurisdiction of the court to extend to the town and liberties. The corporation was also obliged to provide a house of correction, a pillory and tumbril, the latter, sometimes referred to as a ducking stool, being a

stool or chair used for the punishment of offenders by plunging them into water.

The privileges of the corporation and burgesses are set out in the charter in considerable detail. All previous privileges under earlier charters were confirmed; and, in addition, similar liberties to those enjoyed by the corporation of Kilkenny were granted. Kilmallock's loyalty to the English Crown during the Geraldine revolt was recognised in that part of the charter which said:

"Further, in consideration of their dutiful resistance to the archtraitor Gerald Fitzgerald, Earl of Desmond, it is granted that the sovereign be justice of the peace and coroner in the town; and that the burgesses shall be free of all customs, murage, etc., in all the Queen's dominions, as those of Clonmel and Kilkenny are . . ." [6]

Sharing the Spoils

In 1584, commissioners were appointed to survey the forfeited lands of the Earls of Desmond, as a preliminary to the lands being divided up and granted to English Undertakers, that is, grantees who would *undertake* to settle English colonists on the lands. The complete survey contains a vast amount of information about the location of the lands, their extent, the condition of the lands at the time of the survey, and the names of the underlords or tenants who held them. Canon Begley's *The Diocese of Limerick in the 16th and 17th Centuries* (published in 1927, when its author was Parish Priest of Kilmallock) contains a complete transcript of that part of the survey that relates to Co. Limerick. It makes fascinating, if rather sad, reading.

According to the survey, the Earl of Desmond had held a tenement in the middle of the town of Kilmallock, near a castle called Lavery, and on the eastern side of it. The tenement was in the possession of John Wall, who paid no rent for it, but was accustomed to carry and supply to the Earl wood and fuel, taken and lopped out of the woods and underwoods near the town, as long as the Earl sojourned there. A few years were to elapse before the undertakers began to take over the lands granted to them.

Kilmallock becomes a Borough

Granted a charter in 1584, the citizens of Kilmallock were to receive a further boost in 1585, when their town was created a borough with the right to send two members to parliament. The vacuum created by the destruction of Geraldine power was gradually filled by the growing influence of the members of parliament.

Eventually, one family succeeded in achieving such an ascendancy in Kilmallock that the patronage of the two parliamentary seats was in their hands, and the corporation became, for all practical purposes, their private property. But that will be dealt with in a later chapter.

Martyrdom of Fr. Mac Kenraghty of Kilmallock

A Kilmallock priest suffered martyrdom in Clonmel in 1585. He was Fr. Maurice MacKenraghty — the name Mac Kenraghty, an anglicisation of the Irish, *Mac Ionnrachtaigh*, has now almost universally assumed the form Enright. Maurice's father, Thomas, a goldsmith by trade, had come from North Kerry to Kilmallock. The Fiants of Elizabeth have the following entries relating to him — with varying spellings of his surname:

1566 — Pardon to Thomas Mac Enryckty of Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, burgess.

1570 — Pardon to Thomas Kinraght of Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, goldsmith.

Maurice Mac Kenraghty chose the ecclesiastical state, and having pursued a course of studies and obtained a degree in Sacred Theology, was ordained priest. He was an eloquent preacher, and laboured for some time in Kilmallock and the surrounding countryside. Later, he became chaplain to the Earl of Desmond, and shared the rigours and dangers of the Desmond Wars with the Earl and his men. In September, 1583, he was captured in Duhallow, and, on the instructions of the Earl of Ormond, was sent to Clonmel, where he was cast into prison. He remained there for more than a year.

On Easter Eve, 1585, Victor White, one of the leading Catholic citizens of Clonmel, being anxious to do a kind turn to the imprisoned priest, and also to provide religious services for his Catholic neighbours, went to the head jailer, and arranged with him, for a sum of money, to allow the priest pass the night in his house. Fr. Mac Kenraghty was accordingly allowed out. However, Victor White had not realised how treacherous a character the jailer was, for no sooner had he and the priest departed then the jailer approached the authorities, and told them that if they wanted to seize the principal citizens hearing Mass they could easily do so in the house of Victor White at dawn of day.

Fr. Mac Kenraghty spent the night hearing confessions, and in the morning everything was ready for the celebration of Mass, when suddenly a band of soldiers burst into the house. White was immediately placed under arrest. Some of those in the house, including Fr. Mac Kenraghty, managed to escape, the priest hiding himself in a heap of straw in the courtyard. As soon as it was safe to do so he left the town

and went into the country.

White was threatened with death and the confiscation of his property by the authorities unless he delivered the priest up to them. Fr. Mac Kenraghty, hearing of this, sent word to White that in order to save him he would give himself up to the authorities. White objected strongly to this proposal, and said he was prepared to lose his life rather than that the priest should be put to death. But Fr. Mac Kenraghty was determined to save his host, and returned to Clonmel and surrendered to the authorities.

He was immediately seized, bound hand and foot, and cast into prison. A little later he was offered his life if he would renounce his religion. He refused, and was condemned to death as a traitor. On the 30th April, 1585, he was taken to the place of execution, where he was hanged from the gallows, taken down half- alive and beheaded. [7] There is a memorial window to him in Kilmallock Catholic Church.

Geraldine Lands Confiscated

The allocation of the confiscated Geraldine lands among the Undertakers was not proceeding very smoothly. Legal questions sprang up like mushrooms after rain. [8] There were problems as to titles, and arguments as to the legal status of the tenures of the existing freeholders on the lands. Desmond underlords protested against the confiscation of their lands or against the encroachment by the Undertakers on properties that did not form part of their grants. The Solicitor General, Roger Wilbrahan, writing to the Lords Commissioners for Munster Causes, on 11th September, 1587, said:

"At Cork, Kilmallock and Clonmel, we spent five weeks in hearing the claims and titles of her Majesty's lands found by office". [9] However, the Solicitor General was to add: "we have put the Undertakers for the most part in possession". [10]

In the vicinity of Kilmallock the Norman-Irish underlords of the Desmonds retained their lands: Lacy in Bruree (their lands included Ballygibba and Tankardstown in the present parish of Kilmallock); Goolds in Knocksouna; Foxes in *Pobal Boscach*, Fox's Country, between Bruff and Kilmallock.

In 1588, Sir, George Bourchier, who had commanded the garrison of Kilmallock during the 1570's, received, among other properties, the castle and lands of Loch Gur; Ballyhousty (Ballynaught), called the Countess's Land, between Bruree and Kilmallock; 6s. 8d sterling out of two tenements and a garden in St. John's Street (now

Sheares Street) near the town of Kilmallock, late of William Miagh; l0s. sterling out of a decayed water mill; parcel of the manor of Glengora, and 53s. 4d. sterling English, out of three tenements in Kilmallock, in the tenure of Dermot Mac Donnell and others, with the garden and 18 acres; all to be held forever, in fee farm, by fealty, in common socage. [11]

The White Knight, Edmond Fitzgibbon, whose father, John Óg Fitzgibbon, had been posthumously attainted with treason in 1571, and whose lands had been declared forfeit to the Crown, received back in December 1590, in recognition of his services to the Crown, certain parcels of land in the vicinity of Kilmallock, including Karrowgarrowe, near the town, parts of Ballingaddy and Ballinahown, also the site of the castle of Court Rudderye (Cúirt an Ridire) the original castle of the White Knights, situated beside the town, "surrounded with a stone wall, the court being ruinous, the land belonging to it, a water mill, and a third part of another upon the river of Kilmallock . . . all possessions of the late John Óg Fitzgibbon, White Knight". [12] As well, Edmond received substantial tracts of land in the parishes of Bulgaden, Kilfinane, Ardpatrick and Kilflynn, together with extensive lands in Co. Cork. These restored lands comprised a large part of the territory known as the White Knight's Country.

The Fitzharrys, or Fitzharrises, of Clonodfoy (modern Castleoliver), they, too, were rewarded for their loyalty to the Crown with grants of land in and about Kilfinane and Ardpatrick.

Letters patent issued in 1569 had granted "to the sovereign, brethern and community of the town, for the term of 21 years, the site, circuit, ambit and precinct of the late monastery of friar preachers in Kilmallock — a ruined church, a close, a dormitory, three chambers, three small gardens, with all buildings, edifices and cartilages thereto appertaining; 9 acres of arable land and 2 of pasture in the town and fields of Kilmallock; a water mill adjoining the town, parcel of the possessions of the monastery, at the rent of £2 - 13 - 8, and maintaining two fit archers, suitably armed for the defence of the premises. [13]

By grant, made under the Queen's letter of 15th April, 1594, all the above-mentioned monastic property was confirmed to Nicholas Meagh, Sovereign of Kilmallock, and to the brethern and community of the town, to hold forever, in common socage, at a rent of £2 - 13 - 8, and maintaining two English archers. [14]

A person attainted, that is, found guilty of treason to the English Crown, usually had his lands confiscated. In 1595, a grant was made to Captain Robert Collum of various lands in Co. Limerick including two messuages in the town of Kilmallock, formerly the property of James

Fant and Robert Fant, attainted. [15] A messuage meant a dwelling house with its outbuildings and adjacent lands belonging to the house.

William Lyon, Protestant Bishop of Cork and Ross, was unhappy about the lack of progress of Protestantism in Ireland, and in a letter to Lord Hunsdon, on 6th July, 1596, suggested that priests, friars, Jesuits and seminaries and their maintainers, should be restrained and punished, and "that those that are in Cork, Waterford, Limerick, Clonmel, Cashel, Fethard, Kilmallock, Youghal and Kinsale and other towns be reformed." The example of the towns, the bishop said, influenced the country areas. [16]

Castle Oliver

10

Kilmallock and The Nine Years War

Revolt in Ulster

The year 1594 saw the outbreak of the Nine Years War. It began in Ulster, when the combined forces of Hugh O Neill and Hugh O Donnell challenged English attempts to reduce that province to subjection. Margaret Mac Curtain states that there are several ways of looking at the Nine Years War. "From the point of view of Elizabeth's government it was a rebellion against the sovereign of England. Its European background of Spanish intervention had far-reaching consequences and became a vital factor in turning O Neill's lengthy struggle for mastery in Ulster into a major attempt to eliminate English rule from Ireland". [1] Before it was finished the tide of that war would flow up to the walls of Kilmallock. However, everything was still relatively quiet in Munster at the beginning of 1597, when Sir Thomas Norris, Lord President of Munster, visited Kilmallock, and wrote some letters from there. [2]

The continuing success of Irish arms in Ulster and adjacent areas in Connacht and Leinster was climaxed on the 14th August, 1598, by the ringing victory of O Neill and O Donnell at the battle of the Yellow Ford. This was the greatest defeat the English had ever suffered in Ireland, and it resulted in the Gaelic chiefs and the Norman-Irish lords in many parts of the country joining the victors.

Piers Lacy, of Bruff, who had got a pardon and a regrant of his lands after the Desmond wars, was being subjected to continual annoyance and interference by his neighbour, Sir George Thornton, a former President of Munster, who had been granted 1500 acres of confiscated Geraldine lands in Dunaman and in the parish of Uregare. Lacy was becoming exasperated, and, after hearing of the victory of the Yellow Ford, took heart and went to meet Owney O More of Laois, who was out in rebellion on O Neill's side. Lacy and O More agreed on taking action in Munster.

Since the overthrow of the Munster or Desmond Geraldines, and the death of the Earl of Desmond, a kind of leadership vacuum had

existed in Munster, and this situation Lacy and O More decided to rectify by having James Fitzthomas Fitzgerald, nephew of the late Earl, declared the new Earl — the late Earl's only son, also James Fitzgerald, who had been taken as a hostage in his infancy at Kilmallock, was still confined in London. O Neill was consulted about the plans for Munster and signified his agreement with them.

The English realised that it would be only a matter of very little time before the great rebellion spread into Munster. Sir Thomas Norris, writing to Sir Robert Cecil, from Kilmallock, on the 28th August, 1598, referred to the disaster at the Yellow Ford, and said that as soon as he heard of it he took steps to repulse traitors from Leinster who might make incursions into Munster. He had, he said, summoned all the noblemen and gentlemen to meet him at the frontiers with their forces, and also sought aid from the cities and towns, but found an unwillingness among them to do her Majesty service. To further confound matters, there was a great shortage of soldiers in the province. [3]

The following day, 29th August, James Goold, second Justice of Munster, also writing from Kilmallock to Cecil, had this to say: "The state of Ireland is miserable. There is no other likelihood but that this winter you shall have all Ireland, except the towns, in general rebellion, unless there come present force and sufficient, as well to be placed in Munster to keep them without (sic) joining the Earl traitor, as also to be employed in Ulster and Connacht". [4] The "Earl traitor" was, of course, Hugh O Neill.

War Spreads to Limerick

In the last days of September 1598, Owney O More, Captain Tyrrell, Redmond Bourke and Dermot O Connor led an army of 1200 men across the Tipperary border to Mainistir Uaithne (now Abington), in Co. Limerick. Sir Thomas Norris was in Kilmallock with an army of 1700 men, and circulated a report that he intended to attack the invading forces. He failed to attack. Instead, within the next few days he disbanded his army and went to Cork. According to William Weaver, Norris had departed only two hours from Kilmallock when it was sacked and burnt by the Irish. [5] The Irish forces then marched westward, and "did burn, kill and spoil the English inhabitants". They encamped for some days at Rathkeale, and sent out parties to harass the English who had lately settled in the district; they also took great spoils. The English grantees who had got the confiscated Geraldine lands all fled. [6]

The Súgán Earl

Henry Oughtred and his wife fled from Meane (near Castlemahon); Edward Fitton fled from Glenogra; Sir George Bourchier from Loch Gur; Alymer from Kifinny; George Thornton from Bruff, William Mainwaring from Fanningstown (near Croom).

On the 8th October, 1598, Thomas Butler and Art Mac Hugh O Byrne came with their forces from Leinster into Limerick, and encamped at Farrintanckley near Ballingarry. Here they were joined by James Fitzthomas Fitzgerald (usually styled James Fitzthomas), who agreed to assume the title of Earl of Desmond. The leaders of the revolt were all present at the investiture with their men. And the Mac Sheehys, faithful followers of the Geraldines, were there with 10 horse and 30 foot. [7] In derision, his enemies dubbed the new earl "Iarla an tSúgáin", the "Súgán Earl", that is, the straw-rope Earl. But in the coming months, the Súgán Earl, as we shall now, for convenience sake call him, was to prove his worth.

Ormond in Kilmallock

Shocked at the news from Limerick, the Lord Deputy, Ormond, hastened to Kilmallock, arriving there on the 11th October. Ten days later, in a letter to Queen Elizabeth, he was to boast of his relief of the town. [8] Ormond was very annoyed that the Irish forces had entered Co. Limerick without any resistance being offered them, his annoyance, very likely, being directed against Norris, the Lord President of Munster, who had disbanded his army at Kilmallock and gone to Cork, but who now had returned to Kilmallock to join Ormond. Ormond, clearly worried about the inadequate forces available to hold Munster against O Neill's men, had ordered the noblemen and gentlemen of Munster to meet him in Kilmallock, and a number of them came, but with few or no forces, as many of their followers were even then entered into rebellion. Among those who came were Lord Roche, Lord Barry, Edmond Fitzgibbon, the White Knight, and Cormac Mac Dermott of Muskerry. Ormond, in a letter to the Privy Council (21st October, 1598) wanted speedy action — 2000 or 3000 men sent over with money and victuals; and, as for those in rebellion, "their extirpation by sword, fire and famine to the terror of all traitors thereafter." [9]

Ormond, having left a strong garrison in Kilmallock, marched to Mallow on the 14th of October. In the meantime, the Irish forces encamped at Rathkeale and Ballingarry had come together and had set out for Kilmallock. As they approached the town they learned that Ormond and Norris were just then leaving it with their army, and they marched for the space of a day beside the retreating army until they came to Mallow,

where they challenged the English to battle. The English didn't fight, and the Irish army marched into Kerry.

Kilmallock a Key Point

Kilmallock remained very much in the news during all this time, James Goold, writing from Limerick to Ormond, on 3rd November, reported that: "Upon Friday last, about five of the clock in the afternoon, I had an inkling that the town of Kilmallock was that night to be betrayed, and given up to the traitors". Goold then goes on to say that he sent two messengers on horseback to the several captains in the town, The messengers were chased all the way but managed to get to the gates of the town and deliver their messages. The soldiers were stood upon their guard. An hour later, the Irish forces were observed on the hill of Kilmallock, but they later withdrew, knowing that their plot had been discovered. Their contact in the town was James Daniell, one of the Lord President's foot company. He was immediately taken prisoner. [10]

That Kilmallock was considered a key point in Munster at this time is clear from the efforts of the Irish to capture it and of the English to hold it. Sir Thomas Norris, Lord President of Munster, and George Thornton, writing to Ormond, on 3rd November, 1598, said that they had been informed that the companies of foot and horse which Ormond had ordered to Kilmallock had not yet arrived there. They also told him of the recent plot to betray the town, which had been foiled. "We are certainly informed", they told him, "that the traitors do bend all their forces against it, and do expect aid from Tyrone (O Neill)". [11]

Norris was to return to the Kilmallock theme on the 13th December when he wrote to Sir Robert Cecil. First, he mentioned the great confusion in Munster and the growing strength of the Irish forces. The Irish, he said, had for the past twenty days been besieging Kilmallock, and as the town and garrison were in some distress, and as the place was of very special importance for her Majesty's service in Munster, he was preparing to go there with assistance for the garrison. He told Cecil that the Irish forces aimed at Kilmalock as the place of the greatest annoyance to them in all Munster. [12]

Norris marched with his forces from Cork for the relief of the besieged garrison. The Irish, he reported, learning of his approach, desisted from the siege, burned their ladders, and cut in pieces their "sows" and other engines which they had prepared for the assault of the town. Instead, they went to meet Norris's advancing forces at the pass in the Ballahouras, and kept up a continuous attack on them until they came

near the gates of Kilmallock. Norris found that supplies for his soldiers in the town were very scarce, and that for want of footwear many of them were going barefoot. [13]

Providing supplies for the garrison of Kilmallock was a perennial problem, and matters had not improved by the spring of 1599, for on the 26th March Norris was writing to the Privy Council seeking supplies for the garrisons of Kilmallock and Askeaton. [14] Supplies had to be imported from England, through Cork or Waterford, and then transported laboriously overland to their destination.

While the English were facing many problems in Munster, fortune was favouring the Irish forces. In a few months the Súgán Earl of Desmond had won back almost all of the territory of his predecessors in the title and enjoyed immense popularity; only Askeaton, Kilmallock, Mallow and Castlemaine were still in the enemy's hands. Satisfied that the Súgán Earl was firmly secured in his dignity, O More returned to Laois and Bourke went into Ormond. [15]

England became alarmed at the very formidable proportions the rebellion in Ireland was now assuming, and a new Viceroy was appointed. He was the Earl of Essex, and he arrived in Dublin in May, 1599, with an army of 20,000 men, well trained and well equipped. But instead of facing north to challenge O Neill; as he had been instructed, Essex led his army southwards towards Munster. It proved a costly journey, as he was continually harassed and attacked on the way and lost many of his men. Eventually, he reached Limerick, and from there he set out to relieve the besieged garrison at Askeaton, encamping for the night at Adare.

Essex in Kilmallock

Next morning, while passing through Rower Bog, he was attacked by the Súgán Earl and his men, and suffered some losses. Having reached Askeaton, from which, the besiegers withdrew, he superintended the landing of supplies and munitions, which had been sent by boat from Limerick. Next day, as he marched through Finniterstown, between Adare and Kilfinny, the Súgán Earl made a fierce onslaught on him, causing him very severe losses. The attack was kept up until the English forces reached Croom, where they encamped for the night. [16]

From Croom Essex marched to Bruff; then, on the 12th June, he went to Kilmallock, with the Earl of Ormond, the Marshal, the Master of Ordnance, and Warham St. Leger. At Kilmallock he met Sir Thomas Norris, the President of Munster, and consulted with him. There were many problems to be discussed; shortage of supplies and munitions for

the army, and shortage of money; and it became clear that "little help could be expected from Kilmallock." [17] Essex left Kilmallock on the 13th June, and eventually arrived back in Dublin, having achieved nothing of note and with only a remnant of his army. [18]

Norris Rides out from Kilmallock to his death

One day at the beginning of August, 1599, Sir Thomas Norris rode out from Kilmallock with a large raiding party, and headed into north-east Limerick, in the general direction of the barony of Coonagh, his soldiers burning and plundering the countryside as they went. At Kilteely, Norris unexpectedly came face to face with Thomas Bourke, brother of the Baron of Castleconnell, who had a considerable force with him. An engagement immediately took place, and Norris received a pike thrust in the jaw, from which he died on the 16th of August. Robert Dwyer Joyce wrote a poem about the event:

To harry rich Coonagh fierce Norris came down,
From the towers of Kilmallock, by forest and town,
Swearing castle and homestead and temple to sack;
And, oh! what a desert he left in his track.

In that month that Norris died, the Earl of Essex, again ignoring the Queen's instructions, met Hugh O Neill and agreed to a truce. Essex returned secretly to England in September 1599, was accused of making a dishonourable treaty, and imprisoned from October 1599 to August 1600. Soon afterwards, he attempted a rising in London, was arraigned, and beheaded on the 25th February, 1601.

Before Essex's downfall, William Saxey, Chief Justice of Munster, had written to him, setting out what he thought were the best means for suppressing the rebellion. His remedy included the stationing of 400 foot and 40 horse in Kilmallock. [19] And Sir George Thornton had written to him a little later, complaining that the paymaster had refused to pay him the six shillings a day assigned to him as governor of Kilmallock, with the result that he was unable to command at Kilmallock or to maintain the post. He wanted Essex to request the Lord Justices and Treasurer to have the matter rectified.

Thornton also complained in his letter to Essex that James Fitzthomas (the Súgán Earl) had issued a proclamation that the garrison of Kilmallock were to have no wood from any of the surrounding woods which, he stated, were all under his command. [20]

Obviously unaware that Essex had been imprisoned, Thornton again wrote to him on the 31st October, 1599. He referred to the

distressed state of the towns, especially Kilmallock which "is continually burdened with a garrison of 450 foot and 50 horse, who, since your Lordship's departure thence, have not received any lendings, but have been victualled by the poor town to their intolerable charge, insomuch as they are driven to poverty and discontent, as they were ready to depart their dwellings, and leave same waste, had not myself . . . both strained my purse and engaged my credit, to lay out in ready money £330 - 18 - 6 sterling, as may appear by the several bills of the captains and officers which I have". Thornton pleaded that a proportion of the money be sent to Kilmallock, since it was "on all sides environed with the enemy and the town so extreme poor they are not able to victual them (the garrison) by any means". [21]

Plot to Capture Súgán Earl fails

Lord Mountjoy, who had replaced Sir Thomas Norris as President of Munster on the latter's death, was appointed Viceroy after Essex's dismissal from office in October, 1599. Sir George Carew then replaced Mountjoy as President of Munster. Carew, with the co-operation of Miler Magrath, Protestant Archbishop of Cashel, immediately set about hatching a plot for the capture of the Súgán Earl, and soon found the man who was prepared to give the necessary assistance required to carry out the plot to a successful conclusion. This was Dermot O Connor, leader of a large force of Connachtmen then active against the English in Munster. O Connor was to receive £1000 for the capture, and the plot was so engineered by Carew that O Connor would be made appear to have a very reasonable excuse for his action. [22]

A letter was forged, purporting to be from Carew to the Súgán Earl. In the letter the Súgán Earl was thanked for his secret services to the English Crown, and was exhorted to deliver up O Connor, dead or alive. The letter was allowed "to fall into the hands" of O Connor, giving him his excuse to seize the Súgán Earl. [23]

With everything arranged, and satisfied that everything would work out according to plan, Carew set out from Cork to Limerick on the 21st May, 1600. He encamped at Mallow that night; next day he encamped within five miles of Kilmallock, and, on the 23rd, he says he encamped within a mile of Kilmallock, near Effin. The Lord President had marched from Cork without any opposition from the Irish, who were taken by surprise. Edmond Fitzgibbon, the White Knight, came to the camp and made his humble submission to Carew. [24]

On the way to Limerick, Carew took Bruff castle, which had

been abandoned by the Undertaker, George Thornton, and had since been held by Piers Lacy; he also took the castle of Loch Gur, through the treachery of Owen Groome, who yielded it up to him. Carew was very pleased at having got possession of both castles, since their possession cleared the passage between Kilmallock and Limerick; their possession also made it possible to allow the cattle of Kilmallock to graze abroad. These cattle of Kilmallock had been captured by the English in various raids, and constituted, according to Carew, "the greatest prey appertaining unto any town in Ireland". [25]

At about 10 o'clock on the night of the 19th June, Carew, who was then in Limerick, received an urgent message from Dermot O Connor, requesting him to come to Kilmallock, and to bring with him the money promised for the Súgán Earl's capture. Upon receipt of the money, he was told, the prisoner would be given into his custody. Next day, Carew hastened to Kilmallock, taking the money with him. O Connor's wife was supposed to meet him in the town, but there was no sign of her, nor on the succeeding days. Eventually on the morning of the 26th, she came to collect the money, and stated that the prisoner would be handed over within four hours of the receipt of the money. But the best laid plans sometimes go awry, and it happened on this occasion.

O Connor, having been supplied with Carew's forged letter, promptly charged the Súgán Earl with treachery, made him a prisoner, and confined him in the castle of Castleishen. But on the morning of the day the prisoner was to be delivered up to Carew, Fitzmaurice of Kerry, the Knight of Glin, and Piers Lacy, with about four thousand men, attacked Castleishen and rescued him, before Carew could get there. Carew was furious and returned to Limerick, breathing vengeance against the rebels. [26]

On July 9th, Carew appointed Hugh Cuff governor of Kilmallock and commander of its garrison during the absence of Sir George Thornton. Also in garrison in the town were Captain Francis Slingsby, with the President's company; Captain Paul Arundle, with Lord Audley's company; Captains Dillon and O Reilly with their foot companies; and Captain Richard Graeme with his troop of horse. [27]

Carew was very unhappy at the great popularity of the Súgán Earl, who had immense support in Connello, "the inhabitants being all his natural-born followers."[28] That was the reason for keeping strong garrisons in Kilmallock and Askeaton to scour the fastnesses of Connello. The government in England was wondering what it could do to counteract the influence of the Súgán Earl, and on the 11th July, 1600, Sir

Robert Cecil wrote to Carew, and mentioned the possibility of sending back to Ireland, James, the late Earl Gerald's son, who had been taken as a hostage to England in 1579. By setting up James, the former hostage, as the legal Earl of Desmond, and by emphasising that James Fitzthomas Fitzgerald, the Súgán Earl, had usurped the title, it was hoped the people might be encouraged to follow Gerald's son. Of course there would be risks involved.

Cecil wondered what lands the Queen should give the Earl James, and was firmly of the opinion that unless the Irish saw him settled down among them they would never follow him. He thought it might suit to place him in Kilmallock, but later added: "I do not think, upon better consideration, that Kilmallock is fit, being a town." [29]

Carew in Kilmallock

On the 20th August, 1600, Carew came from Limerick to Kilmallock, where he remained for a day, receiving the submission of various gentlemen and freeholders. [30] And now, with the coming of autumn, he stepped up his campaign of terror against the ordinary population, and expressed his intention of not desisting from it until the Súgán Earl was given up. On the 26th August, he wrote to the Privy Council stating that the garrison in Kilmallock and other centres "are now at their harvest". This meant that the garrisons were now traversing the plain of Limerick, burning the houses, and all the corn, which, by now, was stacked in the haggards. The destruction of the harvest, he told the Privy Council, "will procure the next year's famine, by which means only, the wars of Ireland must be determined." "No day passeth", he wrote, "without report of burning, killing and taking of preys from the enemy." [31]

Battle at Knocksouna

Although the English were now gaining ground in Munster in the latter part of 1600, Captain Graeme, and his men from the garrison of Kilmallock, were to suffer a severe reverse - at Knocksouna, early in September. Knocksouna, which lies within the bounds of the modern parish of Kilmallock, formed part of the old parish of Tankardstown in 1600. Graeme, reporting to Carew from Kilmallock, on the 12th September, told how on the previous Friday he had received information as to the location of the Súgán Earl's camp, and went towards it with his companies of horse and foot. But the alarm was raised in the camp, and the Súgán Earl's men advanced to meet the attackers. Graeme would not take his foot soldiers further than Knocksouna. When battle was joined

the Súgán Earl and Piers Lacy dismounted from their horses and led their men. In the letter to Carew, Graeme offers a number of excuses for his defeat at Knocksouna. [32]

The tradition of the battle fought in the Knocksouna area has survived to our own days; and, as if to corroborate the tradition, the district east of the hill has, over the years, yielded up a considerable number of skeletons and coins. There is also a very strong tradition of a battle having being fought a little over a mile northeast of Knocksouna hill, on the borders of the townlands of Tankardstown and Ballygibba. Specifically mentioned as the battlefield is a field in the latter townland known as the High Field, which adjoins the road between the crossroads of Ballygibba and Tankardstown, and straddles a gentle ridge of ground. On the south side, this field is bounded by one of those high double banks known as double ditches; this particular double ditch is said to contain the bones of those slain in the battle. A castle stood just east of the High Field, in a site now occupied by the farm yard and farm buildings of John Lynch. The site of the castle is shown on the Down Survey map of the mid 17th century, but not in the Ordnance Survey maps.

The Súgán Earl, who had defeated Graeme at Knocksouna early in September, 1600, was to suffer a serious defeat at the hands of Graeme later that month, near Aherlow. His forces were now depeleted, and he was hunted from place to place. Piers Lacy, however, remained a staunch and faithful supporter.

Welcome — and rejection, at Kilmallock

In October, 1600, the English sent James, son of the late Earl Gerald, to Ireland. He had been taken from Ireland 21 years before as a hostage for the good behaviour of his father, and was now to be set up provisionally as Earl of Desmond, by the English, in opposition to the Súgán Earl. He landed at Youghal on the 14th October, and from there travelled to Mallow, where he was presented to Carew. He arrived in Kilmallock in the company of Miler Magrath, the Protestant Archbishop of Cashel, on Saturday evening, 20th October, and was given a tremendous welcome.

We are told that there was a mighty concourse of people in the town "insomuch as all the streets, doors and windows, yea, the very gutters and tops of the houses were . . . filled with them. and they welcomed him with all the expressions and signs of joy, every one throwing upon him wheat and salt (the ancient ceremony used in that province upon the election of their new mayors and officers, as a prediction of future peace and plenty)". [33] That night the "English" Earl

dined with Sir George Thornton, who at that time kept his house in Kilmallock; and because of the pressure of the welcoming crowds it took half an hour of the Earl to make his way from his lodgings to Thornton's house. And it was the same on the way back. [34]

Next day being Sunday, the Earl, who had been brought up a Protestant during his captivity in England, went to attend divine service in the church of SS. Peter and Paul, which, by this time, was being used as a Protestant church. All along the way the people sought to dissuade him from going, but the Earl ignored them — perhaps he had forgotten the Irish of his childhood and did not understand what the people were saying. But whether he understood or not, it is highly unlikely, given his English and Protestant upbringing, that the Earl would have changed his mind about attending the service. His going to the service against the wishes of the people was to be the turning point in his brief Irish career.

On his coming out from the church at the end of the service the great welcome of the previous evening had turned to bitter rejection. He was railed at, abused and spat upon. Because he, the descendant of a great line of mighty Geraldine chiefs, was a Protestant, he was no longer acceptable to the people. So loud and vociferous was the opposition to him that the town was cleared of all the strangers who had crowded into it. [35] Whatever about their political loyalties, there was no mistaking the fact that the spiritual loyalty of the people of Kilmallock was still to the Catholic religion.

From that time forward none of his father's followers ("except some few of the meaner sort of freeholders") would have anything to do with the English-reared Earl. Nor was he liked by the Undertakers, who feared that he might be restored to his father's inheritances, large parts of which had been granted to them. [36]

Capture of the Súgán Earl

By now, the Súgán Earl, whose fortunes had sunk to a lob ebb, was ill and in hiding in Aherlow. His brother John, with Piers Lacy and the Knight of Glin, had gone to Ulster, to plead with O Neill for aid for him. While in Ulster they temporarily joined O Neill's forces. Carew was back in Kilmallock in November 1600 to meet a rumoured invasion of Munster by a large force from Leinster. The invasion did not materialise, and he departed from Kilmallock on the 18th of November. [37]

The only service the English-sponsored Earl of Desmond was able to perform for the Crown was the recovery of Castlemaine, which was yielded to him by Thomas Óg Fitzgerald, the constable of the castle.

He must have been getting bored with life in Ireland, for in a letter he sent to Sir Robert Cecil from Mallow on the 18th of December, 1600, he expressed a desire to return to England. [38] He was in Kilmallock on the 21st of December, when he again wrote to Cecil, telling him that Thomas Óg Fitzgerald had brought Piers Lacy's two sons to him as prisoners. Thomas Óg was, he said, the truest follower he had since he came over. [39]

Though the Nine Years War dragged on, Co. Limerick was relatively quiet after 1600. Earl James was still in Kilmallock on the 4th of January 1601. On that day he wrote still another letter to Cecil; he thanked him for his favours, but complained about the mangling of his financial affairs. [40] James had been cast like a trump card on the gambling table of history, but it was a move that achieved nothing. And so he was brought back to England early in 1601, and died that same year, a victim of circumstances, and one of the most tragic figures of the house of Desmond. And there was still another sad chapter of Geraldine history to be written that year.

Towards the end of May, 1601, the Súgán Earl, who had been in hiding in Aherlow, was very nearly captured by a raiding party of English soldiers. He fled, with a few followers, and took refuge in a cave in the townland of Coolagarraunroe, about four miles east of Kilbehenny, Co. Limerick. This cave in Co. Tipperary is close to, and on the same farm, as the famous "Mitchelstown" or "Kilbehenny" Caves, which are visited by great numbers of people each year. Coolagarraunroe formed part of the White Knight's very extensive territories, and though the Súgán Earl's pursuers did not know the exact spot where their quarry had gone to ground, they knew it was in the White Knight's country. This information was communicated to Carew, who immediately sent for the White Knight, and severely reprimanded him for his negligence in not apprehending the Súgán Earl.

The White Knight had once been an intimate friend of the Súgán Earl, who was his kinsman, and had been one of the strongest supporters of his cause, But because of great pressures, or of finding oneself on the losing side, thereby being isolated and made vulnerable, loyalties could change rapidly in 16th and 17th century Ireland. Liberty, lands, and life itself were continually at stake. And so it was that in May 1600 the White Knight deserted the Súgán Earl's cause, and came to Carew's camp near Effin to make his submission. Now, face to face again with Carew, the pressure was on him to prove his loyalty to the Crown by capturing the Earl.

He proved his loyalty on the 29th May, 1601, when, having ascertained where the Súgán Earl was in hiding, he went to the cave and

called on the fugitive to come out. The Earl came, and was immediately seized by the White Knight's men. That day he was delivered up to Carew, in his house in Cork, where he was still detained on the 3rd June, being kept in irons. Carew, writing to the Privy Council on that date, said he had to take this precaution since the Súgán Earl was "a man the most generally beloved of all sorts (as well known in this town as in the country) that in my life I have known". [41] And of his qualities of leadership and military capabilities Carew had this to say: "He was the most potent Geraldine that ever was of the Earls of Desmond, his ancestors". [42]

The Súgán Earl was tried for treason in Cork, and condemned to death, But his life was spared, perhaps as a result of his claim to the authorities, that as long as he lived, his brother John, who, he said, was a far more dangerous leader, could not succeed to the title. He was sent to the Tower of London, and confined there until his death seven years later.

As for the White Knight, he received a thousand pounds for the capture of his kinsman. But he must have realised, as Carew certainly did, that by the betrayal of the Súgán Earl he would "purchase to himself the general malice of the province". [43]

Death of Piers Lacy

The year 1601 was also to prove a fateful one for Piers Lacy, of Bruff, veteran of many a fight against the English in Munster, and loyal ally of O Neill and O Donnell. At the end of 1600, he had gone to Ulster, to seek help for the Súgán Earl, and, until such time as that help would be forthcoming, to fight with the Irish forces in the North. He never came south again, for in August 1601 he was killed in an attack on an English camp in Co. Armagh. Foynes Morrison describes the attack, from the English point of view, in his *Contemporary History*:

". . . and after these our men had given them a volley in the teeth, they drew away, and we heard no more of their drums or bag-pipes, but only mournful cries, for many of their best men were slain, and among the rest, one horseman of great accomplishment, Piers Lacy, an arch-rebel of Munster".

Kinsale — and disaster

The long-awaited aid from Spain, which the English so feared, arrived at Kinsale on the 23rd September, 1601. Word of its arrival was sent to the northern chiefs, O Neill and O Donnell. It created tremendous problems for them, leaving them with little choice except to abandon the fight in Ulster and march south the whole length of Ireland at the approach of winter. Hugh O Donnell was first on the march, and

Mountjoy and Carew, hearing that he was heading towards Munster with 2500 men, mustered their forces and set out to intercept him. O Donnell camped in the vicinity of Holy Cross Abbey, where he learned that Carew was encamped ahead of him, near Cashel, blocking his path southwards. O Donnell decided against going forward, as he did not wish to risk a battle at this stage. But that left him in a perilous position. He dare not wheel to the left into Kilkenny without the risk of encountering the English army of the Pale; and to his right were the Slieve Felim mountains, impassable for an army with baggage because of recent heavy rains.

Fortunately, there came a sudden and intense frost, which hardened up bog and morass, and made it possible to travel over them. O Donnell took advantage of this, and on the night of the 22nd November set out westwards over the frozen countryside, crossed the Slieve Felims, and never halted until he reached Croom in Co. Limerick, a distance of almost 40 miles. Friend and foe agreed that it was one of the greatest night marches in history.

Having rested in Croom for a few days, O Donnell set out again, heading westward into the fastnesses of Connello. O Neill was also marching south, but by a different route, both converging on Kinsale, where, on the 3rd January, 1602, the English would defeat the combined Spanish-Irish forces and Gaelic Ireland would go down in irretrievable disaster.

The English, however, continued to fear further Spanish landings in Ireland, and Mountjoy, writing to Carew on the 18th August, 1602, gave expression to those fears, and told how, "to defend the good subjects," he had stationed garrisons of horse and foot at Mallow, Kilmallock and Askeaton. [44] On the 26th March, 1603, Sir Charles Wilmott wrote to Carew, stating that he proposed lodging the greater part of his army at Limerick and Kilmallock, and adding "no rebels are now stirring in Munster except those in the castle of Ballingarry in Clanmorris, who are blocked by Captain Boys, with 800 foot". [45] For all practical purposes the Nine Years War was over.

11

Kilmallock in early 17th Century

Money Matters

The merchants of Kilmallock apparently were not above manipulating to their own advantage the regulations governing the transfer of currency between Ireland and England. An official memorandum of 4th November, 1602, stated that: "The merchants of Cork, Galway, Kilmallock, Youghal and the West of Ireland who usually embark at Bristol have received £20,000 out of the above exchanges (Bristol and Chester). It is supposed they should have bestowed this in England in commodity and merchandize, for the London merchants give no credit to those merchants, being poor and dwelling far remote. Probably they have secretly carried over that money in specie to Ireland . . . Thereby they make further trade of the Exchange, for it is said that with £100 they have brought £Irish200 to the Exchange, by which buying of money they have infringed the (Queen's) proclamation (carrying specie from England to Ireland) and made a great profit for themselves." [1]

A record of the taxation of the principal towns in Ireland is included in a list of documents bearing the date 1603, although it is possible that the taxation documents may be later than that year. Tax assessed on Kilmallock was £10, the same as that assessed on Kinsale, Youghal, Clonmel and Cashel. [2]

Fined in Kilmallock

Renewed attempts to suppress Catholicism and promote Protestantism in Ireland were made in the reign of James I, who succeeded Elizabeth. Sir Henry Brouncker, who was particularly active in this regard, visited Limerick in 1605, and deposed the mayor, Edmund Fox, because he was a Catholic. At Kilmallock, the College of ministers attached to the Collegiate church went from house to house every Sunday to collect fines of 12d. — a substantial sum at that time — from anybody who did not attend the Protestant service. In this way it was hoped to force

the poorer people to conform. [3]

Rumours of War

Sir John Davys, Attorney of Ireland, made a journey through Munster in 1606, for the purpose of holding assizes. Having left Mallow, he tells us, he and the judges "went by Kilmallock, a good corporate town, over a sweet and ferthe country into the city of Limerick". [4]

Even after the defeat of the Irish in the Nine Years War, rumours of further uprisings being planned continued to circulate. One Robert Wood, a Scotsman, who was a vicar in Kilmallock in the early 1600s, apparently used go among the Catholic population, pretending to be a priest, in order to gather information from them. Even his own Church regarded him as a controversial figure. In a report he made on the 17th June, 1608, he stated that John Óg Verdon, dwelling in a good castle within two miles of Kilmallock, came to him one morning and demanded of him a room in his (Wood's) castle, in Kilmallock, for himself and his wife. He also stated that he would hire a house next to the castle for his cattle. Wood asked him what was the reason for all this, and Verdon told him it was the safest place in the town.

Wood, according to his own report, became suspicious, and travelled into Connello, providing pretended Catholic services for the people. During his sojourn in Connello, he learned, he says, that certain lords, including Thomas Mac Maurice (Fitzgerald) of Claonghlais, the Knight of Glin, and the Lord of Lixnaw, were mustering their men, and that Maurice Mac Thomas had armour in readiness for 400 or 500 men, and that he was now making scabbards for swords. [5]

Last White Knight

Edmund Fitzgibbon, the White Knight, the same who betrayed the Súgán Earl, died on Sunday, 23rd April, 1608. His son Maurice had died the previous day. Both were buried together in the chapel of Kilbehenny, and remained there for a week before being removed to the Dominican monastery of Kilmallock to lie in the tomb of their ancestors. [6] By a rather sad coincidence, the Súgán Earl also died in 1608, a captive in the Tower of London. Edmund Fitzgibbon was the last to bear the title White Knight. In 1821, the Earl of Kingston, who claimed descent from Edmund through the female line, sought to be recognised as White Knight; but his claim to the title was successfully opposed by William Vesey Fitzgerald (afterwards Lord Fitzgerald of Desmond and of Clangibbon).

The Question of Religion

The English authorities of the 16th and 17th centuries saw their adherence to Catholicism as one of the chief reasons why the Irish continued to rebel against the authority of the English Crown. Catholicism linked them with the Catholic powers in Europe who were England's enemies. Furthermore, the refusal of Irish Catholics to recognise the English sovereign as head of the Church tended, the English believed, to make them less willing than they might be to recognise the sovereign's supremacy in temporal affairs. Consequently, their loyalty was always suspect. And so, for temporal if not religious reasons, the sooner the Irish could be made, by one means or another, to conform to Protestantism, the better from the English point of view.

To Bernard Adams, Protestant Bishop of Limerick, Irish priests returning from the continent to Ireland were coming from "the great sink of treason and rebellion to infest this miserable nation". Bishop Adams was writing to Lord Denvers conveying to him some further information volunteered by the already mentioned Robert Wood of Kilmallock. The letter to Denvers, dated 20th June, 1608, was to the effect that a great number of priests were now ministering in Limerick, and that Kilmallock was "half-dozened with Sirs", all of them Catholics — Sir David Lawless, Sir Patrick White, Sir Daniel O Neill, Sir Moriertagh Halpenny, Sir Maurice Hurley and Sir Henry Trustrim. [7]

Sir Dominick Sarsfield

On the 29th September, 1609, a commission sat in Kilmallock and empanelled a jury to investigate whether a minor, Edmund Burke, heir of the late Richard Lord Bourke, was a ward of the King. The commissioners included Sir Richard Morrison, then President of Munster, and Sir Dominick Sarsfield, Chief Justice of the Province.[8] Sir Dominick was later to become Viscount Kilmallock, and Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. The cut stone house that stood in Sarsfield Street, where the Sarsfield Cinema now stands, is said to have belonged to the family of Dominick Sarsfield.

The Sir Richard Morrison mentioned above, very conscious of his authority as President of Munster, wrote to Sir Arthur Chichester on the 14th of May, 1610, claiming that the Mayor of Limerick was obliged to carry out any orders issued to him by the President of Munster. Morrison mentioned as precedent how in the time of the government of Lord Carew, the Mayor of Limerick had refused to carry out an order issued to him by Carew; for this he was called to Kilmallock by Carew, fined £400 and imprisoned for half a year. [9] The provincial presidents

were virtual military dictators.

Protestantism makes little progress in Kilmallock

Protestantism continued to make little if any progress in Munster despite all the efforts being made to promote it. This lack of any appreciable progress is well evidenced in a document entitled "Calculation of the Votes of Munster in next Parliament", which the Vice-President of Munster submitted to the Lord Deputy in October 1611. The Vice-President was clearly worried about the small number of Protestant knights and burgesses from Munster that were likely to be chosen in each county. In the case of burgesses for the cities, Limerick, Waterford and Cork, his comment was: "No hope of any Protestant". It was the same story in the case of the "Burgesses for the five ancient boroughs" of Kinsale, Kilmallock, Clonmel, Cashel and Fethard — "No hope of any conformable." [10]

Many of the documents in which Kilmallock is mentioned at this period concern religious matters. The unsatisfactory situation in which the Protestant Church found itself in the greater part of the country was such that a special commission sat in Limerick from the 28th to 30th July, 1615, to enquire into the matter.

The commission found that there were in Kilmallock six vicars-choral, who had there a small college, with suitable rooms. The vicars-choral would have been attached to Kilmallock's collegiate church of SS. Peter and Paul, now for more than half a century in Protestant hands. The vicars-choral, who according to the commission's findings, were bound to attend in the parish as residents, were: Richard Good, reading minister; James and Henry Quin, and Josias Walker, reading ministers; Francis Forthingham, minister and preacher. They had attached to the college the vicarage of Kilmallock, the rectory of Athin, the chapel of Sochell, the chapel of Kilodmayne, Dungadmond and Durnaris (Donyrish), Chapel Mortel, Ballingaddy and Kilflynn, out of which they were allowed an annual salary of £8 for their sustenance. [11]

As stated in Chapter 6, the churches of Downgadmond (Dún Gadmoinn) and Donyrish (Dún Uí Ruis) were situated in the old parish of Particles, south east of Ardpatrick. So too were the churches of Sochell or Saichaihill (Sfodh Chathail) and Chapel Mortell. The unusual name Particles comes from the Latin *particulae*, meaning "portions", the portions being the areas of land belonging to the aforementioned ancient churches which were amalgamated to form the parish. Athin was probably Athaneasy (Áth na nDéise); Kilflynn was south of Ardpatrick; Kilodmayne may have been the place called Killonan, which lay near Mountrussell; and Ballingaddy, of

course, lies within the modern parish of Kilmallock. [12]

All except one of the vicars choral of Kilmallock are mentioned as simultaneously holding appointments in other churches in the deanery of Kilmallock. Samuel Powe, who had charge of Kilmallock, was also in charge of Ballingaddy, where, however, there was no Protestant church. As well, he was vicar of Kilfinane and resident vicar of Dermacow (ie. *Darach Mochua*, Darragh). Francis Forthingham was vicar of Ballytankard (i.e. *Baile Tancaird*, Tankardstown); he was also given the prebend of Effin with the obligation to preach there. The vicar of Effin was Henry Quin. James Quin, besides ministering in Athaneasy, was vicar of Dromin; and Richard Good was vicar of Athlacca and curate of Bruff and Uregare. [13]

Reference has already been made to the special commission to enquire into the affairs of the Protestant Church that sat in Limerick from the 28th to 30th July, 1615. When the commissioners, who were accompanied by the Lord President of Munster, came to Kilmallock, on their way to Limerick, a Catholic schoolmaster named Barry presented himself before them to make an oration. The commissioners, having been informed that Barry was a Catholic, refused to hear him, but had him arrested. They spent the night in Kilmallock, and next day took Barry with them to Limerick, where they required him to put in sureties that he would cease to teach either a public or private school, unless he first formally conformed to Protestantism. As he either could not, or would not, provide the sureties, he was left in the Lord President's custody. [14]

Kilmallock Rental

The property of the old pre-Norman monastery of Kilmallock, after the monastery had ceased to function, was apparently incorporated in the episcopal property of the diocese. Over the years, however, the sovereign and inhabitants resisted the claim of the bishops to ownership. After a long suit, the case was finally decided in 1619, when the then Protestant Bishop of Limerick, Dr. Adams, was declared lord of the manor. [15] But even after that things did not work out smoothly for the Protestant bishops in Kilmallock.

In a rental of diocesan property, compiled in 1641, during the episcopacy of Bishop Webb, [16] the bishop makes many complaints about the manner in which church lands in Kilmallock have been appropriated by local people, and about the manner in which he has been defrauded of rents. The bishop demanded rents for nine ploughlands, but this was an underestimation, he says, for when he had the lands surveyed they amounted to ten ploughlands, a ploughland consisting of 120 acres of

arable land exclusive of rivers, hills, woods, pastures, etc. Those occupying the lands had, the bishop said, nothing to show their right to them — except their right by descent. He succeeded in recovering the rents, which amounted to £32.6.8; but since the occupants would only pay in Irish money the actual value of the rents received was only £24.5s. The bishop considered the land and manor to be worth £1200 a year.

Demesne lands in Kilmallock that were acknowledged by the inhabitants to belong to the bishop were: the Quarry, Lisheendarragh and Gortinaspug. The Down Survey map of the mid 1650's shows the location of two of these land parcels. From a comparison with the Ordnance Survey map, Lisheendarragh would seem to have been somewhere in the south-eastern part of the townland of Treanlewis, and the Quarry would seem to have been in the southwestern corner of Abbeyfarm, in that part of that townland that is bounded by the river Lúbach and the road leading from the North Bridge to the Catholic church. Gortinaspuk (i.e. *Gort an Easpaig,* the Bishop's Field) is not shown in the Down Survey map, although parcels called Steilanaspicke (*Stiall an Easpaig*, the Bishop's Portion) and Lackanaspicke (*Leaca an Easpaig*, the Bishop's Slope) are shown.

Bishop Webb stated that the Quarry and Gortinaspug had been fraudently got from him, on his appointment as bishop, on a 21 years lease, by one Nicholas Faunt (Fant), a Protestant, who, to quote the bishop, had "promised to be a great help to me in the recovery of my whole right at Kilmallock, but hath proved the most treacherous enemy combining against me". According to the terms of his lease, Faunt was supposed to have built a shambles, mills, bakehouse and limekiln; but this he had not yet done, and seemingly had no intention of doing. His yearly rent was £9; Bishop Webb thought it should be at least £30.

Outside the walls of the town, and near the Quarry, there were twenty houses belonging to the bishop. But he was denied peaceful possession of them, and of the gardens and appurtenances. Rents here, if they could be collected, would amount to £15. The bishop was unable to hold Court Baron in the town, because of the insistence of those who sat in the court to be acknowledged as free-holders, a claim which, if allowed would be tantamount to the bishop surrendering his claim to the lands they occupied. Court penalties from the Court Baron, and the Courts Leat, and all royalties, were lost to the bishop.

The inhabitants of the town operated nine mills, paying no rents for same to the bishop. It was impossible, he said, to bring them to any kind of order; they were grown mutinous and prone to rebellion. Nobody

dare meddle with them. An officer of the former Bishop Adams, who had gone to the town to collect the bishop's rents and fees, had his brains beaten out: another had his house burned over his head, he and all his family perishing in the flames.

Nobody, said Bishop Webb, was prepared to undertake the building of mills for him, or take any lease from him, "by reason of the barbarous tyranny of that corporation, who will not suffer any English to dwell near them". If he were allowed to enjoy peacefully all the rights ordered for him at the Council table, then, declared the bishop, his income from royalties, courts, mills, customs and other perquisites would amount to almost £200 per annum.

Lisheendarragh, a quarter of a ploughland, belonging to the manor of Kilmallock, had been granted by a long lease to Henry Coyne (or Quin). In 1641, Henry's widow claimed to have been in occupation for about 40 years, with 17 years still to run, The yearly rent was but 8 pence. Bishop Webb estimated that a fair rent would be £6.6.8. per annum.

12

The Cromwellian Period

Rebellion of 1641

A list of the members of the Upper House in the Irish parliament published in May 1641, included earls, viscounts and barons. Among the viscounts we find Sarsfield of Kilmallock.

Five months later Ireland was again in revolt. Long accumulating grievances and fears led to this latest uprising. There was the plantation of Ulster, carried out after the Flight of the Earls in 1607. There was the commission set up in 1622 to enquire into ownership of lands; and, arising from that, there were the "Discoverers", who unearthed, or invented flaws in titles, so that no Catholic landowner could feel secure. There was the refusal to grant the "Graces", these being small measures of religious toleration promised to Irish Catholics in return for money subscribed by them to Charles I, who was constantly quarrelling with his parliament about financial matters. There was also the fear of renewed attempts to extirpate the Catholic religion in Ireland.

The rebellion, which was directed more against the English parliament than the King, broke out in the provinces in October 1641; in Leinster, under Rory O More, and in Ulster, under Sir Phelim O Neill. The Old Irish, or Gaelic Irish, who were the first to rise out, were soon joined by the Old English, these being mainly the descendants of those of Norman or English blood who had invaded Ireland almost 500 years before. Among these non-Gaelic Irish were the Catholic lords of the Pale. The combined forces of the Gaelic and non-Gaelic Irish were styled the Catholic Army.

Kilmallock taken by the Irish

The war spread to Limerick early in 1642, with the Catholic forces capturing various castles — Pallace (near Kilmeedy), Castlemahon, Newcastle, Rathkeale, Cloghnarold, Castlematrix, Callow, Cappagh, Aughinish and Castletown Kenry. Adare fell without a blow; Loch Gur, John's Castle in Limerick, Kilfinny, Askeaton and Croom, were

surrendered after sieges. Those who had held these castles prior to their taking by the Catholic forces were presumed by their attackers to be in rebellion against the king and siding with the English parliament.

In the east of the county Kilmallock was easily taken by the Irish under Lord Mountgarrett and Garrett Barry, aided, we are told, by Michael Wall, a professional soldier. The Irish forces then marched to the Gap of Redshard *(Bearna Dhearg*), on the Cork-Limerick border, near Kildorrery. [1] The Lord President of Munster, Sir William St. Leger, arrived with a hastily-mustered army in the vicinity of the Irish camp at Redshard, and a parley took place between the leaders of the two forces, as a result of which articles of agreement were entered into. Following this St. Leger dismissed his men, and Mountgarrett marched to Mallow. [2] At this stage the Catholic Irish forces were very much in control in Munster.

Confederation of Kilkenny

October 1642 saw the establishment of the Confederation of Kilkenny, a kind of Irish national parliament, consisting of 11 Catholic bishops, 14 lords and 226 other members. Three parties with varying aims were represented in the Confederation: the Old, or Gaelic, Irish, who had begun the war, and who, in addition to religious freedom, wanted some measure of national independence; the Norman Irish, or "Old English", who were loyal to the king, and would be satisfied with religious freedom and security of land tenure, the Royalists — including the Protestant Earl of Ormond — mainly centred in Dublin and adjoining areas, who merely wanted to hold Ireland for the king, and who were in frequent conflict with the Old Irish and Old English. There was a fourth party, who were not represented in the Confederation; these were the Parliamentarians, who were violently anti-Catholic, and who were determined to hold Ireland for the English Parliament against the king. With so many parties the situation was very confused, and was to remain so for the duration of the war.

Many Irish officers in the service of continental armies arrived back in Ireland to lend their support to those who had risen out. The most notable was Eoghan Rua Ó Néill, a distinguished soldier, who returned from Spain in July, 1642. In the meantime civil war had broken out in England between the king and parliament.

In May 1643, Lord Inchiquin (Murrough O Brien) and Sir Charles Vavasor divided the Royalist forces under their command, Inchiquin laying siege to Kilmallock with 700 men, and Vavasor marching towards Kerry, only to be defeated and taken prisoner on the

Cork-Limerick border by the Catholic forces under Castlehaven. The very able but ruthless Inchiquin — known in Irish tradition as Murchadh na dTóiteán (Murrough the Burner) — had no hope of taking Kilmallock, being deficient in stores and money. [3]

In September 1643, the King, in view of the worsening situation in which he found himself, instructed Ormond to begin negotiations with the Catholic leaders in Ireland for the purpose of ending the conflict between them and the Royalists. A cessation of hostilities, to last for a year, was proclaimed. Each party was to be allowed retain the towns and fortresses then in its possession, which meant, in the case of Limerick, that the city and county, including Kilmallock, remained in Catholic hands.

The Parliamentarians, who were not a party to the truce, continued to build up their army and remained on the offensive. In July, 1644, Inchiquin, bitterly disappointed at not having been appointed President of Munster by King Charles, deserted the Royalist cause, and went over to the Parliamentarians. [4] The following year, in his new role as Parliamentarian leader, he made a raid into Co. Limerick, and burned the county around Kilmallock. [5]

The Supreme Council of the Confederation (of Kilkenny) sat in Limerick in 1645 and appointed Lord Castlehaven to command the Confederate army. Castlehaven made Kilmallock his chief store and arsenal, depositing his supplies and arms in the castle in the centre of the town. The condition of the Catholics had changed radically with the success of the Confederate arms; in Kilmallock, the Dominicans had repossessed their monastery, and the collegiate church was again in Catholic hands.

Both Pope Urban VIII, and Pope Innocent X, who succeeded him in 1644, took a deep interest in the struggle in Ireland, and were kept fully informed of the deliberations of the Confederation. Hearing, however, of the divisions and difficulties that had arisen in the Confederation, Pope Innocent, in 1645, dispatched to Ireland, as his Nuncio to the Confederation, Giovanni Baptista Rinnuccini, Cardinal Archbishop of Fermo. Rinnuccini, accompanied by his secretary, Massari, landed near Kenmare on the 22nd October. The Nuncio spent his first night in a shepherd's hut, before being taken to a Mac Carthy castle where he remained for a few days. He then set out on his journey to Kilkenny, to meet the members of the Confederation.

Rinuccini in Kilmallock

Rinnuccini arrived in Kilmallock early in November 1645, but his halt there was brief because of a change of plan, which necessitated

his going to Limerick. Father T.J. Walsh, drawing on Massari's account of the journey to Kilkenny, pictures the scene at the Nuncio's arrival in Kilmallock:

"At the medieval gateway, now in Emmet Street, and . . .named the Blossom Gate, one finds ready composition of place for Massari's description of the reception of the Nuncio by the secular clergy and Dominicans of Kilmallock. The procession wended its way along the present Sarsfield Street . . . Here there was direct entry to the great collegiate church of Kilmallock. Even today the roofless ruin with its flanking tower epitomizes a thousand years of history. One can pinpoint the spot before the high altar where Rinnuccini faced the people and imparted his blessing." [6]

"The Nuncio and Massari had hospitality of the Dominicans (in the public inn, according to Massari [7]), whose house was hardby on the opposite bank of the Lúbach river . . . O Heyne, the Dominican historian of the early 18th century, tells of the heroism and fortitude of the friars. Their ruined friary, with its graceful campanile, its blank windows, their stone tracery still a marvel of the craftsman's skill, make the ghostly scene of Rinnuccini's arrival more than three centuries ago, seem to be somehow not too far from reality. . ." [8]

Rinnuccini was to spend almost four years in Ireland, growing more frustrated as time went on. He became suspicious of the sincerity of Ormond and his followers, and soon ranged himself whole-heartedly on the side of the Old Irish and Eoghan Rua Ó Néill. On the 5th June, 1646, Eoghan Rua won a resounding victory over a Parliamentarian army at Benburb, and in the South Lord Muskery captured Bunratty castle. These victories inspired new hope and confidence in the Confederates. However, 1647, brought a turnabout in fortunes, with Ormond leaving the Confederation, and with Inchiquin inflicting a crushing defeat on the Confederates at Knockanoss, near Liscarroll, in November. By the end of the year most of Munster had been retaken by the Parliamentarians, the result of Knockanoss being "to place all Munster at Inchiquin's discretion, except Limerick, Waterford, Clonmel and Kilmallock." [9]

Kilmallock Monastery attacked

The Dominican monastery at Kilmallock was raided by Inchiquin in 1648, and two members of the community, a student named Gerald Fitzgerald, and a lay brother named David Fox, were put to death before the high altar. The rest of the community succeeded in escaping across the river into the town. [10] Fr. Taheny, OP., states that when Inchiquin's soldiers arrived at the monastery, Brother William O Gorman

hurried into the bell tower and there defended himself until help came from the townspeople. After his escape he went to Spain, where he was welcomed at the Dominican priory of Valladolid. Here he plied his craft as a tailor, but gained special renown for his gift of curing people by the touch of his hand. [11]

Eoghan Rua Ó Néill was being deliberately kept in the background by the Old English faction in the Confederation, with whom Ormond, on behalf of the Royalists, concluded a peace in 1648. Ormond next dissolved the Confederation. The Nuncio, who strongly supported the Old Irish, despaired of ever being able to achieve anything, and left Ireland in February 1649. In the meantime, Charles I had been beheaded, and the Parliamentarians, with Oliver Cromwell at their head, were in full control in England. Ireland now remained to be dealt with by the Parliamentarians, and dealt with it was, in a manner that seared itself into the nation's memory.

Cromwellian conquest of Ireland

Cromwell landed in Dublin in August 1649, with an army of 20,000 men. Ruthless and intolerant, and fiercely anti-Catholic, he began his Irish campaign on September 9th with the seige of Drogheda. Two days later he took the town and massacred everybody in it, the soldiers of the garrison, and all the inhabitants, men, women and children. The horror of Drogheda was repeated at Wexford on the 3rd October. Eoghan Rua Ó Néill, the one leader who might have offered effective opposition to Cromwell, was in failing health all this time, and died in November, 1649.

The Cromwellians gradually overran the country. Cromwell himself returned to England at the end of May, 1650, and left his son-in-law, Ireton, in command. One by one the remaining towns fell. Kilmallock surrendered to Ireton without any attempt at resistance, and when the siege of Limerick city looked like being protracted beyond the time expected for the city's surrender, the Parliamentary generals were considering the advisability of retiring to Kilmallock for their winter quarters. But the fall of Limerick rendered this move unnecessary. [12] The Parliamentarians subsequently dismantled the fortifications of Kilmallock, but these were restored later by the corporation. Fr. Taheny states that two other Dominicans, apart from those killed by Inchiquin's soldiers, were killed by the Cromwellians in Kilmallock. [13]

The war came to an end in 1652, and peace was signed between the Royalists and the victorious Parliamentarians. The Cromwellian

conquest of Ireland was complete.

The Civil Survey

The most important source of information on Kilmallock in the 17th century is the Civil Survey. The circumstances leading to taking of the Civil Survey (1654-56) were the commitments of the English parliament:

(i) in respect of money advanced to it by way of "adventure" or investment to finance the war in Ireland;

(ii) in respect of arrears of pay due to its own officers and soldiers.

These obligations to the adventurers, and to the officers and soldiers, were to be satisfied in allotments of Irish land. [14] The Irish land in question was land which it was proposed to confiscate. The taking of the Civil Survey was, in fact, a preliminary to the Cromwellian Plantation of Ireland.

Lots were drawn in London to determine which baronies were to fall to the soldiers and which to the adventurers. The result as regards Limerick was that, roughly speaking, all of the county west of a line drawn from Limerick city to Bruree, together with the barony of Coonagh in the north-east of the county, fell to the adventurers; and the rest of the county, including Kilmallock and its liberties, fell to the soldiers. [15]

The Civil Survey, in so far as it relates to Kilmallock and its liberties, is a remarkably detailed and thorough compilation. Not alone does it give the names of the proprietors of all lands and buildings, but it gives the exact location of the land and buildings; and in the case of the dwellings, a description of each, and the number of rooms in it. Given the time and patience required, one could, by referring to the Survey, go a long way towards placing the proprietor of each building in each street.

The names of the streets (their modern names are given in brackets) were: John's Street (Sheares Street), High Street (Sarsfield Street), Blae Street (Emmet Street), Ivy Street (Lord Edward Street), Water Street (Wolfe Tone Street), Church Lane (Orr Street). The name Blae Street appears as Blapat Street in the early 14th century *Black Book of Limerick*. "Blapat" is a corruption of *Bláth Porte*, a name that is a mixture of French and English, and that means Flower Gate, or Blossom Gate. Blossom Gate still stands in the street to which it once gave its name.

Houses are divided into two main categories in the Civil Survey, stone houses and thatched. It is not quite clear what the distinction between the two classifications was, and so one is left with the question:

could a thatched house be also a stone house, or could a stone house have a thatched roof, Maurice Craig, stating that Kilmallock contained an unusually large number of tall semi-fortified town houses, says he takes it that these were the buildings described as "stone houses" in the Civil Survey. The "thatched houses" which were about four times as numerous as the "stone houses", were, he believed, the smaller houses, the majority of which would have been of rammed earth (i.e. mud-walled), with or without a timber component. And, as for the roofs, thatch or timber shingles were used on even quite large buildings down to the 17th century in areas where there was no convenient quarry. [16]

The late Dr. A. J. Lucas had this to say: "I would think a stone house is one with stone walls in contrast with one of framed wooden beams, which are mentioned in some towns in the Survey. "To the best of my recollection, buildings with walls of wattle construction also crop up in some towns in the Survey. These would almost certainly have been thatched." [17] As will be seen a little later in this chapter, J.H. Andrews was of the opinion that most of the houses in Kilmallock, about the year 1600, had slated roofs.

Perhaps it is relevant to recall too that in the Four Masters' account of the capture and sacking of Kilmallock by James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald in 1571, it is stated that his men "demolished its houses of stone and wood".

Some of the thatched houses in Kilmallock are described in the Civil Survey as tenements, others as cabins. One large, singlestorey, thatched tenement in John's Street, at the west of John's Castle, side of the street, had 16 rooms, and must therefore have extended a considerable distance back towards the town wall. In all, there were 33 stone houses and 119 thatched houses in the town, and there were 53 plots on which houses had formerly stood. There were also a number of waste buildings. Practically all of the stone houses were either of two or three storeys; and some 30 of the thatched houses were two-storey buildings; less than 20 of the thatched houses had only one room. There were 3 bakehouses, and a waste bakehouse; 7 kilns and 2 former kilns.

Apart from John's Castle, or King's Castle, six other buildings in the town are described as castles. One of the castles stood at the the east side (left as you approach from Limerick) of John Street, and was owned by David Meagh; another which stood at the west side of the street was owned by Lawrence Meagh. Francis Creagh owned a castle at the east side of High Street, and James Bluett owned another. There were two castles at the west side of High Street, one owned by Garrett Meagh, the

other by John Fox.

Nine mills are mentioned in the Survey. Mullenpieris (*Muileann Phiarais,* Piers's Mill), and an unnamed mill, would appear to have been on the river bank at the rear of John's Street; Mullentane (*Muileann tSeáin*, John's Mill) was located on the right bank of the Lúbach, in the area between the new ring road and Wolfe Tone Street bridge, where there are still the remains of a later mill. Somewhere in the same general area there was another mill described as the Old Mill. There were two further mills, George Mill and Quarry Mill, close to the North Bridge, between the Lúbach and the road leading from the North Bridge to the town. Across the river from the latter two mills was a derelict mill called Mullena Courtye, properly *Muileann na Cúirte* (the Court Mill); it stood beside the old ruinous castle of the White Knight called *Cúirt an Ridire,* (The Knight's Court).

The ninth mill would appear to have occupied the site of the later Glenfield or Strike's Mills, which were demolished only in recent times. In the Down Survey Map, prepared a couple of years after the Civil Survey, the mill in Glenfield is shown as a very large structure. The building, in fact, comprised two mills, a grist, or corn mill, and a tucking mill. Woollen cloth, which might be in the form of frieze, or in the form of blankets, was tucked after it came from the weaver. Tucking, or fulling, to give the process its alternative name, gave the cloth greater density and a softer finish. The process entailed moistening the cloth and applying repeated pressure to it.

The Down Survey map is worth studying in conjunction with the Civil Survey. So too is an Elizabethan map of Kilmallock, thought to date from the period 1598 - 1600, which is preserved in the library of Trinity College, Dublin, and a copy of which is reproduced in this book. Though half a century earlier than the Civil Survey, the map is useful in that it shows us what Kilmallock looked like at the beginning of the 17th century — and, presumably, in the 1650s. J. H. Andrews, in a very informative article, "An Elizabethan Map of Kilmallock", in the *North Munster Antiquarian Journal,* vol. XI, 1968, suggests that the chief interest of the mapmaker was in the defences of the town — the walls, the corner towers, the gates, the castle in the centre of the town. The writer of the article also ventures certain identities based on the colourings on the original map — "A distinctively coloured greying-brown strip presumably representing a ditch (which would have held water), encloses the town wall for most of its length."

Also: "In the Civil Survey most of the houses within the walls are stated to be thatched, including all those in the side streets and those

at the outer ends of the main streets; on the map, to judge from the distribution of blue colour, more than two-thirds of the walled town (namely all except the north-west section of Sheares Street) consisted of slated houses".

The placing of houses three or four deep in each street "is considerably overdone", and was probably intended to show the distance the street buildings extended rearwards. In some cases however there definitely were houses immediately to the rear of the houses facing the street; one such house, of 17th century date, survives at the rear of the west side of Sarsfield Street, The Elizabethan map also shows two long lines of houses extending beyond Blossom Gate, out along both sides of "the highway to Malo (Mallow)". This part of the town — it was about as long as Sarsfieid Street — lying outside the town walls, must have constituted the "Irish Town" of Kilmallock,

While he could not say so for certain, Andrews thought that: "The curve of the Ivy Gate road suggests that the route from Kilmallock to the south-east may have followed the road named 'Bohergarode' (Bóthar Ghearóid) on the 1/2500 Ordnance Survey map rather than the modern route to Kilfinane; and, on the other side of the town, the highway to Limerick seems to have taken a more direct course down to the river than at present." Bóthar Ghearóid is the road running south from the top of Lord Edward Street, between the townlands of Gortboy and Millmount, and past the ACOT offices.

The owners of property in Kilmallock, whose names appear in the Civil Survey, are almost exclusively of Norman origin, and include a number of names that have been associated with Kilmallock over the centuries; Meagh, Bluett, WaIl, Lewis, Fox, Fleming, Pant, Verdon, Hurley. The name Meagh (from Irish *Mídheach*, a Meathman) has already been noted in this book. The Meaghs were a merchant family of Norman descent, members of whom had, at an early date, settled in Cork, Kinsale, Youghal and Kilmallock. In English documents the name was invariably spelt Meagh or Miagh down to the end of the 16th century; after that the form Meade came into use. [18]

In the Civil Survey, twenty Meaghs and three Meades are returned as owners of property — land and buildings — in Kilmallock. Most of them owned several properties. Other proprietors included eight Creaghs, eight Halys, four Goulds, three Walls, three Hurleys, three Kearneys, three Foxes, two Verdons. John Fox of Ballyvenoge (now called Maidstown) owned some twenty properties inside and outside the walls of the town. Stephen Anster was a property holder there; so was Edy

Lacy of Bruree and Richard Dundon of nearby Howardstown. A two-roomed thatched cabin in Ivy Street is shown in the Survey to have belonged to "Sir Geoffrey Galway, of Limerick, Baronet, deceased, Irish Papist". Sir Geoffrey was one of those exempted from pardon by the Cromwellians after the capture of Limerick. He was hanged and quartered. The description "Irish Papist" appears after the names of all the property owners in Kilmallock, with the exception of four or five absentee proprietors such as the Earls of Cork, Bath and Kildare.

Some of the family names found in Kilmallock at the time of the Civil Survey have for long been incorporated in local placenames — Mountfox (*Móin an Bhoscaigh*, Fox's Flatlands), Fantstown, Flemingstown, Treanlewis (*Trian Lobhais*, Lewis's Third), Graiganster (*Gráig Anstair*, Anster's Village). And in 1654, there was an area in the liberties of Kilmallock called Stiellane Inalta (*Stiall an Fháltaigh*, Wall's Portion), and another property called Garryverdon (*Garraí Verdon*, Verdon's Garden).

Placenames of Kilmallock

In all, 119 different placenames are listed in the Civil Survey for Kilmallock and its liberties, and all but 8 of them are Irish names, which shows how completely Irish-speaking the district was, and had been. The extraordinarily large number of placenames is due to the fact that almost every field or parcel of land would appear to have had a name. We find evidence of this in the fact that 46 of the placenames begin with the element *Gort*, meaning field, and 8 begin with the element 'Garry', from *Garraí*, meaning garden. The place names in themselves would repay a study. Some of them are very beautiful: Inchyderryown (*Inse Doire Eoin*, the Oakwood of Eoin's — John's — Water Meadow); Gortclieneshillynie (*Gort Chlaí na Silíni*, the Field of the Fence of the Cherries); Garryvoneare (*Garraí an Mhóinéir*, the Garden of the Meadow).

The Irish word *stang*, meaning a plot or portion of land which has been pegged out, occurs in one of those now forgotten 17th century Kilmallock placenames, Gortnedriestange (*Gort na dTrí Stang*, the Field of the Three 'Stangs'). And there was Gort Vohir Gerrod (*Gort Bhóthar Ghearóid*, Garret's Road Field); and Gortine Veallnaha (*Goirtín Bhéal na hÁtha*, the Little Field at the Mouth of the Ford); and Stiellane Inrudderie (*Stiall an Ridire*, the Knight's Portion). A waste stone house near the church yard in Church Lane (now Orr Street) was called Dune Inoyre, a name very likely derived from the Irish *Dún an Oir*, the Fort of Gold, or the Golden Fort. What must have been some kind of bank or rampart, which lay a short distance outside the town walls at the rear (railway side) of the present

Emmet Street, is referred to a number of times in the Survey, under various spellings — Clie Cotten, Cley Cotten, Cloye Cotten. The derivation of the name becomes clear, when, in one instance, the structure is called the "common ditch"; in Irish, this would be *claí coitinn*. The *claí coitinn* may have had something to do with common lands, *talamh choitinn*. At the same side of the town walls as the *claí coitinn*, a number of gardens just outside the walls are described as being now reduced to a highway by means of a rampier outside the walls.

Confiscation and Plantation

As already dated, the taking of the Civil Survey was a preliminary to the Cromwellian confiscations, and the plantation, or colonisation, of Ireland with English Planters. At first, it appeared to be the intention of the victorious Cromwellians to banish practically the whole Catholic population to Connacht, the choice offered them being popularly expressed in the saying: "To hell or to Connacht". In October 1652, however, it was announced that "husbandmen, ploughmen, artificers and others of the inferior sort" need not remove. The reason for the exemption was simple: the Planters would have nobody to work for them if all these classes were banished.

But there was to be no reprieve for the Catholic landowners. Most of them held lands that had been in the possession of their families for hundreds of years. Now all were ordered to be removed to Cormacht by the 1st May, 1654. In Connacht they would be given small land holdings in exchange for the large estates that had been taken from them in their native districts. All priests were to leave within 20 days. To oversee the carrying out of these orders in Co. Limerick, garrisons were stationed at Kilmallock, Ballingarry, Gort na Tiobraid (Springfield), Dunmoylan, Castletown Kenry, Adare, Brittas, Tuogh (in East Limerick), Loch Gur and Galbally.

Many of the Kilmallock merchants had land holdings in the vicinity of the town, and, in some cases, much farther afield. All these they lost in the confiscations, the confiscated properties in the Kilmallock area passing to Cromwellian soldiers in lieu of arrears of pay. Because of the fact that the vast majority of the Civil Survey placenames relating to Kilmallock have long since passed out of use and been forgotten, it is not now possible to give the exact location of many of the confiscated properties in the liberties, that is, in the rural part of the old 17th century parish. Nor is it proposed to name every forfeiting proprietor in the parish,

for some of them held only small parcels of land there; neither is it proposed, in the case of forfeiting proprietors that are named, to specify every small parcel of land belonging to them that was confiscated.

Sir Maurice Hurley lost Bantard, Gortnastranghy (in the Bantard direction), Parknacourte (in south of Abbeyfarm, where Cúirt an Ridire stood), Gortgarriff (would seem to have been in south part of Garrynoe), Garryneata and Gortknockanpieris (both would seem to have been in east part of Glenfield), Gortboy and Gortnatrim.

John Fox lost Proonts, Monevosky (*Móin an Bhoscaigh*, Mountfox), Cullamus More, Ardsherace, Gortyknockane, Gorticorneyle, Gortinvurrish. Nicholas Fant lost Ballycullane Beg. Patrick Kearney lost Ardkilmartin, Coolroe, Moneclarine and Bonaghmurry. Piers Creagh lost Deebert, the east part of Breesheen, and Cloonsteevene (north of Portauns). John Gould lost Knockash (Ash Hill) and Garryivamnick. Robert Haly lost part of Bresheen, Farrandae (was in west part of Glenfield), Treanlewis, and a number of parcels of land in the Treanlewis area — Lisheendarragh, Farrancrossa, Monteeniparson, etc. Thomas Meagh lost the south-western part of Bresheen. David Lewis lost Knocksickeene (that part of Kilmallock Hill on which the races are held).

Neither the corporation lands nor the common lands were confiscated. The latter included Portauns, the Spital lands, Portadiberty and part of the Hill of Kilmallock.

The single largest beneficiary among the Planters who got confiscated lands in the liberties of Kilmallock was Chidley Coote, after whose family Mountcoote takes its name. He got 619 acres. These plantation acres were substantially larger than statute acres; the relationship would appear to have been in the proportion of 1 plantation acre to 1 3/4 statute acres. The Protestant Bishop of Limerick was the next largest beneficiary in the liberties, receiving 347 acres.

At the time of the Civil Survey parts of the present parish of Kilmallock were still included in the old parishes of Tankardstown, Ballingaddy and Ardpatrick. However, in the Survey, Ardpatrick parish is not shown separately, but is included in Ballingaddy parish. In these parishes as in the case of the old parish of Kilmallock, or SS. Peter and Pauls, townland boundaries have, in many cases, altered since the 17th century. As well, some of the old townlands have ceased to exist as separate entities, and their names are not found on modern maps; on the other hand, some new townlands, with new names, have been created.

Turning to the greater Ballingaddy parish of the Civil Survey

(1654) we find in the Survey the following details regarding the then proprietors and their lands:

William Creagh, Irish Papist, held Militown, containing 200 acres (arable, 100; meadow, 40; pasture, 60). There was an old ruinous castle on the lands, the seats of two grist mills, and a tucking mill.

Richard Creagh, of Flemingstown, Irish Papist, held Flemingstown, Ballingaddy Beg ("whereon stands one good thatch house or barn and five cottages") and Bohernebottery. Bohernebottery (*Bóthar na bPotairí*, the Road of the Potters), which belonged to Ardpatnick parish in the 17th century, now belongs to Kilmallock parish and is known as Riversfield. Richard Creagh's combined lands amounted to 150 acres (arable, 120; meadow, 10; pasture, 20).

Sir Edward Fitzharris, of Clonodfoy (now Castleoliver), Baronet and Irish Papist, held Ballingaddy More, Garrykettyne and Carrowgarriffe; the last-mentioned two townlands would appear to have been situated to the west of Ballynahown. The whole property cantained 565 acres (arabie, 470; meadow, 25; pasture, 70).

John Gould of Knocksouna, Irish Papist, held Anlonstown, which contained 250 acres (arable, 200; pasture, 50). This townland lay in the vicinity of the present Ballingaddy church, as it included the small lake that lay north-west of the church — "whereon there stands a loch which yields for profit only eels".

John Meagh, of Kilmallock, Irish Papist, held Owlorte (from Irish Úllghort, meaning an orchard), which contained 200 acres (arable, 160; pasture, 10; meadow, 30). Owlorte lay to the east of Anlonstown. Matthew Haly, of Kilmallock, Irish Papist, held Ardovelane, containing 150 acres (arable, 130; meadow, 6; pasture 14). Ardovelane (from the Irish, *Ard Ó bhFaoláin*, O Faoláin's Height, or Hill), which formed part of Ardpatrick parish in the 17th century, is now in Kilmallock parish, and is known as Mountcoote, John Fox, of Ballyvenoge (now Maidstown), Irish Papist, held Ballynahown, containing 500 acres (arable, 350; meadow, 20; pasture, 130).

Chidley Coote was granted all of these lands, and all of the remaining lands shown in the Survey as being in Ballingaddy, but properly belonging to Ardpatrick, the total grant amounting to 2792 acres. Nor was that all, for in addition to the lands he was granted in Ballingaddy, Ardpatrick and the liberties of Kilmallock, Coote received 1004 acres in the parish of Kilquane, and 140 acres in the parishes of Kilfinane and Particles, making a grand total of 4555 acres.

The old parish of Tankardstown poses no problem of identity as far as its 17th century townlands are concerned. They were the same then as now, just three townlands. Neil Lacy (of the Bruree family), Irish Papist, held Tankardstown and Ballygibba, containing 612 acres (arable, 400; pasture and meadow, 200; red bog, 12). John Gould, Irish Papist, held Knocksouna, containing 100 acres (arable 80; pasture and meadow, 20).

According to the Survey, the stump of a castle stood in Bally. gibba, and the stump of another castle, with three houses and an orchard stood in Knocksouna. It was incorrect to say that a castle stood in Knocksouna, for, as the Down Survey map and the Ordnance maps show, the castle in question stood in Tankardstown.

All of time parish of Tankardstown was granted to the Planter Charles Ormsby, who also got 1240 acres in Athlacca parish. The Ormsbys, who resided at first in Maidstown, and then in the Old Court, Athlacca, are still remembered in the folklore of the parish of Dromin/Athlacca as heartless tyrants who once lorded it over the people.

Another Cromwellian Planter family who were later to have very close links with Kilmallock, were the Olivers, who gave their name to Castleoliver. Robert Oliver received 3049 acres in Kilfinane parish, and a further 1038 acres in other parishes in the barony of Coshlea in south east Limerick. The great trio of Cromwellian names in the Kilmallock district were, therefore, the Cootes, the Ormsbys and the Olivers. Members of all three families were to represent Kilmallock in parliament, at various times in the 18th century. But it was the Olivers, who, in the end, were to become the most influential family, as the dominant force in Kilmallock corporation, and as long-standing members of parliament for the borough of Kilmallock and for Co. Limerick.

The Cromwellian Plantation of the 1650s transferred the ownership of land in Ireland from the old Catholic Gaelic and Norman-Irish proprietors to a new English Protestant ascendancy, and it was not finally undone until the passage of the Land Acts at the end of the last century and the beginning of the present century.

Under the Act of Settlement of 1652, all Catholic priests had been ordered to leave Ireland, but instead they went into hiding and continued to minister to their flocks. In May, 1655, Sergeant Walker and Robert Fellows were granted £5 to be divided equally between them, for apprehending a priest at Kilmallock. [19]

Wagon that passed through Kilmallock

Kilmallock figures in a rather sad little episode in 1656. After the defeat

of the Irish in 1653, the records of the Supreme Council of the Confederation of Kilkenny were seized by the victorious Cromwellians. The records were very valuable to the Cromwellians, for they afforded ready and conclusive proof to establish the guilt of the principal Catholic families in the country, nearly all of whom had become members of the Confederacy. Being found guilty meant the forfeiture of one's lands. The Court of Claims and Titles, to decide who was guilty and who was innocent, sat successively in Athlone and Mallow, and the Supreme Council documents were transferred to both centres for the hearing.

Captain Edward Tomlyns, Comptroller of the Trayne, was ordered to prepare a closed wagon in which to transfer the documents from Mallow to Dublin; the Lord Henry Cromwell was requested to provide a guard to protect the wagon.

On the 10th October, 1656, it was ordered that Matthew Doyle, wagon master, be appointed to transport the records, and that the governors of Callan and Kilmallock, on the way to Mallow, be directed to furnish respectively four horses as a convoy from Callan to Kilmallock, and a like number from Kilmallock to Mallow. [20] The precious records of the Supreme Council of the Irish Confederates were collected at Mallow, and, presumably, passed through Kilmallock on their way to Dublin, the closed wagon rumbling over the rough streets, its mounted guard close at hand, Those who saw it pass saw the funeral procession of a vanquished nation.

A census taken in 1659 shows that at that time there were in the barony of Kilmallock (i.e. town and liberties) 537 Irish and 73 English. Listed as Tituladoes, that is, principal persons of standing, in the barony were: Matthew Griffin, Esq.; George Gould, George Benson, John Holmes, Thomas James, Edward Harris, Jonathan Tilly, Thomas Holmes, Henry Glover, John Darby, Will Hill, Beckingham Bentham, Richard Cooke, Thomas Jubbs, and William Bound, Gent. [21] A number of those names were obviously those of Cromwellians.

The principal Irish names in the barony, and the number of families bearing each name were : O Brien, 6; Mac Connor, 4; Mac Donagh, 6; Griffin, 4; Kelly, 6; Mac Teige, 7; Mac Shane, 4; Mac William, 4. [22]

Founding of Charleville

In 1659, it was decreed that the strength of the garrison of Kilmallock should be maintained at 40 men. A few years later an event took place which was to have a very considerable bearing on the fortunes

and the future of Kilmallock. This was the founding of the new town of Charlevile, six miles south-west of Kilmallock, by Roger Lord Broghill, first Earl of Orrery. We are told that Orrery raised Charleville from village insignificance and obscurity to the importance and influence of a town, changed its name from Rathgogan to Charleville, and made it the seat of his court as Lord President of Munster. He built in it a Protestant church, an endowed school, and a princely mansion; introduced manufacturers and attracted tradesmen; and, to crown it all, procured a charter of corporation, conferring on the town the privilege of sending two members to parliament. [23]

In a letter to the Duke of Ormond in 1662, Orrery had said that he hoped to get the new town made into a borough, and have it bear the name Charleville, "it now being called by the heathenish name of Rathgogan". "I admit" he said, "neither presbytr (presbyterian), papist, independent, nor, as our proclamation says, any other sort of fanatic, to plant there, but all good Protestants; and am setting up manufactures of linen and woollen cloths and other good trades". [24]

The name Rathgogan. that sounded so "heathenish" to the English-attuned ears of Orrery, derived from Ráth Gogán, the Fort of Gogan or de Cogan, the de Cogans being a powerful Norman family who had a manor in Ballyhea. The new name Charleville was bestowed by Orrery on Rathgogan in order to carry favour with Charles II, an ungrateful monarch to whom the dispossessed Irish of the Cromwellian confiscations had very little reason to be grateful. Another new name, Ráthluirc, was given to the town by the Charleville Rural District Council in 1920. The choice of this particular name was unfortunate, for no such name had ever existed in the district, An Ráth, being the name that Irish speakers had always used for the town. The result has been that the name Ráthluirc, though the official name of the town since 1920, has failed to gain any kind of general acceptance. In this book the town will be referred to as Charleville up to and including the year 1919; but from 1920 onwards it will be referred to as Ráthluirc.

The new town of Charleville was to prove a serious commercial rival to the old war-weary town of Kilmallock; and the position worsened when the main line of road from Limerick to Cork ceased to be that which passed through Kilmallock and became that which passed through Charleville. And while Charleville enjoyed the patronage of a single head landlord, Kilmallock belonged to a large number of absentee proprietors who took scant interest in its development.

13

Jacobite-Williamite War and Penal Laws

Kilmallock's importance wanes

From the mid 17th century onwards the name of Kilmallock appears much less frequently in the official records. It had lost its former great importance as a town that was sometimes considered to rank almost as capital of Munster. Now its great days were over. But business still went on in the town; and in 1673, a coin, or token, was struck there, bearing the legend of Matthew Meade, a merchant of the town. [1]

From Begley we learn that by the later l670s some Dominicans were again in residence in their monastery in Kilmallock, and were a great help to the secular priests. They led quiet lives, and did not attract the attention of the government, except in the panic over the so-called Popish Plot in 1678 and 1679. One of the Kilmallock Dominicans of that time was Henry Burgatt, who was a noted preacher. [2]

The years up to the 1680s were disturbed ones, with the dispossessed, and sons of the dispossessed — the Rapparees — in action against the Cromwellian Planters. Resentment against those who now held power and influence continually boiled over, as when Hugh Anderton, one of Ormond's chaplains, was attacked while reading the burial service in his own parish of Kilmallock, and received injuries from which he died. [3]

By 1685, when Charles II died and James II came to the throne of England, the old medieval centre of Kilmallock had, to quote J.H. Andrews, "long been sunk in lethargy". [4] King James was a Catholic, and ordered the enforcement of anti-Catholic laws to be suspended. As well, positions in the government were to be opened to Catholics. In England, James's favouritism towards Catholicism led to such strong resentment that he was deposed in 1689 and the Crown given to his Protestant son-in-law, William of Orange.

Jacobite-Williamite War

James came to Ireland in March 1689, and was warmly received. Shortly

afterwards, he summoned a parliament, which met in Dublin in May. The membership of James's Irish parliament was in sharp contrast to the membership of the Irish parliaments that had sat since the late 1650s. Membership of the latter parliaments had been Cromwellian and Protestant; in James's parliament the Catholic Irish were back again in power. The borough of Kilmallock was represented in the 1689 parliament by members of two distinguished local families, one Gaelic, the other Norman — Sir William Hurley and John Lacy,

King William followed James to Ireland with a large army to augment the forces there who were already fighting for him against James's army. The Jacobite/Williamite War — *Cogadh an Dá Rí*, the War of the Two Kings — was to be fought out in Ireland between the years 1689 and 1691, and was to put the spotlight on names that were to become part of the history of that period — Derry, the Boyne, Athlone, Aughrim, Ballyneety, Limerick.

King William, having failed to take Limerick city — mainly because of the destruction of the Williamite siege guns at Ballyneety in a brilliant raid by Sarsfield — raised the siege on the 29th August, 1690, and marched his army away in the night. Shortly afterwards, the Irish commanders in Limerick sent a Lieutenant-Colonel Boismeral with 100 foot and 100 dragoons, to garrison Kilmallock; but on the 9th September Boismeral arrived back in Limerick with all his men disarmed. He had delivered up Kilmallock and all his arms to a small body of Williamite horse without firing a shot. His excuse was that the enemy had threatened to bring foot and cannon to attack the town. [5] All this we learn from the Journal of John Stevens.

Stevens, an Englishman, and an officer in the Grand Prior's Regiment, was in Limerick with the Irish forces during the siege and his Journal gives fascinating insights not only into the lives of the soldiers, but also into the lives of the ordinary people with whom he came in contact.

The March to Kilmallock

A large detachment of the Irish army marched southwards out of Limerick on the 6th October, 1690, and encamped for the night at Grange. Next day they marched via Bruff — where they made a short halt — to Kilmallock, travelling along the old road that ran to the west, or Dromin side, of the present road. That old road led over Kilmallock Hill. Stevens was with the marching troops and has left an account of the journey. He tells how Kilmallock was by then largely a town of ruins, and sparsely inhabitated, most of its inhabitants having fled, taking their possesions

with them. He also tells of the review of the Irish troops on Kilmallock Hill, by the Duke of Berwick. Describing the events of Tuesday, 7th October, he says: ". . . after this little halt (at Bruff), we marched on three miles farther to Kilmallock. Notwithstanding the rains we had before, this road was good, there being a causeway throughout betwixt the two towns, and the paths within the fields being sound, as not much beaten, few people travelling at that time". [6]

Stevens described the road as a causeway because of the fact that it ran along high ground. And his first glimpse of Kilmallock was from the point where the road went over Kilmallock Hill. He wrote:

"Kilmallock lies in a bottom just under a high hill which quite overlooks it, and is surrounded with a stone wall after the old manner with battlements, but not broad enough for two men to walk on it abreast. The ruins show it to have been a good town, the houses being of stone, lofty and large, but most of them ruined, and but few of those that remain inhabitated, both parties (Jacobites and Williamites) having been in the place, and the greatest part of the inhabitants fled, or at least had removed their best effects". [7]

"Here are also some remains of a large church; a small river runs by the walls. The Grand Prior's battalion, as well officers as soldiers, quartered in one large house. There was no provision to be found here but only butter and some small quantity of drink, which was soon spent. We had brought with us six days' bread, and all of the gardens were full of cabbages, which subsisted the men." [8]

Under the date Wednesday, the 8th October, 1690, Stevens says: "A subaltern officer of each battalion was sent with a detachment to bring in spades, shovels and pickaxes from the country. The Duke of Berwick, who came to town the night before, went out with the horse without meeting any enemy. Towards evening marched into the town Colonel Nugent's Regiment of Foot, called the Caps, because they all wore them like Grenadiers, as being more easily to be had than hats". [9]

According to the editor's footnote in the published Journal, Colonel Richard Nugent's Regiment had a colonel, a lieutenant colonel, no major, eleven captains, twelve lieutenants, and eleven ensigns. No less than thirteen Nugents served in this regiment. There were thirteen companies and 659 men. [10]

Continuing his account of the Irish troops stay in Kilmallock, Stevens tells us that on:

"Thursday, the 9th October: Nothing happened of note, but

whereas we expected some works would be carried on with the tools taken up the day before, they were only ordered to be left at the general's quarters." [11]

Review on Kilmallock Hill

"Friday, the 10th: the four battalions of foot were drawn out upon the hill over the town (Kilmallock Hill), where the Duke of Berwick took a view of them (reviewed them), and they returned to their quarters."

"Saturday the 11th: in the morning the foot drew out again on the hill and marched away, having left detachments who burnt Kilmallock, the horse doing the same to Charleville, having before wasted the country round about and fired several villages. This morning we marched the three miles back to Bruff, and with us the Horse Guards and Duke of Tyreconnell's Regiment of Horse . . ." [12]

The army remained for some days in Bruff on its return journey to Limerick. Food was far more plentiful in Bruff than in Kilmallock, for Stevens says: "There was corn and cattle enough, plenty of cabbages in the gardens, amid what was the great support of the people and soldiers, large fields of potatoes, yielding prodigious quantities of them, for they often serve instead of bread, and the soldiers would be feeding on them all the day". [13]

The Duke of Berwick, who reviewed the Irish troops on Kilmallock Hill that October day in 1690, was a natural son of King James by Annabella Churchill, sister of the Duke of Marlborough. He was born in France, and had come to Ireland with a French army to fight for James. A brilliant soldier, he was only 20 years in 1690. After the defeat of the Jacobite cause in 1691, he returned to the continent, and was made a Marshal of France in 1706. In the following year he was in command of the French army that defeated the combined English and Portuguese forces at Almansa in Spain. He was killed at the siege of Philippsburg, fighting against the Austrians, on the 12th June, 1734.

The Wild Geese

Many others of the Irish troops whom Berwick reviewed on Kilmallock Hill also went to France, sailing with Sarsfield and the "Wild Geese" to do service and win fame under the standard of their adopted country. There is an interesting Co. Limerick link with Almansa, scene of Berwick's victory in 1707, One of those who fell in the battle, fighting under Berwick, was an O Dwyer from the Glenroe area, Co. Limerick. O Dwyer, said to be a descendant of the Seán O Duibhir an Ghleanna of the famous Irish song of that name, was of the same family as Elizabeth

Dwyer, mother of the Glenosheen-born poet and patriot Robert Dwyer Joyce, and of the historian and collector of Irish music, Patrick W. Joyce. O Dwyer's sword was brought back to his family by a comrade, and it passed down to Robert Dwyer Joyce, who had engraved on it the words *Buille ar son Éireann* (A blow for Ireland). More recently, the sword was in the possession of a grandnephew of Robert Dwyer Joyce, Dr. Robert Dwyer Joyce, who died in Cambridge in 1985. [14]

The burning of the already almost completely ruined town of Kilmallock by the Jacobites in 1690 must have left the place a scene of the utmost desolation. The object of burning it, and of burning Charlevile and the villages in the area, was to render them of no value to the Williamites, who, otherwise, might have occupied them,

Brief respite for Catholics

During the brief respite that followed James's accession to the throne in 1689, Catholics in Ireland were able to practice their religion freely. The Dominicians were back in Kilmallock, though not necessarily in the monastery buildings. The names of some of them are known: Rawley, Fitzgibbon, Manihan, Magner and Burgatt. About that time three, or four students were received annually, and went overseas after a year to continue their studies. One was Fr. Vincent O Hyne, who left a chalice inscribed with his initials and a dedication (but unfortunately without any date). His signature, written on a book in 1697 (presumably at Kilmallock) is extant. [15]

The Jacobite-Williamite War ended in 1691 with the surrender of Limerick and the signing of the Treaty of Limerick. The Jacobite cause was lost and victory had gone to the Williamites. A new and bitter era of religious persecution was about to begin.

The Penal Laws

The two members returned in 1692 to represent the borough of Kilmallock in parliament, John Ormsby and Robert Ormsby, both of local Cromwellian stock, reflect the changed fortunes in Ireland since 1689. The government of Ireland was now completely in the hands of a small Protestant minority who possessed practically the whole of the land of Ireland. The parliament in which the Ormsbys sat was that which passed the first penal laws against Catholics.

The Treaty of Limerick, guaranteeing civil and religious liberty to the Catholic Irish, was dishonoured, and instead of the promised toleration came the infamous Penal code against Catholicism. "All the

penal laws of that unparalleled code of oppression", wrote Edmund Burke, ". . . were manifestly the effects of national hatred and scorn towards a conquered people". [16] The Penal code Burke described as "a machine . . . as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment and degredation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man." [17]

To get an idea of what life was now to be like for the Catholic majority one need only mention some of the enactments directed against them.

Every Catholic parish priest, in order to say Mass in his own parish, had to be registered; he could have no curate. All bishops, and all priests attached to Orders (Dominicans, Franciscans, Jesuits, etc.) had to leave the country, and if they returned the penalty was death. With the bishops gone, it would not be possible to ordain further priests to succeed the existing ones. No Catholic chapel (the authorities no longer described the Catholic places of worship as churches) was to have a steeple or bell. No Catholic could teach school, or send his children abroad to be educated — these enactments against the provision of Catholic education led to the establishment by Catholics of the original hedgeschools, open-air schools, in many cases, held in remote places away from the prying eyes of the law.

If the eldest son of a Catholic father turned Protestant he immediately became owner of his father's land, the father becoming merely a life tenant. If all the sons were Catholic, the land had to be divided equally among them when the father died. No Catholic could purchase land, or take a lease for more than 31 years. No Catholic could keep a horse worth more than £5; if he had a horse more valuable than that, any Protestant could take him from him for £5 (In this regard, of course, one has to remember the changed values in money since then). No Catholic could be a member of parliament, or hold public office, or possess arms or vote. The law, according to John Bowes, Chief Baron of the Exchequer, did not presume an Irish Catholic to exist except for the purposes of punishment. [18]

This is the background against which one has to view the Ireland of the closing years of the 17th century and the opening decades of the 18th century. With the passage of time the Penal Laws began to be enforced less vigorously: but there was always the danger that their full severity could be invoked at any time.

Members of Parliament and Burgesses of Kilmallock

Chidley Coote and Standish Hartstonge were the Kilmallock members of parliament returned in 1695. The first Oliver enters the Kilmallock parliamentary picture in 1703, when John Ormsby and Robert Oliver were returned as members of parliament for the town. A Charles Oliver was a burgess of Kilmallock in 1692. On the 29th September, 1692, he, with the following other burgesses. of the town, William Blakeney, William Hill, senior, Daniel Webb, senior, Hugh Massy, senior, Jeffrey Owens and John Connor, elected their fellow burgess, John Rogers, to be sovereign of Kilmallock for the ensuing year. On entering into office the new sovereign had to swear that he did not believe in transubstantiation, and had to declare the invocation or adoration of the Virgin Mary or any other saint, as well as the sacrifice of the Mass, to be superstitious and idolatrous. [19]

Perhaps that 1692/3 sovereign was the same John Rogers whose name appears in an inscription on a stone set in the wall (west side of road) a short distance at the town side of the North Bridge.

Repaired Anno Domini 1665
John Rogers then
being Sovereign
of Kilmallock et cetera -

Among others who were burgesses of Kilmallock in the closing years of the century were: William Halliday, Brook Bridges, Hugh Swain, Thomas Webb, Thomas Ponsonby, John Birmingham, Thomas Emmet, Christopher Chapman, John Langford, Edmund Hunt, James Carpenter, Kiner Brazier, George Blakeney, John Silver, Walter Cooper, Samuel Massy, James Hill, John Hamilton, Boyle Aldworth, Robert Oliver, Henry Bondman, Phillips Coote, Knt., Nicholas Ffant, Thomas Holmes, Henry Holmes, Robert Holmes, John Holmes, John Croker. [20]

The Thomas Emmet mentioned as a burgess probably belonged to the family that gave their name to the bridge called Emmet's Bridge, about a mile outside Kilmallock, on the road to Effin.

In 1695, a dispute arose about the election of James Carpenter as sovereign of Kilmallock, The parties to the dispute were Charles Oliver, who opposed the election, and Thomas Holmes, who supported it. The matter was referred to the Lord Deputy and Council of Ireland, and argued by counsel on both sides. The election was found to be void, as Carpenter had not taken the oath as perscribed by law on entering into office. The findings were a victory for Oliver, and, perhaps, an omen of

future Oliver influence in the corporation. [21]

The Trades

Also in that year of 1695, as we read in the minute books of the corporation, Thomas Fleming was appointed master of the broguemakers, shoemakers, glovers and saddlers; John Summers was appointed master of the carpenters, joiners, millers, mill wrights, masons, coopers, glassworkers and smiths; Teige Quinn was appointed master of the butchers and bakers; and William Mac David was appointed master of the roadworkers and cottoners. As well, Patrick Bluet, John Mead Fitzdavid and Henry Casey were appointed goldsmiths to the sovereign of the town. [22] These were all annual appointments.

Weighmaster's Oath

The minute books also contain the oath the weighmaster of the time was obliged to take on his appointment to office:

"I, A.B, do swear that I will diligently and faithfully execute the office of public weighmaster during the time I shall continue in the said office, I will take care truly without fraud or delay to weigh all butter and tallow casks, and to weigh and hand all butter and tallow in order as the said goods shall be brought to be weighed or branded, and in all other respects I will truly execute my said charge. So help me God." [23]

The Registered Priests

We have seen that under the Penal Laws all Catholic parish priests had to be registered before being given permission to carry out their priestly functions in their parishes. Murtagh Moriarty, who lived in Kilmallock, registered in 1704 for the parishes of Effin, Kilbreedy Minor, Tankardstown and parts of the parishes of Kilmallock and Ballingaddy. Fr. Moriarty was ordained in 1679, at Curragh, by James Dowley, Bishop of Limerick. In 1726, he received a legacy from a man named Meade, a native of Kilmallock, who had settled down as a merchant in Callan, Co. Kilkenny, and who died there. Fr. Moriarty himself died in 1728, and after his death the boundaries of Kilmallock parish were adjusted and thereafter consisted of the old pre-Reformation parishes of Kilmallock (SS. Peter and Paul's), Tankardstown, and parts of the old parishes of Ballingaddy and Ardpatrick, as at present. [24]

There was a second priest living in Kilmallock in 1704. He was Patrick Meade, and in 1704 he registered for the parish of Kilbreedy

Major, and those parts of the parishes of Kilmallock and Ballingaddy that were not in the care of Fr. Moriarty. [25]

Trades in Trouble

In 1705, the trade of tailors in Kilmallock was fined two shillings and sixpence sterling by the corporation "for their contempt to the ancient customs and government" of the town. The smiths were fined a similar sum for a similar offence. In the same year, the corporation admitted Thomas Hannon to the post of master of the broguemakers. [26] The name Hannon (sometimes spelt Hannan) has been very much associated with Kilmallock for the past two centuries or more.

Charity Schools

About the year 1710 the system of Charity Schools was introduced into Ireland from England. In England the purpose of these schools was to give education to the poor and neglected children of that country; but in Ireland the movement to promote the schools soon became a proslytizing one aimed at weaning the children from Catholicism. Kilfinane had two Charity Schools, one for boys, the other for girls; they were erected in 1717, and were supported chiefly by the Oliver family. Kilmallock, also, had a Charity school, for which considerable contributions had been procured. [27]

Market — and Stocks

In 1719, the Corporation of Kilmallock ordered that the market of Kilmallock be a free market for the ensuing year for all his Majesty's subjects, without having to pay fine or imposition whatever, and decreed that all labourers and artificers whatsoever, being Protestants, had the liberty of exercising their several trades, arts and callings, without paying any quarterage or duty. [28]

People, apparently, were still being put in the stocks, as a form of punishment, in Kilmallock in the early 18th century, for at a meeting of the corporation, held on the 30th October, 1727, it was ordered that the stocks should be repaired, and a new door made for the castle, and that the castle itself should be repaired. [29]

Charter School in Kilmallock

At a meeting of the corporation on the 17th April, 1730, it was ordered that a grant be made to the Incorporated Society for the Promotion of Protestant Schools in the Kingdom, of a house and plantation acre of that part of the corporation lands called Deebert, for the

term of 999 years, at a yearly rent of a peppercorn, the house to be adapted as a Charter School, the land to be used for a garden and a yard. For the further support of the school, a lease was to be made of 16 acres, plantation measure, of lands in Deebert, for the term of 31 years, at a yearly rent of 6d per acre. [30]

The Irish Charity Schools, already mentioned in this chapter, were not a great success, especially in their primary aim of bringing the children up Protestants. And so application was made to the Crown for a charter to establish schools throughout Ireland for the education of poor Catholics, who should be instructed in English, which most of them did not know, and also in the principles of the Protestant religion and loyalty to the Crown. This, of course, was all happening at a time when, under the Penal Laws, Catholics were forbidden to have schools of their own. The charter was granted, and the existing Charity Schools in Kilfinane and Kilmallock now became Charter Schools. The new system was intended to remedy the defects of the Charity system, for in the new schools the pupils were to be kept as boarders, and were to be sent to schools remote from their own localities so that their parents would have no influence over them. [31]

Priests of Penal Times

According to Fottrell Manuscripts, compiled in 1739, there was then no Dominican community in Kilmallock, although the missals, vestments, chalices and copper statues had been preserved. [32] Of course, if there was a community in the place at that time it would not have been possible for it, because of the Penal Laws, to occupy the ancient priory. Instead, its members would have had to live in secret among the people, ministering to their spiritual needs. A Dominican priest, attached to Kilmallock, was in Limerick jail, for, it is stated, ten years (1696 - 1706). One source says he was jailed for converting a Protestant to Catholicism; another source says the reason for his imprisonment was because of his having returned from banishment in order to minister again in Kilmallock. He escaped from prison and was alive thirty years afterwards. [33]

Three years before the date of the Fottrell report, that is, in 1736, a Dominican friar named Donncha O Hedderman, who was attached to Kilmallock, had gone over to Protestantism. Perhaps he was the last of the Kilmallock community at that particular period. As will be seen a little later in this book, the Gaelic poets of the area greatly resented his action and wrote a number of poems about it.

Although there was no community in Kilmallock in the later 1730s, young men were still being recruited for Kilmallock, presumably by Dominicans from Limerick, who were preaching in the district. Those who offered themselves for membership of the Order were sent overseas to study. We have some of their names. John O Duane was a philosophy student in Louvain in 1734, and Ambrose Mac Grath was a theology student there the same year. Paul Slattery was a student at Rome in 1735-36. He afterwards went to Louvain to teach, and presided over a scholastic disputation there in 1739. Later he taught in Brussels. The other two had possibly returned to Kilmallock by 1740. [34]

In 1749, Fr. Ambrose Mac Grath attended as Prior of Kilmallock at a Chapter of the Order. From the mid 1750s onwards there was a constant stream of Kilmallock men to the Order. [35] In 1756, three friars were living in the district of the Kilmallock monastery: Ambrose Mac Grath, Prior 54 years of age, professed 29 years; John O Duane, aged 57, professed 32 years; Paul Slattery, Lector, 48 years old, professed 29 years. [36] Six further members of the Kilmallock community lived in the three continental houses of Louvain, Lisbon and Rome. Notable among these men were Fr. John Murphy, who lived in Rome (1753-1770), and reached the supreme office of Regent; Fr. Martin Horan, who spent all his life in Lisbon, and Fr. William Hanley, who was educated in Louvain, and later became a distinguished professor in Cork. [37]

At home, at this period, the friars wandered from parish to parish, acting as curates or assisting the local clergy. In the case of the Kilmallock friars, they sometimes met together in the town for "anniversary meetings", such meetings most likely taking place on Christmas Day, on the feast of St. Dominic, and on the occasion of the Visitation of the Provincial. [38] Though they might enjoy relative peace, they never knew when the full rigours of the Penal Laws might be applied against them.

Some of the Kilmallock friars took care of parishes that were without parish priests. Fr. Paul Slattery was parish priest of Effin in 1759, and of Kilfinane in 1766. He was a native of Kilmallock — where Paul was a favourite name with the Slatterys — and was very popular with the people and clergy, being always ready to assist when required. He died in 1787, aged 81, and is buried in Ballingaddy, at the lower wall of the ruined church, facing east; a small headstone stands over the grave with the inscription:

Glory be to God.
Here lieth the body

of ye Revd. Paul Slattery, Dominican,
died 5th day of December, 1787,
in the 81st year of his age.
Pray for him. [39]

A census taken by the Protestant clergy in 1766 shows that there were then in Kilmallock (town and liberties) 1122 Catholics and 73 Protestants. [40]

Road Repairs

An Act passed by the Irish Parliament in 1731 seemed to ensure that the main road from Limerick city to Cork city would continue to be the road that passed through Kilmallock. Because of the large volume of traffic that had been using it, the road, according to the Act, had "become so ruinous and bad, that in winter season many parts thereof are impassible for wagons, carts, cars and carriages, and very dangerous for travellers . . ." The Act gave permission for the erection of toll gates at various points along the road, and for the collection of tolls at the gates, the income from the tolls to go towards the repair of the road.

The trustees of that section of the road that ran through Co. Limerick were to meet at Kilmallock, the first such meeting to take place on the second Tuesday in May, 1732. The list of trustees named in the Act runs to scores, all of them of the landed gentry class or Protestant clergymen. We find in the list two names that one immediately associates with the Kilmallock district — Robert Oliver and Robert Coote. Among the other names in the list are William and Robert Blakeney (very likely of the Mountblakeney family), Colthurst Langton (from Bruree) and Daniel Webb (probably from the parish of Dromin/Athlacca). Any five or more of the trustees could authorize the erection of toll gates at any point, or points along the road.

It is not clear if any toll gate was erected near Kilmallock at that time. The Taylor and Skinner Road Map of Ireland, date 1783, does not show any. But there is a record of a toll house existing at the left of the present Bruff road, just beyond the North Bridge, in 1820.

The Act of 1731 made no mention of the new town of Charleville, which evidently was to be by-passed, for the main road from Kilmallock to Cork city was stated in the Act to be that passing through Ballahoura, Mallow and Whitechurch. And so Kilmallock was to continue for another century to be an important road centre, being on the main road from Limerick to Cork, with access roads running east to Tipperary and Cashel, ,and west into Connello, where the towns of

Newcastle and Rathkeale were situated.

Linen Industry in Kilmallock

Some time in the early 18th century, an attempt was made, presumably by the Oliver family, to establish a linen industry in Kilmallock, and for that purpose three families who were skilled in the making of the cloth were brought to Kilmallock from the Banbridge or Portadown area of the North of Ireland. The families were the Mac Connells, the Hawthornes and the Gilbersons, The Hawthornes, as we shall see later, were to become involved in the story of the famous Gaelic poet, Aindrias Mac Craith. The Gilbersons, who acquired land in Bawntard, grew flax on it. Part of the land was known as "The Bleach". Here linen was bleached in the sun.

The linen enterprise was not a success, but it was operative up to at least the year 1750, for on the 25th February of that year an advertisement in the Munster Journal said:

"Philip Oliver, Esq., desires the Public may be acquainted, that the BLEACH-YARD near the town of Kilmallock, lately occupied by Francis McConnell is now held by Arthur McConnell who is thoroughly skilled and has proper Hands from the North to assist him in that Business, will undertake to bleach all kinds of Linens and Cambricks as well as in any part of the Kingdom, without any damage by Rubbing Boards or other ill handling; and by the advice of his friends will bleach Linen Cloth not worth more than twelve pence per Yard, at three half pence per yard; and all Linens of three quarters wide or under at the same Rate, and all Sheeting not exceeding two Dozen Yarn at two pence a Yard; and all others on the most reasonable terms.

Linens to be bleached at the said Yard will be received and delivered out by Mr. James Rice, Chandler, in the Irish Town, Limerick".

The bleach-yard in question was situated in the townland of Deebert, and the bulk of the flax required to supply the enterprise was probably grown in the Kilfinane area. Extracts taken from the 1821 Census returns for that area, before the destruction of the Public Records Office in Dublin, in 1922, show that there was a considerable number of women employed as flax spinners in the Kilfinane/Ballyorgan/Ardpatrick district in 1821. [41] That would imply a tradition of flax-growing in the district.

Races in Kilmallock

Another advertisement in the Munster Journal, this time in the issue of the 24th August, 1749, gave particulars of a five-day racing festival that was

to be held the following month in Kilmallock. The details of the festival were as follows:

"On Monday the eleventh of September next, will be run for on the Kilmallock Course, a five Pound Plate by any Horse, Mare or Gelding that never started for Plate or Purse to the value of Five Pounds, each horse carrying ten stone weight, Bridle and Saddle included.

On Tuesday the 12th a Buck Hunt in the Morning and a Saddle in the Afternoon.

On Wednesday the 13th a Pair of Silver Spurs and a Silver Mounted Whip.

On Thursday the 14th a Fox Hunt in the Morning and a Saddle in the Afternoon.

On Friday the 15th a Five Pound Plate to be run for by Hunters that never started before, each Horse carrying twelve Stone weight, Bridle and Saddle included.

The Cattle for both Plates to be entered with Francis Lee in Kilmallock eight days before the first day of running. Articles at large to be seen at said Lees."

Note: The term 'cattle', which appears in the advertisement, was sometimes used to mean horses, as in the instance quoted.

14

Wild Geese and Gaelic Poets

With the Wild Geese

The story of the "Wild Geese", those thousands of Irish soldiers who followed Sarsfield to France in 1691, and subsequently served in various continental armies, constitutes one of the most interesting chapters in the history of the Irish in exile. Young Irishmen continued to travel in large numbers to the continent for at least half a century after Sarsfield's time, many of them to study for the priesthood in continental seminaries, but most of them to join their fellow countrymen in the armies of France and Spain. Many of the "Wild Geese", or their descendants, attained high rank in the armies of the countries they served.

In 1712, Edmondo Sarsfield, who was born in Kilmallock, and who was then a Captain in the Spanish service, was a sponsor for Guillemo Terry, who was being made a Knight of the very exclusive Order of Santiago. [1] And in 1721, Denis Mac Sweeny, parish priest of Carrigadrohid, Co. Cork, in the course of letter to his cousin, Matthew O Callaghan, in Spain, said: "I met a gentleman in Cork who told me that he saw you in Barcelona with my Lord Kilmallock." [2] Lord Kilmallock was the already-mentioned Edmondo Sarsfield.

Among the most distinguished of the "Wild Geese" were members of the de Lacy, or Lacy, family, of Co. Limerick, who had branches in Bruree, Bruff and Ballingarry, the Bruree branch owning Ballygibba and Tankardstown in the modern parish of Kilmallock. A number of them, including the celebrated Count Peter Lacy of the Russian service, became Field Marshals. One of the many de Lacys who served in the armies of Spain was David de Lacy, whose father, another Peter, came from Lottera, beside Bruree, and whose mother, Annabella Gould, came from Knocksouna, a townland that now forms part of Kilmallock parish. In 1759, when he was a Captain in the Regiment of Ultonia, David de Lacy was made a Knight of the Order of Santiago. [3]

Kilmallock. Blossom Street (now Emmet Street) c. 1900
-- Courtesy National Library of Ireland

Kilmallock. Sarsfield Street c. 1900
-- Courtesy National Library of Ireland

Kilmallock. Sarsfield Street (looking towards John's Castle) c. 1900
-- Courtesy National Library of Ireland

Another view of Sarsfield Street, c. 1900. Tall stone building on left (late 16th or early 17th century) belonged to Sarsfield family. Since demolished; Sarsfield Cinema now on site.
-- Courtesy National Library of Ireland

Kilmallock. Sheares Street, c. 1900.
-- Courtesy National Library of Ireland.

Kilmallock, Lord Edward Street, c. 1900.
-- Courtesy National Library of Ireland.

Wolfe Tone Street Bridge, Kilmallock, c. 1900.
-- Courtesy National Library of Ireland.

Sarsfield Street, Kilmallock.

At the time of de Lacy's elevation to Knighthood one of the most important men in Spain was the son of a Kilmallock man. This was Richard, or Ricardo Wall, Spanish general and statesman. Ricardo's father was Matthew Wall, and his mother was Catherine Devereux, of the city of Waterford. His paternal grandparents were James Wall of Kilmallock and Christina Creagh, the latter very likely also of Kilmallock, where bearers of the name Creagh were numerous,

Matthew and his wife emigrated to France, and it was there, in Nantes, that their son Ricardo was born on the 5th November, 1694. Ricardo must have gone to Spain at an early age — probably with his parents — for there is a record of his being in the Spanish service in 1718. In 1727 he was a captain of dragoons, and went as secretary with the Duke of Liria, the Duke of Berwick's eldest son, who had been appointed Spanish Ambassador at St. Petersburg (now Leningrad).

On his return from Russia, Ricardo rejoined the Spanish army and served in Italy before being dispatched to the West Indies. In 1737 he was colonel of a regiment of dragoons, and was admitted a Knight of the Order of Santiago. In 1748 he was appointed Spanish Ambassador to London. He returned to Spain in 1752, was promoted Lieutenant General in the same year, and became Foreign Minister. In 1754 he became Secretary of State, which made him virtually Premier. He resigned in 1764, and died in 1778. [4]

Eyre Coote of Ash Hill

It is not known if Ricardo Wall availed himself of the opportunity, while in London, to cross over to Ireland to visit Kilmallock, the native place of his ancestors. However, it is not outside the bounds of possibility that during his stay in London he may have met a Kilmallock-born soldier who was later to become a renowned general. This was Eyre Coote, who was born in 1726 at Ash Hill, beside Kilmallock. Coote, unlike Wall, being of Cromwellian stock, was scarcely likely to join the "Wild Geese", and so, in January 1746, we find him an ensign in the 29th Foot in the English forces that were defeated by Charles Edward ("Bonnie Prince Charlie") at Falkirk Moor,

For this defeat most of the officers in the English forces were courtmartialled. Some were cashiered, others suspended. Among the latter was Coote. After the removal of his suspension he was promoted captain. He then transferred to the 39th Foot, which was serving in India. He sailed to India in 1755, and there, five years later, he came face to face

on the battlefield with a famous soldier of France's Irish Brigade, Count Thomas Arthur Lally.

Lally was born in Romans, France, and baptised on 1st January, 1702. He was the son of Sir Gerard Lally, of Tollendal, four miles north of Tuam, in Co. Galway. Lally was a captain in 1732, a major in 1741, and in 1744, as colonel, was given command of a new Irish regiment forever after linked with his name, the Regiment of Lally. The Regiment of Lally was one of the six infantry regiments comprising the Irish Brigade in the service of France, which, on the 11th May, 1745, won undying glory at Fontenoy.

Now, fifteen years after Fontenoy, Lally was in India fighting to retain the town of Pondicherry, and with it French trade and influence in the East, He met Coote's forces at Wandewash on the 22nd January, 1760, and after a stubbornly contested battle, was defeated. Though short of supplies, and with no payment coming for his troops, Lally held out for another year, conducting a desultory campaign of attacks and ambuscades, before finally surrendering and yielding up Pondicherry to Coote on the 20th January, 1761.

On his return to France, Lally was tried for treason, sentenced to death and executed. Twelve years later, the Marquess de LallyTollendal had this ignoble sentence withdrawn, and his father's honour vindicated by the King, Louis XVI, in Council; and in 1929 Lally's name was solemly restored to honour by the French Army.

After Lally's surrender at Pondicherry, Coote wrote: "Nobody has a higher idea than I have of General Lally, who, to my knowledge, has struggled against obstacles which I believe unconquerable, and has conquered them. There certainly is not a second man, in all India, who could have managed to keep on foot for so long a period an army without pay, and without any kind of assistance." [5]

In 1770, Coote went to Madras as commander-in-chief of the East India Company, but shortly afterwards returned to England. In 1779 he was back in India, in command in Calcutta. He had a very successful campaign in 1780, defeating Hyder Ali and his army of 40,000 men, But ill health forced his retirement, and in 1783 he sailed from Calcutta for Madras, but died aboard ship on the 27th April, 1783. His body was brought back to England, and buried with great pomp and ceremony at Rockburne Church in Hampshire. [6]

The Gaelic Poets

That 18th century of the Penal Laws and the "Wild Geese" was

also the century of the last great flowering of Gaelic poetry in Ireland, especially in Munster and North-East Ulster. Some of the poets who nurtured that flowering came from the Kilmallock district. Risteard Ó Foghludha, editor of many collections of poetry in Irish, believed that the two celebrated poets Seán Ó Tuama and Aindrias Mac Craith (the latter better known perhaps by his soubriquet, *An Mangaire Súgach*, the Merry Pedlar) were both born in Fanstown, or its neighbourhood, some three miles east of Kilmallock. Seán Ó Tuama was born in 1708, and Aindrias Mac Craith would appear to have been born in or about the same year. [7]

Both Ó Tuama and Mac Craith had a knowledge of Latin and English, so there must have been a school of some kind convenient to them in which these languages were taught, the most likely location for such a school being Kilmallock. [8] Irish, of course, was their native tongue. The man who was probably Seán Ó Tuama's closest friend was Séamus Mac Cinnéide of Kilmallock, and he, too, was a poet. Seán refers to him in a poem he wrote to Fr. Seán Ó hAodha, parish priest of Bulgaden:

Thugas mo chall mo ghreann is mo shearc do Shéamus,
Gan laige gan leamhas, an plannda, 'cheap Chinnéide. [9]

Another great friend Seán had in Kilmallock was Seamus Bliúit (Bluett), bearer of a name that had been associated with Kilmallock since the end of the 13th century. Seán also refers to him in one of his poems, a poem addressed by him from Co. Clare to Fr. Ó hUiginn, parish priest of Croom:

Uaimse gabhaidh, a shagairt, le géar-shearc rúin,
Bua agus beannacht le tabhairt do Shéamus Bliúit,
Fear suairc gan mhairg nár dhearmaid féile is clú,
Uaisle is eagna i dtaitneamh na cléire is úird. [10]

[Take from me, O priest, with great love and affection/A greeting (victory and blessing!) for transmission to Seamus Bliúit/A cheerful man without dolefulness, nor lacking in generosity or fame/Nobility and wisdom, that is pleasing to the poets and the Orders].

All four, Aindrias, Seán and the two Séamuses, may, in fact have attended the same school, and at the same time. And the scholarly Dominican, Fr. Paul Slattery, mentioned earlier in this chapter, who was born in 1706, he, too may have been at school with the poets.

Seán Ó Tuama subsequently went to live in Croom, where he kept an inn, in which the Gaelic poets of Limerick and North Cork used meet regularly at poetic sessions. A get-together of this kind by the poets, at which they read their latest compositions, was known as a *cúirt éigse* (a court of poetry), or a *scoil éigse* (a school of poetry). Aindrias Mac

Craith, a hedgeschool master — one of the few occupations open to an educated Catholic in those days — also repaired to Croom, no doubt to be near his friend Seán, especially since Seán had displayed above his door a notice which said he was prepared to supply free drinks to any fellow poet who might happen to find himself short of money, a situation in which Aindrias all too often found himself. Seán's invitation was worded as follows:

Níl fánaí ná sár-fhear d'uaisle Gaoidheal,
Brathair den dáimh ghlic ná suairc-fhear groí,
I gcás a bheadh láithreach gan luach na dí
Na beadh fáilte ag Seán geal Ó Tuama roimhe.

The last word, *roimhe*, by the way, should, in this case, be pronounced "ree". Seán's welcoming quatrain has been translated as:

Should any of the stock of the noble Gael,
A brother bard who is fond of good cheer,
Be short of the price of a tankard of ale,
He is welcome to O Tuama a thousand times here,

Aindrias had a predilection for the old combination of wine, women and song, and this led on one occasion to a condemnation of his ways by the parish priest of Croom, who banished him from the parish. Aindrias went off to temporary exile in East Limerick, to Ballyneety, the place where Patrick Sarsfield destroyed the Wiliamite siege train in 1690; and it was there the grieving poet wrote his famous song of farewell to Croom and Cois Máighe —

Slán is céad ón dtaobh seo uaim
Cois Máighe na gcaor na gcraobh na gcruach . . .

(A hundred and one farewells from this place from me/To Coshma of the berries, the trees, the ricks).

Then there was the pathetic refrain:

Och ochón, is breoite mise,
Can chuid gan chóir gan chóip gan chiste.
Gan sult gan seod gan sport gan spionnadh,
O seoladh mé chun uaighnis.

(Alas, alas, sick am I/Without portion, without justice, without company, without money/Without enjoyment, without treasure, without sport, without vigour/Since I was sent away to loneliness).

Eighteenth century poetry in Irish does not translate well into English since all the distinctive cadences and vowel music of the original are lost in the translation. The Cois Maighe, mentioned in Aindrias's poem is the country along the river Maigue; the words Cois Máighe literally mean "Maigueside". Cois Máighe, anglicised Coshma, is also the name of a long rather narrow Co. Limerick barony, which extends from

the Cork border to Adare, and embraces Croom and Athlacca, as well as the townlands of Ballygibba, Knocksouna and Tankardstown in Kilmallock parish.

Seán Ó Tuama himself had to leave Croom in 1739, due to straitened circumstances, occasioned no doubt by the constant supplying of too many free drinks to too many thirsty but impecunious poets. He was forced to go to work for a time to a Mrs. Quin, who lived in Co. Clare; and so from being a prosperous innkeeper he was now reduced to being, as he says in one of his poems, *"im reachtaire cearc ag bean na cleithe caoile"*, a herder of hens for the dame of the slender wattle. He felt hurt in his lowly and unaccustomed calling, and, in a poem to his old friend, Séamus Mac Cinnéide, of Kilmallock, he gives expression to his grief at his forced absence from the Maigueside —

Beidh an brón ar fad dom chloíse
Go deo go rachad taoibh libh,
Ag ól 's ag caitheamh aoibhnis
Arís i gCois Máighe

(All the sorrow will be overcoming me/Forever until I go among you/Drinking and enjoying myself/Again in Coshma).

Séamus Mac Cinnéide replied to Seán in a neatly-phrased poem, telling him how much his brother poets miss him —

D'fhágais sinne faon-bhocht
Go tráite tuirseach tréith-lag
Gach tráth in iomad géibheann
I ngéar-ghoin is i ngá;
Gáir na cruite téadaí
Go cráite connail céasta
Go tláith gan siolla séismhear
Acht géar-ghol gach lá
Na táinte file is éigse
De ghnáth ag sileadh déara,
Id dheáidhse, a chumainn chaomhchirt,
Mo shaoth sin go bás.

(You left us limp and pitiable/Listless, thed and weak/Every day in sore distress/In bitter hurt and need/The voice of the stringed harp/Is tortured, sad and sorrowful/Faint, with no melodious syllable/ But bitter weeping each day/The hosts of poets and bards/Commonly shedding tears/After you, fair dear friend/My tribulation that is till death.)

There were other Gaelic poets in Kilmallock parish in the 18th century. Pádraig Ó Fionnghail was one of them. He was a hedge school master in Ballingaddy about the year 1770. [11] And some eight years later

there was another hedgeschool master in Ballingaddy, who was also a Gaelic poet. This was Muiris Ó Gríofa, a close friend of the great Kerry poet, Eoghan Rua Ó Súilleabháin. [12] Ó Gríofa's best known composition is "An Seabhac Súil" (The Wandering Hawk), a Jacobite song which would seem to have been written during the Seven Years' War period, when it was hoped in Ireland that France and Spain would restore the Catholic Stuarts to the throne of England, *An Seabhac Siúil* was a secret name for Bonnie Prince Charlie used by the poet, who describes the religious toleration the return of the Stuarts will bring to Ireland:

Beidh cealla 's úird gan smacht ansúd, gan scáth ná baol,
Beidh reacht na dtriúch mar chleachtadh ar dtús ag Pápa Dé;
Beidh ceart is cúinse bleachtmar búch do ghnáth ag Gaeil,
'S ár Seabhac Siúil, gan cead de bhúir, go brách i réim. [13]

(There will be churches and orders without subjection, without fear or danger/The laws of the land will be as they originally were under God's Pope/The Gael will have rights in abundance and kind protection/And our Wandering Hawk, despite the boors, will hold sway forever).

It should be remembered that these Kilmallock poets were writing for a comprehending public, for Kilmallock parish, and all the surrounding countryside was still Irish-speaking in the late 1770s and into the early l800s.

The Kilmallock Dominican who turned Protestant

There was no talk of ecuminism in the Ireland of the 18th century, no more than there was in the Ireland of the preceding two centuries, and so we find religious conflict, of one kind or another, as recurring themes in that part of our story of Kilmallock that covers those three centuries of bitter religious persecution and controversy. That conflict manifested itself again, in verbal form, when Donncha Ó Hedderman, a Dominican friar living at Kilmallock, conformed to Protestantism and became a minister of the Established Church.

His going-over caused shock and dismay to the Gaelic poets of Limerick and North Cork, who saw in his defection a blow struck at that close-knit world of Catholicism and Gaelic tradition to which they belonged. Seán Ó Tuama must have been looked upon as some kind of Catholic lay leader at the time, for four poets addressed poems to him deploring the action of Ó Hedderman. One of the poets was Tomás Mídheach (Meade), who, bearing such a name, was very likely a Kilmallock man, or one with close connections with Kilmallock. His poem began:

A Sheáin ghil ionúin, breathnaigh is feach mo chall,
An cás ina bhfuilim is cuisle no cléire fann,
An brathair d'fhoirinn San Dominic, naomh no gceall,
Mar ta ina mbinistir chuirpe ar thaobh na nGall. [14]

(O bright beloved Seán, judge and see my distress/The plight in which I am while the pulse of the bards is weak/The friar of the company of holy St. Dominic of the churches/How he has become a wicked minister on the side of the foreigner).

Uilliam Ó hIcí was particularly severe in his castigation of the former Kilmallock friar —

Srathaire do mhalartaigh Mac Dé na nGrás,
An bearradh foilt, an tAifreann 's an léine bán,
Ar hata dhuilleach, scairfeanna 's ar dhaolbhrat ghnáith,
Is ar ghreamannaibh de gharbh-rolla ar dteacht ón sráid. [15]

(A stroller who exchanged the Son of God of Grace/The tonsure, the Mass and the surplice/For a shovel hat, scarfs and for a common black gown/And for morsels of a coarse roll on coming from town). [16]

The reference to the coarse roll had to do with the difference in ceremonial between the Catholic and Protestant Churches. It has been said that the fear of being made the subject of a condemnatory poem by the Gaelic poets must have acted as a powerful deterrent to any Catholic who, at that time, was contemplating becoming a Protestant.

Priest Poet of Kilmallock

Fr. Seán Ó Briain, who was parish priest of Kilmallock during the period 1739 to 1764, was very friendly with the Gaelic poets of the Maigue country, especially with Seán Ó Tuama, Aindrias Mac Craith and the very learned poet from An Ráth (Charleville), Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill. Fr. Ó Briain himself wrote poetry, including a fine piece that can be sung to the air of "*An Paidrín Páirteach*" (The Rosary), in which he pictures nature itself sympathising with the Irish people in their oppression by the Penal Laws

Solas don ré ní léir mar chleachtaí
Do réir mar bheartaíodh faidhe ghlic,
Tá teimheal ar ghréin le daorthaibh deataí
'S an saol dar linn d'athraigh. [17]

(The moon does not give her customary light/As was ordained according to the wise men/The sun is smudged with black clouds of smoke/And the world, we think, has altered).

Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill and Seán Ó Tuama replied in verse to Fr. Ó Briain's poem. Seán Clarach, who calls the priest *'a chara na*

hÉigse', friend of the poets, tells him better times are on the way, for Bonnie Prince Charlie will soon be on the throne; Seán Ó Tuama replies in similar vein.

Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill, described as "chief Jacobite poet of Ireland", died in 1754. The Cussen family of Ballygibba, parish of Kilmallock, are, descended from a sister of his who was married to Thomas Cussen, who lived in the parish of Bruree. And that is not the only living link with the 18th century Gaelic poets to be found in Kilmallock parish. The present generation of the Hannon family, of Steales, on Kilmallock Hill, and their mother Josephine Hannon. (née Walsh) are direct descendants of Seán Ó Tuama, through his daughter, who was married to a Walsh man from Fanstown.

Andrias Mac Craith dies in Kilmallock

Aindrias Mac Craith was to outlive all his fellow poets, lingering like an *Oisín i ndiaidh na Féinne* after they had all passed away. In 1793, he was living with his daughter near Fanstown. We know this because Eoghan Caomhánach, then nine years of age, has left it on record that he was sent to the village of Fanstown to buy snuff for Aindrias. [18] Eoghan, subsequently to become widely known as a teacher, scribe, poet in the Irish language, and translator, lived from time to time in Kilmallock, and we will be hearing more about him later in this book.

Some time in the year 1795, Aindrias, then about 87 years of age, felt unwell, and sensed that death was approaching. True poet to the end, he put pen to paper and wrote in verse to some local priest, whose name is not given, but who was probably Fr. Fant, - parish priest of Kilmallock. That last poem of his contained an urgent and pathetic message:

Os cráite mise is go bhfuilim go breoite tréith,
Gan cháil gon chiste gan chruinneas gan chóir gan chéim.
Ó táim ar mire is gur feasach mé leointe i mbaol,
Ní foláir go gcuirfir mé 'om chlipeadh don óspidéal. [19]

(Since I am tormented, ill and weak/Without fame, money, recollection, influence or position/With my mind going and I knowing I am stricken and in danger/It is essential that I be sent speedily to hospital).

Apparently there was no response to Aindrias's message — the priest may have been absent, or the hospital committee may not have been meeting — and no one came to convey him to hospital. The result was that Aindrias set out alone from Fanstown, on foot, for Kilmallock. The journey was only a couple of miles, but to Aindrias, bowed with the

weight of years, and weakened by sickness, the road must have seemed endless. Did many of those, one wonders, who saw him tottering along the road to Kilmallock that day, know that this was the same man who, almost sixty years before, in the hot-blooded vigour of youth, had poured out that great song of heartbreak and farewell, *Slán is céad ón dtaobh seo uaim —*

Is fánoch faon mé is fraochmbar fuar,
Is támb-lag tréith 'sis taomoch trua,
I mbarr an tsléibhe gan aon, monuor,
Im pháirt, ach fraoch is gaoth oduaidh.

(A dispirited wanderer am I, furious and cold/Weak, apathetic, ill and wretched/On the top of the mountain with none, alas/To befriend me only heather and the north wind).

When Andrias reached the bridge over the Lúbach, on the outskirts of Kilmallock, his strength failed him, and he struggled the short distance to the first house on the left side of what is now Wolfe Tone Street. In that house lived his friends, the Hawthornes. They put him sitting in a chair, close to the fire, and there, a couple of hours later he died, and there he was waked, with snuff and 'sad tobacco'. Aindrias Mac Craith, *An Mangaire Súgach*, last great Gaelic poet of 18th century Ireland. The Hawthornes had him buried in their own grave, close beside the entrance to the old collegiate church in Kilmallock burial ground. A monument to Aindrias, which was erected over the grave in 1970, was unveiled by Fr. Tomás Ó Fiaich, now Cardinal Ó Fiaich, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland. And in 1974 a plaque was erected on the house in Wolfe Tone Street in which he died.

A story which has come down in the Kilmallock district would seem to have confused Aindrias with Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill, and is, no doubt, a mixed-up version of the story of the death of Aindrias. According to the story, as heard by Connie Hannon (whose wife is a descendant of Seán Ó Tuama), Seán Clárach was found dying near the walls of Ash Hill Towers demense, just outside Kilmallock, "with a lot of books near him". The parish priest was sent for, but he said he couldn't go because Mac Domhnail had been excommunicated. However, the curate said he'd like to go, and the parish priest gave him permission to do so. The curate asked the dying man where he had been going, and he replied: "I was travelling with speed the fair fields into Anhid". When the curate returned the parish priest asked him how he had got on, "Oh," he told the parish priest, "that man died a saint. I hope I will be as well prepared to go as he was". [20]

Seán Clárach was never excommunicated, therefore what we are very likely getting in the reference to his supposed excommunication is a much distorted memory of the banishment of Aindrias Mac Craith by the parish priest of Croom. The Anhid referred to in the story is a townland about a mile south of Croom; it contains a burial ground.

The chair in which Aindrias Mac Craith died was preserved by the Hawthorne family until, eventually, it fell asunder. The Hawthornes were descended from a Michael Hawthorne, from Banbridge, Co. Down, who was one of a number of Northeners brought to Kilmallock to help establish the linen industry to which reference has been made in the preceding chapter. He was a Presbyterian, but he married a Catholic girl named Fleming, from Ballingaddy, and used to go to Mass with her. After some time he became a Catholic. He lived to the age of 115. [21]

He had a son Michael, who lived to be 94, and Michael had a son Francis, who lived to be 92. Francis's daughter, Meta, who married William Mountcashel, a teacher in Kilmallock, died in 1942. [22] The last of the Hawthorne men folk in Kilmallock were Francis and Patsy; they were tailors, and had the contract of making clothes for the inmates of Kilmallock Workhouse.

Headstone over grave of Aindrias Mac Craith in Kilmallock town cemetery.

15

Cootes, Olivers, Travellers, Whiteboys, United Irishmen

The Cootes

The Cootes, though having their seat convenient to Kilmallock, first at Ash Hill, and later at Mount Coote, played a rather insignificant role in the affairs of Kilmallock as compared with the Olivers, who lived eight miles further south at Castleoliver. Chidley Coote represented Kilmallock in parliament in 1695, and Sir Philips Coote represented it in 1713; but after that the Cootes, for all practical purposes, fade out of the picture, politically.

In 1702, the Rev. Chidley Coote of Ash Hill married a daughter of George Evans, and sister of the 1st Lord Carbery. Other marriages of Ash Hill Cootes, of which there are records, were: Robert Coote to Ann Purdon, in 1730, and another Chidley Coote to his cousin, Elizabeth Coote, in 1752. And, as mentioned in the previous chapter, Eyre Coote, the future General, was born in Ash Hill in 1726.

Among the records preserved in the Limerick Archives is a series of note books belonging to two generations of the Coote family. The earlier note books, covering the period 1776 to 1785, were kept by Mrs. Elizabeth Coote (née Oliver), wife of Charles Coote, who lived at Ash Hill, and was an officer of that unit of the Volunteers known as the Kilfinane Light Dragoons. The note books deal with household accounts, and reveal that Mrs. Coote was a very capable and careful housekeeper. From her note books we learn the prices paid for various articles of food and drink between 1776 and 1785:

Lobster	1/1 each	Macaroni,	2/6 a lb
Salmon	2 1/2d a lb	Sugar	8d to 1/- a lb
Oysters	1/1 per100	Lemons	1/4 a dozen
Whiskey	4/- a gallon	Oranges	1/4 a dozen
Rum	5/- a gallon	Cheese	2d a lb
Claret	£25 a hogshead (52 1/2gals)	Pork	2 1/2d a lb
		Beef	2 1/2d a lb
Brandy	7/7 a gallon	Chickens	2d to 6d each

Port	1/4 a bottle	Ducks	2d to 9d each
White wine	2/- a bottle	Turkeys	7d each
Coffee	1/4 a lb	Rice	6d a lb
Tea	4/4 to 8/-	Soap	4 1/2d a lb. [1]

Entries for bread, butter, potatoes and vegetables are almost enthely absent; these items were obviously home produced. About five pigs a year were killed; the beef supply ran to about six animals a year, and sheep were killed at the rate of about two a month. The household, including the servants, numbered at least thirty, which would account for the large quantity of meat consumed. [2]

Beer and cider were brewed on the estate, beer being consumed at the rate of 150-200 gallons a month; cider at the rate of a modest 25 gallons a month. Much spinning and weaving went on. For example, in December 1777, the purchase and spinning of 11 stone of flax cost £7-l7-7 1/2. Four months later, Mrs. Coote bought her own spinning wheel for 6/-. [3]

Medicines cost no more than £1 in any year, and consisted largely of such items as glauber salts, castor oil, magnesia, jalap and "tincture of rhubarb". The butler was paid 16 guineas a year; cooks (who came and went in fairly rapid succession) received £6 to 13 guineas a year. House maids also changed fairly rapidly; they were paid £4 a year. The coachman received 12 guineas a year. The usual blacksmith was Henry Gilbertson, of Kilmallock, but smiths named Daniel Hannon and Terence Brien are also mentioned. [4]

Mrs. Coote appears to have been a charitable woman, being generous to the poor, whether they were local widows — whom she mentioned regularly — or the anonymous poor who came to the door. For some reason her unit of alms was 6 1/2 d, or multiples thereof; this was a substantial figure when one considers that a labourer was lucky to earn 6d a day at that time. [5]

Some time about 1800 the Cootes went to live in Ardovelane, where they built a mansion which they called Mount Coote. In time the name of the mansion supplanted the old name of the townland, and the townland became known officially as Mountcoote, In Lewis' *Topographical Dictionary of Ireland* (published 1837), we read: "Near the town (Kilmallock) is Mount Coote, the seat of Chidley Coote, Esq., a spacious and handsome modern mansion, finely situated in the centre of the ample and picturesque demesne, highly improved by the proprietor with ornamental plantations. . ."

The Cootes were succeeded in Ash Hill by the Evans family, who were related to them. We learn from the Co. Limerick Grand Jury Presentment Books that Eyre Evans was living in Ash Hill in 1812. He

built a new residence,which he called Ash Hill Towers, to replace the old Coote residence, which was sometimes called Castle Coote. It was under construction in the second half of the 1830s, as we learn from Lewis, who spoke of "the Towers, the splendid seat of Eyre Evans, Esq., a large castellated mansion now in progress of erection in the ancient baronial style, consisting of a centre flanked by lofty circular towers, and two extensive wings, of which one in the west is connected with a noble gateway leading to the offices which occupy the sides of a quadrangular area; the whole is of hewn limestone, forming a large and magnificent structure in a richly wooded demesne, commanding some fine views of mountain and vale, and embellished with a picturesque lake extending to the walls of the town."

Chidley Coote, of Mount Coote, was High Sheriff of Co. Limerick in 1827, and John Coote, of the same place, was High Sheriff in 1876. The latter was also a magistrate and ex-officio member of the Kilmallock Board of Guardians. That was the farthest the Cootes got in the public life of the area after their two terms as parliamentary representatives of Kilmallock, one in the late 17th century, the other in the early 18th.

The Olivers

It was a different story with the Olivers, that other Cromwellian Planter family of the district. They were far more able, ambitious and power-hungry than the Cootes, An Oliver had represented Co. Limerick in parliament as early as 1661, and another member of the family had represented Kilmallock in 1703, The influence of the Olivers can be gauged from the fact that members of the family held seats in parliament, representing either Kilmallock or Co. Limerick, for 117 of the 140 years between 1661 and l80l. [6]

In the 18th century the Irish parliament consisted of 300 members, two-thirds of whom represented boroughs which were either very small or almost non-existent. Kilmallock would, by then, have been one of the very small boroughs. General elections usually took place only when a monarch died. Olivers were elected, or selected, to represent Kilmallock in the following years: 1703, Robert Oliver; 1727, Robert Oliver; 1747, Philip Oliver (succeeded Robert); 1757, Silver Oliver (succeeded W. Blakeney); 1761, Silver Oliver; 1797, Silver Oliver, Junior. When we remember that the Olivers were also elected to represent Co. Limerick in the years 1661, 1703, 1715, 1768, 1776, 1797 and 1801, we realise the dominant position the family held in Co. Limerick, especially in the south-eastern part of the county, which embraced

Kilmallock and Kilfinane. As we shall see, however, the full extent of their influence is not fully mirrored in the number of times they became members of parliament.

The ascendancy of the Olivers in the affairs of Kilmallock probably began in 1703 with the election of Robert Oliver as one of the two Kilmallock representatives in parliament. The same Robert Oliver was elected sovereign of Kilmallock in 1707, He was re-elected in 1708. He was also sovereign for the years 1710 to 1717 inclusive; for the years 1725 and 1726, and for the years 1728 to 1738, inclusive. [7] Silver Oliver was sovereign for the years 1780 to 1783, inclusive.

Others who were sovereigns of Kilmallock at that period were William Blakeney, of Mountblakeney (1699 - 1706, inclusive); John Ormsby, of Athlacca (1709); George Blakeney (1718 - 1720, inclusive); William Blakeney (1721); Robert Gonne (1722 - 1724, inclusive); George Blakeney (1727); Philip Redgate (1739 - 1744). Redgate died during his term of office and was succeeded in 1744 by Thomas Maunsell, who held the office for a considerable number of years. [8]

In due course the Olivers acquired complete control of the borough of Kilmallock, being in the position where they could keep the two borough seats for themselves or sell them to the highest and most suitable bidders. Silver Oliver, who became member for Kilmallock in 1757, and member for Co. Limerick in 1768, and who was High Sheriff for the County in 1764, sold the two Kilmallock seats in 1768, one to Thomas Maunsell [9] and the other to Wyndham Quin, [10] while he himself got the County seat. The sale of the seats must have been a profitable transaction, as the average price of a seat at that time was 2000 guineas. [11] It is estimated that between the years 1771 and 1776 alone, the sale of seats could have brought Silver Oliver about 10,000 guineas. [12]

During the 18th century the enforcement of law and order was more in the nature of a local than a national responsibility, being largely in the hands of magistrates drawn from the landed gentry. In Co. Limerick there were no more diligent enforcers of law and order than the Olivers, who, over the years, commanded local military forces. In 1756, Philip Oliver commanded a regiment of dragoons; in 1782, Silver Oliver commanded the Kilfinane Volunteers. The Kilfinane Cavalry (1796 - 1807) were led by Charles Silver Oliver and Robert Oliver. [13]

In their day the word of the Olivers was law; and it would be no exaggeration to say that the Olivers were harsh and despotic in wielding the power at their disposal. Captain Charles Silver Oliver is remembered

as the man responsible for the hanging of the highly respected "Staker" (Patrick) Wallis in 1798. Fr. John Fleming says of the Oliver family:

"The last quarter of the 18th century saw the power of the Olivers reach its height. They dominatect the military and parliamentary scenes in south-east Limerick completely. By that time they were regarded as the owners of two seats in parliament, and made vast profits from these. They also had command of the Volunteer and Yeomanry forces, and so, to a very large extent, had control of law and order in the area". [14]

As the Olivers had manipulated the parliamentary affairs of the borough of Kilmallock to their own exclusive advantage, so also did they manipulate the affairs of Kilmallock Corporation, and, so much so, that by the second half of the 18th century the corporation could truly be said to be their private property.

On the 30th September, 1766, the corporation leased to the Honourable Silver Oliver some 200 acres of corporation lands, described as follows in the minute of the transaction: -

East Portauns (75a.1r.0p), West Portauns (51a.0r.18p), Coomaline (5a.3r.37p), Quarry Hill (2a.3r.37p), Parknabraher Beg in Monafox, i.e. in Mountfox (4a.3r.15p), Bantard (12a.2r.7p), Tubberidinee (la.3r.6p), Garryanoegreen (4a2r.lp), Churchill (6a.3r.22p), Kercher (0a.2r.24p), Gurtanoneteen (2a.2r.20p), Parkabraher (4a.0r.9p), Charter School lands (14a.2r.23p), Deebert, with house and garden (7a.2r.30p), Bleach Yard (2a.3r.19p), Waste plot called Bridewell Park (0a.3r.31p), with the fairs. [15]

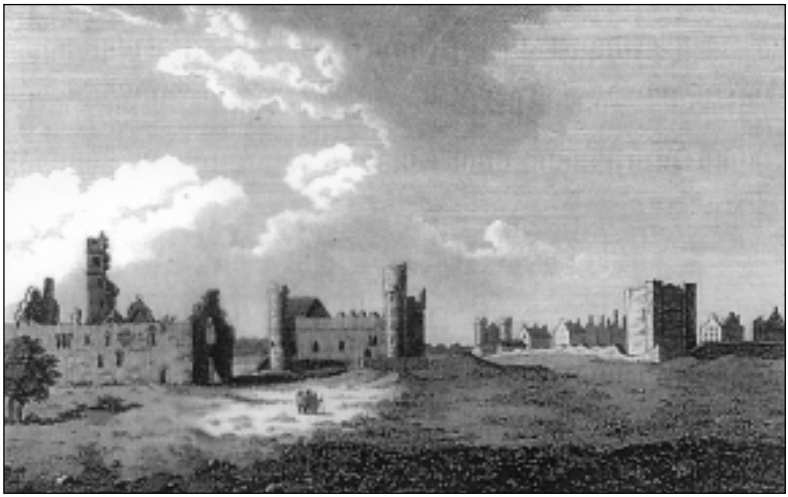
Some of the places mentioned are not now readily identifiable. Tubberidinee very likely derives from *Tobar Rí an Domhnaigh* (The King of Sunday's Well), the old name of the holy well now called Black Dog Well. The Tubberidinee lands would therefore appear to have been in Deebert, in the vicinity of the well. Churchill was probably that part of Kilmallock Hill on which the ancient ruins of St. Mocheallóg's church stand. Silver Oliver was to hold all the lands listed at a combined rent of £82-8-8 a year. The lease under which Oliver obtained possession of the lands was for three lives with covenant for perpetual renewal. The consideration for this lease was a sum of £150, stated to be the amount of certain debts due by the corporation to various persons, which Oliver agreed to pay. [16]

The Market Cross of Kilmallock

Among the Oliver papers in the National Library of Ireland there is a document from the year 1777, signed by Standish Grady, the then

An tAthair Tomas O Fiaich, now Cardinal O Fiaich, unveils memorial to the poet Aindrias Mac Craith, in Kilmallock, 12/4/1970.

The house in Wolfe Tone Street, Kilmallock, where Aindrias Mac Craith died in 1795.



sovereign of Kilmallock, in which the sovereign announces that he will proceed to elect a member of parliament for Kilmallock in place of Silver Oliver — "I will proceed to elect a member or burgess for the said town on Monday, the first day of December next". The document goes on to say that copies of the notices regarding the election had been posted at the market cross, at the castle, at the gate leading to Charleville, and at the Jail of Kilmallock. [17]

We know therefore that the tall market cross that stood in the middle of what is now Sarsfield Street, opposite the opening to Orr Street — and around which were hung the gory heads of Geraldine raiders slain by Perrott in 1571 — was still standing in 1777.

Olivers acquire corporation lands

The interest under the lease of the Kilmallock Corporation lands granted to Silver Oliver was subsequently devised by him to his third son, Silver Oliver, Junior. But with the passage of the Act of Union in 1800, the Olivers feared that the corporation might cease to exist, and that the corporation lands would lapse to the Crown. So they called a special meeting of the corporation on the 6th October, 1800, and at the meeting it was ordered that a fee farm grant should be made by the corporation to Richard Oliver of the lands originally leased in 1776 to his father, Silver Oliver, the rent to be a peppercorn, if demanded. [18]

The order was duly endorsed and signed by the sovereign and ten other burgesses. One of the burgesses had only that day been nominated a member of the corporation and sworn into office. He was none other than Lord Clare, the then Lord Chancellor of Ireland.[19] Having the Lord Chancellor of Ireland a party to the proceedings was intended to give them a semblance of respectability and legality, and to make it unlikely that any questions would, at any future time, be asked about the propriety of handing over valuable public property to a private individual for his own exclusive use and benefit.

Lord Clare, born John Fitzgibbon, and nicknamed "Black Jack", had a previous connection with Kilmallock, having been elected a member of parliament for the town in 1783. A member of the Irish Bar, able and ambitious, and a loyal supporter of the English government Fitzgibbon was appointed Attorney General the year he was elected. In 1789 he became Lord Chancellor of Ireland, became a viscount in 1793, Earl of Clare in 1795; and in 1799 was made a peer of Great Britain as Lord Fitzgibbon of Sidbury, Devonshire. In politics he resisted all reforms, especially those designed to ameliorate the position of Catholics,

and took a leading part in securing the passage of the Act of Union with Great Britain in 1800. This was the Act that left Ireland without a parliament of her own until 1922. Fitzgibbon died in 1802, and his funeral was followed by a jeering Dublin mob. [20]

There were common lands on Kilmallock Hill, and a dispute as to the ownership of these lands arose between Richard Oliver (he subsequently changed his name to Richard Oliver Gascoigne), who had been granted the corporation lands in l800, and his brother, Silver Oliver, who had previously held them by lease, as devised by his father, Silver Oliver, Senior. A number of local people, including some from the town of Kilmallock, taking advantage of the dispute, settled on the commons and built houses there. [21] This was the origin of the little colony, or village, on the hill, part of which still survives. In Griffith's Primary Valuation (1851) seventeen families are shown as having houses on the commons, on Kilmallock Hill, at that time.

Richard Oliver succeeded to the influence his father had possessed in Kilmallock Corporation, and by means thereof nominated the two members to represent the town in the Irish Parliament up to the passing of the Act of Union, He received £15,000 as compensation when, by that measure, the right to nominate was taken away by reason of the abolition of the town's parliamentary borough status.

Kilmallock — town of magnificent ruins

When the Olivers and their friends rode imperiously into Kilmallock in the 18th century, or when the outlawed friars and the Gaelic poets moved more circumspectedly through its streets, as befitted the representatives of a subject and downtrodden people, what they all saw around them was a town of noble ruins, a half derelict town, still bearing all the marks of the many assaults, burnings and sackings it had suffered in the course of the previous two centuries, Its appearance told of the disastrous change of fortune that had reduced this once walled and splendid town of the Munster Geraldines to its present sad and ruined condition. Travellers who saw the town were amazed at the number and magnificence of its ruins. Dr. Campbell, writing on the 20th October, 1775, said:

"Leaving Buttevant, I thought the *ne plus ultra* of human wretchedness was then passed, but Kilmallock was before me . . . I had been told in Charieville that the next stage was Bruff, and there I proposed to breakfast, but after riding a few miles, and staring at a sight so unusual as a well-planted park, I unexpectedly turned through an arch,

under an old castle, into a spacious street, composed of houses, which though magnificent, were windowless and roofless. An inn was . . . unknown here; I got, however, a stable for my horses, and a room for myself, where I suppose, a fire had not been kindled since the last election; for these ruins send two members to parliament. Sheds were raised within these noble structures, too nasty for the habitation of English pigs . . . Kilmallock must be a place of high antiquity . . . It . . . preserves a greater share of magnificence, even in its ruins, than anything I have yet seen in Ireland, I call it the Irish Balbeck. [22]

Dr. Campbell went on: "There was something so picturesque in the perspective of this place that I could not help attempting to delineate it . . . There is but one street now standing entire; but from scattered piles, and from the foundation of others, there is reason to suppose that there have been more. The walls round the town which in many places still remain, are of an oblong square. At each angle has been a castle, like those under which the traveller passes, at the end of the remaining street . . . One of these is the jail of the city. What must you think of the jail of Kilmallock, which is itself the most dreary of all prisons?" [23]

John O'Keeffe, the celebrated dramatist, passed through Kilmallock the year following Dr. Campbell's visit, and had this to say of the place:

" . . . between Limerick and Cork I passed through the ancient city of Kilmallock. We entered one of the gates, and drove down the main street out at the opposite end. The town is enthely composed of old castles joined to each other, the only inhabitants a few country people, living in the tops and bottoms of these castle houses like birds and rabbits. Kilmallock seemed to me the Court of the Queen of Silence." [24]

Arthur Young's account

Arthur Young, that most observant and enquiring traveller, passed through the Kilmallock district early in October, 1776; He was going to visit Silver Oliver in Castleoliver. His journal account of the journey begins: "October 7, to Castleoliver, by Bruff, passing through a very fine tract of reddish-brown loam". [25] It will be noticed that he didn't even mention Kilmallock, though he must have passed through the town! Towns, obviously, did not greatly interest Arthur Young; the agricultural economy, the crops, the animals, the kind of soil, the rents, the husbandry, these were the matters he mainly commented on. In the hilly country in and around Castleoliver he found little tillage, dairying being the

principal agricultural pursuit. However, most of the farms were set to dairymen, [26] which meant that the owners themselves did not work them.

The upland agriculture of the Castleoliver district contrasted sharply with that of the rich Limerick plain — the Golden Vale — that lay spread out to the north. Young wrote: "Bruff, Kilmallock and Hospital have very good land about them. It is in general under bullocks, but there is some tillage scattered about, to the amount probably of the fifteenth of the whole; the rents are from 25s to 40s; average 30s per acre." [27]

And he had this observation to make:

". . . the poor in this rich tract of country are very badly off. Land is so valuable, that all along as I came from Bruff their cabins are generally in the road ditch, and numbers of them without the least garden; the potato land being assigned to them upon the farm where it suits the master best. The price they pay is very great, £4 to £5 an acre, with a cabin; and for the grass of a cow, 40s to 45s. They are, if anything, worse off than they were twenty years ago." [28]

French Traveller's Account

Another late 18th century traveller who mentioned Kilmallock was the French scholar, Charles Etienne Coquebert de Montbret, who was appointed a consul in Dublin, by Louis XVI, in 1789, and who, in his diary, wrote a description of a journey he made from Cork to Limerick, in December, 1790. From *Brooke's Gazette*, published in Dublin, in 1776, Coquebert had learned that Kilmallock was once an important place, "described by some geographers as the Balbec of Ireland". He arrived in Kilmallock on the morning of December 29th, and seeing the many impressive ruins, was satisfied that it was a town of some consequence at one time.

In his account he says that the town would appear to have been surrounded by walls flanked by towers, and that the many well-built houses of grey limestone (from old abandoned quarries on the outskirts of the town) stood in strange contrast to the miserable hovels nearby. Some of the houses were embellished with a pointed arcade running all along the cornice of the first storey, but the arches of the doors were rounded, none *en ogive.* Many churches, he said, were to be seen, including the abbey, which he didn't succeed in exploring, as the entrance to it was cut off by an overflow of water from a nearby stream (the Lúbach). Over the gates still standing were two kinds of fortresses, one of which was being used as a prison. [29]

Clearly, Coquebert mistook John's Castle for a town gate, as the

only town gate standing in Kilmallock in his time was Blossom Gate. It was John's Castle that was being used as a prison. And his reference to "many churches" was very much an exaggeration.

The Whiteboys

The conditions of the poor in the Kilmallock district, as described by Arthur Young in 1776, created an explosive situation. There was the never ending struggle of the labourers to get sufficient land on which to grow potatoes to feed themselves and their families. And there was the plight of the small holders, the men of an acre or two, weighed down with rents and tithes, and scarcely better off than the labourers. Out of that world of seething discontent ultimately came the agrarian secret societies, such as the Whiteboys, to which desperate men turned to right their wrongs.

It has been claimed that, in fact, the Whiteboy movement had its beginnings in Kilmallock. Edmund Burke states that in 1760, a J. Fant, a Protestant and an attorney-at-law, a good-natured and well-liked man, lived on the borders of Cork. Fant was a name that had long connections with Kilmallock — there is a townland called Fantstown, now, however, usually written Fanstown, a few miles east of Kilmallock — and it would appear that J. Fant lived near the town. According to Burke, in 1760, Fant became deranged in his mind, and accused Mr. Oliver (i.e. Silver Oliver), member of parliament for Kilmallock, of several treasonable activities, "and particularly of having brought the Pretender, in women's clothes, and surrounded with a number of papists, publicly to a horse race". He also, according to Burke, accused Oliver of several oppressions against the poor. His complaints having been ignored, Fant, Burke tells us, assembled at night "many of the meanest people of Kilmallock, and having warmed them with liquor, he harangued them on the grievances which the poor in general suffered from the oppression of the rich, and telling them that their town common had been illegally enclosed, and that they had a right by law, to level the walls by which they were shut out from it, they . . . that night completely demolished the fences which enclosed their reputed common." [30]

"This, and no other beginning", wrote Burke, "had these disturbances, which afterwards spread over a great part of the adjacent county . . . [31] The disturbances in question were the leveller or Whiteboy activities, and the adjacent county was Tipperary. However, Burke does not appear to have been an unbiased recorder of events in this case, if one is to judge by some of the highly coloured language he uses — "the meaner people", "warmed them with liquor", "he harangued them", "their

reputed common". White boy activities, which included the pulling down of walls erected around the commons, opposing tithes and high rents, attacking landlords, landlords' agents, large farmers and tithe proctors, and raiding for arms, constituted, according to Canon Begley, a new found weapon put into the people's hands, a weapon "which they wielded with tremendous effect, after sixty years' dumb submission". [32]

The part Kilmallock was to play in the revolutionary movement of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries could be said to have begun that night in 1760 when the local people tore down the walls the Olivers had erected around the common lands. In 1764, an allowance was made by Kilmallock Corporation to William Hill for damage done by the Whiteboys to some of the corporation lands; he was also granted an acreage allowance "for many acres that became a commonage". [33] The term "Whiteboys", which occurs in the Kilmallock Corporation minute books in 1764, was obviously well established by then.

The harsh measures adopted by the authorities to quench the new spirit of rebellion only served to fan the smouldering flames of discontent still further. The billeting of undisciplined troops in the houses of the people, the searches, the taking of prisoners, the torturings, the killings, resulted in the people sometimes banding themselves together in an attempt to protect themselves. Persons enrolling in such groupings were known in some localities as Defenders. Bruff had been attacked on a number of occasions by the Whiteboys, the most serious attack being on the 15th July, 1786, when they burned several houses in the town. [34] A desperate effort to seize the town was made in 1793 by the Defenders, but they were repulsed by the 34th Regiment of Foot, and many were killed on both sides. [35] The Defenders also attacked Kilfinane about the same time. [36] No attacks were made on Kilmallock, presumably because there was scarcely anything left in the town to attack or burn by then.

The Whiteboys had been particularly active in Co. Limerick in 1786, and detachments of troops were stationed at Rathkeale, Shanagolden, Newcastle and Bruff. But Kilmallock, the principal military station of the English for long periods in the 16th and 17th centuries, had no troops in 1786, another indication of its now relative insignificance.

Lord Edward in Kilmallock area

A considerable number of United Irishmen were recruited in the Kilmallock district, the result, undoubtedly, of the intense recruiting campaign carried out by the agents of the organisation in Co. Limerick in

1797. Lord Edward Fitzgerald came to Limerick in the spring of 1798, as part of a tour of inspection of the southern counties to discover the strength and preparedness of the organisation in the South. In West Limerick, he stayed in Ballingarry with the celebrated revolutionary, schoolmaster and mathematician, James Baggot ("the great O Baggot"). From there he proceeded to the East of the county, to the townland of Ballybeg, near Kilmallock, a townland that formed part of the estate of the Earls of Kildare, the family to which he himself belonged. He stayed for some days in Ballybeg, with a family named Greene. [37]

Lord Edward sent word of his arrival in the district to the Kilmallock company of the United Irishmen, and a three man delegation went to meet him, and discussed the prospects of a rising with him. One of the men on the delegation was named Gaffney — his Christian name would appear to have been John; another was Burke Fleming; the third may have been named Howthorne. A grandson of Gaffney, Nicholas Gaffney, a Fenian, in some notes he left, states: "Fleming owned a large tract of land in Deebert; Oliver and his 'yeomen of every ill and omen' hunted him out of Ireland."

The Kilmallock district, like most other districts in Ireland, saw no action by its company of United Irishmen when the Rising broke out in 1798. But in April of that year, a famous United Irishman from the area, "Staker" (Patrick) Wallis, of Tiermore, died on the scaffold in Kilfinane, at the hands of Captain Charles Oliver.

Lord Edward Fitzgerald

16

Old Roads, Crofton Croker's Visit, Schools

Kilmallock made post town

One of the first signs of some improvement in the fortunes of Kilmallock in the 19th century was an announcement in the *Limerick Chronicle* of Saturday, 12th March, 1803, which said:
"The Post Masters General have been pleased to appoint Kilmallock to be a post town".

Thomas Newenham's *A View of the Natural, Political and Commercial Circumstances of Ireland*, compiled in 1806/7, gives the following particulars regarding Kilmallock parish: John Fant, P.P.; Timothy Mac Carthy, C.C.; number of houses 456; baptisms, 136; population on the increase; labourers, 8d and 11d (wage per day); highest rent, £5-13-9; lowest £4; since 1782 rent rose from £1-14-l1/2 to £5-13-9.

A Kilmallock man who died in 1806 had been a benefactor of the diocesan college, founded by Dr. Young, Bishop of Limerick, in 1796, for the study of Logic and Divinity. He was John O Donnell, of Millmount, Kilmallock, and he had arranged that the ground rent of Kilmallock chapel, to which he was entitled, should go towards the maintenance of the college. By his death the rent became lost to the college. Fr. Fant, P.P., had paid the rent to the college up to the time of O Donnell's death. [1]

The chapel, or church, for which John O Donnell was entitled to receive the ground rent, must have dated from Penal times. It continued to be used up to 1814. As far as could be ascertained when this book was being written, no memory or record of it survives. No one therefore can pinpoint its location. Perhaps it stood in Millmount?

Old Roads — and Road repairs

We learn from the Grand Jury Presentment Book for the Summer Assizes, 1807, that J. Cronin and T. Cronin were given the contract to repair 156 perches of the mail coach road from Limerick to Kilmallock,

between Cloonygarra ford and W. Twomey's house at Steales. The road, 34 feet wide in the clear, was to be repaired with gravel or small stones, at 11s.4 1/2d per perch. Extensive repairs were being carried out to the Bruff to Kilmallock road in 1807. As stated in Chapter 13, the road then followed a different line from that which it follows today, crossing over Kilmallock Hill and descending towards the North Bridge between William Mac Carthy's house (Ardaulin) and the shop and filling station at the junction of the present Bruff and Bruree roads.

At that time the road from Bruree to Kilmallock turned sharply left at the entrance to Garrynoe House and followed the line of the existing narrow by-road to the top of Kilmallock Hill, where it joined the Bruff to Kilmallock road. The road from Garrynoe House to Kilmallock did not then exist, and the road running from Tankardstown burial ground towards Kilmallock was a cul de sac. Originally this road had stopped short at the boundary between Ballygibba and Garrynoe, the old parish and liberties boundary, but another piece was lopped off it in 1808, as we learn from the following entry in the Grand Jury Presentment Book for the Spring Assizes of that year: "To Eyre Evans and J. Hannon to stop and make fences to the old road between the gate near the house of Garrynoe and the house of Patrick Kelly of Tankardstown as being useless and unnecessary, £2 .10.0."

Jim Hogan, who lives on the road in question, remembers hearing old people tell how carts transporting corn to the Glenfield Mills that came from the Tankardstown and Knocksouna directions, along the then cul de sac, used take a pathway across the fields to the right, near where Ailbe Flynn's house is now situated. The pathway led to the river Lúbach, which the carts had to cross to get to the mills.

Many other items of local interest will be found in the Grand Jury Presentment Books for this period — the Grand Juries were the predecessors of the County Councils, carrying out many of the functions that were to be taken over by the Councils when they were established in 1899. In 1808, Richard Gilberson was conservator of the roads within the liberties of Kilmallock; his salary was £5 per annum. Eyre Evans, who lived in Ash Hill, was High Constable of the liberties; and the sub-constables were Denis Buckley and Sam Mac Connell — a Sam Mac Connell is noted as the owner of a forge in Deebert in 1811; perhaps he was the same person as the sub-constable. The salary of the sub-constables was £4 per annum. [2]

Eyre Evans figures frequently in the Presentment Books. At the Summer Assizes of the Grand Jury in 1810 he was appointed to be

supervisor of "that part of the mail coach road from Kilmallock to Charleville, between the South Castle of Kilmallock (Blossom Gate) and the old pike, measuring 658 perches, and from that to the bounds of the Co. Cork, near Charleville pike, measuring 653 perches". The Grand Jury authorized and empowered him to keep these 1310 perches of road in repair.

At the Spring Assizes of 1811, a contract was awarded to Eyre Evans and John Leo to lay 45 perches of a new foot path between Blossom Gate and William Connell's house in Blossom Street, the path to be 3 feet wide and to cost £6-15-0. Among other contracts given to Eyre Evans was one awarded to him, jointly with James Hannon, to repair 100 perches of the road from Bruree to Kilmallock, between Michael Clohan's house on the lands of Kilmallock and Paul Slattery's house on the lands of Ballygubby (Ballygibba), at 4s.6d. per perch — this latter house persumably was the thatched house occupied up to about 30 years ago by Michael Slattery, and recently demolished. It stood at the Bruree side of James Lynch's house.

One wonders if the Paul Slattery mentioned in the Presentment Book was related to the Dominican, Fr. Paul Slattery, who laboured in the Kilmallock district in Penal times, or to that Paul Slattery, a United Irishman, who, according to a document, dated May, 1800, was "lying in Limerick Jail under sentence of transportation for life". [3]

The Presentment Book for the Spring of 1820 had an entry which indicates the location of the turnpike gate where tolls were collected at the entry to Kilmallock from Bruff and Bruree directions — the roads from both these places, as already stated, met on the hill of Kilmallock. According to local belief the toll house was the small house that stood up to recently at the junction of the present Bruff and Bruree roads at the North Bridge. The relevant entry in the Presentment Book is as follows: "To John Fitzgerald and Edmond Fitzgerald, to repair the old bridge over the river, on the road from Rathkeale to Hospital, between the turnpike gate, at the Hill of Kilmallock, and the Quarry Hill, in the townland of Kilmallock — £4-19-1".

Evidence of the existence of agrarian secret societies in the district is found in an entry in the Grand Juries Presentment Book for the Spring of 1813. This concerns a sum of £161, which the Grand Jury authorized to be levied on the parish of Ballingaddy, and to be paid: "To Francis Drew, Esq., in compensation of damages sustained by him in having his dwelling house, offices and goods maliciously burned and consumed by nightly insurgents".

New Catholic Church

A new Catholic church, to replace the Penal age chapel that stood on John O Donnell's land, was built in Kilmallock in 1814. The new church was situated in the low ground, between John's Castle and the Lúbach, nearer to the river than the creamery and cheese factory, which were later to occupy part of that space. The church was subsequently enlarged, and was described in 1837 as "a spacious building". [4]

Trotter in Kilmallock

In September, 1817, an aptly-named traveller, John Bernard Trotter, visited Kilmallock. Trotter tells us that before he came to Kilmallock he had met a farmer in a pub in Charleville, and had a conversation with him about the conditions of farmers and labourers in the district. What the farmer had to say about the Charleville district would, undoubtedly, also have applied to the Kilmallock district.

Rents, he said, were still being charged at war-rate (the Napoleonic Wars had ended in 1815). By the end of the war years land in general had risen to five, six and seven pounds an acre; and potato ground was let for ten, eleven and twelve guineas the acre to cottagers. The latter were not allowed to dig the plots until the letting farmers had been paid, as the farmers wanted to pay the landlords. Thus labourers might starve at work, and their families might be perishing, under this dreadful land system . . . The cottagers had no cow, no garden no fowl — they literally existed on the roadside, and the scanty price of labour (sixpence to tenpence a day) was all they had. [5]

Clearly, conditions for the labourers had disimproved even still more from what they were when Arthur Young reported on them in 1776.

Trotter continues; "These distressing . . . reflections . . . brought us to the gates of Kilmallock. Gates ! you exclaim — is it thus you speak of a petty village in Limerick? Even so. As the pleasant and grateful evening sun dwelt on its ruined walls and castles, we entered, through an arched gateway, crowned by a very picturesque tower, this singular old city. We found a tolerably small inn, and, after dinner, explored the ruins of Kilmallock. The main street seems to have been composed of castles, many of which remain. Regular transverse streets, with gates and towers, in different directions, formed the plan of the city, and its walls were guarded by small towers at intervals. We saw a fragment of the wall in one part, with one of these towers very beautiful and perfect". [6]

"A very intelligent inhabitant of Kilmallock" took Mr. Trotter to

see the ruins of the old collegiate church and the Dominican priory, and he was tremendously impressed by them. They then went to see the site of *Cúirt an Ridire*, the White Knight's castle, on the banks of the Lúbach. "My guide showed me the spot where his castle stood, on the riverside, a small distance from Kilmallock. Huge fragments of it have fallen into the water, and remain cemented together, intercepting, in some parts, the stream, and resembling masses of natural rock". [7]

One incident relating to his stay in Kilmallock, which Trotter recorded, still has power to chill us — and, unbelievably, the scene recorded by this English traveller was to be repeated, almost exactly, in the exact same spot in the Famine year of 1847. It was on the second day of his stay in Kilmallock, and he was in the ruined Dominican priory with his guide. In one part of the ruins, he tells us, where a fine arched side aisle was still perfect, and where its stone roof kept off the rain, the guide suddenly showed some terror. A person ill of fever had been left there the day before, in case he'd communicate the sickness to the family where he lodged. He had been left there to die, so great was the fear of contracting the fever. His weak voice plaintively implored for a drink, and Mr. Trotter promised to get him one. In another part of the monastery lay a hat. It had belonged to an American gentleman, who had come to the town some time before, and had been stricken by the fever, He too had died a lonely death in the ruined monastery. Fever was rampant at the time; but, according to Mr. Trotter, there was neither hospital nor dispensary in Kilmallock to cater for the sick. [8]

Census Returns, 1821

The census returns for 1821 show that there were 620 families in the combined parishes of Ballingaddy, Kilmallock and Tankardstown, these now forming the modern ecclesiastical parish of Kilmallock. The total population was 3399, of which 437 were employed in agriculture, 261 in trade, etc., and 385 in other pursuits. The total number employed was 1083. There were 460 children (321 males, 139 females) attending school. Included in all these totals were the figures for Kilmallock town, which were as follows:

No. of families, 216; total population, 904; employed in agriculture, 54; employed in trade, etc, 128; otherwise occupied, 73; total employed, 255; attending school, 352 (249 males, 103 females).

Great Distress in Kilmallock parish

During the early l820s, due to high rents and a succession of bad harvests, conditions were very bad in Co. Limerick. There was great discontent among the impoverished masses, and this flared up in 1822, when, in many parts of the county, there was a virtual state of rebellion. Violence on the part of the people was met with greater violence on the part of the authorities. On the 13th April, 1822, four men; William Dunworth, William Nunan, Patrick Nugent and James Callinan, who were stated to have ambushed a military party, were hanged in Ballyagran; and on the 10th August, Jeremiah O Rourke, of Athlacca, was hanged in Limerick, for allegedly having fired at a landlord, From the scaffold O Rourke stoutly protested his innocence in a short speech in Irish.

In that year of misery and violence, the Catholic clergy approached the gentry, and suggested the holding of a meeting to devise some scheme for alleviating the widespread poverty that existed. The better disposed members of the gentry acted on the suggestion, and called a meeting at which a relief organisation was set up. Apart from a central committee, local committees were set up and subscriptions collected. [9]

The local committee in Kilmallock found there were between ten and twelve hundred paupers in the parish of Kilmallock (SS. Peter and Paul's, Ballingaddy and Tankardstown). When we remember that the population of the parish the previous year was 3399, we realise that one in every three of the population was destitute in 1822. The people described as paupers were stated by the committee to have had no means of subsistence for three months. Out of the contributed funds, the committee distributed, three times a week, gratis, oaten meal to 122 families, and at half price to another 122 families, thus relieving 1603 persons. They also supplied 40 families with seed potatoes, without which the parties would have been obliged to leave their gardens untilled. Eyre Evans was very zealous in collecting subscriptions, and had high praise for the people who resisted the temptation to resort to violence to remedy their plight. [10]

Crofton Croker's description of Kilmallock

There are various accounts and descriptions of Kilmallock from the 1820s. Crofton Croker, antiquarian, folklorist and writer, who was related to Eyre Evans's wife, was there early in the decade and wrote:
"Kilmallock seems to have been gradually sinking into decay since the time of Cromwell, when it was dismantled and received such injury from

the parliamentary army . . . it is from the main street that a just idea of its ancient consequence may be formed; on each side are the remains of houses built of hewn stone, which seem to have been constructed on a uniform plan; and so excellent is the workmanship, the walls of many of them are now in perfect preservation, only wanting roofs and floors to make them as complete as when inhabited. These houses are three storeys high, ornamented with an embattlement, and a tasteful stone moulding on the outside of this pattern.

The square window frames and large fireplaces are well carved, in a bold and massive style; and such is the durability of the limestone, though exposed to the weather and casual injuries, that it retains the sharpness of the chisel as if only yesterday from the hands of the sculptur. A chimney piece in the shell of one of these buildings bears the inscription — *SH 16 IHS 38 EH*

These initials I was told were those of Simon and Edward (more probably Elizabeth or Elinor) Healy; and as these houses were evidently built about the same time, this date satisfactorily points out the period." [11]

One can only regret that these stately buildings of Kilmallock — whose appearance has been so beautifully captured for all time in J.G. Mulvany's painting in the National Gallery of Ireland — did not survive to more appreciative days, when they could have been restored and adapted to modern uses. Had they survived Kilmallock would now be one of the showpieces of Ireland, with people coming from far and near to gaze in wonder and admiration at its glorious heritage of stone. But it was not to be. Indeed the destruction had already commenced before Crofton Croker paid his visit to the town.

"Little attention", he wrote, "is paid by its present inhabitants to the preservation of the remains of its former importance. On the contrary they are daily destroyed, Whenever a hovel is required to be built, the materials are procured by breaking down part of these splendid mansions, some of which have been lowered and fitted up in accordance with the neglect and destruction of the place, and the interior of others is occupied by sheds for cattle, or even more loathsome pigsties". [12]

It was night time when Crofton Croker arrived in Kilmallock for the first time; and in the moonlight the great houses of the town assumed an unreal and magical appearance. Daylight, however, revealed a different view, as Croker tells in the poem he wrote about his visit:

"When first I saw Kilmallock's walls,
Twas in the stillness of moonlight;

And lofty towers and stately halls
Frowned darkly then enwrapped in night;
Just touched with tinsel, streaks and gleams,
Mysterious as a town of dreams!

But morning with its rosy sky
Dispelled this visionary pride;
All greatness did in ruin lie,
Mean hovels stood on every side;
The peasant held the lordly pile,
And cattle filled the roofless aisle.

Kilmallock in the pensive mind
Wakens many a solemn thought;
There will the heart this lesson find —
That human strength and power are nought;
Today, a boast; tomorrow, gone,
A moral deep to muse upon.

From Pigot's Directory, 1824

Pigot & Co's Directory of Ireland for 1824 describes Kilmallock as a post and fair town in the county of Limerick, says it is now in a ruinous condition, goes on to give a short summary of its history, and states: "It formerly enjoyed distinctive municipal privileges, and with its extensive liberties constituted a separate county". But as far as the Kilmallock of 1824 was concerned the Directory has this to say: "Its consequence and trade are now annihilated, the shops are few and very small, and all that remains to it is a good inn, where every convenience and accommodation may be obtained".

The inn, owned by Patrick Hussey, bore a name that would sound rather strange in present day Kilmallock — "The Freemason's Arms Hotel". The *Directory* contains much further information. The Post Master was Henry Mac Connell, and the mail to Limerick, Dublin &c., departed every day at half-past eleven, and returned on its way to Cork at two, bringing the Dublin mail, &c. The gentry and clergy in the town and neighbourhood were: Chidley Coote, Esq., who had a "delightful seat" at Mount Coote; Thomas Dowling, Esq., Chief of Police; Rev. James Ellard, Fairyfield; Eyre Evans, Esq., Ash Hill, Rev. Michael Murnane, P.P., John O Donnell, Esq., Kilbreedy; Thomas Weldon, Esq., Riversfield.

The shopkeepers, merchants, tradesmen, etc., were Robert Berry, grocer and spirit dealer; John Buckley, baker; James Casey, baker; George Connor, flour factor; Nicholas Gilbertson, boot and shoemaker; Richard Gilbertson, publican; Patrick Hussey, Freemason's Arms Hotel; Patrick O Brien, grocer and spirit dealer; John O Connell, apothecary; James Quinlan, grocer and publican; Michael Sheedy, publican; Thomas Ward, baker.

The Directory tells us that Kilmallock had a charter for a market, but that none was held. Fairs, however, were held on 21st February, 25th March, Whit Tuesday, 6th July, 8th November and 4th December, The town was served by the following coaches: To Cork, the mail through Charleville and Mallow every day at two o'clock. To Cork, a light coach through Fermoy every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning, at half past eleven. To Limerick, the mail every day at twelve o'clock. To Limerick, a light coach every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday afternoon at three o'clock.

In all probability, the stage coaches stopped at the Freemason's Arms Hotel. The hotel building is now a private house owned by Kevin Carroll (next to T. Tierney's premises, formerly S.B. Walsh's Garage) in Sarsfield Street. It is said that a room in the house, known as "the Black Room", was where the Freemasons' oath was administered, Kevin Carroll's father Leonard Carroll, was descended on the maternal side from the Gilbertson (or Gilberson) family, — a Northern Protestant family who came to Kilmallock to help establish a linen industry early in the 18th century. They subsequently became Catholics. Later, it would seem, the stage coaches stopped at Thomas Pollard's Inn, at the junction of Emmet Street and Lord Edward Street.

The description of Kilmallock in Pigot and Co's 1824 Directory as a town whose "consequence and trade is now annihilated" finds an echo in Fitzgerald's History of Limerick, which was being compiled about that time. Fitzgerald, a native of Bruff, must have known Kilmallock well. He wrote:

"The principal entrance to the town was by a lofty turreted gateway, which led into a street uniformly built; once, no doubt, a scene of bustle and, animation, but now exhibiting the stillness of a sacked and desolate city, with magnificent ruins of ecclesiastical, military and civic edifices scattered on every side . . ." [13]

Fitzgerald erred however in his reference to the "lofty turreted gateway". This building was John's Castle, not a gateway. The "uniformly built" street was what is now Sarsfield Street, Early 19th

Century Schools

There were eight schools in the area of the modern parish of Kilmallock in 1824. One of the schools is described as a "Free school", which simply meant that the pupils did not have to pay any fees. Although Free schools were usually run by the Protestant Church authorities, or landlords, Catholic pupils were often in the majority in them. The other seven schools in the parish are described as "Pay Schools". The pupils in these schools were charged small fees. As late as 1824, and even later, these payschools, some of them conducted in miserable buildings — one in Kilbreedy Minor, a few miles west of Kilmallock, was in a cow shed — were still generally known as hedgeschools. The term "hedgeschool" was a relic of Penal times, when Catholics were forbidden to have schools of their own, but defied the ban by having their children instructed secretly, in remote places, often in the open air, in the shelter of trees and hedges.

Six of the eight schools in Kilmallock parish were situated in the town. Michael Gilberson, a Protestant, was principal in the one free school, which was held in a thatched stone and lime building. He had 79 pupils, 73 of whom were Catholics and 6 Protestants; 48 were male, 31 female. The Protestant Dean and Chapter of Limerick gave the master an acre of ground, valued at £3 annually. The Association for Discountenancing Vice contributed £6 towards his salary, and G. and S. Oliver, Esqrs., £5 each. The scriptures were read in the school.

In the other schools in the parish all the teachers were Catholics. Arthur Fox taught in a thatched stone and lime house, His income was £10 annually, and he had 80 pupils, including one Protestant; 60 of the pupils were male, 20 female. The scriptures were not read in the school, Michael O Brien taught in a thatched house, built of stone and mud, and had 98 pupils (70 male, 28 female), including one Protestant. His income was £15 a year. The scriptures were not read in his school, nor in that of Thomas Mac Grath, who taught in a stone and lime thatched building, and who had the relatively large income of £60 a year, despite the fact that he had only 50 pupils, all of whom were male and Catholic. He obviously catered for rather better off pupils.

David O Neill had 24 pupils, including one Protestant; all were male. The schoolhouse, which was of stone and mud, was described as very bad. The teacher's income was £20 a year, The scriptures were read in Greek in the school; perhaps it was a classical school? Sharing the same building with O Neill, but conducting a school of his own, was Jeremiah O Connor, who had 64 pupils, including one Protestant. There

were 50 males and 14 females, and the teacher's income was £35 a year. It is not stated if the scriptures were read in the school.

There were two pay schools, or hedgeschools, outside the town, one in Ballycullane, the other in Ballygillane. John Corbett was the teacher in the Ballycullane school, which was described as a "very poor mud cabin". He had 57 pupils, 35 male and 22 female; all were Catholics. His annual income was £8. The scriptures were not read in the school. Daniel O Brien was the teacher in Ballygillane. His income was £12-l0-0 a year. His school was of mud, and thatched, and he had 110 pupils, 73 male and 37 female; all were Catholics.

The information we have regarding the schools in Kilmallock parish in 1824 comes from the *Appendix to Second Report from the Commissioners of Irish Education Enquiry*, published in 1826. Another report, the *Second Report of the Commissioners of Public Instruction, Ireland,* published in 1835, shows that the number of schools in the parish had fallen in the intervening eleven years, There were now only three schools in Kilmallock town, and the number of pupils was very much less than in 1824. Two of the schools are described as hedgeschools. One was taught by John Honner. It was attended by 66 children, 44 males and 22 females; the attendance was diminishing. The subjects taught were reading, writing and arithmetic, these constituting the famous "three R's — Reading, 'riting, and 'rithmetic". The teacher's income came from the fees paid by the children. The second hedgeschool in the town, which had been established only a few months previously, was kept by Matthew Kenna, and payment was by the children, who numbered 69, 42 males and 27 females; average attendance 60. The same subjects were taught as in John Honner's school. Incidentally, we find a Matthew Keane as a teacher in the first national school in Kilmallock in 1839, Perhaps the name Kenna in the 1835 Report was an incorrect transcription of the name Keane?

The third school in Kilmallock in 1835 was described as a classical school. It was kept by Michael Fogarty, and payment was by the children. No further details of the school are given in the Report. Outside the town, there was a hedgeschool in Ballingaddy, kept by John King, who received small payments from the children, who numbered 64, 36 males, 28 females. Attendance was increasing. Reading, writing and arithmetic were taught. The same subjects were taught in a hedgeschool in Tankardstown, kept by a Mrs. Elizabeth Heffernan. Here, too, the attendance was increasing. The number of pupils was 35, 20 males and 15 females; average attendance 25.

A school called St. Peter and Paul's Male School was established in Kilmallock on the 20th February, 1839, and it seems to have come under the control of the National Board of Education almost from the beginning. It was situated in what is now Sheares Street, and consisted of one room, measuring internally 32 x 19 x 9 1/2 feet; it was described as having five glass windows, each three feet by two feet. The room held four desks, each 12 feet long, and six stools, this seating giving accommodation for 120 children. The teacher was Matthew Keane, and his salary, derived from subscriptions, amounted to £10 or £11. Attendance varied with the weather, when the weather got mild it could be as high as 200. [14]

Because of the continuing increases in numbers, another teacher, James Connolly, aged 25, was appointed as an assistant to Matthew Keane, at a salary of £8 a year; and it was proposed that this sum should be subsidized by £5 from the parishioners; but the inspector had to report that "there is an unwillingness on the part of parents to pay, as they know the teacher is paid by the Board." [15]

St. Peter and Paul's Girls' School was established in March, 1839. It too came under the control of the National Board of Education. The first teacher was Mary Hussey, and her salary of £12 was paid by the parents of the children. [16] None of the early teachers employed in the St. Peter and Paul's Schools had received any formal training.

17

End of Corporation, Old Rental, The Workhouse

Last Days of Kilmallock Corporation

Kilmallock had still got a corporation, but its days were numbered. By the last quarter of the 18th century the corporation of Kilmallock could be said, in all truth, to have been taken over by the powerful Oliver family of Castleoliver. How members of the family blatantly "feathered their own nests" in the matter of the corporation lands has already been described in chapter 15. But the day — or days — of reckoning came on the 18th and 19th September, 1833, and on the 17th and 18th January, 1834, when a Special Commission of Inquiry sat to enquire into the affairs of the corporation.

The inquiry found that the corporation then consisted of a sovereign and an unlimited number of burgesses, of whom 12 formed the council. The sovereign was elected from among the burgesses at an annual meeting held on the Monday after Michaelmas Day. The form of an election was observed, but the same person was always re-elected. His salary was £25 Irish a year. The sovereign immediately after his election nominated 12 of the burgesses to be the council for the following year. The burgesses were elected at the same annual meeting by a majority of the members present. No qualification of residence or otherwise was necessary in the persons elected; in practice, for many years past, they had been nominated by the sovereign (one of the Oliver family). The number of burgesses at the time of the Inquiry was 16, of whom not one was resident in the town. All were Protestants. [1]

The officers of the corporation, besides the sovereign, were: the deputy sovereign, the town clerk, the sergeant at mace, the jailer, the pound keeper, the billet master and weighmaster. The deputy sovereign had a salary of £20 Irish a year. The town clerk, who kept the corporation books and attended the annual meetings, resided at a distance from the town. The sergeant at mace attended the court held in the town, and had the execution of its decrees, for each of which he received a fee of 1s. His

salary was £4 a year. He was also jailer and pound keeper, having the usual fees from the latter post. The weighmaster, who kept a public beam and scales within the town, had no emoluments, apart from such fees as he received from persons who had goods to weigh. The salaries of all the officers were paid by Richard Oliver Gascoigne. [2]

The sovereign was a Justice of the Peace within the borough, but not to the exclusion of the magistrates of the county of Limerick, who held a Court of Petty Sessions within the town. The sovereign sat with the county magistrate when matters which arose within the borough were discussed, but he did not act as a county magistrate. [3]

A court was held before the sovereign, or deputy sovereign, the latter of whom only of late years had sat. It was in the nature of a Court of Conscience and exercised jurisdiction to the amount of 40s, in cases arising within the borough. The court was held once a fortnight, and the average number of cases heard was six on each court day. The proceedings were by summons. Both plaintiff and defendant were examined upon oath, and the sovereign decided without a jury, and enforced his decrees by warrant against the goods of the defendant. The cost of the proceedings up to a decree was 3s, 6d. The Hundred Court, granted by charter, had ceased to be held. [4]

Having duly enquired into all matters relating to the affairs of the corporation, including the appropriation of the corporation lands half a century earlier by the Olivers, the Commissioners who conducted the Inquiry had no hesitation in saying in their Report, that:

"The borough of Kilmallock furnishes a remarkable instance, among many others, of the manner in which corporations in Ireland were, in the process of time, diverted from their original purpose of public benefit to the exclusive advantage of individuals, who, either by the possession of property in the town, or through the prudent management of other means, acquired an ascendancy in them". [5]

Kilmallock Corporation was finally dissolved under the Municipal Corporations (Ireland) Act, 1840.

Kilmallock Rental

The Hannons, an old Catholic family in the district, began to come into prominence about this time. In 1832, James Hannon, of Garrynoe, was nominated to be High Constable of the liberties of Kilmallock, and collector of the public cess, or levy, assessed on the liberties. He was replaced in these offices in 1834 by John Hannon, also

of Garrynoe. [6] The Hannons lived in the house now occupied by the de Barra family.

A surviving rental of the Kilmallock estate of Sir Leonard Holmes, covering the years 1831 to 1858 — but mainly the 1830s — throws much light on the workings of the estate of an absentee landlord in Ireland. The rental is now in the possession of John J. Carroll, Mountfox. To judge by what can be inferred from the rental, Sir Leonard was a fairly benevolent landlord; where a payment was disputed the tenant usually got the benefit of the doubt; abatements were given; arrears were struck out on one occasion in the case of a widow.

There are 66 names in the rental, and they represent the occupiers of a substantial number of houses in John Street (now Sheares Street) and Main Street (now Sarsfield Street), and also occupiers of land in the townlands of Ardyoul, Bantard, Deebert and Proonts, and in sub-divisions of neighbouring townlands, such sub-divisions bearing names that have long passed out of use — Propeens, Ardvillan (part of Mountcoote), Gurtivant, Farranacrossa, Monteenaparson, Raheenalousig, Budaneerla, Collerus (this may be the modern Cullamus), Gurtnacrina, Grotto. The first of these now obsolete names, Propeens, is found as Prappin in the Civil Survey of 1654; and the five following names, Ardvillan, Gurtivant, Farranacrossa, Monteenaparson and Raheenalousig, appear in the Down Survey map of the same period.

Rents were paid half yearly, although one of the larger payers paid regularly in four or five instalments, The largest rents were those paid by Thomas Weldon (£80-13-6 per half year), in respect of lands in Proonts and Deebert, and by John and Thomas Casey, jointly, (£66-11-6) is respect of lands in West Bantard. Abatements of 15% were given, to the majority of the tenant farmers of a half year's rent in the years 1832 and 1833. One man, Michael Roche, of Farranacrossa, was given credit in his rent account for work done on the estate, including the building of a coach house at Riversfield, and the sawing of deals. Another man, John Fitzgerald, of 6-10 John Street, was allowed £2-12-3 for 57 perches of masonwork, and £2-13-4 in respect of an outoffice at Riversfield, Edward Moore Creed paid £18-9-3 rent half yearly on his mill, which was situated between Wolfe Tone Street Bridge and the bypass linking the Kilfinane and Knocklong roads.

Thomas Weldon, of Riversfield, was the local agent for the Holmes estate, and he remitted the nett rents to London, to Thomas Lewell, who was the estate agent there. Rents for the half-year September 1831 to March 1832 amounted to £647-7-ll. The arrears outstanding were

£2l2-4-10. After various expenses had been deducted, the sum of £350 was remitted to London, Rents for the following half year amounted to £648-11-5; arrears outstanding were £300-0-3. After the deduction of expenses £300 was forwarded to London.

The expenses for the half year March 1832 to September 1832 included a sum of £3-3-0, described as "school grant and dispensary subscription", and a sum of £2, described as "subscription, cholera orphan fund". [7] Cholera had then been raging for some time in the district, adding further to the misery of the people.

Cobbett and Kilmallock

William Cobbett (1763 - 1835), Englishman, journalist, radical, member of parliament, and great friend of Ireland, was a remarkable man. A Protestant himself, he proposed the elimination of the Protestant hierarchy in Ireland, both civil and clerical, and fought to relieve Irish Catholics from paying tithes to support the Protestant Church. Proud of the small-holding, freeholding yeoman stock to which he belonged, he thought very highly of the people of that class. He served for a time as a sergeant-major in Canada, under no less a personage than Lord Edward Fitzgerald, who in those prerevolutionary days, held the rank of major in the British Army. Daniel O Connell described Cobbett as "one of the greatest benefactors of literature, liberty and religion". [8] This great benefactor of "literature, liberty and religion" finds a place in the story of Kilmallock.

Cobbett had for long wanted to visit Ireland, but did not manage to do so until 1834, He received a tremendous welcome everywhere he went. He was invited to visit Kilmallock, but found it impossible to go there. However, he sent a letter expressing his regrets to the people of Kilmallock, and the text of his letter was published in his Political Register on the 1st November, 1834, under the title "ANSWER TO THE PARISH PRIEST AND OTHER INHABITANTS OF THE CITY OF KILMALLOCK". In his letter, written in a tortuous style, Cobett said:

"Gentlemen, Not being able to stop at your city without breaking my engagement with the people of the city of Limerick, I could not avail myself of your kind invitation; and was obliged to confine myself to a mere passing view of those extensive remains of ancient grandeur, so consonant with the surprising fertility and inexhaustible riches of the surrounding country; so clear an evidence of the political wisdom, as well as the piety of our ancestors, who, by foundations like these, kept constantly alive 'honour to God in the Highest, and on earth

peace and goodwill towards men'; who, in this best of all possible ways, caused the produce of the earth to be enjoyed on the spot, and created a happy yeomanry, held by the ties of gratitude and veneration, in willing and cheerful obedience to their landlords.

With this passing glance, and with these melancholy reflections, I was obliged to content myself; those reflections being succeeded, however, by the bitterest execrations, coming from the bottom of my heart, on the memory of the ruthless spoilers, whose ferocious greediness has, at last, instead of that yeomanry by whom the monks were surrounded, placed a swarm of rackrenters, whose only food is an insipid and spiritless root, whose bed is the rejected produce of the hog, whose place of abode is inferior in point of comfort to that of the lowest and filthiest of animals in other countries, and who are liable to be, and frequently are, tossed out of, even of these, to perish with hunger and cold.

If you, gentlemen, and your fathers, had, like us Protestants, ever abused and villified what are called '*monkish ignorance and superstition*', you might have been said to be the makers of your own miseries; but, having with a constancy and self-sacrifice, wholly unparalleled in the history of the world, remained, even unto the death, faithful to the religion of your fathers, the magnificent ruins which press the recollection of those scarifices and of that matchless fidelity, to the mind of the beholder, cannot fail to fill him with indignation against the spoilers, with anxious wishes for your deliverance from your present miseries, and with a resolution to neglect nothing within his power to effect that deliverance.

Gentlemen, your kind and highly valued address, for which I tender you my best thanks, introduces so many topics, and each of so much importance, that it would be impossible for me to treat of them here, without far too great an encroachment on your time; but, gentlemen, I must observe that, if the unconstitutional doctrine of passive obedience and non-resistance be taught in the schools to which you allude, I abhor those schools from the bottom of my heart. With regard to the matters, relative to which you do me the honour to request my aid in your behalf and in behalf of ill-treated Ireland, I beg you to be assured, first, that I regard it as my bounden duty to render such aid to the utmost of my power; and second, that having now with my own eyes had the fact of this ill-treatment, and of all its attendant miseries, confirmed, and my excellent constituents of Oldham, who feel most acutely for all your sufferings, have charged me with the performance of that duty, I should,

if I were to neglect it, be amongst the basest and wickedest of all mankind.

WM. COBBETT
Limerick, 19 October, 1834." [9]

Cobbett died the following June. The parish priest of Kilmallock to whom Cobbett wrote was Fr. Michael Murnane.

Kilmallock in 1837

Lewis, in his description of Bruree parish in 1837, says: "A new road has recently been formed from Croom to Charleville through the western part of the parish, which will become the principal road between Limerick and Cork". This was a development which was going to have serious implications for Kilmallock. Previous to the formation of the new road, the main road from Limerick to Cork had passed through Kilmallock. The new line of road, which by-passed it, was to have a detrimental effect on the old Geraldine town, making its economic recovery still more difficult. Kilmallock, once among the most important road centres in Munster was now, to some extent, on a road to nowhere.

It would seem that a certain amount of recovery had been taking place in Kilmallock in the previous couple of decades. Lewis states: "Till lately the town had remained in such a state of decay as to present only the appearance of a rural village; but since 1816 several good houses of stone have been erected in the principal street, which is now a handsome thoroughfare, inhabited by respectable tradesmen". But, according to Lewis; "The streets are neither paved nor lighted, and the inhabitants are supplied with water chiefly from the river Lúbach".

Drawing further from Lewis, we learn that close to the town, in the townland of Deebert, there were extensive flour mills belonging to Edward Moore Creed; in the 1840 Ordnance map these mills are called by their old name, Mullen Shane, that is *Muileann Seáin*, John's Mill — the Gaelic poet, Eoghan Caomhánach, wrote a poem about Creed's Mills in 1828. And not too far distant, on the same river, were the Glenfield oat mills, "belonging to Mr. Ivers, built in 1825, at very great expense, on the site of the old manor mills and employing about 20 persons". The Glenfield mills, now demolished, were often referred to as Strike's Mills; in 1840, John O Donovan heard them called *Muileann a' Stráice*, a name open to various interpretations. It could be the Mill of the Strake, a strake being a curved metal plate forming part of the metal rim on a wooden wheel. The Irish word *stráice* also means a piece, or a portion, or a strip of something (cloth, tillage, land, etc.). So *Muileann a' Stráice* could

equally mean the Mill of the Strip of 'Cloth, or the Mill of the Strip of Land, etc.

Kilmallock also possessed a tanyard, and we are informed by O Donovan that it was situated in the townland of Treanlewis, close to Treanlewis House. [10] According to Lewis, "except for the supply of the immediate neighbourhood there was neither trade nor manufacture in the town". The markets, formerly held on Mondays and Thursdays, had been discontinued for many years; but fairs were held on February 21st, March 25th and Whit Tuesday, chiefly for pigs, and sometimes for cattle and sheep, though very poorly attended. A constabulary force was stationed in the town. In 1837, the male and female parochial schools, supported by the Protestant Dean and Chapter of Limerick, were housed in John's Castle, which was the property of the corporation.

In the course of his description of Tankardstown (the old parish of), Lewis says: " . . . there are some large dairy farms, but the land is in general much sub-divided". Elsewhere in his *Topographical Dictionary* (vol. ii, p 263), Lewis says: "It (the system of sub-division) exists to a great extent in the neighbourhood of Kildeemo (Kildimo), where scarcely half a dozen persons in the district keep a horse, and even more so around Tankardstown, near Kilmallock". The Tithe Applotment Books for 1834 are revealing in this regard. They show 54 separate holdings in the townland of Tankardstown. The largest holding was 128 acres; the second largest, 93 acres and the third largest, 42 acres. There were 17 holdings with areas over 5 acres but under 20 acres; and there were 32 holdings of 5 acres and under.

Another remark made by Lewis about Tankardstown was, that; "Turbary being scarce in the district, cow dung, dried and stacked like turf, is generally used as fuel by the peasantry". The present writer has seen the same fuel used in Tankardstown as late as the l930s. It was known by its Irish name, *Boíthreán* (pronounced "borehawn"); but it was not out of economic necessity, or because of the unavailability of conventional fuels, that it was used at that late period, but because it was considered to generate ideal heat for the baking of bread in bastibles or pot ovens,

Lewis also mentions that about 30 children were being educated in a private (i.e hedge) school in Tankardstown. This school was situated on the Bruree road, about 400 yards west of Ballygibba crossroads, and about 10 yards north-west of where this book is now being written.

The Kilmallock Workhouse

Following the passing of an act "for the more effectual relief of the destitute poor of Ireland", in 1833, the country was divided into administrative areas called Unions, which were to be administered by local Boards of Guardians. Limerick was divided into Four Unions — Limerick, Rathkeale, Newcastle and Bruff. The Bruff Union, shortly afterwards to become the Kilmallock Union, was declared on the 9th January, 1839. It covered a very large area in south-east Limerick — and a small area in Co. Cork — embracing in its early days the electoral districts (these were different from the modern district electoral divisions) of Ardpatrick, Ballinlough. Ballinvana, Ballylanders, Ballmacshaneboy, Bruff, Bruree, Cahercorney, Charleville, Dromin, Galbally, Glenbrohane, Glenroe, Hospital, Kilfinane, Kilflynn, Kilmallock, Knockainy, Knocklong, Manisternenagh, Tankardstown and Uregare,

The Board of Guardians, which was subsequently to administer the affairs of the Kilmallock Union, came into existence on the 13th February, 1839. It consisted of 37 members, 9 ex-officio, and 28 elected. The ex-officio members, drawn from the landed gentry class, were: James Russell, of Mount Russell, first chairman of the Board; The O Grady, Kilballyowen; Robert Fetherstone, Bruree House, Joseph Gubbins, Kilfrush; Eyre Evans, Junior, Ash Hill Towers; Thomas Travers Adams, Annagurra; Thaddeus R. Ryan, Scarteen; Robert Holmes Ivers, Castle Ivers; Hugh Massey, Riversdale. [11]

The elected members were: William Collins, Kilfinane; Richard Ivers Wilson, Uregare, Michael O Brien, Ballylanders; Thomas Mac Mahon, Kilfinane; John O Donnell, Ardpatrick; Thomas Malone, Tankardstown; Standish O Grady, Hospital; Michael Walsh, Ballinvana; Michael Ryan, Bruree; William Gleeson, Manister; John Murnane, Ballymacshaneboy; William Wilkinson, Galbally; James Barry, Knockainy, James Riordan, Knockainy; Patrick Moloney, Bruff, Eyre Evans, Senior, Kilmallock; Michael Riordan, Glenroe; Frederick Bevan, Bruff; Patrick Roche, Dromin; Patrick Carroll, Bruree; Thomas Bennet, Bruff; Matthew Madden, Knocklong; Thomas O Connor, Kilflynn; Thomas Fitzgerald, Junior, Galbally; Michael Barry, Cahercorney; Edmund Cahill, Ballinlough; Francis Gaffney, Hospital. [12]

Most of the elected members of the Board of Guardians would have been in the class described as "strong farmer"; others would have been fairly large property owners, — Michael Ryan, of Bruree, for instance, was the owner of extensive corn mills, The elected members, or, at least the majority of them, clashed frequently with the landlord element

among the ex-officio members. Each of the elected Guardians had a constituency within the Union called an Electoral Division; and to help them process requests for relief, each had several wardens within the Electoral Division, with responsibility for different sections of it.

Wardens residing within the boundaries of Kilmallock parish were: For Ardpatrick Electoral Division: John O Donnell, Ballingaddy (1839); James Tracey, Ballinahown (1840-41); Edmund Condon, Ballingaddy (1841). For Kilmallock Electoral Division: Henry Gilbertson, Kilmallock (1839); Michael Gilbertson, Kilmallock (1840-41); Robert Barry, Kilmallock (1841); Stephen Walsh, Kilmallock (1841); Thomas Emmet, Portauns (1841); Jeffry Walsh, Ballycullane (1841); Edward Hannon, Kilmallock Hill (1841). For Tankardstown Electoral Division: Michael Carroll, Ballygibba (1840); Patrick Carroll, Bahlygibba (1841). [13]

The first meeting of the Guardians took place in Bruff on 18th February, 1839. It was also the last meeting to be held there, for the Guardians decided, by majority vote, that all future meetings would take place in Kilmallock, as that town was more centrally situated. And when, in July 1839, it was decided that a workhouse would be built in Kilmallock, what was originally intended as the Bruff Union became the Kilmallock Union. To finance the building and furnishing of the workhouse, the Guardians borrowed £8800, out of which they bought a seven acre site in Millmount for £525, paying the existing tenant £62-12-11 compensation. The workhouse was contracted for in September, 1840, the contract price being £7000; a contract for furniture and fittings amounted to £1212-7-1, The building, which was to have accommodation for 800 persons, was to be completed by September 1840. Work progressed satisfactorily, and the first of the destitute, 30 in number, were admitted on the 29th March, 1841. [14] Six months later the workhouse held 258 inmates, fairly evenly divided between children and adults, between male and female.

John Ryan was appointed master of the workhouse, and Mrs. Elizabeth Cleary matron; however, John Ryan resigned before taking up duty, and Roger Ryan wa,s appointed in his stead. The day to day management of the institution was in the hands of the master and matron. Their salaries were £45 and £30 respectively; each had free quarters in the workhouse, as well as free fuel and rations. Resident staff also included two teachers, the male teacher, Martin Feore, having a salary of £15 a year, and the female teacher, Ellen Dennison, having £12 a year. Both were entitled to free rations. [15]

Other Kilmallock Schools

The Kilmallock Union Workhouse School opened on the 2nd April, 1840, and came under the National School system in 1841. There were two school rooms, each 30 x 43 x 12 feet. Each of the teachers had three classes; and Martin Feore, as well as being teacher, was rate collector for the Union, For that part of the day during which they were not at school, the children were "usefully employed", the girls at needlework, the boys at breaking stones or "other useful work". [16] The fact that the school came under the Board of Education was of advantage to the Guardians, for the Commissioners of Education agreed to supply school books free for the first years and at half price after that. [17]

Reference has already been made to the classical school kept in Kilmallock by Michael Fogarty, and noted as existing in 1835, This was probably the school later attended by Patrick W. Joyce, of Glenosheen, historian, authority on Irish placenames and collector of Irish Music. Joyce, who was born in 1827, describes in his *Ancient Irish Civilisation* (pp 46 - 47) how the students studied their subjects in the ancient Irish monastic schools — "you would see every flowery bank, every scented hedgerow, every green glade and sunny hillock occupied with students, sitting or lying down, or pacing thoughtfully, each with his precious manuscript before him . . ." Joyce adds in a footnote: "I have seen the same custom in full swing in some of the lay schools before 1847. Many a time I prepared my lesson — with my companions — sitting on the grass beside the old abbey in Kilmallock, or perched. on top of the ivy mantled wall".

In the latter part of the last century, a man named Mac Carthy kept a Latin school in the house in which Connie Hannon and family now live, in Steales, on Kilmallock Hill. Boys from the locality who intended going for the priesthood spent a year at this school before proceeding to the seminary.

Daniel O Conneil in Kilmallock

Daniel O Connell spoke at Kilmallock on Thursday, 18th May, 1843. There was no prior announcement of this meeting in the Limerick newspapers, and it would appear that it was one that "just happened", or that was arranged at very short notice. O Connell was that day travelling from Nenagh to address a very widely publicised Repeal Meeting at Charleville. It was the time of his great nation-wide campaign for the Repeal of the Act of Union and the setting up of an Irish Parliament, Never had anything like his Monster Meetings been seen in Ireland before, with tens of thousands, and hundreds of thousands flocking to the

different centres to hear him. He was "The Liberator", the man who had won Catholic Emancipation, and who soon would win freedom and a parliament of her own for Ireland. So it was believed. On that May day of 1843, as he approached Kilmallock, O Connell was at the peak of his power and popularity.

At Bruff he was joined by hundreds of local men on horseback; and when he halted to change horses, he was welcomed by Dr. Swyny, Head Repeal Warden of Bruff, and his staff, and a Teetotal Band struck up "See the Conquering Hero Come". After delaying for about ten minutes he proceeded on his journey accompanied by a numerous cavalcade. It was then about twelve o'clock, "and the day as fine as ever blessed the earth". [18]

As he continued towards Kilmallock, the mighty mass of people accumulated to such a degree that it was almost impossible to pass. The whole surrounding countryside poured forth its tens and hundreds and thousands of men, women and children. As far as the eye could reach a vast mass of human beings presented themselves to view. They were carrying laurels and branches of trees in their hands so as to present the appearance of a moving forest. [19] Great numbers viewed the procession from inside the roadside fences. [20] At Kilmallock the carriage carrying O Connell — which had proceeded at walking pace all along the way — was met by a deputation from the Congregated Trades with their bnnners. [21]

Canon Begley tells us that O Connell's Kilmallock meeting took place on Kilmallock Hill; and for a description of the meeting he draws on an account written years afterwards for an American paper by one who was present at the meeting. According to this account, Fr. Blake, C.C., Effin, rode a dashing charger ahead of the O Connell procession, waving his hand excitedly, and exclaiming: "O Connell is coming; he will pass at this side". Wild excitement gripped the huge crowd. From where O Connell spoke on the Hill the people had a splendid view of the town in the valley below. He stood with his cap in his left hand, and his right hand thrust into the bosom of his great coat; at times he would use his right hand in a sweeping gesture. His face and voice were marvellous; his face was as eloquent as his voice. The writer of the article in the American paper remembered O Connell as a heavy man with curly hair, and as having traces of a Kerry accent. His address, he said, "enkindled a living fire of unbounded patriotism that nothing could withstand". [22]

But the writer in the American paper also had this to say of O Connell: "Well, he is gone. He was no doubt a remarkable personality,

perhaps the greatest Ireland ever nursed. His word would have hurled all Ireland upon England's Redcoats on the eve of the horrible Famine, but he failed to speak it, for which may God forgive him". [23]

It was five o'clock in the evening when O Connell eventually arrived in Charleville to address a meeting that was attended by tens of thousands of people.

Daniel O'Connell.

18

The Famine, Eoghan Caomhánach, Executions

Victims of the Famine

The minute books of the Kilmallock Union give a good insight into conditions in the large Kilmallock Union district during the Famine period. Unfortunately, the minute book covering the period from the beginning of February 1847 to the end of December 1847 is missing. From the end of March 1846 to the end of December 1846, the average weekly number of inmates in Kilmallock workhouse was 614. This figure was made up of an average of 127 males aged 15 years and upwards; 155 females aged 15 and upwards: 168 boys under 15; 133 girls under 15; and 31 children under 2 years. From these figures it is clear that whole families had sought refuge in the workhouse in many instances. In the workhouse the family would be split up, the father in one section, the mother in another, the children in still another.

Figures for the total weekly number of inmates in the workhouse during 1846 varied from the 400s to the 600s, up to about the middle of November. At that point, due most likely to the total failure of the season's potato crop, and the coming of winter with all its attendant hardships, the number of persons in the workhouse showed a rapid increase. There were 826 inmates on the 28th November; 868 on the 5th December; 955 on the 12th December; 1045 on the 19th December and 1036 on the 26th December. There were 18 deaths during that five week period. It has to be remembered that the workhouse had accommodation for only 800 inmates.

At a meeting of the Board of Guardians on the 19th December, 1846, the Guardians had before them a letter from Dr. Morgan O Connell, Medical Officer of the workhouse, and a cousin of the Liberator, Daniel O Connell. In his letter, Dr. O Connell said:

"I am of opinion that the Kilmallock Workhouse cannot accommodate more than 800 inmates without engendering disease. The

overcrowded state of the house for the last month has already generated fever attended with chest affections, and, at this moment there are 37 persons in the fever hospital, on which account it is now absolutely necessary that the Infirmary additions should be given up properly furnished, in order to make provision for the fever cases daily occurring. The boys' and girls' dormitories, and also the nursery and day rooms, are excessively crowded, and the air hot and impure in these departments. The infirm wards too are overcrowded as already reported on by me". [1]

The organising of food supplies for the thousand and more people in the workhouse must have created huge problems. The list of provisions estimated to be required for the week ended 19th December 1846 included the following items: 1200 loaves best white bread, 80lbs meat, 1400 quarts best skimmed milk, 3700 quarts of sweet milk, lcwt. salt, 2lbs tea, 2lbs coffee, 56lbs sugar, 48 pints porter, 8 tons of coal, 1 load of turf, 1cwt. soap, 6270lbs meal, 20lbs dipped candles, 5lbs mould candles, 56lbs oatmeal. Items such as tea and coffee were of course for staff members only.

At the beginning of 1847 the number of inmates in the workhouse rose from 1077 on the 2nd January to 1207 on the 6th February. On the 21st January, the medical officer, Dr. O Connell, reported to the Guardians that he had drawn up a dietary for children aged from 2 to 9 years, and also for those aged over 9 and up to 15 years. The dietary would, he stated, if carried out "be found sufficient for their support at this critical period, when the house is overcrowded, and when milk, the true food of children . . . is unprovided for the younger classes to their great and serious detriment." Continuing, Dr. O Connell said that the high mortality rate found in other workhouses would not be warded off if the Guardians continued to admit more paupers into the house than could, with safety to the inmates, be accommodated. [2] During January 1847 the average weekly number of deaths in the workhouse had risen to 6.

As already stated, the minute book covering almost the whole of 1847, "Black '47", the year of the blight and the black potatoes, is missing; but a letter written by Robert Fetherston, of Bruree House, to Sir William Somerville, on the 14th October, 1847, gives a very clear idea of the desperation of the Famine-stricken at that time in an area only a few miles west of Kilmallock. Fetherston informed Somerville "that this peaceable district was yesterday thrown in the greatest state of excitement and confusion by the assemblage of a turbulent multitude of the lower order, which, in the first place, met on the Hill of Garryfine, and not finding the Roman Catholic clergyman, came on here (to Bruree) to

request, as they said, my influence to procure food. I told them of my sympathy and said that provision had been made both within and without the Poor House (Workhouse)". [3]

The letter then goes on to say that the mob became furious, broke into his, Fetherston's, lawn, drove off 20 of his milk cows, beating them severely with sticks and stones. He sent his servant after them to remonstrate with them. They drove him back. They then went to the Glebe, and took his (the Protestant minister's?) stock, and to the P.P., the Rev. Fr. Ryan, and took his stock as well. Fr. Ryan followed them and persuaded them to abandon the cattle. The people told him that if work or food was not provided within a week they would repeat the performance. Fetherston estimated the crowd at 2000, an said most of them were strangers, and could not be identified. He complained that he had no power to repel them, and also stated that they had wanted him to go to the mill and get them ten tons of meal instantly. He added "This spirit of insubordination should be checked and stopped before it arrives at the maturity to which it is hastening". [4]

Numerous other attacks were carried out at this time on the holdings of members of the landed gentry, and on the holdings of large farmers, and corn, potatoes, turnips, sheep and cattle were seized by large bodies of raiders.

Returning to the minute books of the Kilmallock Union, we find that during the week ended 1st January, 1846, 63 people were admitted to Kilmallock workhouse and 32 discharged; the corresponding figures for the following week were 90 and 37. At a meeting of the Guardians on the 8th of January, it was recommended that the adult inmates of the house should get l2ozs. of Indian meal bread every day for dinner, with one pint of gruel, and that they should get one pint of soup each on Sundays and Thursdays in lieu of the gruel. In the case of children from 9 to 15 years, they were to get l0ozs. of Indian meal bread for dinner, with one pint of gruel, and on Sundays and Thursdays they were to get one pint of soup in lieu of gruel. Children from 2 to 9 years were to get 8ozs. of white bread for dinner, and four ounces of bread for lunch at midday; and on two days a week they were to get a half pint of soup, and on the other days of the week "the usual substitute".

At the same meeting, the Guardians directed the Clerk of the Union "to inform Mr. Flynn that the Indian meal delivered by him at present, although of good quality, has been pronounced by the medical officer (to be) too coarse and consequently injurious to the health of the

paupers, and to request him to grind it finer, or sift it, before delivery in future". [5]

The Kilmallock workhouse authorities were undoubtedly doing their best to cope with an ever worsening situation; but they themselves would be the first to admit that the quantity of food allocated in the workhouse was not sufficient to satisfy completely the hunger pangs of the inmates. Some of the younger inmates apparently decided from time to time to forage for themselves, as we glean from the minutes of the meeting of the 11th February, 1848, which state, rather awkwardly, that: "The master was directed to bring the boys before the magistrate at petty sessions who scaled over the walls for the purpose of stealing turnips." And at their meeting of the 13th July that year the Guardians directed the master to deprive a boy, Thomas Dwyer, of his milk for one day as punishment for having taken stirabout off the dining room table.

It would appear that Dr. Morgan O Connell, the medical officer attached to the workhouse, was a man of strong character and independent thinking, a man with a social conscience, who put the welfare of those committed to his care before all other considerations. Early in 1848, the Board of Guardians decided to close the auxiliary fever hospital, which had been opened the previous year in Garrynoe House, where the Hannon family had previously lived, and where the de Barra family now live; but at a meeting of the Board on the 24th February, a letter was read from Dr. O Connell, which stated:

"I beg most respectfully, but fearlessly at the same time, to decline acting on this recommendation till the order sent me from His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, through the central Board of Health, be recalled. And I am quite sure the Board of Guardians will see the necessity for upholding an institution of such unquestionable public utility as the Garrynoe Fever Hospital, when they recollect the rapid accumulation of reasons for maintaining a District Fever Hospital at Kilmallock; the fearfully increasing sickness for the last two years, and the vast influx of wretched beings who flock hither to our workhouse, and come here rather to die than live, and who, whether living or dying, diffuse the seeds of pestilence around them . . ." [6]

Dr. O Connell then went on to refer to those unfortunates, victims of hunger and famine fever, who, in the spring of 1847, being unable to find accommodation in the workhouse at Kilmallock, had gone to the town's ruined Dominican priory, and had there lain down to die, just as other fever victims had done in the same spot exactly 30 years before, as we know from the already-quoted account of J.B. Trotter.

The story of the sick who had sought shelter in the monastery ruins is given in greater detail in a letter dated 30th April, 1847, written by Dr. O Connell, and published in the Limerick Chronicle of Wednesday, May 5th, 1847. The letter was addressed to the Kilmallock Board of Guardians. It said:

"Gentlemen, I beg leave to call your serious attention to the spread of fever in Kilmallock electoral division, with a view to your speedily carrying out the 9th Vict. c. 10. There are at present in the main street of Kilmallock, six poor families in fever; two on Stone Road, and two more in Church Lane, and, dreadful to add, one of these, Mrs. Power, mother of eight in family, is breathing out pesthence of the most contagious kind in her numerous and truly unfortunate family, who cannot separate themselves, or procure admittance into any other house.

I have been attending fever and dysenteric patients since the 13th April, when I made a report to you from the dispensary books of the cases under my care, and I stated for your information, that there were then lying sick in the Abbey cloister, and in want of bedding and nourishment, some unfortunate creatures. I am sorry to again inform you that the numbers have since increased in this abode of misery. Nine poor souls, victims of famine, and its consequences, fever and dysentry, are now located there.

It would bring heart-sickness on an Ethiopian to behold one of those poor souls, the widow Galwey, within the last week, swollen with dropsy herself, sitting on a cold stone over her daughter raging with fever, and endeavouring to soothe her troubled thoughts and quench, with river water, her parched tongue. This poor girl is since removed to a more generous and peaceful world, and her poor aunt, too, who made some struggle to attend on her, died in the undertaking.

The widowed mother is still in the ruins, with the cold wind blowing in on her; and on the night of her daughter's burial the cows of the Abbey farm came in on the helpless creature, and ate the small wisp of straw from under her. The other sick patients there are going on as well as may be expected from their misery and wretchedness, It is indeed a sad sight to look on these poor people, and not have it in one's power to supply their wants.

I hope the Board will now do something decisive on this head, as they have the power by law, and that they will take a hospital, appoint sanitary police for removing them (the patients) thereto, and order the town to be lime washed, and the filth and manure removed from the

dwellings of the poor, otherwise God only knows where the evil will terminate.

MORGAN DAVID O CONNELL, M.D."

In another communication in which he referred to the sick lying in the monastery, Dr. O Connell told the Guardians: "This is peculiarly the poor man's question: you are his guardians. His health is his property — and health gone, house and land, income and credit, tools, furniture, clothing and independence and, too often, honesty, all follow and go with it. The wealthier can always take care of themselves." [7]

The numbers in Kilmallock workhouse continued to grow during 1848 until it was no longer possible to accommodate all those seeking shelter there. And so auxiliary workhouses and fever hospitals were opened in various other centres within the Kilmallock Union area — Bruff, Ballylanders, Galbally and, later, Bruree. And there was, of course, the fever hospital at Garrynoe, a mile from Kilmallock, and another in Treanlewis House. And for a time a store in the main street (now Feore's Drapery) was used as an auxiliary workhouse. With the extra accommodation now available, the total number of destitute poor and sick in the various institutions in the Union district reached 3500 by the end of December 1848; and the number was to continue very high during the early part of 1849.

Some figures set out in tabular form may help illustrate the situation in the Kilmallock Union area; however, so as not to confront the reader with an intimidating array of figures, only returns for twelve weeks are given:

Week Ended	*Admissions*	*Discharges*	*Deaths*	*Total Number in institutions*
19 Aug., 1848	337	146	3	1631
2 Sept., 1848	128	209	2	1557
23 Sept., 1848	89	87	7	1495
7 Oct., 1848	204	60	10	1642
2l Oct., 1848	259	88	11	1904
4 Nov., 1848	362	103	11	2216
18 Nov., 1848	223	89	13	2549
2 Dec., 1848	401	81	14	2965
16 Dec., 1848	456	220	25	3325
30 Dec., 1848	376	216	39	3500
6 Jan., 1849	171	145	50	3476
13 Jan., 1849	208	197	45	3442

The very large number of admissions during December 1848 probably accounts for the correspondingly large number being discharged during

the same period; and the growing number of deaths was probably due more to famine-associated diseases, such as typhus and dropsy, than to actual starvation. But the statistics do not tell the whole story of the Great Famine of the 1840's, of *Aimsir an Drochshaoil*, for many victims, of whom there is no record, died in their mud-walled cabins, or by the ditches or in the fields. Judging from such memories as have come down, the Kilmallock parish area generally did not suffer unduly during the Famine period. But people did not fare so well in other parts of the Kilmallock Union district, as the teeming numbers of destitute who sought food and shelter in the workhouse tragically testify. And remembering them we think of lines by M.J. Mac Manus:

The people came to drink the soup
Ladled from greasy bowls,
They died in whitewashed wards that held
A thousand Irish souls.

The Census returns show a surprisingly high proportion of Irish speakers in the town and liberties of Kilmallock for the years 1851 (23.6%) and 1891 (19.1%) There is little doubt that the great majority of these Irish speakers had come from outlying districts and were to be found in Kilmallock workhouse.

Young Irelanders

Nicholas Gaffney, later to be a prominent Fenian, was born in Kilmallock and baptised in the local church on the 9th March, 1840. In some brief autobiographical notes he left, [8] he tells us that at the age of 12 he was a reader of the Nation newspaper. He also tells us that in the late 1840s the national movement in Kilmallock split into the O Connellites and the Young Irelanders, and that the division was bitter. The Young Irelanders were the stronger group and consisted mostly of labourers and artisans.

In 1848, according to Nicholas, when the railway line (the Dublin-Cork line) was not completed much further than Kilmallock, three men alighted from a train at Kilmallock station about midnight one night and enquired the way to Cahermoyle, where Smith O Brien lived. When they realised how far Cahermoyle was from Kilmallock they asked a man they met on the platform for directions. He accompanied them down the length of the town, as far as the North Bridge, where he pointed out to them the road they should take from there.

Having walked about two miles they saw light in a house at the left hand side of the road. It was the house of Michael Slattery, of

Ballygibba, a farmer. The house, which stood at the left hand side of the road, just beyond where James Lynch and family live, was demolished within the past few years. The travellers knocked at the door, which was opened by Ter Slattery, a brother of Michael's. Ter was a man who took life rather easily, and never worked too hard. The strangers asked for a drink of water. Ter invited them in, blew the fire into life, and got them some hot milk, with something stronger mixed through it.

When the three set out on their journey again, Ter, full of energy and anxious for adventure, said he'd convey them part of the way. When they got as far as Bruree they persuaded him to return home. Nicholas Gaffney says that he often heard Ter Slattery talk about the three men he had accompanied that night. One of them, according to Ter, was Michael Doheny; another was named O Gorman ; but he couldn't remember the name of the third.

The Poet Eoghan Caomhánach

Kilmallock has some links with the last Gaelic poet of East Limerick. Eoghan Caomhánach was born at Hospital, Co. Limerick, on the 11th April, 1784 — when writing in English he rendered his name Eugene O Cavanagh. He was educated in a local hedgeschool, and became a good Irish scholar, poet, translator and scribe. We have already told how he was sent to Fantstown, on a day in 1793, to buy snuff for the famous Gaelic poet Aindrias Mac Crath, "An Mangaire Súgach".[9] Eoghan was of a roving disposition, and taught school in various parts of the country, including Caherelly, in Co. Limerick; Cloneen, near Slievenamon, in Tipperary; Kilmurry Ibrican, in Co. Clare, and Newcastle West. It is not known if he taught school in Kilmallock, but he certainly spent short, or longer periods there from time to time.

He did a certain amount of translations from English into Irish, his best known achievement in this field being a translation of a religious work, *Think Well On 't*, by Dr. Challoner (1691 - 1781). Eoghan called his translation *Deán do Mhachnamh go maith Air*. He also translated a number of Moore's Melodies, and a collection of these was published in a little 32 page volume by M.H. Gill, late in 1848. The author's preface to the collection is dated at Kilmallock, December 16, 1848. Seventeen days later Eoghan Caomhánach was dead in his lodgings in Francis Street, Dublin.

We have two compositions from Eoghan that were inspired by earlier visits to Kilmallock. On a visit there in 1825 he was shown the grave of Aindrias Mac Craith in the local churchyard. Eoghan, who

remembered having seen Aindrias when he, Eoghan, was nine and Aindrias was in his eighties, took a piece of chalk in his hand and wrote on the ancient church wall above the poet's grave these lines:

Sin file gan meang do mheabhraigh eagna is ciall,
Is b'fhorasta ceann is meabhair le tathach is riail;
Bruscar an nGall le fonn do ghearradh go fial,
Is na haingil dá chabhair in am go flaitheas ag triall.

The following literal translation does scant justice to the easy-flowing rythmical and assonantal original —

This was a poet without guile who reflected with wisdom and sense/ And perceptive the head and the mind, sound and principled! The foreign rabble with relish he used cut so frequently! And with the help of the angels in time may he to heaven ascend.

Eoghan was in Kilmallock again in 1828 when he wrote a song *"In praise of Kilmallock Mills, lately styled Creed Hall"*. The remains of these extensive mills, erected in 1807, are inside the high wall at the right hand side of the road, leading from the Quarry Hill/Tipperary road junction, towards Tipperary. Eoghan, whose first language was Irish, sounds rather pedantic in English. His song in praise of the mills has, in true Gaelic hedgeschool master style, several classical allusions. He is lavish in his praise, describing Kilmallock in the first stanza as "the Athens of Europe" — he surely meant "the Athens of Ireland":

My desire to invite my kind muses
To inspire me in this humorous lay,
To write on the pride of all beauties,
Where nature has chosen to play
With art in her wanton amusements
To embellish this curious fine place,
On the ferthe sweet banks of the Lúbach,
The Athens of Europe to grace.

In the second stanza the poet calls Kilmallock by its Latin name, Killocia:

Killocia so known for its splendour,
Beautiful buildings and wall,
More glorious henceforth we'll consider
While oíer it is pending Creed Hall;
Where honour, sweet candour and genius
With clarity lately combined,
To establish a mansion more famous
Than we now of late days can find. [10]

The Papal Brigade

In 1860, as a result of the movement for the unification of Italy and the campaign of Garibaldi, the Papal States were invaded. The invasion, seen in Ireland as an attack on religion itself, drew an immediate response. Meetings in support of the Pope, Pius IX, were held in all parts of the country; large sums of money were subscribed to the Papal cause; and many young men listed in the Irish Papal Brigade, which has been formed in Rome,

Kilmallock supplied its quota of men to the Brigade, these having been recruited by one of the local curates, Fr. Fitzgerald. Many more than actually went from the district were eager to go, but since recruitment was going on all over the country only a small number was taken from each place. [11] This was less likely to attract the attention of the British authorities, who were openly pro-Garibaldi, and would have been opposed to recruitment of Irishmen for a foreign based force, such as the Papal Brigade.

Among the men from the Kilmallock area who joined the Brigade were Michael Heffernan, of Ballycullane, Lieutenant Hayes, of Proonts, and Thomas Smalle, a master cooper. All three served in St. Patrick's Battalion of the Brigade, under Major Myles O Reilly. Michael Heffernan later went to America, and took part in the Fenian raid on Canada.

Landlord Shot: Three Executed

On Friday, 16th May, 1862, a local landlord was shot near Kilmallock. Some nine months previously, Francis Fitzgerald, and his wife, Mary Caroline Fitzgerald, had come to live in Beechlawn Cottage, which is situated just to the left of the Bruff road, at the foot of Kilmallock Hill; the house is now occupied by the Brazill family. The Fitzgeralds had only recently been married, Fitzgerald was a landlord in a small way, owning property in some of the surrounding townlands.

Some short time before the shooting, he had called on one of his tenants, John Carroll, of Mountfox (grandfather of the present John), and Carroll had conveyed him to the road gate. Here Fitzgerald accidentally dropped his walking stick, and Carroll picked it up for him. It was surprisingly heavy, and Carroll remarked on this. Fitzgerald said it was, in fact, a sword stick; that it was a dangerous time for him to be on the road, and that he carried the sword for protection. [12]

A few weeks prior to the 16th May, a man named Denis Dillane, who lived in Mountfox, had received a notice to quit from Fitzgerald, and felt very strongly about it. At about 3 o'clock on the afternoon of the fatal day, Fitzgerald and his wife set out from Beechlawn, and walked about a mile to Kelly's farm, which was situated on the Tankardstown, or Groe, road. There they remained for about a quarter of an hour speaking to members of the Kelly family. On their return journey, when they had reached the townland of Garrynoe, two men jumped out from behind the fence and fired at Fitzgerald, fatally wounding him. [13]

Two local men were subsequently arrested in connection with the killing. They were Thomas Beckham and Denis Dillane. A third man sought by the police, James Walsh, later gave himself up to the police in Elton. Walsh and Beckham were the two who had fired the fatal shots. All three were charged with the murder of Fitzgerald, but their trials took place at different times. A Special Commission, which was instituted to try Beckham, commenced in Limerick on the 16th June, 1862. The *Cork Examiner* described Judge Fitzgerald's address to the Grand Jury on that occasion as an "inflamatory harangue". Beckham was found guilty and was sentenced to death; he was hanged on the 16th July, 1862, on a scaffold erected in front of the County Jail, in Limerick. An estimated 5000 people gathered to witness the execution. [14]

The trial of James Walsh began at the Limerick Assizes on the 31st July, 1862, the trial judge being Judge Keogh. Walsh, too, was sentenced to death, and was hanged on the 1st September. Again, the execution was in public, some 3000 of the morbidly curious gathering to witness it. [15] Walsh's execution aroused much sympathy; he was only 21 1/2 years of age, and it was generally believed that he had been lured into taking part in the killing. To add further to the sadness of the case, the shock of her son's condemnation had proved too much for Walsh's mother, who had become mentally deranged. A street ballad entitled "The Confession of James Walsh" which was composed at the time, was widely sung:

Ye Christians of this nation of every degree,
I hope ye'll pay attention to what I'm going to say;
James Walsh it is my name and in great torment I lie,
For the murder of Fitzgerald l am condemned to die.

On the first day of September I mean to let you hear,
I was placed upon the gallows high which put me in great fear;

I murdered Mr. Fitzgerald, for which I die today,
I was a working farmer so good people for me pray.

I kept company with Beckham, an assassin that's well known,
Who led me to this crime, alas, I now do own;
I got three pounds to shoot the man at Kilmallock on that day
I confess now that I shot him and boldly ran away.

Myself I did surrender at Elton you all know,
To acting Sergeant Deegan which filled my heart with woe;
The wife of Mr. Fitzgerald she knew me in the dock,
And swore I was the guilty man, which gave me a great shock.

Judge Keogh he asked me to divulge and tell the party's name,
I said I got no blood-money and proud was of the same;
I was led into this horrid deed and also Beckham too,
For which I will now confess I have great cause to rue.

My mother is a widow poor and lives in Kilmallock town,
My father is five years dead, he was a working man;
The orphans and my mother had no support but me,
But alas I kept bad company which caused my destiny.

My age was but twenty-two when I did this fatal deed,
With pistols loaded bought for me I made Fitzgerald bleed;
If I attended to my duty and the clergy what they said,
I'd be a free man now and would not be in dread.

I hope my fate a warning will be to young and old,
To shun bad company everywhere, and do what they are told;
Leave the landlords all to God above, to judge them as he please
May he convert them to what's good and lengthen all their days.

(Note: The ballad singer would have pronounced the word "please" as "plaize" so that it would rhyme with "days").

Denis Dillane, the third man arrested in connection with the Fitzgerald murder, was charged at the Spring Assizes in 1863 in Limerick, "that he did maliciously incite, procure, aid and command" Thomas Beckham and James Walsh to murder Francis Fitzgerald. Despite an able defence by his counsel, Dillane was sentenced to death on the 14th

March, 1863, and was hanged on the 13th April, a crowd of some 2000 witnesssing his execution. [16] Much praise was expressed at the time for the great consolation brought to the three doomed men in their final days by the Sisters of Mercy, who visited them frequently.

Celtic Cross in Kilmallock Cemetery.
Marks the grave of the "Unknown Fenian", Patrick Hassett, who died in the attack on Kilmallock Barrack during the Fenian uprising of 1867.

19

The Fenians Attack Kilmallock Police Barracks

The most outstanding event in Kilmallock in the 19th century was undoubtedly the attack by the Fenians on the local police barracks on the morning of the 6th March, 1867. Fenianism in Kilmallock had its origins in a branch of the Brotherhood of St. Patrick which was founded in the town about 1860. Ostensibly, the Brotherhood, an open unsworn organisation, was concerned only with literary and cultural matters, but it was to become one of the chief recruiting grounds for Fenianism in the early days of that organisation.

The secretary of the Kilmallock branch of the Brotherhood was Stephen Barry Walsh. There were about fifty members in the branch; but when it became obvious that the interest of the majority of the members lay not so much in books and literature as in an uprising for Irish freedom, the more timid members resigned. Out of those who remained the Kilmallock Fenian circle was born. The revolutionary tradition in the district was strong — Levellers, Whiteboys, United Irishmen, Young Irelanders.

In November, 1861, when the remains of the Young Ireland leader, Terence Bellew Mac Manus, who had died in America, were being conveyed by rail from Cork to Dublin, it was expected that the train would stop at Kilmallock station. Nicholas Gaffney, and some thirty young men, wearing crepe on their arms, were waiting at the station, and when they heard the train coming, but discovered it was not going to stop, they went on their knees to pray for the soul of the man whose body was now being whisked past them. [1] Thirteen years previously, Mac Manus, a very successful businessman, had been sentenced to death for his part in the 1848 Rising, but had had his sentence commuted to transporation for life in Van Diemen's Land. He had escaped three years later to America, where he had died in poverty. His funeral in Dublin was made the occasion of a great nationalist demonstration.

For the first two years or so the leaders of the Kilmallock Fenians had maintained their circle as a rather select group, confined almost completely to the town, except for a few areas such as Ballycullane and Quarry Hill. After that the circle was gradually widened to embrace areas slightly further afield. Many farmers' sons were recruited, a development that could be attributed to the fact that about twenty farmers' sons from the district were in the drapery trade in Dublin and had become Fenians. They were in the habit of coming home from time to time to help propagate the Fenian cause among the male members of their own families or of neighbouring families. In the meantime ash was being cut and shaped for pike handles by some local carpenters, and one or two local blacksmiths were engaged in making pikeheads. Commercial travellers were going around the country selling revolvers on the sly; but it was not easy for the average Fenian to find the 25 shillings required to buy one. [2]

In his survey of the strength of the Fenian organisation in Ireland, John Devoy, in that part of his survey that deals with Limerick, had this to say: "Except for Kilmallock, the rest of the county was poorly organised". The growth of Fenianism in Kilmallock was due in large measure to the support which the organisation got from William Henry O Sullivan, owner of a hotel, shop and public car establishment in what is now Lord Edward Street. O Sullivan had some 40 men employed, and very many of them were Fenians. As well, his premises became a meeting place for the Fenian leaders. According to the Attorney General, when he was stating the case for the Crown at the Fenian trials, "there was not a greater nest of Fenians in the neighbourhood than that hotel; and . . . there was not a more active person engaged in the movement than the proprietor, William Henry O Sullivan". [4] Condon's public house was another popular Fenian meeting place.

Patrick Walsh, a farmer's son from the Kilmallock district, who was employed as a shop assistant in O Sullivan's, did much useful work in building up the organisation in the town and surrounding countryside. In this he was ably assisted by Daniel Bradley, a native of Kilfinane, who was employed in Grant's drapery. Plans for Kilmallock's part in the projected Rising were drawn up, and an arms depot was established at Dick Walsh's carpenter's workshop in Tankardstown, at the Bruree side of the parish.

It was expected that the Rising would take place in 1865, and the Kilmallock Fenians got orders to be ready. Two weeks before the expected date of the Rising, at least six of the Fenian leaders from Kilmallock, hearing that there was a priest in Milford, Co. Cork, diocese

of Cloyne, who was prepared to give absolution to Fenians (the rescripts against Fenianism were not promulgated in two Irish dioceses, Cloyne and Clonfert) travelled there and had their confessions heard, and received absolution. [5] No Rising was called in 1865, and, as a result, many of the Fenians felt disappointed and disillusioned.

Patrick Walsh, who was described at his trial as a man of superior ability, education and attainments, left Kilmallock at the beginning of 1865, and would appear to have gone to the United States on Fenian business. He re-appeared in Kilmallock at the end of the year with Captain John Dunne, a native of Charlevile, who had fought in the Civil War; both stayed at O Sullivan's Hotel, a fact duly noted by the police. During January and February, 1866, Walsh was very busy swearing in new members. The police continued to keep a close eye on his movements. On the 28th January they noted in their report book that Captain Dunne had returned to O Sullivans, and that he had been visited by Patrick Walsh, Stephen Barry Walsh and William Wall. [6]

William Wall, of Groe (southern, part of Ballygibba), who was a teacher in the workhouse, was reported by the police to the Board of National Education as being a person who was active in the Fenians. The Board, on the 20th February, 1866, ordered that Sir Thomas Larcom be informed that this was a matter for the Kilmallock Board of Guardians, as it was the Guardians who employed the teachers in the workhouse school. [7] Nicholas Gaffney, a fellow-Fenian and comrade, described Wall as "a good and sensible fellow". [8] Wall, aged 22, was arrested on the 24th February, 1866, while playing cards with an old police sergeant. He was held in prison for six months, and was then given the option of expatriating himself. He chose to go to America. As he was leaving Kilmallock railway station, under heavy police escort, on the 29th August, he slipped unobserved into the hands of his sister, Ellen, a poem of farewell he had written. This was the poem:

Farewell to dear old Ireland, for America I am bound,
In this isle for another while no peace for me is found;
And though I must roam from my own dear home, across the stormy sea,
I have hopes in store I'll come back once more and help make Ireland free.

Chorus:

So now with a sigh I must bid you all good-bye and make no more delay,
The ship's sails are spread before the gale, no longer can I stay.

I thought before this in the battlefield for my country I could stand,
But now instead I must earn my bread far away from my own dear land;
And who've I to blame but the man I won't name who would not give us the word,
Our country to free from Saxon tyranny with the rifle, pike and sword.

It makes me so lonesome to think of the past and of my childhood days,
And how at the cross when we came home from Mass we'd meet and join in our play;
But almost every one of those friends are gone and scattered all over the earth;
In grief and woe they were forced to go from the land that gave them birth.

Under the sun there's not another one to equal our own green isle —
Yet what is the reason so many of her sons are living in exile?
I'll tell you the cause, 'tis the Saxon laws that won't give them room to live,
But I hope that day is not far away when this room to us? they must give.

O! Éire, mo chroí must we always be exiles all over the earth,
To return no more to you, a stór, the land that gave us birth?
Oh, no! oh, no! 'tis a burning shame, and this cruel thing shall not be,
For we'll come back in ships with vengeance on our lips from the wilds of 'Americay'.

William Wall never came back. He joined the American Army, and died at a comparatively early age in Dakota.

On the night of February 25th/26th, 1866, O Sullivans was raided by the police, but the wanted men, Dunne and Walsh, had flown. Next morning, Stephen Barry Walsh was arrested and, in due course, lodged in Mountjoy Jail. He, too, was given the option of expatriating himself, and elected to go to the continent. Nicholas Gaffney, who also was to have been arrested, eluded the police, and got to the United States, via Glasgow.

Captain Dunne was eventually captured in his home town of Charleville, and lodged in Cork Jail; but was released on his giving an

undertaking to return to the United States. Patrick Walsh, having succeeded in escaping the clutches of the police, also travelled to the United States, where he and Dunne busied themselves making preparations for the coming fight in Ireland. By the end of 1866 Walsh was back again in Kilmallock, and became closely associated with Richard Bermingham, the Fenian leader in the Tankardstown area.

The Rising was finally fixed for the night of the 5th/6th March, 1867, and a considerable number of Irish-American officers arrived in Ireland to take charge in the different areas. The prospects of success were certainly not now as good as they would have been had there been a Rising in 1865, when Fenianism was a formidable organisation with immense potentialities. But all had changed since then, due to various causes — the activities of spies, the arrest of the leaders at home, the dissensions and divisions among the American Fenians, who had been expected to supply men, arms and money; and, finally, the drafting overseas of those regiments of the British army stationed in Ireland which contained hundreds of men who had taken the Fenian oath.

Captain Dunne returned to Kilmallock to take command in the Kilmallock, Bruff and Charleville areas. His plan of operations for the Fenians under his command was that they were to assemble in bodies in the different districts, massing themselves together by degrees, and so increasing in numbers as they went. They were to take arms by force, supplying themselves with whatever weapons they could procure. They were to disrupt communications by taking possession of the railways, and by pulling up the rails and cutting the telegraph wires. The outlying police barracks at Bruff and Charleville, which would have only small garrisons, were to be surprised and taken, and the policemen's arms seized. [9]

That task accomplished, the Fenians from these and other outlying areas were to march on Kilmallock and link up with the local Fenians, there, after which a combined attack would be made on the Kilmallock police barracks, one of the strongest in the south of Ireland. It was a bold plan, ably drawn up, but when the test came the Fenians were to discover that they had neither the training nor the arms that the carrying out of the plan called for.

Captain Dunne and Daniel Bradley spent the night of Monday, 4th March, at Clerys of Gibbingstown. Next day, Shrove Tuesday, William Henry O Sullivan, and Owen Donegan, one of his car drivers, were arrested and conveyed to Limerick Jail. Donegan was released on the 9th July, on condition that he went to America; O Sullivan was held

in Mountjoy Jail until the 23rd March, 1868. But to return to the attack on the Kilmallock police barrack:

At eight o'clock on the night of the 5th March, some twenty Fenians assembled on Bruree railway bridge. They included Daniel Blake a shoemaker, who was fated to die in the attack. Patrick Ward distributed pikes among them; and then, led by Richard Bermingham and James Lyons, they marched to Tankardstown, to Dick Walsh's workshop, which lay a few hundred yards south of Ballygibba crossroads. Here the Tankardstown Fenians were assembled, and pikes were brought out of the workshop and distributed among them. From Tankardstown the united parties proceeded by a roundabout route towards Kilmallock. Fenians from Bruff and Charlevile were also on the march to Kilmallock. The rendezvous was a large field, known as Gabbett's Field, which was situated near Ash Hill Towers. [10]

While the main body of the Fenians waited in Gabbett's Field, a small group were spending the night in Hawthorne's house, beside the bridge, at the end of Wolfe Tone Street. This was the house in which the Gaelic poet, Aindrias Mac Craith, died in 1795. Now it sheltered the party of Fenians who had been detailed to hold the bridge under Christopher Hawthorne. The bridge covered the approaches from two roads.

There were thirteen constables in the barracks, under Head Constable Richard Adams. At that time the police were a semimilitary force. It seems that the police had some suspicion that an attack might be made that night, for the lights did not go out in the barracks until between 5 and 6 o'clock on the morning of Ash Wednesday, 6th March. By then, presumably, the police had concluded there would be no attack on that occasion.

But the going out of the lights in the barracks was the signal for the Fenians to advance to the attack. Falling in four deep in Gabbett's Field, they marched towards the barracks, which was about a mile distant. At their head were Captain Dunne, Patrick Walsh, Daniel Bradley, Patrick Riordan (the Driver), and William O Sullivan, the eighteen year old son of William Henry O Sullivan, the proprietor of the hotel. Some of the men had firearms, but the majority had only pikes.

The barracks, a strong stone building, stood on its own, a few yards back from the side of the street now called Lord Edward Street. Before it there was a wall about three feet high. Some of the Fenians took up their position on the street side of this wall; others took up positions at the rear of the barracks. Patrick Walsh advanced to the barrack door, poured some paraffin oil on it and attempted to set it alight. Returning to

his comrades he fired the signal shot which set off the Kilmallock barrack attack, an attack that would later be described by the Attorney General as "this outbreak, which was the most obstinately conducted of all these engagements, the most wickedly persevered in and the most seriously planned", [11]— and about which the ballad-maker would sing:

"I was down then in Kilmallock —
'Twas the hottest fight of all —
And you see" — he bared his arm
"There's the mark still of a ball.
I hope the young lads growing now
Will hold the ground we won,
And not disgrace the cause in which
I held that Fenian gun."

Volley after volley was exchanged between the police and their attackers. Before long it became apparent to the latter that if they were to take the barracks they would have to blow a hole in one of the walls of the building or burn down the door. Two quarryrnen named Holmes, employees of William Henry O Sullivan, were brought up and put to work drilling holes in one of the side walls of the barracks, with the object of blowing it up. This attempt was later abandoned, and a barrel of tar and straw was brought from Conba's yard, placed against the barrack door and set on fire, but without the desired effect of setting the door alight. Early in the fight Patrick Walsh received a rather serious wound in the thigh, but he continued at his post after the wound had been dressed by Dr. Clery, who was with the Fenians.

Daylight came, bringing with it for the Fenians the added danger of recognition by the police. But still the fight continued, the desultory fire of the Fenians being answered by the regular military-style volleys of the police. The turning point, however, was soon to come. At 6.30 that morning, Mr. Milling, Sub-Inspector of Police at Kilfinane, had set out by public car for Kilmallock in the company of three policemen. They had almost reached Kilmallock when they heard the sound of gunfire, and, learning what was afoot, they returned to Kilfinane for reinforcements. When Milling started out again for Kilmallock he had ten policemen with him.

A party of Fenians, who had been detailed to occupy a position in the workhouse grounds, which would give them control of the road from Kilfinane, had earlier withdrawn, and by so doing had left their comrades in the positions in front of the barrack exposed to the deadly

cross-fire which Milling and his men suddenly opened on them sometime between 9 and 10 o'clock in the morning. Already, many of the pikemen, all too aware of the inadequacy of their equipment in the kind of fight that had developed, had dumped their weapons and had disappeared in the darkness of the early morning.

But the men who had the guns held their positions and were still fighting. Now, however, under pressure of the cross-fire, those firing from the front of the barracks had to evacuate their position, crawling in single file on hands and knees to a place of comparative safety. They held their new position for a short time, then retreated slowly, the final phase of the battle being fought down the length of Lord Edward Street between some dozen determined Fenian riflemen and 25 well trained policemen. At the cross in the centre of the town, where the Kilfinane-Limerick and the Ráthluirc-Tipperary roads intersect, and where the buildings to some extent gave them shelter, the Fenians made their last stand.

A brief council of war was held. Some were for fighting it out to a finish, but on the advice of Captain Dunne it was agreed that further resistance would be worse than useless. And so the Fenians decided to scatter in various directions. Dunne shook hands with them, bade them farewell, mounted a policeman's horse — taken the previous evening when a police orderly from Bruff had been captured — and rode off towards Charleville. He succeeded in escaping out of the country and getting to the United States. [12]

Three men died in the fight at Kilmallock. Twenty-one year old Daniel Blake from Bruree was one of the fallen. Twenty- five year old Dr. Michael Clery was another. Dr. Clery was a noncombatant, being with the Fenians in a professional capacity. He knew that his sister and his fiancée would be at Mass that morning in Kilmallock, it being Ash Wednesday, and when it neared the time when they were due to return from the church., he set off to warn them not to come up the town as the streets were now being swept by police fire. He had only gone a short distance when he was hit by a police bullet. He died in a few minutes. Two of Dr, Clery's brothers were among the Fenians who made the last stand at Kilmallock.

The third Fenian who died at Kilmallock was not identified, and was afterwards universally referred to as the Unknown Fenian. He is buried in Kilmallock churchyard, where his grave is marked by a Celtic cross, put up by William Henry O Sullivan. Michael Hogan, "the Bard of Thomond", wrote the quatrain which is inscribed on the stone:

Here lies one who loved his country well,

And in her sacred cause untimely fell;
Let every Irish heart who reads this scroll,
Pray God save Ireland and his immortal soul.

Michael Hogan also wrote a fine song about this Unknown Soldier of Irish freedom. It begins:

Who was he at Kilmallock, that brave-hearted stranger,
Who daringly breasted the fire of the foe?
Like a veteran inured to the battle's grim danger
He fought 'till the red hail of death laid him low,
Nameless befell on the frozen sward dying,
No kind hand to soothe him or bear him away;
The dreary March wind his sad litany sighing,
His death-couch and pillow the blood-moistened clay.

No name went on the Unknown Fenian's headstone; but gradually a name began to be whispered in the Kilmallock district. It was that of Patrick Hassett, whose father owned a public house in Bulgaden, a couple of miles east of Kilmallock. Patrick Hassett was missing on Ash Wednesday morning when his sister went to call him; nor had his bed been slept in. Many of the Fenians didn't return to their homes after the Kilmallock fight, but headed for the ports in order to escape out of the country. But Patrick Hassett was never seen again by his family, nor was any word ever heard from him. That his father did not got to the barracks to view the body of the dead man may have due to the fact that he feared his publican's licence would be taken from him, if it transpired that he had a son in the Fenians.

By the afternoon of 6th March almost 100 armed police were busy searching and making arrests in Kilmallock. They made 20 arrests that first day, and among those taken were Patrick Walsh, Daniel Bradley, Patrick Riordan (the Driver) and William O Sullivan, Junior. By nightfall all were lodged in the County Jail in Limerick. But many of the Kilmallock fighters did not wait to be arrested. Some went into hiding; others headed for the ports and succeeded in getting away to America. Fr. Edward Clifford, C.C. of Loughill, and a native of Effin, gave shelter to many of them and helped to get them on board ships at Foynes and elsewhere along the Shannon Estuary.

After a few days escape through the ports became almost an impossibility. On the 12th March the Cork Constitution reported that five young men had been arrested at Queenstown (Cobh) the previous day on a charge of attacking the Kilmallock police station; and it added that since

the Rising constables from Kilmallock had been sent to keep watch at the different sea ports from which vessels sailed for America. The Limerick Chronicle of the 12th March reported the arrest of Michael Stephen Walsh, Kilmallock, for having sold paraffin to the Fenians to burn the police barracks. Thomas Conba and his wife were arrested on a similar charge.

On May 6th, 1867, at the Special Commission set up to try the Kilmallock Fenians, the County Grand Jury — all the Jurors being of the landed gentry class — handed down true bills for High Treason against the following 25 prisoners: Patrick Walsh, Daniel Bradley, Patrick Riordan (the Driver), William O Sullivan, Maurice Fitzgibbon, Denis Hennessy, Christopher Hawthorne, Michael Riordan, Michael Foley, John Sheehan (a militiaman), Michael Noonan, Patrick Ward, Patrick Riordan (the Smith), William Turner, Robert Cantillon, John Mac Carthy, Thomas Ahearn, Patrick Maguire, Patrick Pigott, Thomas Daly, Thomas O Donnell, Patrick Barrett, Thomas Meehan, Denis Connors, John Walsh. The charge of High Treason was later reduced to one of Treason Felony. The judge who tried the Kilmallock Fenians was the notorious Judge Keogh.

For his part in the barrack attack Patrick Walsh was sentenced to 15 years penal servitude; Daniel Bradley to 10 years; Denis Hennessy, Patrick Riordan (the Driver), John Sheehan, each to 7 years; Thomas Daly, Michael Noonan, William O Sullivan, Junior, Maurice Fitzgibbon, each to 5 years. The charge against the remaining prisoners was further reduced to one of Whiteboyism, and they received lesser sentences.

Another Kilmallock man, Colour-Sergeant Charles Mac Carthy, had, while serving in the Fifty-third Foot in the British Army, secretly enlisted in the Fenians, as many other Irish soldiers had done. Mac Carthy was one of a group of soldiers, including John Boyle O Reilly, who were courtmartiailed and sentenced to death in the Royal Barracks, in Dublin, in 1866. The sentences were subsequently commuted to life imprisoment. John O Leary, the Fenian leader, met Mac Carthy in prison, and afterwards described him as “a fine type . . . of the trained soldier and the true Irishman”. [13] William Henry O Sullivan said of him: “. . . he was a townsman of mine and a finer fellow never lived”. [14]

Mac Carthy spent over eleven years in prison, being one of the last three military prisoners held in England to be released. The other two were Thomas Chambers and John O Brien. On their arrival at Dún Laoghaire (then called Kingstown), on January 5th, 1878, the three were met by Parnell, O Connor Power and others, and when they reached

KILMALLOCK FENIANS

(Pictures reproduced courtesy of Marcas de Burca and Walter MacGrath)

Patrick Walsh, sentenced to 15 years penal servitude.

Daniel Bradley, sentenced to 10 years penal servitude.

William 0 Sullivan, Junior sentenced to 5 years penal servitude.

Colour-Sergeant, Charles Mac Carthy, sentenced to death; sentence commuted to life imprisonment.

Kilmallock police barracks after Fenian attack, 6th March 1867.
-- Illustrated London News.

Inquest on Dr. Michael Clery, Fenian, killed in the attack on Kilmallock police barracks. -- Illustrated London News.

Westland Row railway station they received a great ovation. Parnell invited them to breakfast at Morrison's Hotel, where a tragic scene occurred. As Sergeant Mac Carthy, who had suffered much in prison, entered the dining room, he was seen to grow faint and stagger. He was immediately helped to a sofa, where, in a few moments, he died. [15] He was buried in Glasnevin. Now amost completely forgotten in his native town, Sergeant Mac Carthy deserves to be remembered as one of Kilmallock's Fenian dead..

Daniel Bradley, Patrick Riordan (the Smith) and Michael Noonan evidently availed themselves of an offer later made to certain of the Fenian prisoners, permitting them to go to Australia. The remaining prisoners, apart from Sergeant Mac Carthy, were released at the general amnesty in 1871, but were forbidden to return to Ireland for the period of the sentence that remained unexpired. Despite this ban, Patrick Walsh, whose health had been seriously impaired by the rigours of prison life, returned to Ireland in 1875, but was arrested in April of that year, and sentenced to six years imprisonment, the unexpired portion of his original sentence. Daniel Bradley died while a ticket-of-leave man, and his bones lie in far away Freemantle in Australia.

When Patrick Riordan (the Driver) returned home in 1870, he was completely broken in health, due to the harsh prison conditions he had to endure, and he died shortly afterwards. The Limerick Chronicle of the 24th May, 1870, carried the following news item: "A Fenian demonstration took place in Kilmallock on Sunday, on the occasion of the death of an amnestied Fenian named Riordan. About 100 young men walked in military order wearing crepes trimmed with green ribbons". The embers of Fenianism were still smouldering in the town and district, and would continue to smoulder. A monument erected over Riordan's grave in Kilmallock churchyard was unveiled in 1911 by Seán Mac Diarmada, one of a new generation, who, in the words of Pearse, had been "re-baptised in the Fenian faith", and who would die for that faith before an English firing squad five years later.

The story of what the Fenian prisoners suffered in English jails will never be known in full. They would seem to have been singled out for specially harsh treatment by many of the prison officers. Three of the Kilmallock prisoners, Daniel Bradley, Patrick Riordan and William O'Sullivan, Junior — as is mentioned on the Celtic cross near John's Castle — died early in life as a result of the great hardships they had endured in prison.

Of the scores of Fenians who participated in the Kilmallock

barrack attack we know the names of only a handful, apart from those who were tried and sentenced. Batt Raleigh was official dispatch carrier to Captain Dunne, the Fenian leader, and was very active before and during the attack. In the weeks leading up to the Rising he spent many weary hours on foot and on horseback travelling around the district making the necessary contacts. Batt's brother, Edward Raleigh, also a Fenian, was a grandfather of Seán Moylan, who was born in Kilmallock, and later won fame as an IRA leader in North Cork during the War of Independence. Both the Raleigh brothers were shoemakers, and were employed in Kilmallock workhouse.

Batt got a chance of escaping to America after the Rising, but chose to remain in Ireland. He stayed in hiding for a short time in Tankardstown, then went on to the historic Glen of Aherlow. When conditions allowed, he returned and went back to his old employment, and lived to see the Kilmallock police station attacked and burned by the IRA in 1920. Batt and Edward Raleigh are buried in Ballingaddy churchyard.

Among others mentioned during the trials as having been present at the Fenian attack on the Kilmallock barrack were: "a son of Paddy Peter Clery's" who "wore a Glengarry cap with ribbons and had a gun"; "a son of Mark Clery of Gibbingstown"; "Paul Slattery's youngest son"; "a son of Jack Kennedy's"; David Treacy's youngest son"; and John Clery, Cornelius Murphy, Patrick Barrett, James Leahy, John Cashel, James Lyons and Richard Bermingham. The "son of Jack Kennedy's" was, very likely, that P.N. Kennedy who wrote a fine account of the attack for the *Gaelic American* in 1906, an account that was subsequently reprinted in full by John Devoy in his Recollections (pp. 224 - 227). The men arrested in Kilmallock after the Rising, apart from those already mentioned, included: John Osborne, John Maguire, James Joyce, Daniel Lynch, John Cummins, Thomas MacDonnell, Simon Daly, John Nixon James Wall, Daniel Murphy, John Mac Ginn, James Healy, George Ryan.

And here, I would like to introduce a personal note, for I, as a child, saw still another of the Kilmallock Fenians who was "out" in '67. He was Michael Wall of Ballygibba, brother of William Wall, leader of the Kilmallock Fenians until his arrest in 1866. At the time I remember seeing him, Michael Wall was a very old man, who walked with the aid of crutches, and resided with a nephew, Michael O Rourke, at Ballynaught, on the Bruree-Kilmallock road.

The last event of the Fenian Rising was the fight at Kilclooney Wood on 31st March, 1867, in which Peter O Neill Crowley died. A

contingent from Kilmallock was among the huge throng that attended Crowley's funeral. They went there on one of William Henry O Sullivan's long cars, one which bore the name *The Fair Trader* another of his cars was called the *Erin*. A ballad-maker later celebrated the journey to the funeral:

O Sullivan's car from Kilmallock
Went there in the grandest of style,
And the crowd that was on the Fair Trader,
Oh, sure it would cause you to smile.
His son gave five years in prison,
Although he was childlike and young;
His name was given down as a Fenian
For fighting 'longside Captain Dunne.

Fenian Monument at Sarsfield Street, Kilmallock.

20

The Land League Period

William Henry O Sullivan

The name William Henry O Sullivan, or W.H. O Sullivan, was to become very much part of the political and economic history of Kilmallock in the decades following the Fenian Rising. In 1871, O Sullivan established a mineral water factory that, for a century, was to manufacture the famous "Abbey Brand" lemonade, widely regarded as the finest lemonade made in Ireland.

A man of fine physique, 6 feet 4 ins, in height. O Sullivan was elected a Member of Parliament for Co. Limerick in 1874. He was re-elected in 1880, and held office until 1885. A collection of speeches he gave in various places was published privately in booklet form. Many of his early speeches were delivered at meetings held in support of the call for an amnesty for the Fenian prisoners. Speaking at a Limerick city meeting early in 1872, he said:

"Men of Limerick, it is now over four years since you assembled in your thousands to ask the Government of England to release Irish political prisoners. Today, you assemble again for the same purpose. Since the first great meeting, all the leaders, and many of the minor portion of the prisoners were released; but England still holds about forty of our men imprisoned for the same breach of their laws — on the pretence that they are not political but military prisoners".

He returned to this theme in a speech he gave at a public banquet in Limerick, on St. Patrick's Night, 1872. This time he struck a local note in his reference to Sergeant Mac Carthy. "There are few matters", he declared, "which stir the hearts of our countrymen at home and abroad more than the tortures endured by our imprisoned patriots, for they were men who loved their country more than their lives. Is it to be wondered at, that we should feel for their sufferings? No, but the wonder would be if we did not feel for them. I know one of these men, Colour-Sergeant

Mac Carthy; he was a townsman of mine, and a finer fellow never lived".

He made a speech in 1873 in defence of the Kilmallock Board of Guardians against criticisms of the Board made by C.J. Coote, J.P., who had made several charges against the Guardians, including the wastage of public money and dereliction of duty. Referring to Coote, he said: "He walked into the (Board) room for the first time in his life (he was an ex-officio member of the Guardians), when, I believe, not half a dozen in the room knew him, and his first act was to nominate a chairman over the heads of those who were acting here for twenty years; but I am proud to say there was manhood enough in the room to reject him and his nominee . . . we did not see him for about six months more, when there was another election for the chairs of the Board".

O Sullivan was Vice-chairman of the Board of Guardians when he made these remarks.

On January 1st, 1874, on the eve of the Parliamentary Elections, he issued an Address to the Electors of Co. Limerick in which he clearly set out the things he stood for. He told his electors:

"Should you send me to Parliament, I will be unremitting in my endeavours to aid Butt, Martin Ronayne and their faithful colleagues of the Home Rule Party in hastening the day when that Parliament shall no longer misrule our unfortunate country...

I yield to no man in my desire to sustain and uphold the principle of Denominational Education, endangered by the proposed action of the supporters of the Government, and I will use my utmost endeavours to resist any attempt to infidelise the rising generation by a system of irreligious education.

With regard to the Land Question, I consider that no measure will be regarded as a final settlement by the Irish tenant farmers which does not adopt fixity of tenure at valued rents, and the other principles laid down at the Tenant Conference in Dublin last February, which I attended as one of your delegates..

The miserable condition of our labouring classes is, admittedly, a disgrace to a civilised country; they are all but houseless and homeless, and the amelioration of their wretched condition shall have my unceasing and hearty support". [1]

In his Address, O Sullivan also said he would never cease in his efforts to procure the release of the remaining Fenian prisoners.

Not only Kilmallock, but all of Limerick, and the whole of nationalist Ireland, rejoiced when William H. O Sullivan was elected Member of Parliament. The *Nation* of the 3rd January, 1874, said: "Limerick has chosen its candidate, and a shout of approval leaping up

from the lips of every true lover of Ireland will celebrate the mention of his name. A wiser choice, a more judicious selection, was never announced by an Irish journalist, or brought honour to an Irish constituency. It is all we could have wished, it is more than we ventured to hope for . . . Ireland will bless the day when the good men of Limerick, flinging to the winds the last rags of territorial ascendancy and aristocratic domination, marked out as the member for their county that incorruptible representative of Irish patriotism, William H. O Sullivan of Kilmallock."

The *Weekly News* of the 3rd January hailed O Sullivan's election in these words:

"He represented the political prisoners. He himself had been a political prisoner, who was detained by the arbitrary power of England, though they were unable to bring forward the slightest charge against him. His son had been one too. He had suffered more for his opinions in a commercial and financial way than any other man they could put their hand on. He was a man that scorned to crouch when he was in prison. He did not beg his release although his commercial interest was at stake."

Similar tributes to the new Member of Parliament were paid by various other publications, including the *Flag of Ireland*, the *Tipperary Advocate*, the *Cork Daily Herald* and the *Irishman*.

In the early 1870s, it was decided to build a new Catholic church in Kilmallock, and the local clergy must have been very pleased when, in 1875, K.B. Brazier, a Protestant, of Ballyellis, Mallow, gave a free site for the church. Mr. Brazier was the owner of much property in the town and its immediate vicinity, and in appreciation of his generosity, a banquet was given to him. William H. O Sullivan spoke at the banquet. He referred to the great improvements he had seen take place in Kilmallock since he was a boy; the town, he said, was now "advancing in wealth, comfort and happiness". He was satisfied that Mr. Brazier would give such security to his tenants as would enable them to further improve it.

He reminded his listeners that Mr. Brazier's father had already given a site for a school, with a lease to run forever — this was the school in Wolfe Tone Street, which was built in 1864. He went on: "When he saw that our present chapel was built in a hole (this was the church near the river, between John's Castle and the ruined monastery), as if to remind us of the dark days when both priests and people had to retire to secluded spots to offer up their prayers in secret . . . he said to our worthy parish priest, 'as soon as the only land I have adjoining this parish comes into my hands, I will give you a place for a church'".

But Mr. Brazier, said the speaker, had died before the land came into his hands. His son, however, the gentleman they were honouring, said he would give the people of Kilmallock sufficient land on which to build not only a church, but a parochial house and convent as well. But the tenant of the land would not give up possession. The present, site was not as good as the one that it was originally intended to give, but "it is better than the hole we have at present". [2]

The foundation stone of the new church was laid on the 6th July, 1879, by Dr. George Butler, Bishop of Limerick. The sermon was preached by Dr. Fitzgerald, Bishop of Ross, and amongst those who assisted at the ceremonies was Dr. Hogan, Bishop of St. Joseph's Missouri. The stone to build the church was supplied free by William H. O Sullivan, from his quarry at Quarry Hill.

The Land League In Kilmallock

At the very end of 1876, a fiery young priest, Fr. Eugene Sheehy, a native of Broadford, Co. Limerick, had come to Kilmallock as a curate. Within half a dozen years the name of this young priest would be a household word in Ireland; and the bearer of the name would be known far and wide as an implacable enemy of landlordism and a fearless champion of the Land League. But the Land League had not yet been founded in 1876; nor yet in 1877, when, on Monday, 17th September of that year, Charles Steward Parnell, came to. Kilmallock, on the invitation of William H. O Sullivan, M.P. It was a beautiful day, and had all the appearance of a holiday, with crowds of people from the surrounding area thronging the streets of the town. Nearly every house was decorated with laurels and evergreens, and triumphal arches spanned the streets. Just at the entrance to the town, from the railway side, there was a triumphal arch bearing the words Céad Míle Fáilte. [3]

With Parnell and his party when they alighted at the railway station was William H. O Sullivan, who had travelled to Limerick Junction earlier that morning, so that he could join the train there and be with Parnell and his friends when they arrived in Kilmallock. Waiting to formally welcome the visitors at the station was a reception party consisting of: P.D. Clery, H.J. Gilberson, James W. Joyce, Michael L. Walsh, Michael Gubbins, George D. Cahill. Dr. Michael Sheehy and William O Sullivan, Junior. The visitors and the members of the reception party took their places in the vehicles provided; and then, with bands from Kilmallock, Kilfinane and Charleville at its head, a very long procession of people and vehicles set off towards the town. Having paraded through the town, the procession drew up in Sarsfield Street, where addresses

were delivered. [4]

Parnell, who was wildly and enthusiastically received, referred to the obstructionist policy then being conducted by the Irish members in the English House of Commons. Standing here, he declared, amidst the monuments that mark the ancient struggle between the Irish and the English, we inaugurate a fresh struggle between Ireland and England. . . It is not to conciliate, it is not to beg, it is not to pray from England, that we are Irishmen and Irish representatives. No, our duty is to demand, and if we can't get all we ask by demanding it, then it is our duty to show them they must give it . . .

Among other speakers at the meeting were William H. O Sullivan and Fr. Eugene Sheehy.

Bad weather had led to bad harvests in 1877 and 1878, and to a disastrous harvest in 1879. The value of crops produced fell catastrophically. As a result, tenants were unable to pay their rents. The landlords responded with wholesale evictions. The appalling plight of the huge numbers of people thus thrown out on the roadsides was a terrible indictment of the system of landlordism as it operated in Ireland. In Co. Mayo, Michael Davitt, himself the son of an evicted tenant, decided the time had come to make a stand against that system, and he began to organise and rally the people to take action in their own defence. He invited Parnell to Mayo to share a platform with him at a meeting he, Davitt, had called to explain his ideas to the people. Parnell was tremendously impressed by what he saw and heard in Mayo, and out of his meeting with Davitt came the Irish National Land League, which was founded in Dublin in October, 1879.

Fr. Sheehy, a man of very strong nationalist views, was present at the inaugural meeting of the Land League and was elected on the National Committee. During the course of the meeting he seconded a motion which had been proposed by Parnell; and later he himself proposed a motion that Parnell should visit America to seek support for the objects of the League among the Irish exiles there. This motion was seconded by Michael Davitt. [6]

With Fr. Sheehy stationed in Kilmallock, the formation of a branch of the Land League in the town in March 1880 comes as no surprise. He was elected president of the branch. It was easy to get the local tenant farmers to join the League, for anything that held out a hope of improving the system under which they held their lands, some of them being mere tenants-at-will, was bound to prove attractive to them. And now as the people combined to fight landlordism as it operated in Ireland, new slogans gained immediate and wide currency: "The Land for the

People"; "Fair Rent, Fixity of Tenure, Freedom of Sale"; "Keep a firm grip on your Holdings". But opposition to landlordism was not something completely new to Kilmallock. As early as 1850, Callaghan T. Mac Carthy, of Farranda (the western part of Glenfield), became widely known as one of the strongest opponents of landlordism in the country. And William H. O Sullivan had carried the fight against the system to the House of Commons in England.

In the Kilmallock area seizures of cattle for non-payment of rents were more common than evictions. The Kilmallock branch of the Land League kept a close eye on all that was happening in the neighbourhood, and during 1880 set up a "court" which sat weekly. The court decided what action tenants should take with regard to demands for rents; whether to pay, or not to pay until satisfactory reductions had been given. [7] The matter of persons taking farms from which former tenants had been evicted was also dealt with by the court, the usual action in such cases being to give the person who had taken the farm a week to vacate it. [8]

The Land League court, which, of course had no legal standing, exercised very considerable control in the district, and the majority of people abided by its decisions; most of them willingly, but some only because they feared what the consequences of their not doing so might be. It is interesting to find the local Protestant clergyman, the Rev J. Gabbett, accepting, through his agent, conditions laid down by the court on the 27th November, 1880, as to the rents he was to charge his tenants. [9]

On the 21st November, 1880, a tenant, evicted from his farm by C.J. Coote, was reinstated by a party of armed men. [10] Similar action was taken in the case of another evicted tenant in March, 1881. [11] On the 20th December, 1880, a man was brought before the court and charged with Land Grabbing [12] (taking the farm of an evicted tenant). Land grabbing was looked upon as a heinous crime by the people. The police were regarded as the willing agents of a government that supported the landlords, and so feelings against them ran high. They were refused supplies in the shops, and nobody would hire cars to them.

Fanny Parnell, sister of Charles Stewart Parnell, was accorded a royal welcome when she visited Kilmallock on Friday, 25th March, 1881. As on the occasion of her famous brother's visit some 3 1/2 years before, the streets were decorated with green arches, and many of the houses were decorated with laurels and green flags. [13]

Miss Parnell addressed two meetings, at Kilmallock. The first, confined to ladies, was held at the Ball Court, in Chapel Height, and the

attendance was estimated to be about a thousand. A number of Addresses from local branches of the Ladies Land League were presented to Miss Parnell. Miss Carmody read an Address from the Athlacca branch; Miss Wilconson, one from the Galbally and Aherlow branch; and Miss Moroney one from the Herbertstown branch. Miss Gilberson of Kilmallock also read an Address, but this was not from the Ladies Land League, as the Kilmallock branch of the organisation had not yet been formed. [14]

The second meeting, which was largely composed of men, was addressed by Miss Parnell from a platform erected outside the Land League rooms. The attendance at this second meeting was put at ten thousand. [15]

The Kilmallock branch of the Ladies Land League was formed in April, 1881, as a result undoubtedly of Fanny Parnell's visit the previous month. When he was introducing Miss Parnell on that occasion, Fr. Sheehy called for the establishment of a branch of the organisation in the town. [16] When the branch was formed Jane E. Walsh was elected president; other members included E. Quigley, E. O Donnell, H. Gilberson, A. Nunan, M. Begley, M. Norris, N. O Donnell and M O Grady.

The authorities were very concerned about the influence being exerted by the Land League in Kilmallock, and a special Resident Magistrate, an Englishman named Clifford Lloyd, was dispatched to the town. He arrived there on the 12th May, 1881. By then, according to Lloyd's account, the authority of the Crown had been completely displaced, while that of the Land League was established. "Fr. Sheehy and his committee had usurped all power and authority". [17]

Clifford Lloyd had charge of a large district embracing Kilmallock, Kilfinane and Charleville, and had at his disposal 110 police and 160 troops, the latter stationed in Kilfinane and Charleville. He found that in Kilmallock the police were literally boycotted; nobody would have any dealings with them, nor would anybody in the town let them have a car on hire for the performance of their duties. [18] Former Fenians, said Lloyd, were strong in the Land League committees — "One member of the Kilmallock branch had received a gunshot wound during the armed attack upon the barracks in 1867; and others had taken a more or less active part in the abortive Fenian Rising of that year." [19] Fr. Sheehy he was to describe a short time later as "most violent and disloyal and a notorious Fenian". [20]

On the night of the 16th May, a crowd of between 300 and 400 people, headed by a brass band, paraded down the street and halted

opposite the barrack. Lloyd tells us that; "The band was playing 'Donald Aboo', ("O Donnell Abú"), a well known rebel tune". The crowd then yelled shouts at the police, and hurled stones on to the roof of the barrack, and against the iron shutters of the building. [21] Clifford Lloyd decided to arrest all the members of the committee of the Kilmallock Land League branch. He travelled to Dublin on May 19th and obtained warrants for their arrest, after which he sent coded messages to the military detachments in Kilfinane and Charleville to be in Kilmallock the next morning by 5 o'clock. The military flying column at Limerick was also put at his disposal.. He returned from Dublin on the evening train, bringing with him fifty extra police from the depot, and arrived in Kilmallock at about 1a.m [22]

The arrest of the committee members began shortly after 4a.m. on the 20th May. The police knocked at the door of Fr. Sheehy's house at about 5.30; but it was an hour before the knock was answered, and Fr. Sheehy himself did not appear until about 7a.m. Describing what happened after that Clifford Lloyd says:

"I naturally felt some anxiety at the delay, as everyone in the town was up and about, the street leading towards the barrack and railway station being already thronged with an excited crowd of people. Father Sheehy . . . was a great favourite with the lower classes, to whom, I believe, he was kind and sympathetic . . . When arrested he was allowed, in consideration for his feelings, to walk to the barracks, with the Rev. Father Downes, his parish priest, who bravely refused to desert him in his trouble . . . I shall never forget the scene as he proceeded up the street. The people fell upon their knees as he passed, and seized his hands and the skirts of his clothes, while begging his blessing before he left them. Shouts of defiance and loud awful curses greeted my appearance, as I walked towards the barracks through the people . . ." [23]

The committee members who were arrested with Fr. Sheehy, or subsequently, were: Stephen Barry Walsh, merchant, Kilmallock; Henry J. Gilberson, auctioneer and emigration agent, Kilmallock; John Slattery, farmer, Ballinstona; Michael Mac Carthy, farmer, Glenfield; Thomas O Donnell, Bulgaden, James W. Joyce, contractor and coach builder, Kilmallock. All those arrested on the 20th May were interned in Naas Jail; but Fr. Sheehy was transferred shortly afterwards to Kilmainham Jail, where he joined Parnell, Davitt, Dillon and other "Suspects".

James W. Joyce, the secretary of the branch, was not arrested until the 9th June, as we learn from the diary he kept during his internment in Limerick Jail. [24] The relevant entry states: "June 9th, 1881.

Arrested, and lodged at 4p.m. in County Jail (Limerick). I suit, wearing, and frieze top coat." The diary was faithfully kept day by day, for each of the 111 days Joyce remained in prison; and in it he recorded the names of all the people who sent him letters, and the names of all the people who visited him. He had many priests among his visitors. In all, he wrote 220 letters, received 216 letters, and had 155 visits.

He wrote almost daily to his wife. Most of the letters to his wife were concerned with his very successful business of contractor and coach builder. From the prison he was also directing the building of a teacher's residence in Athlacca, and the supply of wooden pumps for the provision of public water supplies in the Kilmallock Union district. Nicholas Gaffney, former Fenian, and a plasterer by trade, seemed to be his right-hand man in his business affairs, and was often in consulation with him, either through correspondence or visits.

The interned Land Leaguers had the option of arranging for food of their choice to be supplied to them by outside contractors — this, it would seem, being arranged for by Land League headquarters — or of accepting the ordinary prison fare. Joyce apparently built up a good relationship with the prison Governor, who lent him books, and listened to his suggestions about providing a shelter for bad weather in the exercise yard, and improving the sanitary facilities. This relationship did not however keep the Governor from refusing, on a couple of occasions, in his capacity as prison censor, to permit certain letters written by Joyce to be put in the post for delivery.

The following are some extracts from Joyce's diary:

"Thursday, June 16th, 1881: I got the following books from home — *Visit to the Blessed Sacrament, Crown of St. Jospeh, Imitation of Christ, Science Primer's Geology and Physics, Galbraith's Mechanics, Galbraith's Optics and Trigonometry, Wiseman's Science and Religion*. From Fr. O Shea: *Our Father*."

"Monday, June 20th: Fr. Quaid brought the plans and specifications of Teacher's Residence in Athlacca. I signed two bonds for Union pumps in the presence of the Governor."

"Thursday, June, 23rd: I was visited by the representatives of the Ladies Land League, Dublin, Miss Quirke and Miss Cantwell, relative to catering etc. I gave my own opinion after 14 days experience, and recommended one contractor, and that he, or she, should buy bacon at James O Meara's, do away with soup and pudding, and supply plain dinner. Committee of four prisoners, 'Suspects', to order through Ladies Land League any articles that may be required hence forward".

"Thursday, June 30th: Breakfast: — tea, bread and butter, so wretched some of the men did not touch it. I was appointed at 12.30 to see the dinner before being served; if not approved, I was to report same, and have it returned, and order dinners with tea at 6p.m. from Miss Slattery."

Sunday, July 3rd: From home, *Deirdre* (a long poetic work by RD. Joyce, published 1877), and Prayer Book: from Ladies Land League, Dublin, 2 Vol. *History of Ireland*."

"Saturday, July 16th: I had a visit from Ed, Condon, P. Brazil, and R. O Donnell, who brought me some flowers, fruit, two pairs stockings; also some oranges."

"Tuesday, July 26th: At 2.30p.m. I had a visit from Mrs. Margaret O Donnell (Peggy Shawn Oge). She gave me a pot of strawberry jam and some half pound of cheese. I got a lot of news from her."

"Tuesday, August 9th: Aniversary of my father's death. May the Lord have mercy on him. Amen."

"Monday, September 12th: I wrote to . . . *Freeman's Journal*, Dublin, to insert correction in their Limerick Correspondent's report 'Release of Suspects'. I never wrote to have my case considered, nor did anyone on my behalf."

"Sunday, September 18th: The Feast of the Dolours of the Blessed Virgin Mary. I assisted at Holy Mass; Father Mac Namara celebrant, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday coming week, fast days. This day was fine. Base dinner today. I only used potatoes and beer."

"Wednesday, 28th July. Released about 12 noon".

James W. Joyce continued his diary after his release, and a few extracts from that section may be of interest, since the period they cover saw the banning of the Land League (20th October, 1881), and a number of events that led to Joyce's second arrest.

"Saturday, October 15th, 1881: The Charleville meeting (Land League) prohibited by proclamation".

"Monday, 17th October: James Mac Grath arrested for posting bills of Charleville meeting at 9.30p.m., and kept in police barrack all night. I told police it was I who gave the bills and was responsible. I went to Jeremiah Neville's wake for a short time."

"Tuesday, October 18th: I was told by Head Constable that Jim Mac Grath would be taken to Kilfinane before Clifford Lloyd. I went with W. Smith to see if bail would be taken. After waiting a couple of hours, the R.M. (Lloyd) went on towards Kilmallock. I followed, having got seat from Dr. Coll. I arrived there about 2.30p.m. and was arrested under

warrant charging me with Treason Felony. I was brought before Clifford Lloyd and remanded to Limerick Jail for one week. All my papers, keys, knife, etc., taken from me. I was kept in police barracks all night".

"Friday, November 25th: William Townsend (he was agent for a number of landlords) passed me at Mulqueen's Cross and asked if I would repair the pump at Kilfinane police barrack. I said I would not. He then drove on".

In order to pick up the continuous thread of our story, it is necessary at this point to go back some two months to the 29th September, 1881, when Fr. Sheehy was released from prison. He had spent 130 days in prison, and his return to Kilmallock on the 30th September was made the occasion for a huge demonstration, with Addresses of Welcome being presented to him by various groups and organisations, including the local Land League branch and the Kilmallock Board of Guardians.

Replying, Fr. Sheehy, having expressed his thanks for the Addresses of Welcome, delivered what would today probably be considered a violent speech, in which he denounced landlordism and all its works and pomps, and fiercely attacked the police and Clifford Lloyd, the latter now stationed in Kilfinane. He opened on a tender note, saying:

"I am not quite as strong physically as I used to be when I had the happiness of addressing you both from the platform and from the pulpit some months ago. But while I confess diminution of my physical strength, I am sure it will be a pleasure for you to learn from me at the same time that there is no diminution of any feeling of my heart, or of any faculty of my mind. Those feelings are just what they were five months ago. No change whatsoever for the better, I fear. No change for the worse, I hope. I am then, taking me all round, pretty much the same as when I was separated away from you on the 20th May last . . . I have a wealth of feeling towards you which no amount of words, no matter how tender or how strong, would be adequate to express. I feel that this Kilmallock and my humble name are identified in the national mind by associations so tender, and by ties so strong, that no matter what the separation may be, no matter how great the distance no matter how long the time, I am now and always will be 'Fr. Sheehy of Kilmallock' ." [25]

Fr. Sheehy, whose speech was punctuated with wildly enthusiastic cheers and handclaps from his audience, then began a blistering attack on his opponents.

"Now," he declared, "my first and highest duty, and I feel that

here I am now about discharging a duty to myself in the first place, as a priest well known to you, to protest indignantly against this outrage perpetrated in the name of the law — accursed by such laws! I say; in the name of order, which was here bouleversed by a man who pretended that he symbolised order; in the name of a thing called justice. I protest. against my forcible removal from my duties here. I protest indignantly, and I declare most defiantly in my challenge to them, now that I am released, to declare the reason, the real reason, of my arrest.

As one whose sacred ministry requires that I should preach the divine and the moral law, I protest indignantly against the thought or suspicion that I have violated any just law in the whole course of my public ministry. I set myself in opposition to the thing called law, realising the character and the attributes with which I clothe God's rule upon earth. God is law; and everything, as it diverges from our ideas of the divine attributes of justice, of mercy and goodness, departs from the type, becomes a mockery, and, as in our case here, a tyranny. English law does not reflect the moral law: that, as I understand it, reflects the guidance of this world and its government under Divine Providence. The English providence and the Divine Providence are antitheses the one of the other." [26]

Fr. Sheehy's well known powers of oratory were utilized to the full as he continued his attack, declaring:

"Law, then, as it was enacted in Ireland, as it was trampled on in Kilmallock, as it was outraged in the person of Clifford Lloyd, as it was scandalised by drunken peelers, as it was trampled on by those battalioned blackguards that were brought here in the name of civilisation to protect the lives and liberties of the Irish people — I protest against this foul travesty and treachery perpetrated upon that divine manifestation of God's will to this world — namely, the guiding, governing, salutary, merciful, fostering thing called law.

I was arrested in the name of justice. I protest against this, the travesty of justice, as it was enacted here five months ago, in my own arrest in the first place, and in the arrest of my friends, your fathers and brothers, your friends and neighbours, whom you have known from your cradles, and always respected as the most righteous of your citizens. I protest against their and my incarceration, because, forsooth, the world was made to believe through the medium of falsehood, concocted and perfected as the Royal Irish Constabulary know how to concoct falsehood. I protest, I repeat, against my arrest, because, forsooth, the statement was made that order was impossible as long as Fr. Sheehy,

Stephen Barry Walsh, Henry J. Gilberson, John Slattery, Michael Mac Carthy, Thomas O Donnell, and last, but not least, James W. Joyce, were at large". [27]

Referring to their opponents, who believed that the Land League campaign would fizzle out, "if they only gave us a dose of prison life", he said:

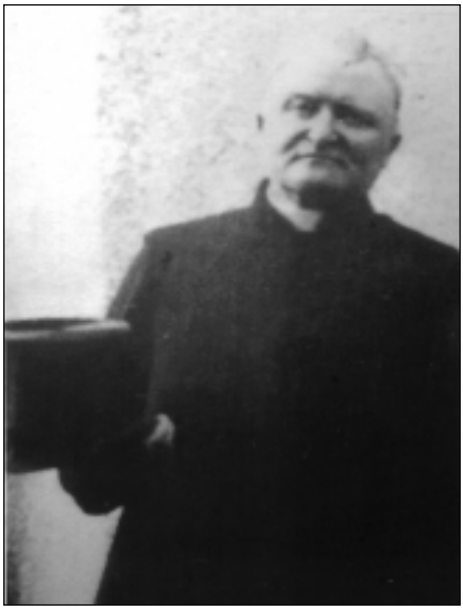
"We came out as we went in, their foes, as we are the foes of crime. We came out as we went in, making no truce whatever with a man who is ready when it is favourable to his projects, to cut your throat. You can't have truce or terms with them, because they represent the landlords, and you cannot have a truce or terms with that robber class." [28]

For Fr. Sheehy — as for William H. O Sullivan — the slogan "The Land for the People" had a somewhat different meaning from what it had for many of the tenant farmers and supporters of the Land League. In his Kilmallock speech he declared: "Our platform is now about to be widened, and every agricultural labourer in Ireland must come upon it. The land shall be for the people, not for any class of the people. The Land Act (of 1881) has disappointed the farmers, and it has left the labourers utterly out in the cold". [29]

Before going on to give a brief account of the subsequent career of Fr. Sheehy, a few happenings, some prior to, some subsequent to, his release should be mentioned. On the 26th May, 1881, William H. O Sullivan protested in the House of Commons at Fr. Sheehy's arrest; in the same assembly, on the 29th June, he condemned a number of evictions that had been carried out in the Kilmallock area; and on the 20th July, again in the House, he strongly attacked the policy of Clifford Lloyd.

On the 4th November that year, O Sullivan's eldest son, William, died at the age of 31. A little over 15 years before he had taken a prominent part in the Fenian attack on the police barrack in Kilmallock, for which he had been sentenced to five years imprisonment. The harsh conditions he had to endure in Portland Prison seriously undermined his health. An immense concourse of people followed his funeral to Kilmallock churchyard on Sunday the 6th November.

A Land Commission court sat in Kilmallock between 24th and 29th December, 1881. A great number of tenants from the Kilmallock Union area applied for fair rents to be fixed on their holdings, the majority being tenants on the Gascoigne estate (the Gascoigne in question was descended from an Oliver who had changed his name to Oliver



Fr, Eugene Sheehy, "the Land League Priest", C.C., Kilmallock, later PP. Bruree/Rockhill.

W.H. O'Sullivan (reading in foreground)

Gascoigne). The existing rents were reduced in most cases. [30]

In mid-December, 1881, Clifford Lloyd, having completed the task set him to the satisfaction of the authorites, was transferred from the Kilmallock district. On his going he left behind him a reputation for harshness and ruthlessness that survived long after his time. He probably had meant well, and was honest in his intentions, but he had no real understanding of the underlying causes that had ultimately led to the formation and rapid growth of the Land League. An over-zealous servant of the Crown, he used the powers vested in him in despotic fashion. In July 1881, for example, he arrested an elderly woman in Kilmallock, [31] and the following month he sent a dying man from Ballylanders to prison. [32] He must have gone from the Kilmallock district quite pleased at his achievement in having broken the power of Fr. Sheehy and his Land Leaguers. He could not have known then that the Land League campaign had not been in vain, and that within a quarter of a century successive Land Acts would effectively bring about the end of landlordism in rural Ireland. Thus was the Cromwellian Plantation of the 1650s finally undone.

But to return to Fr. Sheehy — shortly after his release from prison he went on a prolonged visit to the United States. Three years later, he was appointed Administrator of Bruree, the parish priest of that parish, Fr. Enraght, having retired. When Fr. Enraght died in 1886, Fr. Sheehy was appointed parish priest in his place. One of his Mass servers in Bruree in the 1890s was the boy Eamon de Valera, who, ever afterwards, held his old parish priest in the highest esteem. Fr. Sheehy, who retired in 1909, and went to live in Dublin, was long remembered in Bruree for his great gifts as a preacher, for his May devotions, for his support for the observation of the parish pattern on St. Munchin's Day *(Lá Fhéile Mainchín)*, and for his active interest in the GA.A. and the game of hurling.

He was present in the Rotunda, Dublin, on the 25th November 1913, when the Irish Volunteers were established; later, he became very friendly with Tom Clarke and Seán Mac Diarmada; and during the Easter Week Rising in 1916 he made his way to the G.P.O. "to administer spiritual consolation" to its Volunteer garrison. He died in 1917, aged 76, and is buried in Glasnevin. Inscribed on the Parnell monument in Dublin are the words: "No man has a right to set bounds to the onward march of a nation." These words have always been attributed to Parnell himself, but Mrs. Hannah Sheehy Skeffington, a niece of Fr. Sheehy, has written that, in fact, these words were first uttered by Fr. Sheehy at a banquet in Cork

at which Parnell was present. Parnell was so taken with them that he ever afterwards made his own of them. [33]

Fr. Eugene Sheehy (from right) with founders of the Central Council of the G.A.A. circa 1888.

Munster Bank (1877), now AIB Bank, Lord Edward Street, Kilmallock.

21

Recovery, Labourers' Cottages, Hiring Fair, Rural District Council

Economic Recovery

The closing decades of the 19th century saw Kilmallock make considerable economic recovery. There had been a gradual improvement in business in the town since the middle of the century. The railway came in 1848, and the National Bank opened a branch there in the 1850s. A new primary school for boys and girls was built in Wolfe Tone Street in 1864; and in 1871 William H. O Sullivan established a very successful mineral water factory in Lord Edward Street. Before the mid 1870s the Munster Bank (later to be known as the Munster and Leinster Bank, and now one of the AIB group) opened a branch in the town.

In 1875/76, as we are informed by the *Limerick County Directory*, grocers' shops and public houses in the town numbered twenty-one. There were eight drapers, five hardware shops, five bakers, five butter merchants, two carpenters, two coopers, two emigration agents, one auctioneer and one solicitor. And the town had two hotels: the Eagle Hotel, owned by William Henry O Sullivan and The Hotel, owned by P. Clery.

In 1877, a new bank premises was erected for the Munster Bank in Lord Edward Street. This beautiful cut stone building - now the AIB Bank — incorporates some of the distinctive architectural features, notably the window and door mouldings, of the many splendid 16th and 17th century cut-stone mansions that once stood in Sarsfield Street. It harmonises admirably with historic Kilmallock

Much building took place in Lord Edward Street at this time, or a little earlier. In 1840, as can be seen from the Ordnance map, there were scarcely any buildings at the Post Office side of the street. In fact all the buildings, apart from two, lay inside the line of the old town wall, Buildings at the left hand side of the street, as one travelled towards Kilfinane, extended along the street for only about 200 feet (61m) beyond the cross; and the buildings on the right hand side extended for an even lesser distance. The two buildings lying outside where Ivy Gate once

stood were a girls' school on the right hand side of the road, and the police barracks on the left.

The first major extension to the street was a magnificent three-storey limestone building with brick facings erected by William H. O Sullivan in connection with his mineral water factory which was opened in 1871. In each of the upper storeys seven large windows fronted the street, The girls' school of 1840 had occupied part of the site of the new building. The building now houses Cahill's hardware shop.

A little later, O Sullivan suggested to George Harris, owner of the Victor Stud, that he should continue the development of the street by erecting a building similar to his, O Sullivan's, at the same side of the street. Harris said he couldn't afford to build anything as fine as what O Sullivan had built; but O Sullivan told him "If you are willing to build, I'll give you all the stone and lime you want, for nothing, or at any price you care to pay". (O Sullivan owned a quarry and lime kiln). Harris accepted the offer, and the building was erected in the same style as O Sullivans. Part of the building became and still is, the Post Office, and George Harris became Postmaster. Previously; the Post Office had been in Sarsfield Street, in what is now the Sarsfield Tavern.

The Dairyman System

The dairyman system, which began in the 18th century, and which was very common in Munster, was a system whereby landlords, middlemen and wealthy farmers, who owned large herds of milch cows, rented them for a year to landless men. [1] Arthur Young, writing at the beginning of the last quarter of the 18th century, said: "The cows are all let and paid for principally by butter, one cwt. to a cow, and twenty-five shillings horn-money. The dairyman's privilege is a cabin, a garden of an acre, and the grass of a cow or a horse to every twenty cows, and may rear half the calves and keep them to November or Christmas." [2]

As time went on however the conditions under which herds were rented began to vary considerably. The dairyman system operated to some extent in the Kilmallock area; but by the late 1870s it was everywhere beginning to fail. The owners of the herds were seeking higher rents; there was less profit to be made by the dairymen, and they had problems in paying rents and were frequently dispossessed. [3] Faced with what was for them a real crisis, dairymen from Cork and Limerick met at Kilmallock in January 1881, and decided to hold the line on rents. They sought to reduce competition by prohibiting farmers with more than 20 acres of

land from hiring cows, and to limit their own liabilities in the event of failure by keeping deposits to £100 or less in the coming year. [4] But their efforts were unsuccessful, and the dairyman system eventually disintegrated. Some dairymen however succeeded in acquiring the farms, or part of the farms, on which they had formerly rented cows, or acquired other lands in the area.

De Valera Arrives in Kilmallock

If they could only have seen into the future, it is certain that the surviving Fenians of the Kilmallock district, and the Land Leaguers, would have hurried in a welcoming mood to Kilmallock railway station on Monday, the 20th April, 1885. For that was the day when there alighted at the station, from the train from Cork, to set foot for the first time on Co. Limerick soil, a 2 1/2 year old child named Eamon de Valera. He was coming from the United States, in the care of his uncle, Edmond Coll. Another uncle, Pat Coll, was waiting at the station with his donkey and cart, and together all three, the two brothers and their small nephew, set out for the Coll homestead at Knockmore, near Bruree, where the future revolutionary leader, statesman and Irish President would grow up.

In September 1898, when de Valera set out for the first time for Blackrock College in Dublin, it was from Kilmallock station he departed. This he noted years afterwards on an Ordnance map (now in the possession of the author of this book) on which, beside where the station is shown, he wrote, in pencil: "Got ticket here to Dublin." It was his first journey to Dublin. As a youth, he knew Kilmallock very well, for he frequently went shopping there with his uncle Pat,

Fr. Mark Crowley, of Kilmallock Hill, recalls an occasion when he visited de Valera, then President, in Áras an Uachtaráin. The conversation turned to Kilmallock, and the President asked: "Do they still sell four-prong forks at Stephen Barry Walsh's?" Being then for a number of years on the English mission, Fr. Crowley was unable to say if Barry Walsh's still sold them. The President then remarked: "They sold four-prong forks in Charleville and other places, but the forks they sold in Stephen Barry Walsh's in Kilmallock were the best of all."

Labourers' Cottage in Kilmallock Union District

De Valera spent his first night in Knockmore in the old thatched house, a workman's house, in which the Colls had been living for some

years. Next day, all the family, including the little lad from America, moved to a new labourer's cottage which had been built for them by the Kilmallock Board of Guardians close beside the old house. It was one of the very first such cottages built in Ireland. It is now a national monument, in the care of the State.

In the Kilmallock Board of Guardians, of which he was a member, and in the British House of Commons, William H. O Sullivan had constantly and forcibly advocated the provision of proper and adequate housing for the Irish labourers. He was one of the sponsors of the Labourers (Ireland) Act 1883, which empowered the Boards of Guardians to acquire land on which to build cottages. The Kilmallock Guardians became noted for the number of cottages they built in their Union area, the first, it would appear, being that in which de Valera grew up. P.J. Meghen wondered how this enthusiasm for the building of labourers' cottages originated in the Kilmallock Union. He wrote:

"Kilmallock Board of Guardians was partly elected by the farmers in the area; there were no representatives of labour in those days. The remaining members were an equal number of J.P.s (Justices of the Peace), probably mostly Protestants of the landlord class. It was an extensive dairying district, and a large number of migratory labourers came from Cork and Kerry to work with farmers in that area. It has been suggested that the farmers were anxious to retain these labourers in the area." [5]

But obviosuly the demand for cottages exceeded the supply, and this led to trouble at a meeting of the Board of Guardians in Kilmallock in May, 1887. The guardians were in the courthouse conducting an inquiry into a proposed plan for the building of new cottages, when the building was invaded by a large crowd of labourers armed with blackthorns. We are told that they singled out guardians who were "unfriendly to their cause" and subjected them "to very bad treatment." Two farmers were severely beaten, and five labourers were arrested and charged with assault. [6]

Still, the record of the Kilmallock Board of Guardians in providing housing was a good one, considering that in the course of the first ten years they built no fewer than 500 cottages. [7]

The Hiring Fair

Any reference to the conditions of the labourers in the Kilmallock district must inevitably recall the hiring fairs which were held in Kilmallock. The largest fairs took place in the closing decades of the last, and the opening decades of the present, century. The fairs, which were held in the grounds of the railway station, commenced on the first

Hiring Fair in Kilmallock in l930s — from the Limerick Leader

Kilmallock Workhouse, built in 1841: Entrance and Administrative Block.

Sunday in March and continued on successive Sundays up to St. Patrick's Day. The largest fair was that held on St. Patrick's Day.

Almost all of those offering themselves for hire as servant boys or servant girls came from areas of poor mountainy land in Kerry or North-west Cork, arriving in great crowds off the trains at Kilmallock station. The farmers, who also would have assembled in very large numbers at the hiring fair, viewed all those on offer, assessed them for their likely strength of wind and limb, and finally struck a bargain and hired them. Wages were poor, work was hard, and in some cases the servants were treated badly. The period of employment ran out on Christmas Eve. A substantial number of those who came to work on farms around Kilmallock married and settled down in the area, and were known for their honesty and their capacity for hard work.

There was nothing romantic about the hiring fair, and many people nowadays are appalled at the thought of boys and girls having to offer their labour for hire in a kind of human market place. References to the hiring fair in contemporary songs are far from complimentary. There is the well known song of *An Spailpín Fánach*. This itinerant labourer, who can compose a song with the same skill and ease with which he can dig and mow, has been to the hiring fair of Cashel and has decided that he will go to fight for France in the ranks of the Wild Geese rather than endure again the indignity of

"Bodairí na tíre ag tíocht ar a gcapaill
Á fhiafraí a' bhfuilim híreálta"
(The churls of the country coming on their horses,
Asking if I have been hired)

And from nearer home there is the song called *"The Galbally Farmer"*, this composed not by an aggrieved labourer but by Darby Ryan, a Tipperary farmer with a social conscience,

Further Developments and Establishment of Trades Society

Many strands have gone into the making of the story of Kilmallock. In 1885, a year after the founding of the GAA, a GAA club was established in the town, thus beginning Kilmallock's long and honourable connection with the association.

By 1886, as that year's Postal Directory of Munster shows, some of the Kilmallock merchants had branched out into new lines, and some new businesses had been opened. S.B. Walsh and Sons now had an Agricultural Implements Warehouse and were also brick merchants; Denis Leahy was a salt merchant; Lawrence Hartnett had a China and

Glass Warehouse; there were three leather dealers, and five milliners and dress makers.

The fact that Kilmallock Post Office was the head post office for a very extensive area in which there were several sub post offices, and that Kilmallock was the administrative centre of a large Poor Law Union district, gave the town a special importance in the final years of the 19th century.

At a meeting held in Kilmallock on the 6th February, 1886, a resolution that an Amalgamated Trades Society be established in the town was passed unanimously. James W. Joyce was elected president of the society; Nicholas Gaffney was elected treasurer, and P. O Kelly was elected secretary. The first minute book of the society, which recently came into the possession of the author of this book, enables us to see Kilmallock of the mid 1880s from the viewpoint of its artisans and tradesmen.

Among the 67 men who joined tha Amalgamated Trades Society at its inaugural meeting were seven who were described in the minutes as "cordwainers". A cordwainer is defined in the dictionary as a shoemaker, or a worker in cordovan leather, this being a very fine leather of horsehide. It can be assumed however, that all of the Kilmallock cordwainers were shoemakers. The survival of the word "cordwainer" is interesting, for it must have been an archaic term even by 1886.

At a meeting of February 27th a code of rules, which had been drawn up for the new society, was unanimously adopted. The objects of the society were stated to be:

1. Provide the trades with means for the protection and advancement of their interests;
2. To create and foster an educated public opinion in support of such interests;
3. To co-operate with those who are striving to revive and protect native industry by every legitimate means, and gradually to remove all restrictions of whatever kind which hinder the Irish artisan and manufacturer from competing successfully with foreigners.

Members of all properly constituted trades, including apprentices, were eligible to join the society, but the latter were not permitted to take part in any discussions that might take place. The standing committee was to meet weekly at 6p.m. on Sundays, or as often as it should be determined by the majority, or when called together by the president.

At a meeting of the 4th April, 1886, it was decided to take steps to have trade associations or unions established in nearby towns and

villages — Charleville, Kilfinane, Bruff, Hospital, Herbertstown and Bruree. At their meeting of 11th April the Kilmallock society agreed to respectfully tell the Kilmallock Board of Guardians that they considered it unfair of them to employ a painter who was a perfect stranger in the Kilmallock district while a good local man, who was idle, would have done the work for the same wages.

The president, James W. Joyce, at the meeting of the 25th April, emphasised the importance of supporting the lottery to cover the cost of the new marble pulpit being installed in Kilmallock's new Catholic Church. He said the pulpit was a magnificent example of stonework and a credit to the men who executed the work and to stonecutters in general all over Ireland. Tickets for the lottery cost ten shillings each.

At a meeting on the 20th June, 1886, it was resolved: "That the operative bootmakers of Kilmallock be invited to compete for a prize pair of hand-sewn ladies' and gentlemens' boots, the boots selected to be given to the managers of the bazaar to be held in aid of the new church; the materials of the boots to be enthely of home manufacture".

The matter of the benefits to be derived from membership of the society came up for discussion at a meeting, on the 19th September, 1886. The president stated there was an advantage in people of the same trade banding themselves together, and in this regard he instanced the example of the Kilmallock coopers, who had "stuck together in the case of machine-made firkins" putting out of business the man who had set in opposition to them manufacturing these firkins.

The creameries, or butter factories, then being set up, came in for criticism at the same meeting. The treasurer, Nicholas Gaffney, congratulated the coopers of Kilmallock and surrounding districts on their opposition to the butter factories or creameries which were being established in the locality. These establishments were putting them, the coopers, out of work for the greater part of the year. One member, John Hassett, a cooper, said he was greatly surprised to see farmers in the parish of Kilmallock being involved in the creameries. If the creamery system were to take over, the farmers would not be able to afford to owe a shilling rent, for what would happen was that the landlords would have caretakers on the farms who would take the milk to the factory morning and evening.

At a meeting on February 6th, 1887, an appeal was made to the people of the district to buy home made goods, and the local shopkeepers were respectfully requested to cease the sale of imported goods, in the

Large ornate coloured advertisement for O Sullivans which hung in shops supplied by the firm

W.H. O Sullivan.
From "Weekly Irish Times", 17th March 1883

raw material, as far as practicable, but particularly in the manufactured state.

At a meeting held on the 1st May 1887, the Kilmallock Amalgamated Trades Society passed a vote of sympathy with the family of the late William Henry O Sullivan, who had died on the 27th April. In his death, the resolution of sympathy said, Ireland had lost a pure-souled patriot, and the poor a never-failing friend; his loss to his native town was irreparable. At their next meeting, held on 8th May, the members of the society unanimously adopted a resolution calling upon the ratepayers of the electoral division of Kilmallock to elect as their representative on the Board of Guardians in place of the late W.H. O Sullivan, his son, J. O Sullivan, he being a most fitting and popular gentleman, beloved by all his fellow townsmen, This is the last entry in the minute book,

W.H. O Sullivan

The impact of William Henry O Sullivan, and of the firm of Wm. H. O Sullivan & Sons, on Kilmallock in the latter half of the 19th century was enormous. O Sullivan himself was an ardent nationalist, a staunch supporter of the Fenians, a member of Parliament, a theless champion of the rights of the labourers and the poor, a successful business man and a very good employer, who employed large numbers in his various enterprises. He is buried in the grounds of Kilmallock church, his grave marked by an imposing monument erected by the priests and people of the parish.

In the late 1880s, W.H. O Sullivan & Sons installed a generator to provide electric light for their premises. A few years later, after they had acquired a larger generator, they provided a supply of electricity for a number of pubs in the town.

Heroic Deed at Kilmallock Railway Station

A now almost forgotten deed of great heroism took place at Kilmallock Railway Station on Friday, 30th September, 1892. A 32 year old commercial traveller from Cork, a man named Jeremiah O Callaghan, had purchased a ticket for Cork, and had crossed over to the "down" platform to await the arrival of the 6.15 train to Cork — at that time there was no footbridge, and passengers had to cross over the rail tracks to get to the opposite platform.

As the train was approaching, to the horror of the onlookers on the platform, an old woman named Anne Ryan, an apple seller from Charleville, was seen attempting to cross the tracks, Apparently she was deaf, and did not hear the sound of the oncoming train, nor the warning

shouts of the people on the platform. The train was at the bridge, no more than 40 yards away, when she commenced to cross over. Seeing what was happening, Jeremiah O Callaghan jumped off the platform and dashed to the old woman's assistance. She fell in front of the train. O Callaghan bent down and as he was lifting her to safety the train struck both of them. Mrs. Ryan died instantly and O Callaghan shortly afterwards. [8]

Jeremiah O Callaghan was accorded a hero's funeral in Cork when he was buried in St. Joseph's Cemetery. A year later, his fellow commercial travellers had a monument erected above his grave, and the inscription on it tells how he had been killed at Kilmallock Railway Station, "while courageously attempting to save a poor old woman."

A Thriving Town

We turn to the *Postal Directory* of 1893 for further information on Kilmallock in the closing years of the century. Five trains stopped daily at Kilmallock station, which was on the main Cork - Dublin line. A petty sessions court was held every second Monday. By far the most important business in the town was that of Stephen Barry Walsh & Sons, in Sarsfield Street, which had been in existence since 1829. It is listed in the *Postal Directory* under Boot and Shoe Warehouses, Chemists and Druggists, Grocery Establishments, China and Glass Warehouses, Coach Builders, Coal Merchants, Drapers, Hardware and Ironmongers, Leather Dealers, Oil and Colour Merchants, Timber and Slate Merchants, Agricultural Implements, Salt Merchants and Brick Manufacturers.

Another large concern was that of Thomas Conba & Sons, in Lord Edward.Street, who were grocers and egg merchants, and also sold china and glass products, drapery, hardware, leather, salt, timber and slates. There was a big demand for salt at that time for the curing of home produced bacon. And of course there was the firm of W.H. O Sullivan & Sons, described in the Directory as mineral water manufacturers, and also as porter, ale and biscuit agents.

Kilmallock had two creameries in 1893, the Golden Vale Dairy Company, Glenfield, and Kilmallock Dairy Company, which was owned by a Mrs. Smith. There were six coach builders: John J. Crotty, Michael Kelly, Thomas Hannon, M.M. Sheedy, James W. Joyce, and S.B. Walsh & Sons. Two millers are listed: Joseph Cagney, Glenfield,. and John Hallinan; the latter's mill was in Deebert, where Cleeve's later had their creamery. There were three butchers: Lawrence Feore, James O Rourke and Maurice O Grady; and there were five bakers: Patrick Dillane, John Hallinan, James Slattery, William Glasheen and Roger Dwane. There were ten drapers, and public houses and groceries numbered twenty-five.

A further indication of the prosperity of the town was that it now had four hotels: Clery's, O Sullivan's, Crotty's and the Railway Hotel, owned by Elizabeth Newe.

New Church of Ireland School and Hall

Kilmallock also acquired a new Church of Ireland primary school and parochial hall about this time, The building, comprising school, hall and teacher's residence, was formally opened on Friday evening, 30th September, 1898, by Rev. Canon T.A.P. Hackett, D.D., through whose efforts this new Church of Ireland centre had been built. The Hall, which was capable of seating 200 people, was named the Coote Memorial Hall, in memory of C. John Coote, Mount Coote, who had died on January 20th, 1897, aged 85, and who had been a very generous benefactor to the Church of Ireland in the parish. He had endowed the parish with £3000, and the new school with £1000, as well as contributing £120 towards the building of the school. He had also given £1000 towards the assessment, thus ensuring a fairly good income for the incumbent. [9]

About 100 parishioners attended the opening ceremony, which was followed by a tea and a musical entertainment, Canon Hackett was obviously a man of great energy, as prior to the building of the school and hall he had also had a new rectory built in Kilmallock, at the cost of £10,000. And in the early part of 1901 we find him giving a series of twelve lectures in the new Kilmallock Church of Ireland hall on such diverse subjects as: "Some Recent Discoveries in the Field of Astronomy", "The Rise of Puritanism", "St. Patrick and the Early Church", "Gau-tama, Christianity and Buddhism", "Charles Kingsley", "Tennyson's 'In Memoriam', "Theories about a Future Life". [10]

The Kilmallock Church of Ireland school, which catered for a wide area, saw its numbers gradually decrease all through the 1960s and early 1970s, and it finally closed in 1974 for lack of pupils. One of its pupils was Vere Wynne Jones, at present newscaster on RTE. The former school building, including the hall, is now the headquarters of "C" Company of the 14th Infantry Battalion, FCA.

Remembering 1798 and 1867

The year 1898, the centenary year of the 1798 Rising, was to witness an awakening of patriotic feeling in Ireland as the memory of the dead was honoured in many parts of the country. A national commemoration society was formed, and a branch of the society was

established in Kilmallock. It was called the Lord Edward Fitzgerald branch, this, no doubt, because of the fact that Lord Edward Fitzgerald had visited the Kilmallock area in the spring of 1798.

The Lord Edward branch got the approval of the townspeople for the changing of the names of the streets in Kilmallock. And so John Street (also popularly known as Garryowen) became Sheares Street; Main Street became Sarsfield Street. Church Lane became Orr Street; Blossom Street became Emmet Street; Water Street became Wolfe Tone Street; and Ivy Street became Lord Edward Street.

Main Street was, undoubtedly, called Sarsfield Street after Patrick Sarsfield, popular hero of the Jacobite Williamite War. But the choice of name certainly also had something to do with the fact that an important Sarsfield family once lived in the street. In October, 1619, a member of the family, Dominick Sarsfield, was made the first of the newly instituted Order of baronets in Ireland; and in 1625 he was elevated to the rank of Lord Viscount Kilmallock, by King Charles I. He was also Chief Justice of the Court of Common Pleas. He was a kinsman of Sir William Sarsfield, great-grandfather of Patrick Sarsfield.

The Star Chamber proceeded against him in 1634 in connection with his handling of a particular court case. In the course of making his defence, Lord Kilmallock stated that he had been 36 years a judge, and was a peer of Ireland, He had been ordered in Trinity Term, 1625, to ride the circuit; he had the Irish language. [11]

A Dominick Sarsfield, Viscount Kilmallock — probably the son of, rather than the first Viscount — was a member of the Upper House of the Irish Parliament in 1641; he suffered the loss of his estates at the Cromwellian Plantation. The fourth Viscount Kilmallock served in the French Army, but returned to Ireland with King James II, in 1689. James made him a member of the Royal Privy Council. He sat in the Upper House of James's "Patriot Parliament" in Dublin, and was a colonel in a regiment of infantry. He was a brother-in-law to Patrick Sarsfield, being married to Sarsfield's sister. After the defeat of the Jacobite cause in Ireland, he went with the "Wild Geese" to France, where he served in the ranks of the Irish Brigade. He is believed to have died about 1710.

Another achievement of the Lord Edward branch in the centenary year was the erection of a Celtic cross at Chapel Height, across the street from John's Castle. Since no son of Kilmallock had fallen in the 1798 Rising, the cross carried the names of later insurgents — the Fenians who fell in the Kilmallock barrack attack in 1867, or who died

subsequently of the hardships they endured in prison. The inscriptions on the cross (the inscriptions in Irish, said to have been composed by An tAthair Peadar O Laoire, are given in modern standardised spelling) read as follows:

"Éire go brách. 1798: God save Ireland: 1867. Anseo i gCill Mocheallóg, an séú lá de Mhárta, 1867, ar éirí do chlannaibh Gael in aghaidh fhorneart Gall, do sheasaimh an triúr oirirc seo .i. an Dochtúir Micheál Ó Cléirigh agus an Blácach agus an té nár sloinneadh, agus tuilleadh leo, agus throideadar troid bhíobha báis in aghaidh naimhde Éireann agus do thiteadar am an bhfód seo. Beannacht dílis Dé lena n-anam.

Buíon an Ghearaltaigh de Chuahlacht Chuimhneacháin ar Nócha a hOcht is iad do chuir suas an chrois bheannaithe seo mar chuimhne orthu súid.

Erected by the Lord Edward branch of the '98 Centenary Committee to the memory of the heroic dead of '98 and '67. Dr. Michael Clery, D. Blake and the Unknown Fenian died for Ireland at Kilmallock, March 6th, 1867. William O Sullivan, Patrick Riordan and Daniel Bradley were done to death in English prisons.

Cuir do ghuí chun Dé ar anam Uilliam Uí Shúilleabháin, agus ar anam Dhónaill Uí Bhrathlaí, agus ar anam Phádraig Uí Ríordáin, triúr a sladadh chun báis i gcarcaraibh Shasana mar dhioltas ar méid a ngrá d'Éirinn. Go dtuga Dia suaimhneas síoraí dóibh. Amen, a Thiamna. Dia go saora Éire."

The references on the memorial to being "done to death" and "a sladadh chun báis", need some clarification. The three Fenian prisoners in question did not die in prison, but died as a result of the hardships they had endured in prison.

Cork and Kerry Creamery

On the 25th October, 1898, the Cork and Kerry Creamery Co. Ltd., got a lease of a plot of land, adjacent to the town, in the townland of Deebert, from John Henry Weldon, for the purpose of erecting a creamery on it.

County Council and District Council Elections

The year 1899 saw county government in Ireland put on a representative basis for the first time with the setting up of the county councils to replace the grand juries. Also constituted at that tithe were subsidiary councils, called rural district councils, which administered areas called rural districts, These rural districts were, in fact, the same areas as those designated "unions", which were utilised for the

administration of poor relief. Kilmallock, the administrative centre of the Kilmallock Union, now became, in addition, the administrative centre of the Kilmallock Rural District Council.

Thomas J. O Sullivan, son of William H. O Sullivan, was a candidate for the new Limerick County Council. Proportional representation was still a considerable way off in the future, and election results were decided on the straight vote system. As well, there was a limited franchise. The county was divided into 20 electoral areas, and one member was elected for each area.

On the 25th March, 1899, Michael Davitt arrived in Kilmallock to support O Sullivan's candidature. He was met by a very large crowd and two bands and escorted to the meeting place. Addressing the crowd, Davitt expressed his delight at being in Co. Limerick. where such a great fight was being made for nationalism, labour and democracy in the contests for County and District Councils. The best and highest use to which county councils could be put to, he declared, was to make them strongholds of the greater national cause and a powerful means to the end the Irish people were resolved to reach, namely, an Irish legislature. [12]

County Councils, he believed, should have the power to acquire land by compulsion for such purposes as were best calculated to keep the people at home to grow food, and in this way to aid small industries and those of the labouring poor, and so reduce pauperism and the population of the workhouses to the lowest level. He severely criticised the poorhouse (workhouse) system in Ireland, and said a substitute was needed for it; that substitute should be a system of Old Age Pensions. [13]

Four candidates contested the election for the Kilmallock electoral area seat on the county council; but despite Davitt's support, and the support of Kilmallock town, O Sullivan failed to take the seat. The result was as follows: William Gubbins, Cush, 337; Thomas J. O Sullivan, Kilmallock, 292; George Hartigan, Ballinscaula, 43; John Canty, Gibbinstown, 34.

For the Kilmallock Rural District Council, two members were elected for each of the 21 electoral divisions in the district, Those elected for each division were:

Ardpatrick:	David Treacy, Peter J. Walsh
Athlacca:	M. O Regan, Richard C. O Regan
Ballmacshaneboy:	Thomas Carroll, John Bluett
Bruree:	James Lyons, Patrick Coll
Bulgaden:	Thomas O Donnell, James Meade
Cahercorney:	Patrick Hogan, James Hasty

Colmanswell:	John Cronin, Martin Meagher
Darragh:	William J. Lee, Timothy Casey
Emlygrennan:	William Barry, John Kearney
Glenbrohane:	James Madden, Morgan O Brien
Griston:	Thomas O Dwyer, Thomas Hennessy
Hospital:	P.H. Madden, John Ryan
Kilmallock:	James Mortell, David Sheehy
Kilfinane:	Denis Condon, John Fitzgerald
Kilteely:	John Gilhooly, John Jones
Knockainy:	Owen Bresnan, Jeremiah Dunworth
Knocklong:	Daniel Moloney, John Harris
Particles:	Hon. C.W. Trench, J.P., Timothy Dineen
Rockhill:	Patrick, O Shea, Bryan Mac Mahon
Tobernea:	John Carroll, James Prendergast
Uregare:	J.J. O Callaghan, William Canty

One is pleased to note two old Kilmallock names, Bluett and Meade, among the names of the members of the new Kilmallock Rural District Council. In the press reports of the time all but one of the 42 elected members of the council were described as nationalists. The exception was the Hon. C.W. Trench, J.P. who was described as "Home Ruler", a description that surely put him also in the category of "nationalist". Owen Bresnan, elected for the Knockainy division, was a native of Loch Gur, and a noted local historian and song writer. Among his compositions were "Teampall Nua" and "The Maid of Loch Gur". Daniel Moloney, of the Knocklong division, was elected chairman of the district council.

Michael Davitt.
Spoke at a meeting in Kilmallock on 25th March 1899. He was supporting the candidature of Thomas J. O'Sullivan (Kilmallock) for the Limerick County Council Elections.

22

Into The New Century

Gaelic League Branch

The Gaelic League was founded in 1893, its main objectives being the deanglicisation of Ireland and the restoration of the Irish language as the spoken language of the people. A branch of the League was founded in Kilmallock on January 16th, 1903. The first officers elected were: President, An tAth. Séamus Ó Sé. S.P. (Fr. James O Shea, P.P.); Secretary, Micheál Ó Domhnaill (Michael O Donnell);Treasurer, Roibeard S. Seoighe (Robert J. Joyce). [1]

Two Famous Brackens

In the same year that the Kilmallock Gaelic League branch was formed, Joseph Kevin Bracken, who had owned a prosperous stone-cutting business in Templemore, came with his wife and young family to live at Ardvullen House, a short distance outside Kilmallock, on the Ardpatrick road. Bracken, an IRB man, was one of the seven founding members of the G.A.A. One of his children, a two-year old at the time of his removal to Kilmallock, was to carve out a distinguished career for himself in a *milieu* that was far removed from his family's Irish nationalist background. He was Brendan Bracken, adventurer extraordinary, who became Minister for Information in Churchill's war-time cabinet in 1941, and was made Viscount Bracken in 1952.

The family remained only a few years in Ardvullen, as Joseph Bracken died in May, 1904. He is buried in Tankardstown, in Kilmallock. parish, his headstone being to the right as you enter the burial ground. A plaque, inset in the headstone, and provided by the Limerick County Board GAA, was unveiled by Seán Ó Síocháin, former General Secretary of the GAA, in 1984, the centenary year of the founding of the GAA.

New Creameries

In 1907, the far-flung firm of Cleeves opened a creamery in

Deebert, just outside the town, on the Knocklong road, taking over the old mill premises which had previously been worked by the Hallinan family. The Kilmallock Co-operative creamery was established in 1912. The various creameries established in Kilmallock over the years are dealt with in a separate section in Chapter 32 of this book.

Murphy's Brewery Acquires O Sullivans

In 1908 the old-established firm of W.H, O Sullivan and Sons went into bankruptcy, and was acquired by Murphy's Brewery, Cork. The firm continued to trade under the O Sullivan name under the new ownership.

Races and Show

Kilmallock Races date from before the first World War, at least one of the pre-World-War One meetings having been organised by British Army officers stationed in neighbouring garrisons.

The Kilmallock Agricultural Show also dates from some years previous to 1914. A two-day event, it was one of the most successful shows of its kind in the south of Ireland, and was always a big occasion in the Kilmallock district, It continued up to the early 1930's.

The Suffragette Movement in Kilmallock

A branch of the Irish Women's Franchise League operated in Kilmallock during the period 1911 - 1913. This was certainly an unusual branch, for it was composed of three men and had no women members. The three men were: David Dwane, a post office official; W. O Grady, an official of the rural district council, and Michael J. Hurley, a press correspondent. According to David Dwane:

'The Kilmallock branch of the Women's Franchise League kept the secret of its strength in numbers to itself, Composed of O Grady, Hurley and myself, it wielded a powerful influence in changing public opinion and winning, ultimately, the vote for women . . . We were able to help the ladies all the better by not having any of them amongst us, which seems paradoxical." [2]

Very likely, it was somebody in Kilmallock, who had an idea of the composition and strength of the local branch of the Irish Women's Franchise League, who was the author of a report that appeared in the *Leader* (D.P. Moran's Dublin publication) of the 4th May, 1912. In a prefatory note to the report, the editor of the *Leader* said: "Even the great town of Kilmallock had its Suffer (i.e. Suffragette) problem." Perhaps one

can detect a little measure of sarcasm in the description "great town", coming as it does immediately before the cutting down to size as "little town" by the anonymous correspondent, who had this to say:

"The little town of Kilmallock is scarcely ever behind in anything. There has never been an organisation of any kind formed that a branch was not immediately started there, and we have now about a dozen associations in a town containing something like 1,100 souls. It seemed quite natural therefore that in such a place some persons would be found to hook themselves on to the movement for extending the franchise to women, and indeed expectations were gratified without delay for the ladies soon found doughty champions in a Mr. David Dwane and a couple of other young bachelors of the town, who called a meeting, which was sparsely attended, and at which the proceedings were of a very tame order, although a Mrs. Cousins and another lady from Dublin were present and spoke."

Street Lighting

Kilmallock must have been among the first towns in Ireland to have its streets lighted by electricity. That was about 1912, when W.H. O Sullivan and Sons, having installed a large electric generator, supplied current to a number of pubs, and also provided some public lighting in the streets.

People's Hall Built

The initial steps towards providing a hall for Kilmallock were taken by the Kilmallock Co-operative Friendly Society in 1914. The foundation stone of the hall was laid on the 29th June, 1916, and the buildIng was completed before the end of the year, for we find Cáit Ní Ghamhna, secretary of the Kilmallock Gaelic League branch, writing to the secretary of the Co-operative Friendly Society on the 10th November, 1916, stating that the Gaelic League would like to book the new hall for an Irish Ireland entertainment on the following St. Patrick's Night.

World War One

The first World War — or the "Great War" as it used to be known up to the outbreak of World War Two — lasted from 1914 to 1918. Despite such opposition to recruitment as the more strongly nationalist elements in Ireland could organise, influential public opinion in the country was, in the main, in favour of Irishmen taking part in the war on England's side. And so, as happened in practically every parish in Ireland,

many young men from Kilmallock joined the British Army and went off "to fight the foreign foe", some of them never to return. The terrace of Soldiers' and Sailors' Houses, built in Gotoon, beyond the Railway Bridge, was provided in 1923, at British Government expense, for ex-soldiers of the First World War.

Prosperous Years In Kilmallock

Kilmallock was a very prosperous town at this period, with many shops, large and small, all doing good business. Besides, there were a number of concerns giving considerable employment. *The Cork and Limerick Trades Directory* for 1915 lists the various shops and firms in the town. There were 11 grocers, 13 others described as grocers, wine and spirit merchants; 2 wine and spirit merchants, 7 drapers, 4 milliners and dressmakers, 2 hardware establishments, 2 victuallers, 2 flour merchants, 2 chemists, 2 bootmakers, 1 baker, 1 baker and confectioner, 1 confectioner, 1 coach builder, 1 egg, hardware and leather merchant, 1 hide, skin, feather, egg, poultry and game exporter; 1 saddler, 1 cycle agent, 1 mineral water manufacturer and wholesale bottler; 3 creameries, 4 banks (Provincial, National, Bank of Ireland, Munster and Leinster; some were branches, open on one day a week only), 4 hotels, one of which, Clery's is described in the Directory as "near the railway station, at which best horses and cars attend all trains".

Business continued to increase and flourish in the years leading up to 1920. Since neither Kilfinane nor Bruff were served by trains, large volumes of goods for these centres were consigned by rail to Kilmallock, and had to be transported by horse and cart from there to their destinations. Goods for Kilmallock town itself were transported from the station by the same means. The main employers in the town were W.H. O Sullivan and Sons, S.B. Walsh and Sons, the creameries, and the coach building establishments of J.W. Joyce and Sons and O Sullivans. Kilmallock also had a general hospital at this time; it occupied part of the Workhouse building, and continued in existence until 1921.

The town had a pig market, which was held on the streets on Saturdays. A Mrs. Barrett had a weighing machine, where Parkinson's new shop in Sarsfield Street is situated, and used to weigh pigs, and also commodities such as butter,

Ball Alley on the Hill

The ball alley on Kilmallock Hill was erected in 1919, on the site of an old lime kiln, which had been made available by Roger Fox, who

owned the land on which the kiln stood. There was a very close-knit community on the Hill, consisting of nearly twenty families, and practically all of them had a hand, in one way or another, in providing the alley. They bought the materials and supplied the labour themselves. Among those who played a big part in the project were: Paddy Dalton, John Culhane, Paddy Murphy, Paddy Downes, Paddy Kelly, and his sons, Andy and Mick; Ned and Timmy Scully. [3] The present writer remembers seeing the slogan, "Gaels of the Hill, strike out for Freedom", which was painted in large white letters on the back wall of the alley.

The ball alley had not long been erected when the Gaels of the Hill, and of many other parts of Ireland, were striking out for freedom in more dangerous arenas than handball courts. The story of those who struck out for freedom in the Kilmallock area at that time forms the subject of our next chapter.

Memorial to William H. O Sullivan, in grounds of Kilmallock church.

23

The War Of Independence

The Beginning

As a response to the formation of the Ulster Volunteers, who were opposed to Home Rule for Ireland, the Irish Volunteers, representing Irish national aspirations, were established at a meeting in the Rotunda, Dublin, on November 25th, 1913. Present at that inaugural meeting were three men who knew Kilmallock well. They were: Fr. Eugene Sheehy, curate in Kilmallock from 1876 to 1881; Larry Roche, of Ballynamuddagh, parish of Dromin; and Eamon de Valera, who had grown up in the Bruree district.

The formation of companies of Volunteers now began to proceed apace in all parts of the country. Some time in March, 1914, David Dwane, a native of Clogher, parish of Dromin, a senior officer in Kilmallock Post Office, and a man actively involved in the Gaelic League and Sinn Féin, received a letter from his friend Joe Gaffney. Joe, a Kilmallock man, son of the Fenian, Nicholas Gaffney, was at that time teaching in St. Joseph's College, Ballinasloe, In his letter to David he said:

"What is the matter with Kilmallock? Are they going to neglect the opportunity of training in arms? This place has not got the national record of Kilmallock, but without touching anything but the outskirts of the town and the neighbouring country district, we have got together a company and have been drilling for some weeks past.

I suppose you can do nothing openly, but you might stir others up. Get a committee of all shades of opinion willing to join. Find some hall or shed for drilling about two nights a week, and get an instructor. For instance get someone who was a sergeant in the army. I think Bob Connors was one, but you will get someone, I am sure. Two pence a week will cover current expenditure. For extras you can open a subscription list. Miniature rifles are all right for practice. You can get one for a guinea. They come under the Proclamation, but there are some still to be had from

John Lawlor, 2 Founes Street, Dublin. Anyone that can afford one ought to get one immediately. They are sighted for 200 yards.

I would like to hear from you as to the progress of the movement. As Ballinasloe town was slow in starting, our company has taken steps to organise a public meeting for Monday night next. Almost every town in Connacht has now taken it up. I hear Sligo has 1000 men and 12 instructors. Order the *Irish Volunteer*. Stick to the young men, and let the movement be managed by those taking an active part. Hoping to hear Kilmallock has not lost its martial spirit." [1]

As soon as he had received the letter, David Dwane consulted with a few friends, including Seán T. O Riordan, and they organised a public meeting in the Castle Hall on April 4th, 1914. It was at this meeting that the Kilmallock company of the Irish Volunteers was formed. Among those who attended the meeting were: James Ryan, Sarsfield Street, William O Grady, Orr Street, Henry O Grady, Orr Street, John Donegan, Ballingaddy, Thomas F. Sheedy, Flemingstown, John Joe O Callaghan, Wolfe Tone Street, Nicholas Gaffney, Lord Edward Street, Cornelius O Callaghan, Wolfe Tone Street, Richard Mac Carthy, Sheares Street, Thomas Gilberson, Sarsfield Street. Many others joined later. Seán T. O Riordan was elected captain of the company, and he asked David Dwane to act as secretary of the company; but David, because of the position he held in the post office, thought his place was not in the open, and that he would be able to be much more useful by keeping out of sight.[2] Time was to prove the wisdom of his decision.

Kilmallock Feis and Parade 1914

The Kilmallock branch of the Gaelic League decided to hold a *Feis* on Sunday, 28th June, 1914, and it was arranged that there would also be a parade of Volunteers on the same day. The dual organising committee then decided to invite Roger Casement to review the parade and deliver the *Feis* oration. David Dwane wrote to Joe Gaffney and asked him if he could arrange the visit. In a few days he had a reply from Joe, who stated that he had called to Volunteer headquarters, in Dublin the previous day, and had been told that Casement's programme was so full that it would not be possible for him to go to Kilmallock. However they told him at headquarters that they would try and arrange for some other speaker to attend. [3]

But, according to David Dwane, Joe Gaffney seemed more concerned about the Kilmallock company getting rifles than he was about the matter of a speaker for the *Feis*, for he went on in his letter:

"My opinion is that we will not properly feel the seriousness of the movement until we have guns. The O Rahilly told me that the best rifles can be got wholesale somewhat cheaper than what I thought, but still the price is prohibitive. He says that good rifles like, for example, the Boers had in South Africa, can be got for £2 or so . . . I told them what we were doing in Kilmallock district. Send in an account of your work to The Volunteer as soon as possible, as they are pressed for space, and it will be held over if not early. Let me know in a few weeks how things are going in Kilmallock and district. There is no scarcity of rifles where the money is available. There may be of ammunition." [4]

The great day of the *Feis* and parade arrived. Lord Ashbourne, one of the most colourful characters of the early Gaelic League, was the man selected to review the parade. In all, some 3000 Volunteers crowded into Kilmallock that day. They had come from Bruff, Bruree, Dromin, Athlacca, Grange, Effin, Bulgaden, Elton, Knockainy, Ardpatrick, Kilfinane and, of course, Kilmallock itself. Larry Roche, of Ballynamuddagh House, a prominent member of the GAA, and winner of a senior All Ireland Football medal, was in command of the parade.

Led by a band, the Volunteers, many of them carrying rifles or shot guns, paraded up the town, and past the platform at the top of Lord Edward Street, where the salute was taken by Lord Ashbourne. The great parade of armed Irish volunteers through the streets of the old Geraldine town of Kilmallock stirred the hearts of all who beheld it; and when it was over the crowds made their way to the Fair Green, where the *Feis* was to be held. The speakers here were Lord Ashbourne and Neillí Ní Bhriain, granddaughter of William Smith O Brien, and founder of Carrigaholt Irish College. The chairman was Fr. P. Woulfe, C.C., Kilmallock. After the speeches there was a fine programme of Irish song, music and dance.

Split in the Volunteers

A split occurred in the Volunteers following John Redmond's speech at Woodenbridge, Co. Wicklow, on September 20th, 1914, in which he declared that it was Ireland's duty to fight for Britain and her allies in the World War which had broken out the previous month. The majority of the Volunteers in all parts of the country agreed with Redmond's views and many of them joined the British Army. Larry Roche was one of those who joined; he subsequently attained the rank of Major. The Volunteers who sided with Redmond now described themselves as the Irish National Volunteers, while those who held that

Irishmen should fight only for Ireland, and on Irish soil, retained the original name of Irish Volunteers.

Intelligence Service

Some time in 1915, David Dwane came by chance on a police telegram in Kilmallock Post Office, where he worked. The telegram had been sent by the RIC in Newcastle West to the RIC in Kilmallock, and was all in code except for the name Ernest Blythe. David knew that Blythe was at that time busy organising the Volunteers in West Limerick, so he put two and two together and concluded that he must be coming on a visit to Kilmallock. Slipping out of the post office at the first opportunity, David went down the street to John Cahill, an active member of the Gaelic League and Sinn Féin, who had a drapery business at the corner of Emmet Street and Sarsfield Street, and told him that Ernest Blythe was coming to town.

He was puzzled when John Cahill showed no surprise. Instead, he said "Come this way", and took David down to his office at the end of the shop. There, sitting on a high stool, was Ernest Blythe. The three had an interesting conversation. There were two doors giving access to the shop, one in Sarsfield Street, the other in Emmet Street. Glancing through the window after a little while David Dwane noticed a policeman on the beat, marching up and down past the shop, and rounding the corner so as to keep the two doors under observation. Remembering, as he said himself, that a policeman seldom looks over his shoulder, David waited until the next time the policeman passed the door nearest to him, David; then stepped out quickly, and walked away in the opposite direction. [5]

This episode was the beginning of a new role for David, for when he told Seán T. O Riordan how he had seen the coded message and deduced its contents, the latter realised that David, as a senior official in the post office, was ideally situated to act as an Intelligence Officer for the Volunteers. He decided therefore to set up an Intelligence Unit, with David as the key man in the Unit. David's extreme usefulness lay in the fact that he worked in a large post office through which army and police messages passed, and that he was able to have access to these messages.

Easter Week and Reorganisation of Company

The Kilmallock company of Irish Volunteers mobilised on Easter Sunday 1916, and on Easter Monday a party of them, comprised of Michael Scanlan and Henry and William O Grady, joined with members of the Dromin company in raids for arms on Ballynamuddagh House,

where they secured a rifle, and on Maidstown Castle, where they secured a shot gun and sword. For some reason, the Kilmallock RIC garrison temporarily evacuated their barrack on Easter Monday night and took up positions in the neighbourhood of Kilmallock Hill and Mountfox — all except Constable Morton, who remained in Kilmallock, having taken up a position in the post office, almost directly opposite the barrack. [6]

There was no Kilmallock man in action in Dublin during the Rising of Easter Week, 1916; but Joe Gaffney, true to the traditions of his family, was out with Mellows in Co. Galway. The previous year Joe had been on Volunteer duty at the funeral of O Donovan Rossa at Glasnevin.

And there is another Kilmallock link with the Rising. Eamon O Dwyer of Ballagh, Co. Tipperary, County Centre of the IRB., prominent Volunteer, and close friend of Seán Treacy, was arrested on the Saturday of Easter Week, and interned in Wakefield Prison, England. Eamon was very friendly with a Kilmallock lady, Kathleen Searson, who, at that time, was living in England. One day in June, 1916, Miss Searson received the following letter from Seán Treacy — he signed the letter in Irish, putting John Treacy in brackets after the signature:

Soloheadbeg,
Donohill,
Co. Tipperary.
Ireland.
13-6-'16

Dear Miss Searson,
I take the liberty of asking you to deliver this parcel to Éamon Ó Duibhir in Wakefield. He has asked us to send his parcels through you. We are glad to hear that Éire has children who remain faithful even in the poisonous atmosphere of England. But I believe the sun never sets on faithful Irish men and women, no more than on British felony.

Mise,
Do chara sa chúis,
Seán Ó Treasaigh (John Treacy)

Kathleen Searson later sent Seán's letter to her sister in Kilmallock, with this note written on it: "This I got one day last week — I delivered the parcel all right . . . All the 'boys' in Wakefield are total abstainers; and most of them wore the Fáinne and would speak all the time to one another in Irish . . ." [7]

A reorganisation of the Kilmallock Volunteer company took place in the autumn of 1917, when the following officers were elected: Seán T. O Riordan, Company Captain; James Chamberlain, 1st Lieutenant, Seán Hayes, 2nd Lieutenant; Thomas Hogan (Sheares Street), Adjutant; Tim Tierney (later of Dromin), Quartermaster. The threat of conscription by Britain, now in the third year of World War I, had led to a big influx into the Volunteers. In October, 1917 no fewer than 87 men signed a document as members of the Kilmallock company. Many of these took no active part in subsequent events; others transferred to adjoining companies for their convenience, especially the newly-formed Ballingaddy company; others simply fell away when the threat of conscription faded. [8]

Men from Parish in Other Companies

A company of Volunteers had been formed in Bruree in 1914, and it was this company that the men from Ballygibba, Knocksouna and Tankardstown, in the western part of Kilmallock parish, joined. They were to remain members of Bruree company all through the War of Independence. When the company was reorganised in 1917, two of those elected officers were from Kilmallock parish; these were Laurence O Keeffe, of Tankardstown, 1st Lieutenant, and his brother, Michael O Keeffe, Quartermaster. The Company Captain was Eamon Roche, manager of Bruree Co-operative Creamery, later Sinn Féin T.D. for West Limerick, and, later still, manager of Mitchelstown Co-operative Creameries. [9]

A new company of Volunteers was established in Ballingaddy, in the southern part of Kilmallock parish, in 1917. Albert Bourke, of Kilmihill, was elected Captain; Michael Hennessy, Lisheen, was elected 1st Lieutenant, and Edmond Byrnes, Millmount, 2nd Lieutenant. On August 20th, 1917, Edmond Byrnes was accidentally drowned in Bundoran, and Michael Leonard became 2nd Lieutenant in his place. [10]

The Telegram that was refused

Though endeavouring at all times to avoid drawing attention to himself by any act that might be construed as anti-British Government, David Dwane more or less accidentally found himself in conflict with an ex-Sergeant of the RIC named John O Brien, who owned a pub across the street from the Post Office, and who acted as a kind of recruiting sergeant for the British Army during World War One. O Brien, apparently, was something of a character. At times he could be dour and taciturn; at other times, in rollicking good humour. [11]

According to David Dwane: "If you owed him a few shillings for any length of time, and he saw you on the street, he would go in at once for a megaphone, which he kept convenient, and shout through it from his door, calling out your name and the amount you owed. He had one particular victim whom he tormented. This was Patrick Joyce, an ex-teacher and a scholarly man (a relative of P.W. Joyce, the historian). O Brien claimed that Joyce owed him 7/6, which Joyce strongly denied. Any time O Brien saw him come down the street, he'd dash in for his megaphone and shout through it at the top of his voice: 'Hi, Joyce, when are you going to pay that bill?' In the end, Joyce, then well advanced in years, had to make his way through the Fair Green any time he wanted to go down to the main street." [12]

On one occasion, O Brien had a recruit, but to bind him properly it was necessary to have the attesting officer, Colonel Williamson, present. Colonel Williamson, who resided in Bruree, had just left for home, and O Brien decided to ask him return, He prepared a telegram, "On His Majesty's Service", and sent it across to the post office by a policeman. David Dwane happened to be at the counter, and took the telegram from the policeman; but glancing at it he noticed that it hadn't been countersigned by an army officer as required by the regulations. David explained to the policeman that in order for the telegram to go "On His Majesty's Service", that is, free, it would have to be properly countersigned. The policeman went back to O Brien with the telegram. He returned shortly afterwards with another telegram, which O Brien was now paying for, The policeman apologised for the contents of this second telegram, and hoped David would attach no blame to him. The telegram read:

"To Colonel Williamson, Bruree: Dwane, acting postmaster, has refused a telegram 'On His Majesty's Service'. Have him removed from office at once. Come quickly, recruit waiting. O Brien." [13]

Much as the British Empire might need recruits to replenish its losses on the war front, and much as the War Office might rage at the refusal of a post office official, on a technicality, to accept a telegram addressed to one of its recruiting officers, David Dwane's action in adhering strictly to the rules was defended by the Post Office authorities, and no disciplinary action was taken against him.

Preparing for action

During 1917 and 1918 the Volunteers of the Kilmallock area continued to prepare for a possible renewal of the fight for freedom. They trained and drilled regularly, made occasional raids for arms and, on

Mortell's farm in Ballycullane, constructed a large, well-hidden dug-out in which to store their arms and equipment. When it was thought that food might run short as a result of the World War, they carried out a survey of all available supplies in the area and earmarked a number of buildings in which food could be stored. They campaigned against Conscription and against recruitment for the British Army. In July 1917, three members of the Kilmallock company, Seán T. O Riordan, Thomas Hogan and Thomas Conba, went as helpers to Clare for the famous by-election that was to result in a resounding victory for Eamon de Valera and Sinn Féin, and a clear endorsement of all that the men of 1916 had stood for. [14]

Thomas Ashe and Count Plunkett in Kilmallock

Some time after the Clare Election, the Kilmallock Gaelic League branch decided to hold an *aeríocht*, and arranged for a parade of Volunteers to be held on the same day. Thomas Ashe, a 1916 man, was invited to speak at the *aeríocht*. On the day previous to the *aeríocht* a Saturday, he arrived in Kilmallock, accompanied by Count Plunkett, father of the executed 1916 leader, Joseph Mary Plunkett. That same day David Dwane put through a telephone call from Dublin to the Kilmallock RIC barrack. The speaker announced himself as a detective officer to the policeman to whom he spoke, and, after some small talk, said: "Look out for a man with a grey cap who will arrive from Dublin by the late train." Somehow, David came to the conclusion that the man with the grey cap would be the detective himself.

That night he went to the railway station to await the arrival of the train from Dublin. As soon as it drew up, out on the platform stepped a man wearing a very bright grey cap. He looked about him for a second or two. There was a policeman on duty on the platform, and David saw him exchange knowing looks with the man with the grey cap; but there was no further contact, and the stranger headed off for the town, with David following at a discreet distance behind. On reaching the town the stranger turned into O Sullivan's Hotel, where Thomas Ashe and Count Plunkett were staying.

David thought it advisable not to go into the hotel just then. He was subsequently delayed, and it was almost two hours before he returned to O Sullivans. There was a big crowd in the hotel, and one of the first persons he saw was the man from Dublin chatting amiably with a member of the local Sinn Féin club. David made his way as unobtrusively as possible towards Thomas Ashe, and told him the story of

"the man with the grey cap." "Yes, that man tried to press his friendship on me half an hour ago," remarked Ashe, glad of the warning he had received, Gradually, the word was passed round, and the stranger found himself being shunned by most of those in the hotel. [15]

The *aeríocht* and parade went on, as arranged, on the following day, and Thomas Ashe delivered an oration. It was to be one of his last public appearances. He was arrested in August of that year, charged with making "speeches calculated to cause disaffection," and sentenced to twelve months imprisonment with hard labour in Mountjoy Jail. He went on hunger strike, and died on the 25th September as a result of attempts by the prison authorities to forcibly feed him.

Timely Warnings

Because of the success attending the campaign against conscription and against recruitment for the British Army being conducted by the leaders of the Volunteers and Sinn Féin, the British authorities were feverishly looking for some excuse to arrest them; but it would have to be an excuse that would not alienate public opinion in America, where Irish influence was very strong. In due course the British "discovered" the "German Plot", linking the Irish nationalists with Germany, with which Britain and America were then at war. Here was the excuse the British wanted. Now the leaders of nationalist Ireland could be arrested without occasioning any great outcry in America. It was planned to carry out the arrests all over Ireland on the night of the 17th May, 1918, and on the following day.

One morning, in the post office in Kilmallock, David Dwane put through a phone call from the County Inspector of Police in Limerick to the District Inspector in Bruff. The excited voice of the County Inspector attracted his attention. He was enquiring about a very important letter sent to the District Inspector, and which, to the County Inspector's annoyance, the District Inspector, who had arrived in Bruff only the previous day, had not yet opened. The County Inspector told him that with the enclosed letter was a second envelope containing instructions of the most confidential nature, which he was not to open until he should hear again from him, the County Inspector. David Dwane informed Seán T. O Riordan, who worked in a nearby solicitor's office, about the phone call, and the latter decided on a stratagem by which he hoped to get possession of the envelope containing the instructions next day.

But early next morning a telegram in code from the County Inspector, for the District Inspector, passed through the Kilmallock post office. Within an hour another telegram, this too in code, came through from the District Inspector for the Sergeant of the RIC in Ballylanders. Back, in due course, came a telegram from the Ballylanders sergeant, all in code, Then another telegram from the District Inspector, for Ballylanders, again all in code, except for four words at the very end — "Use your own discretion." [16]

David Dwane was convinced that something unusual was afoot, and he again consulted with Seán T. O Riordan. Both men were of the opinion that some action, probably arrests, were planned by the authorities for Ballylanders. The words "Use your own discretion" in the telegram seemed to indicate that the projected action, whatever it might be, might possibly involve the use of arms. Straightaway, Seán T. O Riordan wrote a dispatch, which he gave to John Murphy — better known as Seánán Murphy — a trusted member of the Kilmallock Volunteer company, who immediately faced the long road to Ballylanders on his bicycle to deliver the dispatch at the address he had been given. On arrival there he found two prominent Volunteer officers, one of them Liam P. Manahan.

As soon as they had read the message from Kilmallock they hurriedly left the house by the back door. Seánán Murphy left by the front door, and observed a policeman keeping the house under observation. Later, when a large force of police surrounded the house, they were to be bitterly disappointed, for the two wanted men had flown, The whole area was scoured for them, but without success. [17]

Among the 73 prominent figures arrested in connection with the so-called "German Plot" and deported to England were: Eamon de Valera, Arthur Griffith, W.T. Cosgrave, Countess Markievicz, Madame Gonne Mac Bride and Mrs. Clarke, the widow of Tom Clarke.

The search still went on for the two men who had eluded the police net in Ballylanders. Then, one day, a brief telegram of enquiry from the District Inspector of the RIC in Bruff to the District Inspector in Mallow passed through the Kilmallock post office. It simply asked: "In whose district is Milford?" David Dwane, who heard the call go through, did not attach any importance to the query until, shortly afterwards, a long telegram in code was sent from Bruff to Mallow. Then followed, as in the case of Mallow, an exchange of telegrams, again in code.

David immediately got in touch with Seán T. O Riordan, and

again, Seánán Murphy was on the road on his bicycle, this time to Milford, with an urgent dispatch for the Milford Volunteers. In the house where he was to deliver the dispatch he found the two wanted Ballylanders men, who as soon as they had read the message, left by the back door, as they had done in Ballylanders. A scout guided them further along the road to safety. Seánán had travelled only a few miles on his journey home when two tenders of police approached from the opposite direction, travelling at great speed towards Milford. [18] And all for nothing, for the wanted men had got safely away.

Later, when Michael Collins had perfected his Intelligence system, which had penetrated even Dublin Castle itself, the seat of British power in Ireland, the military and police codes were known to the Volunteers. In Kilmallock Post Office, where David Dwane had previously to rely on the intelligent interpretation of such clues as might fortuitously be found in the service messages passing through the office, he was now regularly supplied with up-to-date codes being used by the British in Ireland. This was a great improvement, and one that was used to the fullest advantage.

Volunteer Reorganisation

Towards the end of June, 1918, Seán T. O Riordan, captain of Kilmallock company of Volunteers, was appointed commandant of the 1st Galtee Battalion of the recently reconstituted East Limerick Brigade, of which Seán Wall was now the commanding officer. Seán Hayes, 2nd Lieutenant Kilmallock company, became Battalion Lieutenant of Signalling. John Keane, Sheares Street, replaced Seán T. O Riordan as company captain, and Maurice Fitzgibbon replaced Seán Hayes as 2nd Lieutenant. On 16th May, 1919, because of pressure of work, John Keane resigned as company captain. He was succeeded as captain by James Chamberlain, who was promoted from the rank of 1st Lieutenant. Michael Fitzgibbon now became 1st Lieutenant, and James Ryan 2nd Lieutenant, Thomas Hogan and Tim Tierney continued respectively as Adjutant and Quartermaster. [19]

The Irish Republican Army

Two of the IRA men (by the early part of 1919 the Irish Volunteers had become known as the Irish Republican Army, or IRA) wounded in the rescue of Seán Hogan at Knocklong in May, 1919, James Scanlan and Edmond O Brien, were, while recuperating, kept in various houses in the East Limerick Brigade area, including Tim Lyons's at

Ballytigue, Bruree, and Albert Bourke's at Kilmihill, Kilmallock. Capture would have meant death on the scaffold for them, as it meant for Ned Foley and Patrick Maher — even though the latter had no connection with the rescue. It was from Bourke's house that Scanlan and O Brien set out for Dublin on the first perilous stage of their journey to America.

Two Kilmallock IRA men, John P. Delee and John Hogan, collected them at Bourke's and drove them to Ráthluirc station to meet the Dublin train. All four boarded the train. Two other local IRA men, Seán T. O Riordan and William Naughton, boarded the train at Kilmallock; and two members of the Ballylanders company boarded it at Knocklong. The six formed an escort for their two comrades, whom, on their arrival in Dublin, they handed over to the protection of members of the Dublin Brigade IRA. [20]

The Banned Feis

The Kilmallock branch of the Gaelic League, in conjunction with the members of the local Volunteer (IRA) company and the local Sinn Féin branch, decided to hold a *feis* in the Fair Green in Kilmallock, on Sunday, 15th June, 1919. Though described as a *feis*, what was proposed to be held was, strictly speaking, an *aeríocht* which did not have competitions, as a *feis* would have, but was rather in the nature of an open-air concert of Irish music and song. The *feis* was intended to be a huge demonstration in support of the idea of an Irish Ireland, and in support of the struggle for Irish Independence, and the principal speakers were to be Bruree-born Dr. Richard Hayes, who had fought in the Easter Week Rising, and was now newly-elected Sinn Féin T.D. for East Limerick, and Fr. Michael O Flanagan, from Co. Roscommon.

Fr. O Flanagan had first come to notice at the time of the Roscommon by-election in February, 1917, which was won for Sinn Féin by Count Plunkett. "At the moment most needed," wrote David Hogan, "came an orator, whose name and voice were soon to be known in every-parish in the country — a young priest from Crosna in that very County of Roscommon, Father Michael O Flanagan. His presence, like his courage, was magnificent, his gift of words was magical. His voice, deep and musical, his mind strong and subtle, he could speak with humour or with passion, with moving tenderness or bitter anger, but, above all, he understood the hearts of the young." [21]

What happened at Kilmallock that June day in 1919, when Dr. Hayes and Fr. O Flanagan were to speak there, illustrates very clearly the

reality of the situation that had now developed in Ireland. At the General Election, held on the 14th December, 1918 — the last before the partitioning of Ireland by a British Act of Parliament — Sinn Féin, standing for an All-Ireland Republic, had won 73 out of the 105 seats; the Irish Parliamentary Party, had won 6 seats, and the Unionists 26. In the nine counties of Ulster, Unionists polled a majority only in four — Antrim, Armagh, Derry and Down. Out of the million and a half votes cast Unionists received approximately one-fifth.

In the Election the will of the Irish people had been unequivocably and decisively expressed in democratic fashion before the world. That being so, the Irish people believed they now had an unquestionable right to be allowed govern themselves and conduct their own affairs, as they saw fit, without outside interference. And so they set up their own parliament, the first Dáil Éireann. Now there were two governments in Ireland: one there, a native one, by the will of the people; the other, an alien one, by the power of imperial might.

It was on the authority of that alien imperial administration that the *feis* arranged to be held in Kilmallock, on Sunday, June 15th, 1919, was banned. The proclamation of June 14th forbade the *feis* to be held in the town, or within a radius of ten miles of it. Unknown to the British authorities, the organisers of the *feis* then decided to hold alternative gatherings, or meetings, at Martinstown and Knocksouna. Early on Sunday morning large forces of military and police were drafted into the town. The military were armed and wore trench helmets, and were backed up with armoured cars. It was an intimidating show of armed might.

But on the roads leading to the town, IRA men were discreetly directing people to the alternative locations by roundabout routes that by-passed the town. Despite the fact that armoured cars made continual tours of the district, they failed to discover the meetings which were held successfully at the new venues.

At Martinstown, Dr. Hayes made a strong appeal for support for the Irish language and the Sinn Féin movement. The larger meeting was that held at the storied hill of Knocksouna, which was attended by a thousand people, and addressed by Fr. O Flanagan. John Cahill, of the Kilmallock Gaelic League, presided. Fr. O Flanagan received a tremendous welcome, and his speech was continually punctuated with wildly enthusiastic bursts of cheering and hand clapping. [22]

Opening his address, the reverend speaker referred to the weak

and helpless position of Ireland at the beginning of the World War, when its elected representatives in parliament, its local government representatives, and the great bulk of influential and responsible people in the country, preached the doctrine that it was Ireland's war, and that it was the duty of the Irish people to help the British in that war. If the policy preached by those men had been adopted, said Fr. O Flanagan, the best and bravest of Irishmen would have joined the British Army at the start of the war, and the remainder would have been forced into it by conscription. The one thing that saved Ireland from the danger, he declared, was the sacrifice made by Padraig Pearse and other Irishmen in Easter Week. These martyrs were practically unknown in Ireland at the commencement of their great movement, and fearing they could not make their voices heard, they laid down their lives to save Ireland from the danger that threatened.

Fr. O Flanagan recalled the great joy and enthusiasm of the people at the founding of the Irish Volunteers in 1913, and then referred to the split in the movement in 1914 that had seen the great majority of the Volunteers go over to the side of the Irish Parliamentary Party and become known as the National Volunteers. But since that time, said Fr. O Flanagan, the smaller body had been vindicated and now the National Volunteers had died out, and the best of the manhood of Ireland, all over the country, were members of the Irish Volunteers.

That very day, he continued, the discipline and organisation of the Irish Volunteers had enabled them to have a gathering of such large dimensions at Knocksouna, and rendered futile the big display of force, consisting of policemen, and soldiers armed with machine guns and armoured cars. Fr. O Flanagan contrasted the successful action of the Volunteers that day with happenings in the days of the Land League, and said that in Land League times a dozen police were enough to suppress a public meeting, and all the ingenuity of the people would not be able to bring together in a secret place more than a dozen people. But the Volunteers were able to have a meeting of a thousand people . . . They had been given an opportunity of testing their efficiency against the display of physical force . . .

Their meeting showed the real work that had been done during the year. It showed the true spirit of Irish nationality, and would stimulate the children and young men to renewed efforts in the study of the Irish language, and would do more good than if they had succeeded in holding their *feis*. [23]

Those returning from the gatherings at Knocksouna and Martinstown, whose way led through Kilmallock, now had no need to by-pass the town, and as the very large numbers of people, in traps and motor cars, on bicycles and on foot, began to pour into the town, the authorities realised they had been outwitted and were in an angry mood. Crowds of curious spectators gathered to stare at the armoured cars, but the soldiers remained impassive.

The police, on the other hand, looked intimidating, and were jeered. This was followed by some stone throwing. At this the police drew their batons and there was a baton charge, with, as frequently happens in such cases, the victims being completely innocent parties. A chaplain of the United States Army was walking along the street with his brother, when the latter was batoned and knocked to the ground. The chaplain approached the police officer in charge and told him he had never seen such conduct in his life, and informed him that he intended making a report to the authorities about it. The police were then ordered to retire. [24] After that Kilrnallock settled down to a night of uneasy peace.

Ballylanders and Kilmallock Barrack Attacks

The Solohead Ambush on the 21st January, 1919, and the rescue of Seán Hogan at Knocklong Railway Station on the 13th May, are generally considered to have been the actions that sparked off the War of Independence, a war that was to be fought out with a fierce intensity in the East Limerick Brigade area, where raids, ambushes and barrack attacks were soon to be of almost daily occurrence. One of the first major engagements in East Limerick was the attack on Ballylanders police barracks, which took place on the 27th April, 1920, and was led by Battalion Commandant Seán T. O Riordan.

Included in the attacking party of 29 men were the following from Kilmallock parish: From the Kilmallock company; Michael Gammel, Seánán Murphy, Michael Scanlan and Liam Scully; from the Ballingaddy company: Albert Bourke, James Clarson, Timothy Quinlan and Michael Leonard; from the Bruree company: Michael O Keeffe, Johnnie Lynch and John O Brien ("Holy John"), all of Tankardstown. [25] The well armed garrison put up a very determined resistance, but after the attackers had set the barracks on fire their position became untenable and they surrendered. All arms, ammunition and bombs were captured, although some of the material had to be retrieved at great risk from the burning building. [26] The police themselves were treated with the utmost courtesy by the attackers once the fight was over.

On the 12th May, 1920 Seán T. O Riordan and Michael Gammel were arrested and each sentenced to three years imprisonment, On the arrest of O Riordan, Michael Scanlan, a teacher in Kilmallock Boys' National School, was immediately appointed to replace him as commandant of the 1st Galtee Battalion of"the East Limerick Brigade IRA.

On the 28th May, 1920, almost exactly one month after the attack on the Ballylanders barracks, came the attack on Kilmallock police barracks. This was the barracks the Fenians had vainly attacked on the 6th March, 1867. The barracks, a detached building, standing a short distance back from Lord Edward Street, was something in the nature of a fortress, being strongly protected by steel shutters and sandbagged defence works, To the resurgent Ireland of 1920, these police barracks represented the eyes and ears of English domination in Ireland, and hence the military campaign waged to destroy them. [27]

Seán Wall, commander of the East Limerick Brigade IRA., had overall charge of the attack on the Kilmallock barracks. Seán's mother, Debbie Lynch, had come from Tankardstown, in Kilmallock parish; and relations of his had been among the Fenians who attacked the barracks in 1867. And the family link with Kilmallock continues, for Seán's son, An Canónach Gearóid de Bháil (Gerard, Canon Wall), is present Parish Priest of Kilmallock.

The men from Kilmallock parish who participated directly in the attack on the Kilmallock barracks, or who performed vital tasks in the town and its approaches on that occasion, were: from the Kilmallock company; Michael Scanlan, Michael Mortell, Daniel Mac Carthy, John Keogh, John Mortell, Edmund Mulqueen, Michael Moynihan, Seánán Murphy, James Ryan, John P. Delee, James Chamberlain, Larry Dinneen, John Crotty, Tim Tierney, Michael Moroney, William Naughton, Thomas Conba, Thomas Hogan, Richard Walsh, Michael Walsh and Liam Scully, a Gaelic League organiser from Kerry, who had been in Kilmallock for sometime previous to that attack; from the Ballingaddy company: Albert Bourke, Patrick Cowhey, Thomas Sheedy, John Casey, Maurice Casey, Patrick Fitzgerald, James Clarson, Michael Leonard; from the Bruree company: Johnnie Lynch, Michael O Keeffe, Joseph O Keeffe, John Wall, John O Brien, Dick Fitzgerald, all of Tankardstown. [27]

The main attacking party was located in three buildings directly across the road from the barracks — Clery's Hotel, the Provincial Bank

of Ireland and Con Herlihy's shop. Another group, under Tomás Malone ("Seán Forde"), had taken up a position on the roof of William Carroll's shop, a tall building which overlooked the barracks; and it was from this roof the fateful flashlight signal was given for the attack to commence. Immediately, thirty rifles cracked and the attack was on. [28]

Three 56lb weights slung from Carroll's roof went crashing through the slates on the roof of the barracks. Bottles of petrol and paraffin oil were then hurled through the breached roof, which eventually was set on fire by the explosion of a Mills bomb. [29]

The fight now became a furious engagement, and the night was deafened with the sound of gunfire and the roar of exploding bombs. In the houses facing the barracks the attackers were covered with dust and grime from falling plaster; and every time a grenade fired by the police struck the front wall of one of the houses and exploded the whole building seemed to rock, and fresh showers of dust and grime descended on the attackers, half suffocating them. [30] Though the barracks was now blazing furiously, the strong RIC garrison fought on with tremendous courage.

After two hours fighting the attackers sounded a cease fire and called on the police to surrender. They refused, and the grim fight went on for a further three hours or so. In the heat of the battle the police succeeded in withdrawing to a small building at the rear of the barracks from where they still kept up a deadly fire. Shortly afterwards the roof of the barracks collapsed, and this was followed by a series of loud explosions as the stores of bombs and grenades in the building were detonated by the fierce heat. By now the IRA's supply of bombs and ammunition was well nigh exhausted, and as there was a grave danger of reinforcements for the police arriving, Seán Wall reluctantly decided to order his men to retire. [31] Liam Scully, who had been with the attacking party on Carroll's roof, stepped out into the street to have a last look at the blazing barracks and was hit by a police bullet and mortally wounded. He was the only IRA casualty. The police lost two men, Constables Morton and Keane.

Military, Black and Tans, and Auxiliaries Arrive

On the night following the attack on the barracks, British soldiers burned down the Kilmallock People's Hall, as a reprisal. The police, now without a barracks, took over a tall building on the road to Ash Hill, a few hundred yards beyond Blossom Gate. About the same time a force of military arrived in the town and took over Ash Hill Towers

as their headquarters. They were men of the Machine Gun Corps, under the command of Colonel Hope, described by David Dwane as "a slow-moving conciliatory officer who had a touch of rural England about him." [32] Two other officers, whose names were to become well known in the district, were also stationed at Ash Hill. They were Captain Davis and Lieutenant Brown, the former soon gaining the reputation of being a tough, ruthless character. He acted as an Intelligence Officer.

On one occasion he warned the local press correspondent, Michael Hurley, against submitting any reports that would seem to reflect unfavourably on the Crown forces. Some time later, Hurley reported a raid by the military during which members of a completely innocent family were very roughly handled. Captain Davis was furious and went straightaway to Hurley's lodgings and gave him a final warning. So sinister did the warning sound that Hurley ceased to report for the paper. [33]

David Dwane tells how one morning, shortly after the police had moved into their improvised barracks, he was on his way to work in the Post Office when he happened to meet Jimmy Ryan directly in front of the new barracks. Jimmy was an IRA man and a member of the Gaelic League. The police were putting up a barbed wire barricade round the building. While David and Jimmy were conversing a crossley tender approached, braked, spun around and stopped beside them. As soon as the vehicle had stopped, out of it jumped a motley body of men who gave the appearance of having been dressed in a hurry.

To judge by their attire, they were partly soldiers, partly policemen, partly civilian. One man had his own civilian cap, khaki military tunic and black police trousers; another wore a black police jacket and a khaki trousers. And so on. According to David Dwane this mixture of black and khaki (dull yellowish-brown) drew from Jimmy Ryan the comment, "the Black and Tans", for the two-tone uniforms immediately reminded him of the name of the famous East Limerick pack-of-hounds who were known as the Black and Tans. David says that he told some of his friends what Jimmy had called the new arrivals, and that that was how the name Black and Tans came to be applied to that force of unhappy memory in Ireland. [34]

Quickly on the heels of the Black and Tans came a contingent of Auxiliaries, a tam-o' shanter wearing force, composed almost enthely of ex-officers who had fought in the British Army in the World War. They occupied Kilmallock Workhouse. The IRA in Kilmallock now found themselves with four armed forces to contend with — the regular military,

the Auxiliaries, the Black and Tans and the police. One who remembered those days in Kilmallock has stated that the Black and Tans were a callous and dangerous lot, drunk or sober; the Auxiliaries, only when drunk.

Formation of First Flying Column

The Flying Column was, in the words of Donncha O Hannigan, "the spearhead of the Irish Republican Army in its fight for Irish Independence," and, he states, "the success which attended that fight was in no small measure due to the achievements of these swift-moving and well disciplined guerilla units." [35]

The first Flying Column was formed in East Limerick, and recruitment for it took place in the home of Johnnie Lynch in Tankardstown, in the Bruree company area, but in the parish of Kilmallock. Donncha O Hannigan and Paddy Clancy, two officers of the East Limerick Brigade IRA, had gone to West Limerick to attend the funeral of Liam Scully, who was killed in the Kilmallock barrack attack. While in West Limerick they travelled around much of the West Limerick Brigade area, and crossed the Shannon to Clare, giving the IRA members in these areas valuable advice based on their own experiences in East Limerick. That done, they set out from near Glin for Tankardstown, where they were received by Johnnie Lynch, a man who was subsequently Quartermaster of the Fourth Battalion, East Limerick Brigade IRA. Next day, they travelled via Kilmallock to Clancy's house in Cush. It was after that march, according to Donncha O Hannigan, that they realised the full significances of the journey. He says:

"Fully armed we had travelled over thirty miles cross-country, and without any great difficulty. It occurred to us that since we had successfully done so there was no reason why a larger number, organised and equipped as a unit, could not do likewise. Thus was conceived the idea of the Active Service Unit . . . the original name of the Flying Column. This idea was revolutionary in its implications in the circumstances then prevailing, for, in fact, it implied maintaining in the field a standing force for the duration of the struggle." [36]

Donncha O Hannigan, together with David Clancy and Patrick O Donnell, returned to Lynch's in Tankardstown, to await further recruitment for the Flying Column. There they were joined by, among others, Tadhg Crowley, Tom Murphy, David Tobin and Tom Howard. [37]

Kilmallock Press Correspondent

As already mentioned, Michael Hurley, the Kilmallock press correspondent, had ceased reporting for the papers following a warning from Captain Davis that he was not to report on military matters in the area. The publication of such reports had been a valuable service to the people of the Kilmallock district as it acted as a curb on the actions of the military.

When Black and Tans set fire to Thomas Conba's house in Lord Edward Street it was not reported, and the owner of the house contacted the Freeman's Journal about the matter. That paper sent a special correspondent — who happened to be an IRA man — to interview Michael Hurley, who explained why he was no longer reporting. The special correspondent then made contact with one of the local IRA officers, and impressed on him how important it was that a local correspondent be found for the Freeman's Journal and the Cork Examiner. [38]

David Dwane was approached and asked to act as press correspondent. After much persuasion he agreed to do so, but on one condition — absolute secrecy as to his identity. His name was not to be disclosed to the other members of the IRA, nor even to the editors of the papers; he would be known only as 'D. Fitzgerald', and would use that name when sending in his reports. As an extra precaution all the reports would be in his wife's handwriting.

A safe way of getting the reports away had now to be devised. A Miss Bourke, a railway telegraphist, had an office at the railway station, and each day a locked bag containing the previous day's telegrams was sent up from the post office for her to check before they would be dispatched to the Accountant in Dublin. When trains stopped at the station, the guard's van nearly always stopped opposite Miss Bourke's office, and usually the guard dropped into her office for a few seconds' chat. David told Miss Bourke that occasionally he'd have stamped letters for the post, which he'd put in the bag with the telegrams, and he asked her if she would give these letters to the guard on the train and ask him to post them in the railway letter box at his destination. This Miss Bourke agreed to do, having no idea, of course, of the contents of the letters. [39]

In due course, reports from Kilmallock again began to appear in the newspapers. The first few were innocuous enough, but then came one that showed the military up in a very bad light. A furious Captain Davis went straightaway to Michael Hurley's lodgings with a party of six armed men. The Captain was in a dangerous mood. He accused Hurley of having sent the report, but Hurley was able to show him correspondence

from the editors of the papers for which he had been correspondent which proved that he was no longer reporting for the papers. [40]

From now on Captain Davis strove night and day to discover the identity of the press correspondent who had replaced Michael Hurley, but without success. His next move was to go to Cork to interview the editor of the *Cork Examiner*. He demanded to know the name of the Kilmallock correspondent, but the editor refused to disclose it. The Captain became so threatening that a staff reporter took it on himself to give the information. "The correspondent's name is D. Fitzgerald", he told the Captain. Captain Davis returned to Kilmallock in triumph.

But his elation was short lived. None of the police in Kilmallock knew any D. Fitzgerald who was likely to be a press correspondent. Some time later, Dr. Trevor Mac Namara of Kilmallock, who had been temporary medical officer to the military, was invited to tea at Ash Hill Towers by Colonel Hope, to meet the permanent man who had replaced him. A number of other officers were present, including Captain Davis. All were in good humour, except the Captain, who, during a lull in the conversation, suddenly turned to Colonel Hope and said: "The police think that Dwane a postal official, is the man", "You think," replied Colonel Hope, "that Dwane is the 'D. Fitzgerald' you're looking for." The Captain said he was almost certain of it.

The following day Dr. Mac Namara called to David Dwane's house and told him what he had heard at Ash Hill Towers. David expressed his thanks to the Doctor, but because of his resolution to keep his role as press correspondnet a secret from even his closest friends, gave the Doctor to understand that he was not 'D. Fitzgerald'. [41]

Numerous ruses were resorted to in order to trap David. Sergeant Maguire engaged him in friendly conversation one day and casually mentioned that three IRA men had been captured earlier that day at Ballygibba cross. David discovered that evening that only two men had been captured. Had he reported the capture of three men to the papers he would effectively have identified himself as 'D. Fitzgerald.' On another occasion a telegram addressed to the County Inspector RIC., Limerick, passed through Kilmallock post office. It said: "Send ambulance here immediately for three soldiers wounded in ambush today . . . O/C Military Herbertstown." A discreet query by David to one of the creamery staff in Herbertstown revealed that no ambush had taken place. And so another attempt to trap 'D. Fitzgerald' failed. [42]

Some time after this Captain Davis was transferred to Bruff, but the hunt for 'D. Fitzgerald' went on, under Lieutenant Brown. The final trap set to capture the mysterious correspondent almost succeeded. Returning to the post office one morning after a few days' sick leave, David found a letter addressed to D. Fitzgerald, Post Office, Kilmallock, in the caller's box (poste restante). Waiting until nobody was looking, David took the letter, repaired to the toilet and opened the letter. Inside was an official communication from the District Inspector to the Sergeant, RIC., Kilmallock, instructing him to place an armed guard on the Munster and Leinster Bank. David immediately realised he had fallen into a trap. But then he noticed that the envelope had opened in such a way that it was possible to re-seal it with gum, leaving it to appear as if it had not been opened. In a few minutes the re-sealed envelope was back in the caller's box.

An official of the post office, who wished to ingratiate himself with the military, and British establishment in general, with a view to promotion, had, apparently, agreed to co-operate in springing the trap; and as soon as David had taken the letter from the caller's box, he had phoned the military in Ash Hill Towers. And so, shortly afterwards, a lorry load of armed soldiers surrounded the building, and Lieutenant Brown, Sergeant Maguire and four policemen entered that part of the office where David Dwane was working. He was immediately searched, but nothing was found on him. The search party appeared puzzled. David heard Lieutenant Brown ask the post office official if he was certain the letter had been removed from the caller's box. He said he was, Lieutenant Brown and his party took another look at the caller's box, and to their great surprise the 'D. Fitzgerald' letter was there.

Lieutenant Brown began an interrogation of David trying to get him to admit he had taken the letter; but he continued to deny having done so. Sergeant Maguire suddenly interrupted the questioning and shouted at David: "You did take the letter; you have admitted taking it." David strenuously denied having made such an admission. Turning to Lieutenant Brown, the Sergeant said: "You heard, Mr. Dwane say just now that he took that letter and put it in his pocket?" But Lieutenant Brown remained silent. The plan had miscarried, and the military and police withdrew. [43]

Arrests, Re-organisation, Sack of Town, Curfew

In July 1920, a number of the members of the Kilmallock company IRA were arrested. These included the company captain, James

Chamberlain, who was sentenced to 18 months imprisonment, and the following who were sentenced to varying terms: Michael Moroney, Fairyfield; Cornelius (Neily) Keane, Larry Dinneen, Joseph Sheedy, and Michael O Connor of Abbeyfarm. Following the arrest of Chamberlain some re-organisation took place in the company, with new appointments to officer rank and some replacements. Michael Mortell, Ballycullane, now became Captain, Michael Walsh became 2nd Lieutenant, and Thomas Conba became Quartermaster. Michael Fitzgibbon and Thomas Hogan retained their posts respectively of 1st Lieutenant and Adjutant; and David Culhane was appointed Intelligence Officer. About the same time, Michael Leonard, 2nd Lieutenant, Ballingaddy company, joined the East Limerick Brigade Flying Column, and was replaced as 2nd Lieutenant by John O Byrne, of Millmount (later of Lord Edward Street). [44]

On Friday evening, 23rd July, 1920, two crossley tenders filled with Black and Tans drove into Kilmallock from the Ráthluirc direction. Behind one of the vehicles an Irish tricolour trailed in the dust. It was obvious that the occupiers of the tenders were under the influence of drink. Jumping down off the tenders they savagely attacked a few unsuspecting people who happened to be on the streets. They then burst into houses and shops, beating up everybody they found inside; they smashed furniture, looted drink and fired at anything that moved. Finally, they repaired to Lord Edward Street, where they set fire to William Carroll's shop. As soon as the flames took hold they discharged shot after shot into the building. They next turned their attention to Con Herlihy's shop in the same street. This too they set on fire. Three young girls were trapped in the upper storey of the shop, and but for the heroism of some young men who procured a ladder and rescued them they would inevitably have been burned to death.

The IRA, especially in East Limerick and in Cork and Tipperary, continued to strike effectively against the strong British forces deployed against them. Early in August, 1920, Major-General Strickland, commanding the South Division, and "Competent Military Authority", proclaimed a curfew for the Rural District of Kilmallock (which comprised a very large area in South-east Limerick, extending from Bruree to Ballylanders) and neighbouring districts in Cork and Tipperary. Under this curfew regulation it was ordered that "every person within the area specified . . . remain within doors between the hours of 9p.m. and 8a.m."

Nine IRA men from Kilmallock were in prison in the following English jails in September, 1920: Parkhurst: Seán T. O Riordan, Michael

Gammel; Wandsworth: Michael Walsh, Larry Dinneen; Birmingham: Joe Sheedy, Michael Moroney, Michael O Connor; Wormwood Scrubs: Cornelius (Neily) Keane; Liverpool: Tim Noonan.

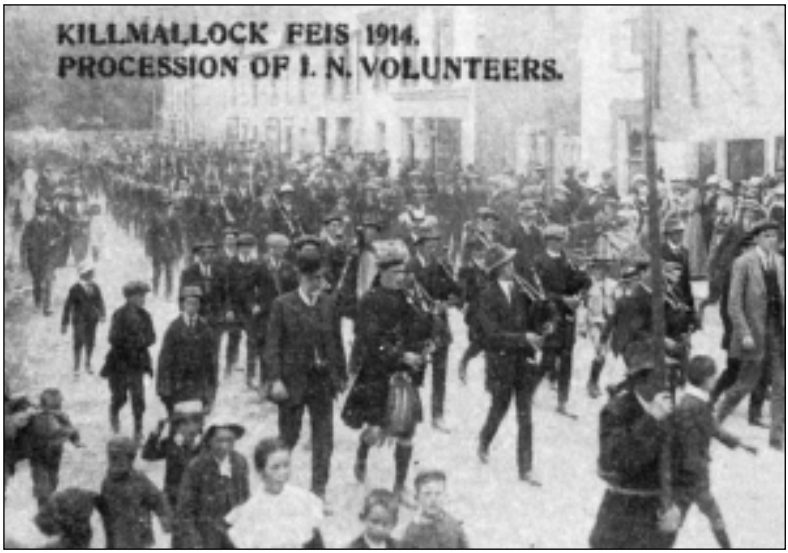
Deaths of John A. Lynch, Michael Scanlan and Tom Hogan

The people were now solidly marshalled behind the fighting men of the IRA as the War of Independence reached a new peak of intensity. Each day brought its litany of sufferings and killings. On the 22nd September, 1920, John A. Lynch, of Kilmallock, was shot dead in his room in the Royal Exchange Hotel, Dublin, by a party of British Crown forces. Lynch, an active member of Sinn Féin, and a member of Limerick County Council, had gone to Dublin on business.

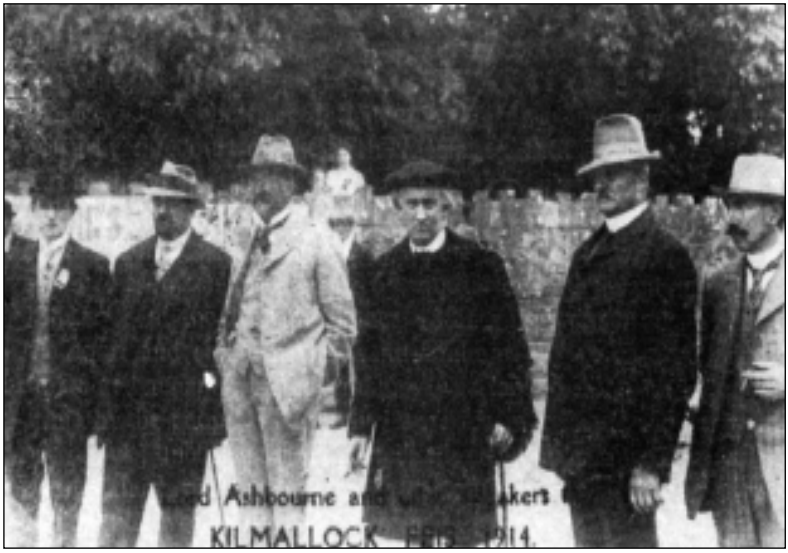
On the day of his funeral in Kilmallock the town was completely taken over by the military. The funeral, on leaving the church, followed the traditional route, down the Bruff road and around by Quarry Hill; but the number permitted to walk behind the hearse was limited to 50. Armed soldiers patrolled all roads leading to the town, and officers on motor cycles mounting machine guns dashed from place to place. Armoured cars with their menacing guns took up positions in Emmet Street and Lord Edward Street, and Army officers with drawn revolvers suddenly appeared in pairs and moved among the mourners at the grave side. [45] 1t was a chilling display of armed might. But the large crowd of people who had gathered for the funeral remained calm, confident and determined in the face of the massive intimidation.

A little more than a month after the shooting of John A. Lynch, Kilmallock was again to be shocked by a death. Michael Scanlan, a native of Galbally, and Commandant of the 1st Battalion East Limerick Brigade IRA, was a teacher in Kilmallock Boys' National School. He was arrested on the 27th October, and was being conveyed in military custody to William Street RIC barracks in Limerick city. When the lorry that was taking him stopped at the entrance to the barracks he decided to make a bolt for freedom. Taking his escort unawares, he jumped from the lorry and made a dash for it. He succeeded in reaching Thomas Street safely and took refuge in the basement of a house there. But minutes later a party of Auxiliaries found him and opened fire on him. He died of his wounds that evening.

The following month there was another man from Kilmallock parish to mourn. Tom Hogan, of Tankardstown, had, like his brothers



Feis Chill Mocheallóg 1914.



At Kilmallock Feis 1914. Left to Right: David Dwane, secretary Kilmallock Gaelic League; Michael O Shaughnessy, Bruff; T,W.W. Bennett (later Cathaoirleach of Seánad.); Lord Ashbourne (who opened Feis); W.R. Gubbins, Cush, (Chairman Limerick Co. Council); Dr. Clery, Kilmallock.

John A. Lynch, killed by British Crown forces, 22nd September 1920.

Commandant Michael Scanlan, Kilmallock, killed in Limerick, 27 October1920.

Tom Hogan, Tankardstown, died of wounds received in Croke Park, "Bloody Sunday", 1920.

David Dwane (whose memoirs are quoted frequently in chapter on War of Independence in this book) at wheel, with Pat Coll, Eamon de Valera's uncle, entering Ennis, 15th August, 1924, to attend a meeting addressed by de Valera. David Dwane (1882 - 1960) was author of first biography of de Valera, published January, 1922, when the author was senior official in Kilmallock post office.

Mick, Dan and Paddy, joined the Bruree company of the Irish Volunteers. Later, Tom took up a position in Dublin, and joined one of the IRA companies there. He was in Croke Park on "Bloody Sunday", 21st November, 1920, for the football match between Tipperary and Dublin, and was one of those hit when British forces opened fire on the crowd attending the match. He died of his wounds on the 26th November. He was only 19 years of age. He is buried in Dromin churchyard, his grave marked by an Irish-inscribed headstone that was unveiled by Canon Tomás de Bhál, brother of Seán Wall, and one of the two patriot Limerick priests whom General Maxwell asked Bishop O Dwyer to discipline after the 1916 Rising, only to receive that historic rebuff from the bishop.

Further Reorganisation; Mac Swiney and Barry; Martial Law

Michael Mortell, Kilmallock Company Captain, having become a member of the East Limerick Brigade Flying Column, and Thomas Conba, Quartermaster, having left the district, Michael Fitzgibbon, 1st Lieutenant, became Acting Captain, in November, 1920, and Daniel Mac Carthy, Glenfield, became Quartermaster. As well, John P. Delee replaced Thomas Hogan as Adjutant. [46]

On the national front, the previous couple of months had witnessed two events that were to win world-wide sympathy for the Irish cause. These were the death of Terence Mac Swiney, Lord Mayor of Cork, on October 25th, after 74 days hunger strike, and the hanging of Kevin Barry, an 18 year old student, on November 1st.

As 1920 drew to a close the struggle for Irish freedom, especially in Munster, grew more intensified, and on December 10th, the Lord Lieutenant, Lord French, issued a proclamation placing the whole of the counties of Cork, Kerry, Limerick and Tipperary under martial law.

British Plane Captured

A British military plane was observed flying low over the Martinstown-Kilfinane area on February 8th, 1921. Some members of the East Limerick Brigade IRA flying Column, under Seán Mac Carthy, who happened to be in the area at the time, opened fire on the plane, which landed about half a mile further on, in the Kilfinane direction, apparently having run out of fuel. The Column members were quickly on the scene, and captured the observer pilot, Flight Lieutenant Edward Percy Mac Kay. The plane was set on fire and destroyed. John Donegan, of the Ballingaddy company, was one of those who took charge of the prisoner,

who was transferred to Michael Carroll's, of South House, Ballygibba, in Kilmallock parish. Here he was held for a few days before being transferred to Toby Bourke's, in Rathcannon.

Early on the morning following the airman's removal the whole area between Bruree and Kilmallock, including the townlands of Ballygibba, Tankardstown, Ballynaught, Clogher and Garrouse, suddenly swarmed with military and Black and Tans. Close on a thousand of them roared into the district in their high powered lorries and tenders. Armoured cars raced up and down the roads, and troops, armed to the teeth, combed the whole countryside. The captive had not been moved a moment too soon.

Practically all of the able-bodied men in the district were rounded up by the military and marched to Bruree, where they were subjected to intense questioning, some of them being severely ill-treated. They were allowed return home later in the day. The airman was eventually released by the IRA, and was so grateful for the courteous treatment he had received at their hands that, when brought on a tour of the area in which he had been held, by the Fermoy Black and Tans, he claimed he could not recognise any of the locations or people involved, even when he was taken into one of the houses in which he had been detained for some days.

The Shooting of Sergeant Maguire

On Sunday evening, 6th March, 1921, Sergeant Maguire of the Kilmallock RIC, was shot dead by a small group of IRA men in Lord Edward Street, as he went to post letters in the post office, He had a fixed time to post his letters, and every Sunday evening he would arrive at the post office on the stroke of nine. David Dwane had this to say of the victim:

"He looked for trouble by employing tyrannical methods, but he wasn't a tyrant, only a man with a rough streak of foolishness which his long experience of life did not smooth. Other police sergeants led raids too, but where they were diplomatic he was doggedly offensive; where they would search a room with almost normal care, he would knock furniture about, break pictures and damage antiques . . . The IRA warned him, but instead of easing off he seemed to get worse . . . Not withstanding the warnings he had got, he often walked alone amongst the fat bullocks on a fair day, which of itself, in the times that were there, shows that a streak of innocence can run side by side with a streak of despotism in a man . . . Personally, I felt sorry for this bitter, foolish and headstrong old man, whose grey hairs did not bring him wisdom." [47]

Dwane tells of his own reactions when he heard that Sergeant Maguire was to be shot:

"When I heard he was to be shot at 9p.m. on the following Sunday, I would much prefer that the news had passed me by. It brought sadness upon me, though I had no reason whatever to have any sympathy with him. The knowledge that a man is to be shot at a fixed hour, and that he is unaware of the grim fact, is information you would feel much happier without. To know that he had been warned did not ease my mind. Could I save him by an appeal to the IRA? I thought of that. To warn him to keep away from the post office was entirely and definitely out of the question. Apart from all other considerations, any attempt to save his life in such a away would possibly lead to greater bloodshed. A trap would be laid at once, backed by all the four forces — the military, police, Auxiliaries and Black and Tans. The whole town would be shot up, so any one with inclinations to do the 'Good Samaritan' had to keep away from that road. I did not remember for him the desperate attempts he had made to bring me suffering and end my career.

As I was resting on my thoughts, wondering how I should go about interceding for him, I learned that the local Catholic Curate had tried hard to save him, but without success. That was enough for me. I could not hope to succeed where the C.C. had failed.

The fatal Sunday arrived. All the various thoughts flashed through my mind. Could my information be wrong? Was the Sergeant really to be shot that night? Would it be possible that somebody might have interceded for him at the last moment? Maybe he'd have no letters to post this Sunday night; or if he had would he go in with them, an hour earlier? Would he remember the warnings he had got, and, on this occasion, send in a police constable with the letters?

The endless tape of time passed before my eyes, with the hours marked on it: 6 o'clock, 7 o'clock, 8 o'clock. It was soon 8.45p.m., with only fifteen minutes to go. All I could do now was to walk up and down the concrete path in front of my house, listening, listening, listening. At nine sharp a volley rang out, and I knew instantly that Sergeant Maguire was dead. His most notable feat as he entered eternity was his punctuality . . . I went down on my knees on the spot, the first, I am sure, to say a prayer for the repose of his soul." [48]

As a reprisal for the shooting of Sergeant Maguire, the military and Black and Tans burned down the business premises of Michael

Houlihan, in Lord Edward Street. Michael Houlihan, local creamery manager, had succeeded John A. Lynch, killed by Crown forces in Dublin, as secretary of the Kilmallock branch of Sinn Féin. The destruction of Houlihan's premises was carried out in broad daylight. First, the military rounded up all the townspeople they could find and herded them to the cross in the centre of the town, near where the doomed building stood. Colonel Hope then addressed them on "the enormity of the crimes committed by the IRA". After this the house was set on fire, the military not withdrawing until the roof had fallen in. [49]

Officer Appointments; The Truce; The Treaty

In March, 1921, John P. Delee, Adjutant of the Kilmallock company IRA, emigrated to the USA, and was replaced by Chris Dalton; the following month Dalton was appointed Battalion Lieutenant of Communications, and Paddy Downes became Company Adjutant. On the 2nd May, John Murray, of Knocksouna, a member of the Bruree company, took part in an engagement at Lackelly, in which four IRA men were killed. [50]

Four days later, all of East Limerick was plunged into mourning on learning of the death in action near Annacarty, Co. Tipperary, of Seán Wall, commander of the East Limerick Brigade IRA, and the man who had led the attack on the Kilmallock police Barracks in May 1920. His place was taken by Donncha O Hannigan

The Truce came on July 11th, 1921, and hopes were high that the unparalleled efforts and sacrifices of the Irish people since 1916 had been sufficient to win freedom for their country. The last shot fired in the War of Independence in Kilmallock was fired on the day the Truce came into force. It was fired in Sarsfield Street by IRA man Jimmy Costello at a Black and Tan named Bullock who, however, escaped uninjured.

Apart from those already mentioned in this necessarily brief account of the War of Independence in the Kilmallock district, there were other active members of the Kilmallock IRA, whose names are mentioned in Seán T. O Riordan's papers covering the period. They include: William Cusack, Daniel O Brien, Michael Kelly, Edmond Costello, John Dennehy, Denis Dennehy, Christopher Ryan, Patrick Winters, Michael Winters, Bartholomew Healy.

Kilmallock did not have a branch of Cumann na mBan during the War of Independence, but the following from the western part of the parish were members of the Bruree branch: Lizzie Hogan and Margaret

Hogan, Tankardstown; Mary Finn and Babs Finn, Ballygibba; May Murray, Knocksouna.

December 6th, 1921, saw the signing of the Treaty between Britain and Ireland, which was to be followed by the tragic split in Dáil Éireann and the Irish Republican Army. The Treaty conferred Dominion status on Ireland, and gave recognition to the recent partitioning of the country by a British Act of Parliament. The pro-Treatyites said the Treaty represented the most that could possibly be won from England at that stage, and that it would prove a stepping stone to the complete freedom of the country. The anti-Treatyites declared the Treaty to be an abandonment of the Republic for which so many had fought and suffered and died during the five years since the Easter Week Rising. Neither side seemed to have attached any great importance to the Partition clauses in the Treaty, apparently believing that the territorial division of the country would prove to be a temporary arrangement. The new 26 county State was to be known as the Irish Free State. Hence, the pro-Treatyites became popularly known as the Free Staters and the anti-Treatyites as the Republicans.

Shootings in Kilmallock

As the great arguement about the Treaty was just beginning, gunfire was heard again in the streets of Kilmallock. On the night of 14th December, 1921, two members of the RIC from Thurles, who had dogs running at Kilmallock coursing, were emerging from Clery's Hotel, in Lord Edward Street, in civilian attire, when they were fired on by a party of armed men. Sergeant Enright was shot dead, and Constable Tierney seriously wounded. The reason for the attack was said to be an incident that had taken place some time previously in Thurles.

24

The Civil War

Industrial Unrest

During the latter part of the period between the Truce and the outbreak of the Civil War there was serious industrial unrest in the Kilmallock district, especially in the neighbourhood of Bulgaden. The trouble began in November, 1921, when agricultural labourers went on strike because of the refusal of the Irish Farmers Union to pay the harvest bonus demanded by the I.T.G.W.U. The relations between farm labourers and farmers deteriorated alarmingly and became ever more bitter. In one case a farmer's house was raided and a separator dismantled. Four men were arrested by the IRA. This led to a general strike being declared in the Kilmallock area. Two local creameries were shut down, and about 300 men paraded through the town carrying the Red Flag. [1]

The unrest continued all through December and into January. About the middle of January a deputation from the Irish Farmers Union met Arthur Griffith, President of Dáil Éireann, and laid particular stress on the happenings in the Kilmallock district: fairs and markets held up; roads blocked by fallen trees; hay, straw and farm buildings burned; agricultural produce commandeered; fences knocked down, livestock driven. [2]

The dispute was also affecting the local IRA companies, some of whose members were in sympathy with the workers (including workers employed in the creameries); others in sympathy with the farmers. With no sign of a solution in sight, Donncha O Hannigan, O/C East Limerick Brigade IRA, proclaimed martial law in the disturbed area, and 200 IRA were drafted into the Bulgaden area. O Hannigan, who declared his neutrality in the dispute, ultimately succeeded in bringing the sides together for talks, on 23rd January, 1922. The talks were successful, and it was agreed that the men should resume work, the question of bonus and other matters to be submitted to arbitration by a representative from each side and an umpire. [3]

Taking Sides

Two officers of the Kilmallock company, Michael Fitzgibbon, the Captain, and John O Donnell, of Kilbreedy, 2nd Lieutenant, took the pro-Treaty side and joined the newly-formed Free State Army. So did Michael Mortell, a former captain of the company, and later a member of the East Limerick Brigade Flying Column. The vast majority of the Kilmallock company, however, took the anti-Treaty, or Republican, side; and, following a reorganisation of the company, the following officers were elected: Seán Hayes, Captain; James Chamberlain, 1st Lieutenant; Michael Walsh, 2nd Lieutenant; Daniel O Brien, Intelligence Officer; Tim Tierney, Quartermaster; Patrick Downes, Adjutant. Seán T. O Riordan, Battalion Commandant in the pre-Truce IRA, who was released from prison in October, 1921, now became O/C of the East Limerick Brigade IRA, his predecessor in the post, Donncha O Hannigan, having joined the National, or Free State, Army. Some time later, James Chamberlain changed his allegiance, left the IRA, and took up a position in Dublin. [4]

The great majority of the Ballingaddy company also took the Republican side after the Treaty split, and in a reorganisation in February 1922, Maurice Casey, of Flemingstown, became Captain in place of Albert Bourke, who had been appointed Vice-Commandant of the 4th Battalion, East Limerick Brigade IRA. William Mac Carthy was appointed 1st Lieutenant in the company, William Casey 2nd Lieutenant, and John Donegan, Quartermaster. [5]

With regard to the men from the western part of the parish (Ballygibba, Knocksouna and Tankardstown) who were members of the Bruree company, all except a couple continued in the post-Truce IRA; those who didn't, while remaining Republican in their sympathies, took no part in the Civil War.

The split that was threatening to divide the former comrades in the IRA into two opposing camps on the issue of the Treaty began to become a reality about March 1922. After the ratification of the Treaty by the Dáil, the building which had lately been used as a barracks by the RIC at Gortboy, Kilmallock, and that part of the Kilmallock Workhouse, which had been occupied by British forces, were taken over by members of the Kilmallock company IRA, and by members of companies from other districts. [6]

Shortly afterwards, approaches were made to the members of the companies by an officer acting on behalf of Donncha O Hannigan, inviting them to join the army of the newly established Irish Free State. Those who were not willing to join withdrew from the garrisons, which meant that the positions were now completely in the hands of Free State

forces — all except one part of the Workhouse, which remained in Republican hands. Incidents regularly occurred between the two sides; and this was to be the position up to mid-July, 1922, when the tide of Civil War flowed towards Kilmallock and the Republicans evacuated their part of the Workhouse so as to enable an attack to be made on the remainder of the building. [7]

Outbreak of Civil War

The Civil War commenced in Dublin on the 28th June, l922, when Free State troops began a bombardment of the Four Courts, which was occupied by Republicans. On the outbreak of hostilities, Liam Lynch, Chief of Staff of the Republican forces, established his headquarters in Limerick city. The great majority of the Munster IRA had taken the anti-Treaty, or Republican, side, and by the first week of July the whole province was under Lynch's control.

Donncha O Hannigan — he and Lynch came from the same parish, Anglesboro/Kilbehenny, in South-east Limerick — was also in Limerick city, with his Free state forces, and a formal agreement was drawn up between himself and Lynch that their respective forces would not attack each other. But Free State headquarters in Dublin was not prepared to countenance such an agreement, and on Friday, 7th July, 1922, Free State forces opened fire on the Republican forces, and the battle for Limerick city had begun. [8]

Burning of Kilmallock Workhouse

An uneasy peace, with occasional interruptions, had prevailed for some time between the Free State and Republican forces occupying positions in Kilmallock since the beginning of 1922. But with the continuation of hostilities in Limerick city, the Republicans in Kilmallock attacked and took the Free State positions, including the Workhouse, which they set on fire. That was on Saturday, 15th July. The main portion of the building was destroyed, but the administrative section, the convent and chapel survived. The administrative section now serves as an Area Office for Limerick County Council, and also as courthouse; and the convent is now the curates' residence,

The Workhouse had first opened its doors to the destitute on the 29th March, 1841. Later, it served as both fever hospital and workhouse; and in more recent times a well equipped general hospital, which catered for the large area covered by the Kilmallock Union, was established there. In 1889, a community of the Sisters of Mercy from Charleville Convent were invited to take charge of the hospital. They remained in Kilmallock

until part of the building was taken over by British forces in 1920.

Battle for the Kilmallock Triangle

Fighting in the battle for Limerick City was sporadic and indecisive until the 19th July, when the Free State troops began to use artillery. Two days of fierce fighting followed, before the city fell to the Free Staters. The bulk of the Republican forces succeeded however in withdrawing from the city, and the main body fanned out southward, and blocked roads with trees and mines, and blew up bridges as they went, They then dug themselves in at Bruree and Kilmallock to challenge the advance of the Free State Army. [9] Liam Deasy was in command of the Republicans, with Seán Moylan in charge of operations. [10]

The battle for what came to be known as "the Kilmallock Triangle" was to prove the most prolonged and decisive and, in the matter of the numbers involved, the biggest engagement of the Civil War. The triangle in question was the area lying, between, and including, the towns of Bruff, Bruree and Kilmallock; and it was held by veteran disciplined soldiers from the War of Independence. But there were also many fresh troops from Cork and Kerry. It is estimated that in all there were about a thousand Republican troops in the triangle. [11] Among them were men of the H-Company, from Kiskeam, in the Duhallow area of North-west Cork, and Fr. J.J. Ó Ríordáin, a native of Kiskeam, tells us about their impressions of Co. Limerick. He says:

"H-Company had its main focus in the Kilmallock-Bruree area. Life around the Golden Vale had varied interests for the men of Duhallow. The herds of milk cows, the richness of the pasture, and the fact that the cows were milked out in the fields, were all a source of curiosity and wonder. What was a source of greater wonder was how the farmers and milking teams would go about their milking morning and evening despite the skirmishing between the warring parties and the fact that bullets were whistling overhead and around the fields as they milked. At first the local people were fearful, but gradually they ignored the fighting and went about their work". [12]

On Sunday night, July 23rd, an advance guard of Free State troops, who had fought southward during the day, were surprised at Ballycullane cross near Kilmallock, by an arnoured car of the 1st Cork Brigade IRA, supported by men of the 5th Cork Brigade. A number of the Free State soldiers were captured; with their arms and ammunition. Next day, a party of Free State troops approaching Kilmallock from the south-west, were attacked at Thomastown, and, after suffering some

casualties, surrendered. On the same day the Republicans re-took Bruff.

Things were going badly at this stage for the Free State forces advancing on Kilmallock. A contingent of Commandant Flood's men, advancing towards the town from the direction of Effin, came under fire near Pouladragoon Bridge, a short distance south of the railway line. The ensuing fight lasted for several hours, and Flood's men were eventually forced to retire, leaving four of their number dead. The IRA claimed a total of 76 men, 76 rifles, machine guns and ammunition captured during two days' fighting. The Free State command now decided that Bruree must be captured before Kilmallock could be taken. [13]

The Battle for Bruree

The battle for Bruree became a fierce affair. Diversionary and holding attacks were launched at Bulgaden and at Ballygibba cross between Bruree and Kilmallock to contain Republican troops, who otherwise, might have hastened to the relief of Bruree. Major-General Murphy was to lead the main attack on Bruree from the north-east, using artillery and armoured cars; and Commandant Flood, with his Dublin Guards, was to make a surprise assault from the south-east, via Ballygibba cross.

An engagement took place in the Bailygibba/Tankardstown area, near Ballygibba cross, in the late afternoon of Friday 28th, which resulted in the deaths of four Free State soldiers. They were shot by Republican forces as they crossed a roadside field in Ballygibba, about 400 yards at the Bruree side of Ballygibba cross (and within 50 yards of where this book is being written). Their comrades, with their arms and ammunition, were captured. On the same day a Republican position near Quarry Hill came under fire, and one of the IRA men, Donal Murphy, of Tulladuff, Liscarroll, was killed.

I, the author of this book, was two years of age when the fight at Ballygibba cross took place. An IRA man, realising that our locality was likely to become a battle ground, called to our house at Tankardstown, and advised my parents to move to a safer place. And so my parents, my year old sister, and myself, left our home, and went first to my maternal grandmother's house in the Forty Acres, near Bruree, and when that proved unsafe, to the house of a man named Jim O Shea, in the townland of Dromacummer East, near Athlacca. And thus, at the age of two I become a war refugee! We were away from home for about a fortnight, during which time fierce fighting took place in the immediate vicinity of our house. And the house bore all the signs of it: windows shattered by bullets, bullet marks on the walls and rafters, and, in one of the fields, a

calf killed by gunfire.

Bruree was finally taken on Sunday 30th July. 1922. A statement issued by General O Duffy said: "I am well pleased with the progress made by the troops in the command, The best fighting material the Irregulars (the Free State description of the Republican forces) can muster is ranged against them. Having concentrated all their forces from Munster on the Kilmallock frontier, they have the advantage in quantity . . . I consider the capture of Bruree today of much strategic value, making Kilmallock untenable. Kilmallock is now covered on three sides by our troops, and its fall is, I believe, inevitable." [14]

It was in Bruree, of course, that Eamon de Valera, now in 1922 personifying Republican opposition to the Free State, was reared, and so its capture must have had a certain symbolic significance for the Free State commanders.

The Fall of Kilmallock

On August 2nd, Republicans captured Patrickswell on the main line of communication between Limerick and Bruree, and attacked three Free State positions in Bruree, taking two of them. However, they withdrew from Bruree on the approach of Free State reinforcements from Bruff, the latter town now being in Free State hands. Next day the Republicans lost Patrickswell. The Free State troops were now ready to attack Kilmallock. around which they held a semi-circular position stretching from Bruree, through Dromin, by Bulgaden, to Riversfield House.

In the meantime Free State forces had landed at Tralee, and an urgent message was sent to the Kerry IRA men at Kilmallock ordering them to return home and fight in their own localities. Their going left the Republicans at Kilmallock in a numerically weak condition, as pitted against them were some 2000 troops with armoured cars and artillery support. [15] While the Republican forces were mainly composed of veterans of the War of Independence, the Free State forces, by now described as the National Army, had been greatly augumented by a very large influx of recruits since the setting up of the Free State.

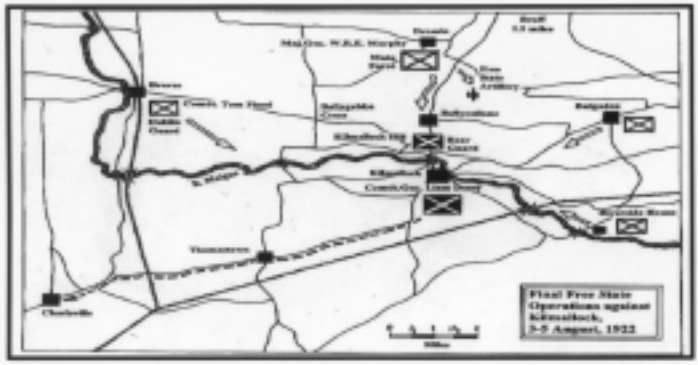
As the time for the assault on Kilmallock approached, the Dublin Guards, under Commandant Flood, advanced from Bruree to Knocksouna Hill to control the Republican line of retreat towards Ráthluirc (Charleville). Troops occupying Riversfield House were given the task of covering a possible retreat in that direction, When everything was ready, fire from artillery stationed on Dromin Hill was directed towards a

Republican position on Kilmallock Hill. The Republicans had no reply to artillery; and their position in Kilmallock having become untenable, they decided to withdraw.

This they succeeded in doing on August 4th, when the bulk of their forces slipped past Flood at Knocksouna, and made their way, via Ráthluirc, into Co. Cork. Some of their comrades from the Cork Brigades had volunteered to stay behind and fight a rearguard action covering their withdrawal. At 4a.m. on Saturday, August 5th, 1922, Major-General Murphy and his Free State troops marched into Kilmallock. The town was theirs.

Fr. John Carr, of Glenfield, remembers, as a boy, seeing the town crowded with soldiers on that now far-off Saturday in 1922. Many of the exhausted troops were lying on the sidewalks, sound asleep, their guns beside them. Next day, Sunday, the church was packed with soldiers attending the 11 o'clock Mass, and as the congregation were leaving the church at the end of Mass, Pa Mac Carthy played "The Soldiers' Song" on the organ. At this stage the sympathy of the Church authorities was almost completely on the side of the Free State,

The defeat of the Republicans holding the Kilmallock triangle marked the beginning of the end for the Republican cause. From now on the heart of the Republican soldiers was less and less in the fight, and the time came when they decided that further resistance in arms to the Free State and the terms of the Treaty would achieve nothing. And so, on the 30th April, 1923, the tragic Civil War came to an end. Many of those from the Kilmallock district, including Seán T. O Riordan, who had fought on the Republican side in the Civil War, were arrested and interned, and were not released for several months.



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The Story to Date

We come now to deal with some of the events that form part of the Story of Kilmallock for the period from the end of the Civil War in 1923 to date.

The year 1923 was the year of publication of that great pioneer work on Irish surnames, *Sloinnte Gaedheal is Gall*, the author of which, Fr. Patrick Woulfe, was then, and had been for many years previously, a C.C. in Kilmallock.

In 1925 Rural District Councils set up under the 1898 Local Government Act were abolished. With the dissolution of the Kilmallock Rural District Council, Kilmallock ceased to be an administrative centre for local government.

The year 1927 saw the publication of the second volume of Canon Begley's monumental work, *The. Diocese of Limerick*. Canon Begley was then P.P. of Kilmallock. The Preface to the work, signed Seán Ó Beaglaoich, is dated at SS. Peter and Paul's, Kilmallock, 5th September, 1927. It was in 1927, too, that the Sisters of Charity of St. Paul came to Kilmallock, at the invitation of Canon Begley. The nuns established a temporary convent in Sarsfield Street, in the premises now owned by William Mac Carthy, where they carried on a private secondary school. Sister Dympna O Sullivan, a native of Ardpatrick, became principal of the girls' primary school, then located in Wolfe Tone Street. A new girls' primary school was built in 1929, and was named Scoil Uí Eilí is Uí Ruairc after the two churchmen who were put to death in Kilmallock in 1579.

The great popular Irish Leaders since the mid l9th century O Connell, Parnell, Davitt, had all addressed public meetings in Kilmallock. On Sunday, January 3rd, 1932, it was the turn of Eamon De Valera to speak there. He was then engaged in a general election campaign. Referring to his party's policy on industrialization he said that: "Their attitude to the building up of industry was not the establishment of one

huge factory in Dublin for the manufacture of clothes or boots . . . Their idea was not one of centralization but rather of decentralization. . .” [1] The following month de Valera was returned to power and headed the first Fianna Fail government.

On the final Sunday of the International Eucharistic Congress, held in Dublin in June, 1932, one million people attended the open air Mass in the Phoenix Park. The Mass was broadcast. Radios — or wirelesses, as they were then called — were few and far between at that time, and for that reason a radio was temporarily installed in the Little Flower shrine in the grounds of the Catholic church in Kilmallock. It was a lovely sunny day, and hundreds of people came to listen in to the broadcast of the Mass, during which they heard the voice of the Pope relayed from Rome, the sound of the ancient St. Patrick’s bell rung at the Elevation, and the singing of John Mac Cormack.

There was scarcely a house in the area that did not, in common with houses in most parts of the country, fly papal or national flags during the week the Eucharistic Congress lasted. And shrines and altars were erected in the streets of the towns and villages. The whole country was *en fête* for the occasion,

Memories of the Civil War were still fresh in 1932, and feelings often ran high at political meetings, A serious riot that ushered in a period of grave distrubance took place in Kilmallock on Sunday, October 9th, 1932. Cumann na nGael (the party now known as Fine Gael) were holding a meeting in the town. Present in support of the meeting were some 50 members of a newly-formed organisation called the Army Comrades Association (ACA). The members of the Association were drawn from men who had served in the Free State Army during the Civil War. The Association was the forerunner of the more broadly based Blueshirt movement,

The Kilmallock meeting, due to commence at 2.30p.m., was to be addressed by General Richard Mulcahy. T.D., and Professor Michael Hayes T.D. A rival Fianna Fail parade, about 200 strong, began to march towards the meeting, but were stopped by a cordon of Gardaí. While they were protesting at being stopped the ACA members and themselves clashed.

In a few minutes a regular pitched battle was in progress, with sticks, stones and hurleys being freely used. Some of those attending the meeting joined in the fight. A number of shots were fired, by, it was claimed, members of the ACA. The police drew their batons as they tried to restore order. This took a considerable length of time.

The surprising feature of the conflict was that the casualties were so few. Over twenty people sustained injuries, but no one was very

seriously injured. The town itself bore ample evidence of the fight in the form of smashed windows, splintered woodwork, dents in house fronts and, in a few places, bullet marks. [2]

The Sisters of St Paul of Charity, who had been living in a rented house in Sarsfield Street since their arrival in Kilmallock six years earlier, moved into their new convent on the 25th March, 1933. Later that year, Cardinal Mac Rory, on his return journey to Armagh from the centenary celebrations in Mount Melleray Abbey, visited his friend Canon Mulcahy, P.P. of Kilmallock, a former Professor of English in Maynooth. He said Mass in Kilmallock church on Saturday, 19th August. He was the first cardinal to visit Kilmallock since Cardinal Rinuccini came there in 1645. The new convent secondary school was opened in 1934.

The choir of the old collegiate church in Kilmallock, for long used as the Church of Ireland parish church, was set on fire on the 22nd July, 1935, and destroyed. Kilmallock was shocked by the occurrence, for relations between Catholics and Protestants had been very good in the district, and nobody wanted that harmony to be endangered in any way. Indeed it would appear that the burning of the church was not intended to be an act directed against the local Church of Ireland community, though how the destruction of their place of worship could otherwise be regarded by that community is hard to imagine.

If one were to seek a motive for such a mindless and wanton act as burning the church one wouid probably find it in the reaction to the bitter religious tension existing at that particular time in the Six Counties, where, in the period July 12th to 22nd, eight sectarian killings had taken place. On July 18th, Dr. Mageean, Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor, protested strongly to Lord Craigavon, the Six County Premier, on "the inadequacy of the measures taken by your Government to put an end to the unchristian campaign now on foot." The Bishop stressed "the urgency that immediate steps be taken to prevent my Catholic people being expelled from their homes." [3]

In Limerick, dockers refused to discharge a vessel from Belfast and stated that if the riots did not cease in Belfast by that day week they would refuse to handle any more Belfast cargoes. In the far more extreme action taken at Kilmallock on July 22nd the innocent were made to suffer for events taking place some 200 miles away.

In 1938 a new Church of Ireland church, to replace the burned building, was opened in the townland of Deebert, on the outskirts of the town.

The 1920s had been prosperous enough in Kilmallock, but business began to decline in the 1930s. This was partly due to the so-called "Economic War", the tariff war waged between Ireland and Britain because of the Fianna Fail Government's decision to discontinue the payment of Land Annuities to Britain. The nationalist view in Ireland was that since these Annuities represented rent for lands that had been confiscated by England in the past, Ireland was under no moral obligation to pay them.

Farmers were very badly hit by the tariffs imposed on the import of Irish cattle into Britain, and towns like Kilmallock, so largely dependent on the farming community, saw a great fall-off in business. World-wide of course, the early 1930s were a time of recession. Another factor that had a detrimental effect on Kilmallock was the ability of nearby Ráthluirc (Charleville) to attract business away from it.

The "Economic War" ended in 1938 with what was, from the Irish point of view, a satisfactory agreement between Ireland and Britain. Especially important to Ireland were those articles of the agreement by which the British-occupied naval bases in Cork Harbour and Lough Swilly were returned to Irish sovereignty, and by which British rights in Ireland in the time of war (guaranteed under the Treaty of 1921) were ended. The real value of these articles only became clear on the commencement of World War Two in 1939, when Ireland was able to declare its neutrality.

Though the war broke out in September 1939, the real conflagration did not begin until May 1940 when the German armies swept westward through Holland and Belgium and into France. With war now on our doorstep, there was an All-Party appeal for the formation of a local defence force. At a meeting held in Kilmallock on 6th June, 1940, and attended by a very large number of men, a company, or group, of the Local Security Force (LSF) was formed. Shortly afterwards, Section A of the Local Security Force became the Local Defence Force (LDF). A large number of the young men of the district joined the regular Army; and because of the scarcity of employment at home there was very heavy emigration to England.

During the war many commodities were rationed — tea, sugar, flour, bread, clothes, petrol (eventually, private motorists ceased to get any petrol allocation). Items such as cigarettes, bicycle tyres and dry batteries for radios were in chronic short supply, and long hours were regularly spent by people vainly scouring all the neighbouring towns and villages in search of them, Coal became very scarce, and people became

more and more to depend on turf, which was even used to run the trains. Fruit such as oranges, lemons, bananas and grapes went completely off the market.

But a great spirit of comaradeship grew up over the war years with so many people involved in the various voluntary service organisations — LDF, LSF, ARP (Air Raid Precaution), Red Cross, etc. People gave very generously of their time to these organisations; and despite the shortages and rationing there were few complaints, but rather was there gratitude for having been spared the horrors of the war that raged so near us,

The firms and establishments giving most employment in Kilmallock from the 1930s to the l960s were those of W.H. O Sullivan and Sons and S.B. Walsh and Sons; the two creameries (Co-operative and Cork and Kerry); Ahern's Bakery; Dowling Brothers, Builders; and Harris Brothers. The latter firm, established in 1929, held the agency for Ford cars and tractors, and serviced all makes of vehicles and cycles. They were also main agents for BSA Rudge and Hercules cycles, Lucas lamps and HMV gramophones and records.

With the l950s came an upturn in the fortunes of Kilmallock. The first sign of a new spirit in the place was the provision of a very fine new GAA playing pitch, work on which commenced in 1949. Half a dozen years later Kilmallock received a great boost when it was selected as the location for the new Golden Vale Co-operative Mart. Two men from the parish were among those who played a prominent part in bringing the mart to Kilmallock. These were Kevin Barry of Ballycullane, and Liam Barry of Garrynoe. Golden Vale Co-operative Mart Ltd., which was registered in 1956, held its first sale in 1958. Today, with marts in eight centres in five counties, and with a catchment area extending into ten counties, and with almost 200 people employed, Golden Vale Co-operative Marts Ltd. has an annual turnover approaching £60 million.

Some of the other events that made news in Kilmallock in the next decade and a half can, perhaps, best be summarized in the form of "Annals":

1960 Golden Vale Development Association set up in Kilmallock.

1963 First ordination in Kilmallock Catholic church, when Dr. Henry Murphy, Bishop of Limerick, raised Rev. Donal Aidan O Sullivan, Sarsfield Street, to the priesthood.

1964 Golden Vale Development Association reorganised; name changed to Kilmallock Community Development Association. New Vocational School opened.

An Dr. Séamus de Cúipéir,
P.P., Kilmallock, 1961 - 1975.

EMMET PIPE BAND, KILMALLOCK. Front Row, left to right:
John Kelly, Tommy Dennehy, Tommy Irwin, Joe Ahern, Peter Clifford,
John Bourke, Jimmy Clifford, Tom Moloney. Back row: Jack Ahern,
Dan Barrett, Christy Clifford, John Irwin, Frank Quin, Tommy Clifford
Jim Ahern, Mick Clifford.

Kilmallock Macra presentation to Dr. Harry Spain, 1950. Left to right: John J. Carroll, Robert M. Clery, Pat Halpin, Tom Bailey, Dr. Harry Spain, John Quinlivan, Dr. Tom Walsh (Dept. of Agriculture), Liam Barry, John Ryan Purcell.

Last day in Kilmallock Telephone Exchange, 8th January 1987. Kilmallock district went automatic that day. (Photo: John Brazill)

1965 Sunday 7th March. Mass in vernacular. First Mass in English in Kilmallock. Canon Cowper, P.P., promised to have a monthly Mass in Irish later on.

1967 March 5th. Commemoration of centenary of Fenian Rising organised by Kilmallock Community Development Association Parade of Old IRA, Cumann na mBan, FCA, realtives of Fenians, local organisations, the general public and school children; laying of wreaths at Fenian memorial and on Fenian graves; recitation of a decade of the Rosary in Irish by Canon Cowper; delivery of oration by Mainchín Seoighe; 1000 attended; also Exhibition of Kilmallock Fenian material in premises of S.B. Walsh and Sons.

17th December. New boys' primary school opened.

1970 12th April. Fr. Tomás Ó Fiaich, now Cardinal Ó Fiaich, unveiled monument to Gaelic, poet, Aindrias Mac Craith, in Kilmallock churchyard.

1975 25th April: President Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh officially opened Féile na Máighe, a bilingual week-end in Kilmallock. Through the efforts of the Kilmallock Community Development Assocation, the Limerick County Development Team, Limerick County Council and Shannon Free Airport Development Co. (SPADCo) the following new enterprises were set up in Kilmallock in the l970s and l980s:

1971 Neodata Services Ltd. (Data Processing), a subsidiary of the American company A .C. Nielsen.

1972 Salemink, a Dutch company, producing copper ware for the international and home market.

1975 Paul and Vincent, producer of animal feeds: a provender mill, with associated, facilities, including distribution centre.

1980 Golden Vale Creameries: a provender mill.

1986 Irema (Ireland) Ltd: production of surgical masks.

In the Small Industries category there are three successful local enterprises:

O Brien's Ironworks: Established by Denis O Brien in the early l940s in the old power house of the Kilmallock Electric Light and Power Company, in Gortboy; present proprietor, Con O Brien. Wide variety of articles manufactured, including such objects as locks and fire guards. No. of employees, 5.

H.G.F. Engineering Co. Ltd.: Set up in Industrial Estate, Bruree Road, 1980. Involved in plant installation and maintenance, turning, fabrication, plant repair and manufacture. Deal mainly with local dairy and milling industries. No. of employees, 12.

The Diamond Engineering Co. Ltd., was located at Gotoon, established January, 1985. Mainly engaged in mechanical services and process piping systems, and the manufacture of pressure vessels. Caters for pharmaceutical, chemical, brewing and dairy needs. No. of employees, 15.

Kilmallock has also got a printing works, *the Abbey Printing Works*, which was established in 1953 by Joseph and Robert Wingfield. It is a general letter-press printing works, and has operated successfully for the past 33 years. It employs four people.

If there were gains for Kilmallock during the 1960s and 1970s there were also some losses. Despite intense local opposition the railway station was closed for goods traffic in 1963 and for passenger traffic in 1975. Ráth1uirc station was retained; so, once again, Kilmallock had lost out to its neighbouring town in Co. Cork. 1975 also saw the closure of Harris Brothers, car dealers and garage owners. Two years later the hardware firm of S.B. Walsh and Sons, which had been established in 1829, closed. In 1978 "the Brewery" (the bottling firm of Murphy's Brewery, Cork, trading under the Kilmallock name of W.H. O Sullivan and Sons) closed. However, the industrial gains over the same period outweighed the losses, although the closure of the railway station continues to be a source of much dissatisfaction in the town and surrounding district.

Since 1970 over 100 houses have been built in the town by Limerick County Council. As well, there was a substantial upsurge in private house building. The population of the town, which had been falling in previous decades, showed a small but significant increase during the period 1961 to 1981. In 1961 the figure was 1110; in 1971 it was 1170; and in 1981 it was 1277.

A recent newspaper article described Kilmallock as "The town that came back from the dead." [4] Earlier chapters in this book have chronicled the rise and fall of Kilmallock from the heyday of its influence and importance in the 15th and 16th centuries to the nadir of its decay and insignificance in the 18th century.

Referring to the completeness of its destruction in the wars of the 17th century, Rev. Jeremiah Newman said of Kilmallock:

". . . complete though the destruction was, it does not suffice in itself to explain why the centre never after revived to anything even approaching its original status. Sociological studies talk of social pathology and even of the death of communities. Something very like this seems to have occurred to Kilmallock after the Confederate and Williamite wars". [5] Kilmallock had been established as a fortress town at

Commemorating Centenary of Fenian Rising in Kilmallock, Sunday 5th March, 1967. Procession led by relatives of Fenians, followed by Old IRA and employees of W.H. O Sullivan and Sons.

Mannix Joyce (standing left front) talking to the crowd at Kilmallock Dominican Priory

an important communications junction; but, according to Fr. Newman, "its old military *raison d'être* had vanished forever with the destruction of its walls and the coming of a new epoch of military strategy". [6]

And: "Another, and at least equally important reason for the difficulties which Kilmallock has found in the way of its rehabilitation has, undoubtedly, been the emergence of the town of Charleville nearby in Co. Cork . . . It was the construction of new roads that saw the first growth of Charleville and *pari passu* the erection of an added and almost insuperable obstacle to the rebuilding of the former importance of Kilmallock. . ." [7]

In the view of Fr. Newman, it would appear that it was not until very recent times that Kilmallock succeeded in re-establishing itself as a genuine centre of human geography. "That it restored", he says, "some of its population is undeniable, but population alone does not constitute a vital community". He adds: "An interesting sidelight on this is thrown by the fact that right up to the present day many residents of the town are interred not in Kilmallock cemetery but in the cemetries of a number of surrounding villages and hamlets from which their ancestors, it must be presumed, came to work in Kilmallock after the establishment there of some employment opportunities in modern times. There would seem to be much room in a place like Kilmallock for the kind of sociological study that would examine the structure and strength of community consciousness and bonds and their influence on the general life of the community". [8] It should be remarked that Fr. Newman (now Bishop Newman) was writing in 1964.

The past twenty years or so have seen the growth of a strong community spirit in Kilmallock. This is well evidenced in the number of associations and societies of a community nature that have been established in the town. And it was demonstrated, during the period 27th June to 2nd July, 1983, when RTE came to the town for a week of "Kilmallock Community Radio". The week was a memorable one in every way, not least in the manner in which the local people and local groups co-operated in making it an outstanding success.

Almost 80 separate items were broadcast, these faithfully representing the interests, tastes and cultural heritage of the district. All over the area, Radio Phobal Chill Mocheallóg, Kilmallock Community Radio, was eagerly listened to all through the week, and as the week progressed the people became more and more conscious of being members of the one community.

Two other events of community significance took place in 1983. The first was the blessing of a grotto of Our Lady of Fatima on

Kilmallock Hill, on Sunday, 2nd of October. The statue of Our Lady was carried in solemn procession from Kilmallock church to the Hill, where it was placed in position in the grotto. After that there was a concelebrated Mass, perhaps the first public Mass said on the Hill since the time of St. Mocheallóg's church, the remains of which are only a short distance from the grotto. A very large crowd attended. The idea for the grotto came from Fr. Mark Crowley, now retired from the English mission and living on the Hill. The grotto was erected by voluntary labour.

The following Sunday, October 9th, saw the official opening of the footbridge across the Lúbach giving access to the abbey (i.e. the old Domincan priory). The local Community Council and Tidy Towns Committee had been campaigning for a considerable time to have the bridge erected. The Board of Works, who erected the bridge, also laid down a pathway to the abbey. After the opening ceremony at the bridge there was a concelebrated Mass in the abbey, the concelebrants including two Dominican priests from the Limerick priory.

That this book on Kilmallock has been written is mainly due to the fact that there is extant a seal of the corporation of Kilmallock bearing the date 1585. In 1984 and 1985 the cities of Galway and Cork respectively celebrated the 5th and 8th centenaries of the granting of their first charters, the year-long celebrations in Galway being publicised as "Galway 500", the similar celebrations in Cork as "Cork 800".

Somebody in Kilmallock, remembering the date 1585 on the corporation seal, thought that Kilmallock might as well be in the fashion, and suggested a "Kilmallock 400" to be observed not for a year but for a weekend. The date on the seal merely provided an excuse for doing something in 1985 to focus attention on the long and chequered history of Kilmallock. The "Kilmallock 400" weekend was held from the 11th to the 13th October, 1985, and created great interest in the town and district.

The opening of the weekend was heralded by a parade of the Liam Lynch Pipe Band from Anglesboro through the town. The official opening, which took place in the People's Hall was performed by the Very Rev. Canon Wall, P.P. After that Gerard Lee, S.C., gave a splendid lecture on the history of Kilmallock; and that day's programme ended with a very fine concert presented by the Kilmallock church choir under Seán Naughton.

A historical exhibition was opened in Mac Guane's shop in Sarsfield Street, on Saturday 12th; and that evening there was a showing of old films relating to Kilmallock, followed by an "Irish Night". On Sunday, a

most informative and enjoyable tour of the historic buildings of Kilmallock was conducted by Liam Irwin, lecturer in the Mary Immaculate Training College, Limerick.

During the preparations leading up to the holding of the "Kilmallock 400" weekend, it was decided that a book on the history of Kilmallock should be written. This is the book. The writing of it was not completed until early in 1987.

During 1984 and 1985 Kilmallock Catholic church underwent major renovations, including the complete reroofing of the building. It was the first time that any very extensive repair works had been carried out to the church since its opening in 1889.

In 1986 Michael (Mike) Sheedy, of Knocksouna, retired from what was, undoubtedly, the most unlikely calling any man from Kilmallock parish ever followed. For Mike Sheedy was a lion tamer! And for all of 30 years. Interested in circus life since his schooldays, and fond of adventure, Mike emigrated to England at the age of 20, and joined Billy Smart's Circus. Then, in the early 1960s, he joined Fossett's Circus, and, on joining, was asked if he would like to train lions. He said he would. After his five years with Fossett's he was an expert lion tamer.

Later, he joined Chipperfield's Circus. In his time, Mike has trained tigers as well as lions. Handling lions and tigers in the ring has its hazards, and Mike suffered a few maulings. One of his worst experiences was when a lioness came for him and toppled him. She ripped open his thumb and gashed his head. Another frightening experience he had was when a huge anaconda snake wrapped itself about him and started squeezing him to death. It took ten men to pull it off. [9]

Mike joined Fossett's Circus in Ireland in 1970, but after some time he decided to retire from his dangerous calling. He did so; but has returned on a few occasions when trainers fell ill. He last returned in 1986. When he bowed out at the end of that spell, he had, he says, firmly made up his mind that there would be no more lion taming for him.

The oldest evidence of the presence of man in the Kilmallock area was discovered in August 1986 during the laying of the gas pipe line from Mallow to Limerick. This was when a Neolithic house site was uncovered in Tankardstown. The site has been provisionally dated to about 2500 B.C. The discovery is more fully dealt with in chapter 1, and the text of an official Report on the excavations at the site, received as this book was going to press, will be found in the Appendix section at the end of the book.

An Autumn Fair, in aid of parish funds, held in Kilmallock on Sunday, September 28th, 1986, was probably the most successful one-day community event ever held in the town. The fair, meticulously organised in every detail, and providing a wide variety of attractions, proved a highly enjoyable social occasion for young and old. The extent of the involvement of people from all parts of the parish in the event was something unprecedented. So also was the amount of money realised by the fair.

The Knocksouna district, which includes Tankardstown, figured at the very beginning of our story of Kilmallock and its surrounding area. And it figures at the end of our story. On the 29th September, 1986, the *Cork Examiner* published an article entitled "Seeking an alternative to Oil in the Warm Springs of Munster". [10] Some of these warm springs have been discovered in the Knocksouna district. According to the *Cork Examiner* article:

"Warm springs, with an average temperature of over 12 degrees C. were located at five places in Munster — at Mallow, Meelin, Kilmallock, Newcastle West and Gneeveguilla — during an investigation set up to establish the geological setting of the springs. Some were newly discovered during the study, which began in November, 1979, and was completed in December, 1983".

The reason for the springs being warm was explained as follows: "Fractures in the below ground rocks along an east-west trending fault account for the warmth. They are thought to provide channelways for the warm waters to rise rapidly from deep within the earth to the surface without losing too much heat along the way. Average temperatures at the springs investigated varied between 13.1 degrees and 19.5 degrees, and the water chemistry in each was found to be typical of Irish limestone groundwaters".

The article goes on to say that: "In January, 1982, a new warm spring complex was discovered at Knocksouna, near Kilmallock, Co. Limerick . . . The springs at Knocksouna. . . occur along a roughly east-west line at the foot of Knocksouna Hill. Other possible warm springs were located during the regional survey in the lower ground extending several kilometres west of Kilmallock. Several of these had spot temperatures of over 15 degrees C . . ."

As to the possible potential of these warm springs, the article says: "Though not in any way comparable to Icelandic geysers, the finds, if developed, could help in a small way to reduce our dependence on imported oil. But the development depends on costly engineering and it is hoped that if it can be shown first to work on one project, then others may come into being . . . The cost of the engineering work involved in utilising

the warm springs can be paid for in the long term by savings on oil".

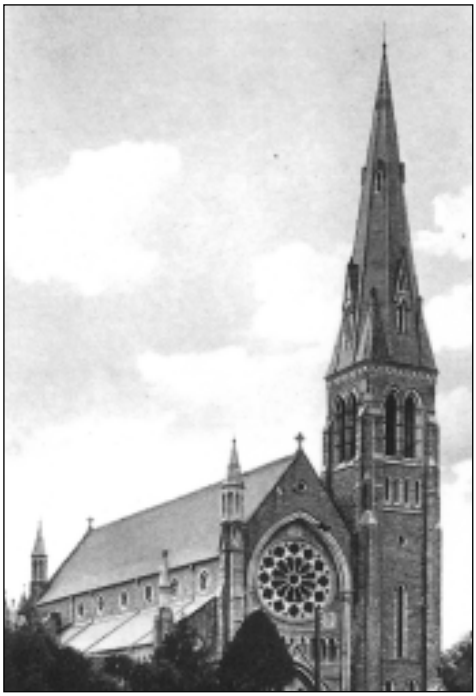
Crowds of people, in a far distant past, assembled annually to watch the ritual fire burn on Knocksouna on the feast of Samhain. None of them, in their wildest imaginings, would have suspected that, deep under the ground on which they stood, burned a fiercer fire than that on the hill, warming the water of hidden springs that men would tap on a day in the distant future.

Kilmallock Local Defence Force (LDF) during World War II period. Front row, sitting, left to right: Michael Browne, Sgt. Con Halpin, Liam Purcell (District Leader), Michael Fitzgerald. Michael Winters,-- Bresnihan, William Cregan, Sgt. Paddy Scanlan. 2nd row (comprising three): John Fitzgerald, John Wall, Jack Ahern. 3rd row: Jerry 0 Sullivan, Joe 0 Sullivan, Billy Buckley, Jerry Ryan, Jack Raleigh, Jimmy Clifford, John Body, Michael Ryan,, John Noonan. 4th row: Tommy Dennehy, Tom Mac Guane, Tommy Joe Carroll, Jim Bourke, Mick Bourke, John Mortell, Willie Flynn, Michael Treacy, Willie Fox. 5th row: (back row): Dick 0 Donnell, Matt Ryan, Denis 0 Keeffe, Willie Hannan, Tim 0 Donovan, Denis Cunningham, Tadhg Allen, Ned Jackson, Paddy Mac Carthy.

Shown in section of picture to right the fallowing not shown in larger group -- from front row to back: Christy Clifford, Jim Brennan, Bill Gilbert, Paddy Raleigh.

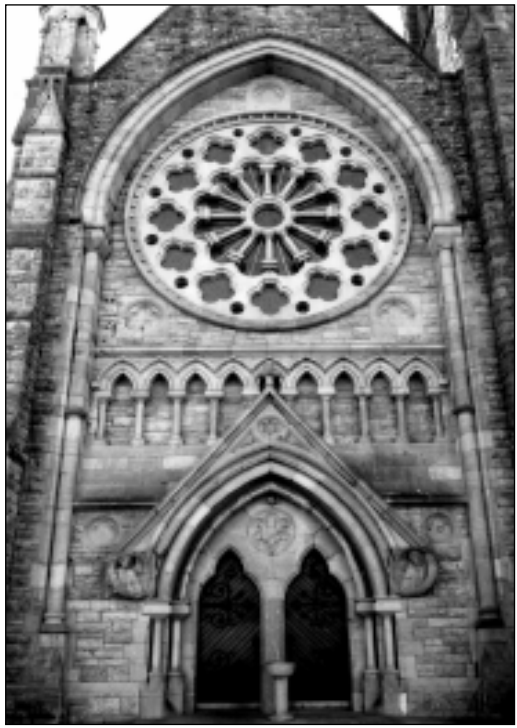
All that remains of the primitive church of St. Mocheallóg on Kilmallock Hill.

View of Kilmallock from Catholic church spire.
-- photo by John O Leary.



S.S. Peter and Paul's Catholic Church, Kilmallock

S.S. Peter and Paul's Church of Ireland church, Kilmallock



Beautifully carved entrance and rose window, Catholic Church, Kilmallock

(Photo by Pat McCarthy)

Former Church of Ireland school and hall, Kilmallock, now headquarters "C" company, 14th Infantry Battalion (FCA)

Ruins of Dominican Priory, Kilmallock.

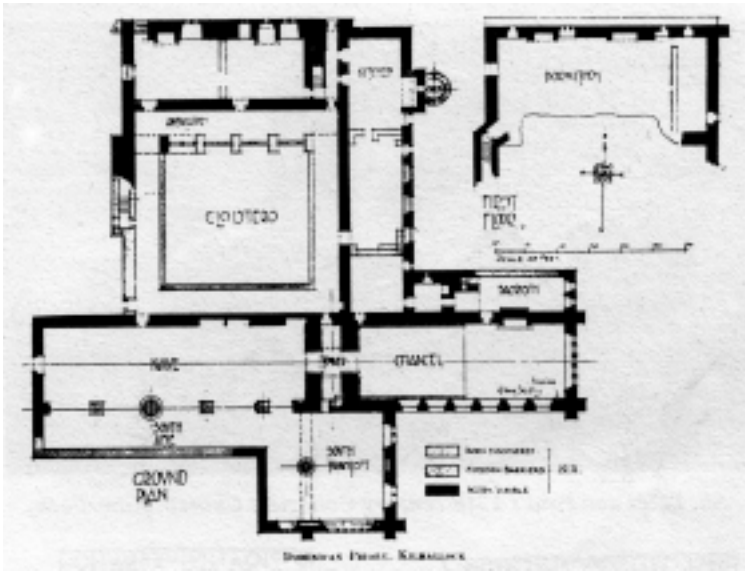
The lovely 13th century east window in Dominican priory, Kilmallock

15th century traceried window, Dominican Priory, Kilmallock.

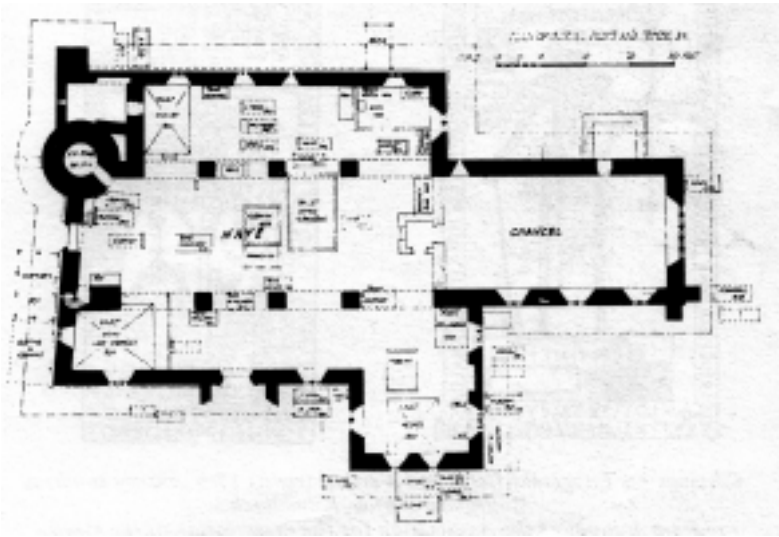
Ball Flower decoration on capital of column, Dominican Priory, Kilmallock

Head and supporting hands on corbel, Dominican Priory, Kilmallock.

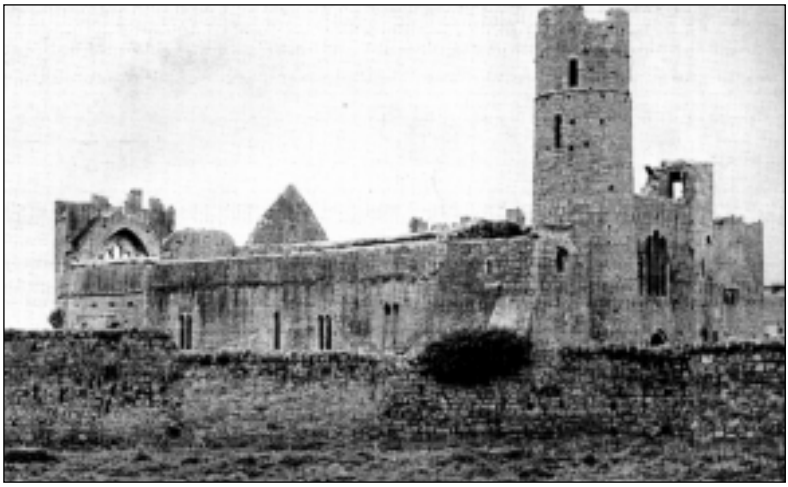
Decorated niche,
Dominican Priory, Kilmallock



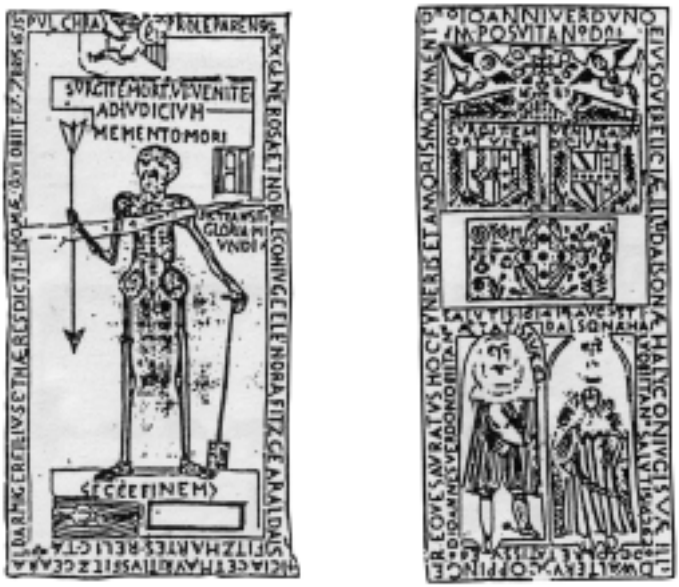
Plan of Dominician Priory, Kilmallock.



Plan of SS. Peter and Paul's Collegiate Church, Kilmallock.
Courtesy of Commissioners of Public Works



SS. Peter and Paul's 13th century Collegiate Church, Kilmallock.



Carvings on Fitzgerald (left) and Verdon (right)
17th century tombs in Collegiate church, Kilmallock
-- from Journal of the Association for the Preservation of the Memorials of the Dead, Vol. I, 1888 - 1891

Details from Verdon tomb, Collegiate Church, Kilmallock.

Detail from Fitzgerald tomb, Collegiate church, Kilmallock
-- from Journal of the Association for the Preservation of the Memorials of the Dead, Vol. I, 1888 - 1891.

26

Relics of the Past
Monastery, Churches, Castles, Holy Wells, etc.

Dominican Priory

The beautiful Dominican priory of Kilmallock — always referred to locally as "the Abbey" — was founded in 1291 by, it would appear, Gilbert Geraldine, or Gilbert Fitzgerald, known in Irish as Giobún. In *Hibernia Domincana* Gilbert is described as "ancestor of the White Knight. . . or of the Clan Gibbon, and of the entire family to which the surname Fitzgibbon is given." [1] His tomb is believed to be that on the left hand side of the chancel.

The lofty five light 13th century window in the chancel is the glory of the priory and one of the most beautiful in Ireland. It has been said of this magnificent window that its construction pushed contemporary architectural knowledge to its very limits. The chancel also has some finely carved 14th century sedilia, as well as a piscina and an Easter tomb. A large slab inset in the north wall has a Latin inscription commemorating three members of the Burgate family — two brothers and a nephew — who fell at the battle of Liscarroll in 1642. And on the raised portion of the floor a recumbent stone, now broken in two, marks the grave of Edmond Fitzgibbon, the last White Knight.

It was he who betrayed his kinsman, the Súgán Earl, for £1000, and a hollow formerly visible on the stone, and caused by a constrant drip from the roof — called in Irish *an braon sinsir*, the hereditary drop, or drip — was said to signify Heaven's displeasure at the betrayal. The inscription above the White Knight's grave is now almost worn away, but, fortunately it was transcribed more than a hundred years ago. It reads:

I.H.S.
Hic tumulus erectus fu
it in memoriam illius ste
mmatis Geraldinorum qui
vulgo vocantur Equites

Albi
Johannes cum filio suo
Edmundo et Mauricio fi
lio praefati Edmundi
et multi alii eiusdem famil
ii hic tumulantur pref
at . . . [2]

As the inscription tells, a number of bearers of the title White Knight are buried in the monastery. Apart from Edmond, the last White Knight, Maurice, the first White Knight, as already stated, is buried there; it was he who built the castle outside the walls of the town, near the North Bridge, that was commonly known as *Cúirt an Ridire*, the Knight's Court, John Óg Fitzgibbon, White Knight who died in 1569, and whose son, Edmond, was the last White Knight, is also buried there.

The tall graceful 90 foot 15th century central tower of the monastery, which divides the nave of the church from the chancel, is Franciscan rather than Dominican in style.

The south transept has a very lovely 15th century window with reticulated ("honeycomb") tracery. Here too, are the carved recesses that mark altar tombs. Mass was chanted for those buried in the tombs, providing an important source of revenue for the friars. Some excellent carvings in the areas of the transept and aisle include heads and ball flower decoration, the latter found elsewhere in Ireland only at Jerpoint. On one of the corbels the figure of a woman, wearing a hair band, supports an arch with her upraised arms.

The Dominicans were the Order of Preachers, the "Preaching Friars", and the large nave at Kilmallock must often have been crowded by the great numbers of people who came to hear them preach. The friars would have chanted their Mass in Latin, but their preaching would have been in Irish, the language of the local people. Apart from preaching the Word of God, the friars practised good works; they cared for the old and sick and lonely; they gave shelter to weary travellers; they comforted the afflicted.

Kilmallock is the best preserved of all the larger pre-Reformation Dominican houses in Ireland. It preserves its main features not merely in the parts of the building devoted to divine worship but in the domestic quarters as well. The large fireplace on the ground floor of the north wing identifies the kitchen. Across the passage from the kitchen entrance, and running west from it, is a long kind of hall with corbelled roof, which may have been the refectory. Only a small section of the cloister arcade survives. Overhead, approached by a stone stairs, is

what appears to have been the dormitory. Another stairway leads from the sacristy to an apartment that has a narrow slit in one of its walls (a "squint window") giving a view down to where the main altar used to be. The purpose of these "squint windows" is still a matter of conjecture. Maybe a friar guilty of some transgression was temporarily banished to that upstairs apartment from where he followed the Mass through the slit? Or perhaps some monk chose to live, as hermit there?

The friars worshipped in the chancel, or choir, of the monastery, and the general public worshipped in the nave. Altars for the lay congregation were situated under the central tower, the altars containing tabernacles for Holy Communion. The recesses with stone ledges in the wall were used to store small sacred vessels in. [3]

A general Chapter of the Order was held in Kilmallock Priory in 1340. All went well for the friars until the time of the Reformation, or, to be exact, the year 1541, when the monastery was dissolved and its land and buildings confiscated. The monastery with part of its possessions, was subsequently granted to Nicholas Miagh, sovereign, and the brethren and commonalty of the town, at the annual rent of 53s 8d. Though the friars must have dispersed at the time of the dissolution, they returned to the monastery when conditions improved.

They were there in 1645 to welcome Cardinal Rinuccini, who was on his way to the Confederation of Ki1kenny, and they were there in 1648 when Cromwellian forces attacked the monastery and slew two of the friars before the high altar. The others succeeded in escaping across the river into the town. After that, the Dominicans would never again repossess Kilmallock, even though for the greater part of the next two hundred years priests would continue to be ordained for the Kilmallock Priory; and, as already told in this book, some of these priests ministered from time to time in the district, especially during Penal times.

We find an interesting item relating to the priory in an article published in 1889, regarding a visit paid to Kilmallock in 1864 by a Dr. Russell. In his notes on the visit, Dr. Russell says: "Mr. Buckley (a local antiquarian) told me that he was informed by his grandmother, who was 105 years old when she died, that she had seen part of the abbey roofed by friars of the Order, and used for a chapel." [4]

The ruined Priory of Kilmallock had a very distinguished visitor in the second week of July, 1966, in the person of Cardinal Michael Browne, Master General of the Dominican Order. The Cardinal had come from Rome, to bless the altar of the new Dominican church in Droichead

Nua on the 9th July, 1966. Fulfilling a long cherished wish, Cardinal Browne availed himself of his stay in Ireland to come to Kilmallock and walk among the ruins of the ancient house of his Order in that town. He was accompanied by his secretary, an Italian Dominican priest, Fr. P. Capaccio.

The Cardinal's visit to Kilmallock was completely unannounced. Following his visit to the monastery, he visited the local Catholic church, where he met Fr. Edmond Houlihan, C.C. Canon Cowper, P.P., happened to be away from home that evening, and the Cardinal told Fr. Houlihan that he thought he had known the Canon as a young clerical student in Rome. He also told Fr. Houlihan that his brother, Monsignor Pádraig de Brún, President of U.C.G. (brilliant mathematician and linguist) used to come frequently to Kilmallock to visit his friend, Dean Mulcahy — Dr. Cowper's predecessor as P.P. — who had been a fellow professor of his in Maynooth. And both, according to Cardinal Browne, used spend much of their time together in Kilmallock composing limericks!

The new footbridge, giving easy access to "the Abbey", that was opened on Sunday, October 9th, 1983, also served to bridge the centuries that day. Nobody with any sense of history could ever forget the sight of two white-robed Dominican friars crossing the bridge for the celebration of a Mass in "the Abbey" to mark the official opening of the bridge. They were like ghosts out of the Dominican past of Kilmallock.

A very large crowd of people attended the Mass, the chief concelebrant of which was Fr. John Cahill, O.P., St. Saviour's Priory, Limerick. The other concelebrants were: Fr. K. O Dwyer, O.P., Prior St. Saviour's Limerick, Fr. T. Greene, P.P., Ardpatrick; Fr. E. Houlihan, P.P., Effin, Fr. R. Costello, C.C., Kilmallock; Fr. J. Carr, Kilmallock; Fr. J. Duggan, C.C., Dromin. Also present were James Canon Culhane, P.P., Bruff, and Michael Canon Minihan, retired P.P., Kilmallock. The choir which sang in Irish, English and Latin, was conducted by Seán Naughton. The famous "Kilmallock Chalice", that had belonged to the Kilmallock priory, was used during the Mass. Fr. Cahill, O.P., showed it to the people, and remarked: "It must have felt today that it was coming home again."

Kilmallock Chalices

A few precious heirlooms of the Kilmallock priory survive. The Dominican priory in Limerick cherishes what is known as "the Kilmallock Chalice". This is a chalice that was given to the Kilmallock priory in 1639 in, memory of Maurice Ftizgibbon, son of the last White Knight. An inscription on it reads: "Orate pro Mauritio Gibbon filio comi-

tis albi". A second inscription, also in Latin, tells that the chalice was donated by Callaghan O Callaghan and his wife Joan Butler for the priory of Kilmallock.

In 1812, when there was no longer any likelihood of the Kilmallock monastery ever being restored, a Fr. Kenneally, who was still nominally attached to the Kilmallock house, took the Kilmallock chalice to the priory in Athy, where it remained until 1864, when it was taken to Limerick, since that was the priory nearest to Kilmallock.

The chalice is of silver gilt. It is very solid and heavy, weighing 21 ounces 15 pennyweights. Its height is 9 1/4 inches; the width of the cup is 3 3/4 inches, and the width of the base is 6 inches. The base is octagonal, with plain facets, except one, on which is engraven a figure of the Crucifixion; the terminals are rounded. The knob of the chalice is elongated and pear shaped, with four bosses, each of which has a cherub's head, with renaissance floriation. The cup of the chalice is tulip shaped.

The account of the chalice, from which the above-mentioned description comes, was written by Rev. J. Crowe, and published in the Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Society of Ireland, Vol. IX, 4th series, 1889, p. 216. An additional note, by Robert Day, in the same issue of the Journal (p. 219), says:

"Comparing the size of the Kilmallock chalice with its unusual weight, I would infer that either the stem or base has been loaded, as this loading was sometimes introduced to guard the cup from being overturned, and to prevent the accidental spilling of the sacred elements. The uncommon and beautiful cherub-head decorations upon the knob have a useful as well as an ornamental purpose, as they afford a grip for the three fingers of the hand with which the priest holds and presents the chalice".

Besides that described as "the Kilmallock Chalice" some other chalices from the Kilmallock priory survive. There is the Henry Burgat Chalice (1639), which dates from the time when Henry Burgat was prior of Kilmallock. An inscription on the chalice says: "Pray for the souls of Lord John Burgat and his wife Geneta Ffant." This chalice is preserved in the parish church at Drum, Co. Tipperary.

Another Kilmallock chalice, that also bears the date 1639, is preserved in the parish church at Irishtown, Ringsend. And there is the Vincent O Heyne Chalice, which has always remained in the possession of the Dominicans in Limerick. Finally, there is the Fr. Meade Chalice, which is preserved in St. Mary's parish church, Limerick. The date on this chalice tells its own story. The Kilmallock priory was attacked and burned by Cromwellian forces in 1648; by 1652, when the chalice was made, the

Cromwellian conquest of Ireland was complete. The inscription on the chalice reads: “Frater Dominicus Meaghe me fieri fecit Anno Domini 1652 die 3 Aprilis”.

The Collegiate Church

The large ruined church of SS. Peter and Paul in Kilmallock burial ground is older than the Dominican priory erected in 1291, since there is a reference to “the great church of Kilmallock” under the date 1251 in the *Black Book of Limerick*. But the church has been altered and added to since then — there is for example, a record of its enlargement in 1420 by Maurice Fitzgerald.

The transept, with its tall lancet windows with their sandstone mullions and surrounds, and with its sandstone door jambs, appears to be the oldest part of the church building proper. The use of sandstone in this manner is a 13th or 14th century characteristic, the 15th century showing a clear preference for limestone. Apart from the transept, practically everything else in the church appears to be 15th century.

The chancel, which measures 49 1/2 by 25 1/2 feet, has a large five light window, much in the style of the famous east window in the Dominican priory, without being as strikingly impressive as the latter. The nave, which is 80 by 65 feet, has two aisles which are separated from it by massive plain pointed arcades, four arches to each side. There were also arches springing in a lateral direction from the pillars supporting the existing arcades, and terminating at the walls on each side, but these have been destroyed. The west window has three lights; below it is a well-moulded Gothic doorway, considered by Westropp to be 13th century. [5] Traces remain of a porch that existed on the south side of the building. The inner door of the porch, through which one now enters the church, is 15th century and richly carved.

Incorporated in the church is a round tower. This tower has been the subject of a certain amount of controversy, one view being that it was the campanile of an earlier church that stood on the site. But an examination of the tower on the 28th June, 1986, by members of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, left the members satisfied that the lower courses of masonry in the building confirmed that the structure had originally been a genuine round tower in the usual sense of that term in an Irish, pre-Norman context. Reconstruction of the upper part of the tower did, very likely, take place. But the original tower must have formed part of an ancient monastic settlement, the monastery of Cill

Mocheallóg. The church suffered extensive storm damage in 1720.

The church of SS. Peter and Paul, which was the parish church of Kilmallock, was elevated to the rank of Collegiate Church some time about the end of the 15th or beginning of the 16th century. The exact date may become known when the Papal documents and letters relating to Ireland for that period are published. There were collegiate churches in such places as Galway, Kilkenny, Kildare, and Youghal, and the fact that Kilmallock was granted the privilege of having such a church speaks for the importance of the town at the time in question. Collegiate churches resembled cathedrals in that they had a chapter, or college, of canons attached to them. The canons were housed together, and so led a partly monastic existence. [6]

In the Kilmallock district, the collegiate church, in a far more noticeable way than the Dominican priory, was to figure in the changes brought about by the Reformation. In 1541, the entire college of canons accepted the tenets of the Reformation, and gave their church over to Protestant worship. Twelve years later, however, when Catholic Mary came to the throne in England, the canons quickly returned to the Catholic fold. [7] The collegiate church was now, for some time, to alternate between being Catholic and Protestant, its identification with the one or other religion depending, one might say, on the fortunes of war.

It was probably in Catholic hands for at least some of the period during which Gerald Fitzgerald held sway as last Earl of Desmond; it was in Protestant hands in 1600, and back again in Catholic hands in the early 1640's during the period of triumph of the Irish Confederate forces. Cardinal Rinuccini, on his way to the Confederation of Kilkenny, in November 1645, visited Kilmallock, and was conducted in procession to the church. That was the last known period that it was used for Catholic worship.

The church had close associations with two dramatic episodes in the history of the Geraldines, which are dealt with fully in the body of this book. One was the submission of James Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald in 1573; the other, the rejection of James, the "English Earl", in 1600.

There are some interesting monuments in the church, one being a cadaver monument, that is, a monument on which a decayed or skeleton figure has been carved. This is the 17th century Fitzgerald tomb, of which Helen M. Roe says: "At Kilmallock . . . our whole attention is focussed on a gigantic 'lively' figure of Death holding his fatal dart and

the grave-diggers T-handled spade, whereas the dead man himself receives no more than token reference as a tiny corpse on an open shroud laid lengthwise below Death's right foot." [8]

She continues: "On this tomb should be noted the inscriptions which accompany Death's figure; Above his head, *Momento Mori*, and beneath his feet, *Ecce Finen*. Across the upper part of the slab is *Surgite Mortui venite/Ad Judicium* — Rise ye dead and come to judgement — and close to Death's left shoulder an hourglass, now rather blurred, is shown above the words *Sic Transit Gloria Mundi*. [9]

The front of the tomb has an intricate foliated design in which oak leaves are prominent. The Fitzgerald arms occupy the centre of the design, and the whole is surmounted by the figure of a hound. Underneath is the following inscription: Thomas Fitzgerald, Esquire, died 1630. Mistress Joane Fitzgerald, alias Bourke, relict, built this monument. *Comes Virtutis Invidia*."

The tomb itself has been more fully described as follows: "Large tomb chest and mensa. Stands against east wall of north transept. Sides and ends ornamented by coat of arms, inscriptions, Crucifixion. On the mensa a number of brief inscriptions are scattered about the figure of Death, shown standing frontally and grasping a dart and spade. He is 96cm in height by 20cm across the haunch bones. Beneath the figure's right foot is a shallow slot or depression in which lies the small corpse of the defunct, an open shroud about him. This measures in total length 25cm by 12.5cm in width. A corresponding slot under Death's left foot has been left vacant. Inscriptions in Latin and relief Roman capitals set along the margins of the slab record the death in 1635 of Maurice FitzGerald, husband of Elena FitzHaryes. On the side of the tomb, accompanying a finely carved shield of the Fitzgerald arms, a further inscription records the death of Thomas FitzGerald, father of Maurice, and states that the monument was erected by Mistress Joane Bourke, relict of Thomas and mother of Maurice." [10]

Elena FitzHaryes (Fitzharris) very likely was of the Fitzharris family of Clonodfoy (later known as Castleoliver), and Joane Bourke very likely belonged to the Bourke family of Brittas or Castleconnell.

The Verdon tomb, which is situated in the transept, is more elaborately carved than the Fitzgerald tomb. As the Latin inscription on the tomb informs us, it was erected in 1627 by Walter Coppinger to the memory of John Verdon (The Knight of the Golden Spur) and his wife, Dame Alsona Haly. The former died in 1614 and the latter in 1626. The upper slab of the tomb exhibits large relief effigies of John Verdon — here

styled “Eques auratus” — with the golden spur prominently portrayed, and of his wife Alsona. Further up the stone are three richly carved heraldic shields and arms; and the top panel of the stone has figures of angels and many decorative devices.

There is another Verdon monument in the form of a flat slab, the head of which touches one of the pillars that separate the nave from the aisles. The slab bears a coat of arms with a lion crest, and with a Latin inscription in Roman capitals, telling us that the monument was erected by James Verdon in memory of his father, George Verdon, one time sovereign of Kilmallock, who died on 2nd May, 1632; and of Anastasia Verdon, who died on 18th December, 1597. [11]

There are portions of what appear originally to have been the ends of an altar tomb scattered about; one piece bears a shield depicting a Crucifixion, with the date 1594; above it the letters INRI, and below a portion of a scroll with an inscription ending “. . .enexere Beatet.” [12]

Between the first-mentioned Verdon and Fitzgerald tombs, and just to the left of the entrance to the choir, or chancel, is the Blakeney tomb, which bears the arms of the family, with the motto: “Auxilium meum ab alto.” The inscription, which is in English, reads: “Here lieth the body of Lieutenant William Blakeney, of Thomastown, who deceased the last of March, AN. DOM. 1664.”

William Blakeney received a grant of 450 plantation acres in the townlands of Thomastown and Gortnepequiney at the time of the Cromwellian Plantation. The memory of the Blakeneys still survives in the district in the townland name Mountblakeney.

Another 17th century monument, this in the form of a flat slab, has incised lettering which states: “Heare leyeth the boddy of Eliz., the daughter of Daniel Webb of Rachanon, who departed this life the 14th day of May, 1684.”

There is an imposing Evans Mausoleum, erected in 1850 by J. Eyre Evans, of the Ash Hill family; and there are a couple of monuments to the Holmes family of Maiden Hall. The Thomas Pollard, who died in 1831, aged 50 years, and to whom there is a headstone, was probably the owner of that Pollard’s Inn in Kilmallock, at which the Bianconi coaches used stop.

In its final phase as a Protestant place of worship, only the choir of the old collegiate church was used as a church. Some of the old Catholic families of Kilmallock and district seem to have retained burial rights in the nave, for we find there headstones to them dating from the 18th and 19th centuries — Meades, Flemings, Kearnys, Fants, etc. There

is a headstone to Thomas Meade who died in 1786 aged 50 years; another to a Patrick Kearny who died in 1733, aged 68; another to a Michael Fleming who died in 1750, aged 53 years. and another to a Mrs. Elmer Fleming who died in 1780, aged 75 years.

On the south side of the entrance to the choir is a mural tablet erected by Mrs. Ellen O Callaghan, née Crowe, to her granduncle, Rev. John Fant, who died in 1808, aged 59 years. Fr. Fant was P.P. of Kilmallock from 1786 to 1808. There is also a monument erected by Laurence Mac Namara for his wife Mary, née Fitzgerald, who died in 1754, aged 50 years.

The end for the church as a place of worship came on the night of 22nd July, 1935, when the choir, in which Church of Ireland services had for long been conducted, was destroyed by fire.

Other Churches

Church of St. Mocheallóg on Kilmallock Hill

St. Mocheallóg's ancient church on Kilmallock Hill has already been dealt with in Chapter 2 of this book. It is from this very early church of Mocheallóg — *Cill Mocheallóg* — that Kilmallock takes its name. St. Mocheallóg is said to have flourished in the second half of the 6th and early part of the 7th century. The ruins of the church are situated on the gentle slope of Kilmallock Hill, on Patrick O Sullivan's farm, and close to Noel Collins's house which has been aptly named "Cois Cille". The length of the church would appear to have been about 22 1/2 feet, and it was about 12 1/4 feet wide. The walls, which are now only about two feet high, are constructed of large unmortared stones, and are about 3 feet thick.

The church would appear to have been built on some kind of raised platform, roughly elliptical in shape. The platform has a stone facing, and at one point is about 4 feet high. Or perhaps what appears to be the stone facing may, in fact, be the remains of a surrounding wall? Burials once took place within the platform area, and a number of stones jutting above ground level may be grave markers.

Kilmihill Church

From its name, Kilmihill, *Cill Mhichil*, the Church of (St.) Michael, it is obvious that there was once a church dedicated to St. Michael in this townland. The site is not known.

Ardovelane Church

Ardovelane is now known as Mountcoote. Ardovelane church is

mentioned in White's list of churches, a list thought by Lenihan to be a copy of a list dating to the episcopacy of Cornelius O Dea, who was Bishop of Limerick from 1400 to 1426. [13] In the reference in the list to the church of Ardovelane it is stated that "scarcely any traces remain." Begley says there was no church there in 1615. The church belonged to the Bishop's table. The exact location of the site is not now known.

Tankardstown Church

The remains of the former parish church of Tankardstown — also called Ballyhankard (*Baile Thancaird*) in early church documents — are situated in the townland of Tankardstown South. Only sections of the walls remain. The following description is given in O Donovan's *Survey Letters of Limerick* (1840):

"It is forty-three feet long by twenty-three feet eleven inches in breadth. The east gable is almost level with the ground, adjoining the east, about eighteen feet in length of the south wall retains its original height (about twelve feet). There is then a large breach on this wall, evidently where the doorway was placed. About six feet in height of the west gable and a portion of the north wall adjoining it remain; the remainder of the north wall is almost enthely destroyed with the exception of a small portion adjoining the east, which retains its original height. The walls are about three feet one inch in thickness, and their features are so injured as not to be capable of description."

The Church was dedicated in 1410 to St. David, patron of Wales, whose feast falls on the 1st March.

It is not known when it was last used for Catholic worship, but it would certainly have been in Protestant hands by the second half of the 17th century, since all the old medieval Catholic churches had been taken over by then. Lewis Prytherch, an English-born Protestant clergyman, was appointed to a number of benefices in the Kilmallock area in the closing years of the 17th century, These benefices included Athlacca, Bruree, Dromin, Effin, Kilfinane and Tankardstown. Reporting as Rector of Tankardstown in 1700, Prytherch says:

"Tankardstown . . . is a Rectory in the donation of the Rt. Revd. Fr. in God, the Lord Bishop of Limerick, from whom I have it. It has twelve acres of Glebe on the south of the church in little closes contiguous; and about two acres more in the land of Ballygibbon (Ballygibba), that lie loose without bounds in the field that is east of the highway." [14]

The fact that Prytherch, when mentioning the church, makes no reference

as to its condition — as he does in the case of the churches in Effin and Bruree, which he says are in ruins — would seem to indicate that the church was usable in 1700. According to a local tradition, the church, which was thatched, was ultimately burned by a man named Collins. It must have been a ruin by the second half of the 18th century, for a number of headstones within the walls of the church date from that period. There is one to Patrick Wall, who died in 1764, aged 38; one to William Hickey, who died in 1778, aged 52; and one to David Wall, of Ballynaught, who died in 1790, aged 68.

Ballingaddy Church

The old church of Ballingaddy is in a very ruinous state, the east and middle gables having long since been razed to the ground. The west gable and the side walls of the nave have survived. There was a window in the south wall (in the choir portion), ten feet from the east gable, but its features are defaced. There were two windows on the part of the wall which belongs to the nave, but they have been destroyed. In this wall, too, some twelve feet from the west gable, was the doorway; this also has been destroyed. The west gable had a quadrangular window, measuring six feet eight inches by three feet ten inches, and there was a window in the north wall of the nave. The church was dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mary in 1410. [15] It belonged to the Collegiate Church of Kilmallock.

Ardkilmartin Church

The name Ardkilmartin derives from *Ard Chill Mhártain*, meaning "the Height (High ground) of St. Martin's Church". The scant remains of the church are located in Ardkilmartin burial ground, in the extreme north-east of Kilmallock parish, close to Bulgaden. There are a number of references to the church, under its Latin name, *Capella Martini*, in the *Black Book of Limerick*; and it is also mentioned in the *Civil Survey of Limerick* (1654), in the specifying of one of the boundaries of Patrick Kearney's lands — "the highway from Ballycullane to ye Church of Ard Kill Marten". The church belonged to the Collegiate Church of Kilmallock. It was dedicated in 1410 to St. Martin, whose feast is observed on the 11th November.

The Chapel of St. John

The only record we have of this church is the reference in White's list of churches, which probably dates from the early 15th century, and which mentions "The chapel of St. John betweenthe bridge and St. John's Gate,

Kilmallock." [16] That would put the church somewhere between the present Catholic church and the North Bridge.

Castles and other Structures

John's Castle

John's Castle stands in the centre of the roadway at the junction of Sheares Street and Sarsfield Street. A fine peel tower, it is about 60 feet high, and is battlemented in Irish style. It was the citadel of the town. In later times it served various purposes — an arsenal during the War against Cromwell, meeting place of the Corporation, a school, a blacksmith's forge. The castle has two wide arched openings on the ground floor, placed opposite each other, one at the Sheares Street side, the other at the Sarsfield Street side. This has led to the suggestion that the castle was originally a town gate, and that it was only when the town expanded to include what is now Sheares Street that John's Gate was erected. John's Gate, all trace of which has long since vanished, stood somewhere between the gate of the Catholic church and the convent gate.

Blossom Gate

Blossom Gate, in Emmet Street, is the sole surviving gate of the four town gates of Kilmallock — or five gates, if one includes the Friars' Gate which gave access from the Dominican priory to the town. The present gate, which is probably 16th century, is in an excellent state of preservation, and is one of the finest examples of a town gate to be found in the country. In medieval times, the original gate that stood on this site was called "Blapat", this being a corruption of a bilingual name formed from the Irish *bláth*, a flower, and the French *porte*, a gate. Combined, these elements gave *Bláth-porte*, Flower-Gate; hence, the present name, Blossom Gate. In the not so distant past the gate was sometimes referred to as "the Pigeon Castle".

The Town Walls

The old town walls constitute that part of the physical heritage of Kilmallock that is most under threat. A part of the wall at the rear of Sarsfield Street was demolished recently; and even as these lines are being written, other sections of the wall are faced with the threat of destruction, in some cases because they are thought to be in danger of collapse; in other cases, for other reasons.

Because of the threat to the wall, members of the Urban

Archaeological Society paid an emergency visit to Kilmallock in 1986, and, having carried out a survey of the wall, prepared a report, in the course of which it was stated:

"Kilmallock is one of about six Irish towns which retains a long stretch of its medieval wall. In north and east Munster, only two towns have similar surviving stretches, Fethard, Co. Tipperary, and Limerick city. The stock of medieval town walls is very limited, and for this reason alone every endeavour should be made to ensure its preservation.

The threatened stretch of wall is part of a line of wall 575m. long extending from Blossom Gate to the rear of SS. Peter and Paul's parish church. Generally, the wall survived in good condition, although it is overgrown in places with ivy. Its thickness averages 1.45m to 1.5m and its surviving height varies from 2m to 5m. It is difficult to date precisely, but it is known that Kilmallock received a murage grant in 1374, and the wall almost certainly dates to about that time. The archaeological importance of the wall is beyond doubt."

Old Town Houses

One of the old town houses — one of the many that stood there as late as the 1820's — survives in Sarsfield Street, at the right hand side of the street as you travel from John's Castle towards the cross. It is probably late 16th or early 17th century. Originally it had three storeys, but the top storey was removed in recent times. It is now used as a store by Edmond Cronin. Inside, it is a very spacious building, stretching back a very considerable distance from the street, and giving a good idea of the size of these once proud cut-stone mansions of Kilmallock. Across the road, but nearer to John's Castle, one notices the long tall line of wall running back from Mrs. Bluett's shop, beside the Celtic cross commemorating the Fenians. The long wall was the side wall of one of the old town houses, and it shows how far back they reached. It will be remembered that the 1600c. map of Kilmallock shows the houses on each side of Sarsfield Street in double, and in some places even triple, rows.

Another of the old town houses survives at the same side of the street as that with the house owned by Edmond Cronin; but it is further towards the cross. It is not visible from the road, however, as it is at the rear of Michael Fogarty's house, which faces the street. It would appear to be 17th century.

It is likely that many of the existing houses in Sarsfield Street date from the 16th or 17th century, but are not now immediately

recognisable as such because of altered and modernised facades.

Other Castles in Kilmallock parish

Of at least six castles that once stood within the bounds of the present parish of Kilmallock, only one, John's Castle, now survives. The Civil Survey (1654) mentions a number of castles as existing in the town of Kilmallock, but these, most likely, were not castles in the strict sense of the word but large cut stone mansions. John's Castle has already been dealt with in this section, and the other castles are listed below.

Tankardstown: The site of this castle, which is shown on the Ordnance Survey map, is on Hennessys' lands, in Tankardstown North. Part, at least, of the castle was standing in 1828, for the Limerick Grand Jury Presentment Book for the Spring Assizes of that year specifies the acceptance of a tender for the repair of "196 perches of the road from Bruff to Charleville between the cross of Ballygibba and the castle of Tankardstown." All trace of the castle — apart from the memory of its site — was gone when the Ordnance Survey was being carried out in 1840. *The Survey Letters* record that the old people of the district called the castle *Caisleán Bhaile an Áirithe*. The castle belonged to the de Lacys.

Ballygibba: This castle is marked on the Down Survey map of the 1650's, but no trace of it now remains. Local tradition says it stood somewhere in the area now occupied by John Lynch's farmyard in Ballygibba South, a short distance south-east of Ballygibba cross. A battle is said to have been fought in the High Field, which lies a short distance west of the reputed castle site. This castle also belonged to the de Lacys.

Courtenruddery (Cúirt an Ridire): This was the castle of the White Knight. The *Civil Survey* mentions "Courtenruddery, an old ruinous castle, and waste mill on river Gleane (Lúbach) outside the town walls, having the river to the west and the (Dominican) Abbey land to the south." No trace of the castle now remains, but its site is known. It stood on the right bank of the Lúbach, in the townland of Abbeyfarm, couple of hundred yards upstream from the North Bridge.

Millmount: The site of the castle so named is marked on the Ordnance map, but in the townland of Gotoon. Westropp, in his *Ancient Castles of the County of Limerick* (p. 193), says: "The railway now crosses its foundations."

Prappinye (Praípiní): In the reference to this small division of land (20 acres) in the *Civil Survey*, we are told that here "stands a small butt of an old castle." From a comparison of the particulars in the *Civil*

Survey with the contemporary Down Survey map, it would appear that Prappinye formed part of the modern townland of Ardyoul. No trace of the castle remains

HOLY WELLS

There are a number of holy wells in Kilmallock, but no pattern is now observed. The holy wells are:

Tobereendoney: *Tobar Rí an Domhnaigh*, meaning, "the King of Sunday's Well." This was the original name of the well, which is situated on the roadside at Deebert. Nowadays, it is called the Black Dog Well, because of a ghostly black dog that was supposed to have appeared there. It is a circular stonelined well, and over it is a small statue of Our Lady in a little wooden shrine. It has not been much frequented in recent times. The water of the well is said to cure eye ailments, and a trout is seen in the well by those cured.

A story recorded in the 1930s tells how a Kilmallock man had gone to America many years before that. When he returned home he was blind. He was carried to the Black Dog Well and did the rounds there. Suddenly, his sight was restored, and he saw a golden fish rise to the surface of the water.

Some confusion seems to have arisen as to whom the well was dedicated, later belief being that it was dedicated to the Virgin Mary. But the old name of the well, *Tobar Rí an Domhnaigh*, clearly shows that it was originally dedicated to the Deity. Caoimhín O Danachair says: "Thirteen wells (in Co. Limerick) are dedicated to *Rí an Domhnaigh* — the King of Sunday — one of the titles of the Deity. This devotion seems to be typically Irish, and also is probably very old." [17]

Tobereendoney, Lady's Well, St. Brigid's Well, Tobermihill

The 1840 Ordnance map shows three holy wells in close proximity to one another in the townland of Ballingaddy South. The wells are named as: Tobbereendoney (*Tobar Rí an Domhnaigh*), Lady's Well and St. Brigid's Well. Two of the wells still exist, but the third has been closed up. O Donovan, in his *Field Names Book* (1840), noted that the wells were "not much frequented at present."

Less than half a mile further south, in the townland of Kilmihill, there is a holy well which is called Tobermihill in the 1840 map, though sometimes the 'm" of the name is aspirated by the local people who pronounce the name "Tuberveeheel". Both forms of the name derive from *Tobar Mhichil*, the well of (St.) Michael.

Doubtful Wells.

There are also in the parish some supposed holy wells which Caoimhín Ó Danachair describes as "doubtful wells". One such is Tobernaguppaun — *Tobar na gCupán*, the well of the Cups — in Bawntard South; another is Toberkinangle — *Tobar Cinn Aingil* — the Well of the Angel's Head — in Glenfield. Both *Tobar na gCupán* and *Tobar Cinn Aingil* are marked on the 1840 map.

Not marked on the 1840 map is a well that is situated in that part of the townland of Kilmallock Hill which lies east of the road to Limerick. The well is situated north of the road to Quarry Hill, very close to the left bank of the little stream called Áth an Trasnáin, which flows into the Lúbach a short distance further on. Incidentally, the final stretch of this stream was very neatly lined with stone, but most of the lining was removed during recent drainage works. That the well on the bank of the stream was considered a holy well is evidenced by the fact that memories survive of votive offerings, such as Rosary beads, being left on a bush that grew beside the well.

There was also said to be a holy well in Tankardstown. O Donovan (*Ordnance Survey Letters*) says: "The inhabitants say that there was formerly a holy well (the name of which is forgotten) in the townland of South Tankardstown, not far from the old church."

Leper Hospital

It would appear that there was a leper hospital south of Kilmallock in medieval times. That section of the Civil Survey of 1654 that relates to the old parish of Kilmallock lists a piece of land, 4 plantation acres in extent, which it calls the Spittleland, and describes as a commons. According to the Civil Survey, the Spittleland was contiguous to Portauns. The 1840 Ordnance map shows a Spittle Bridge in the northern part of the townland of Portauns, near where the Green Road branches off from the Kilmallock/Ráthluirc road. The element "Spittle" in the names Spittleland and Spittle Bridge derives from the Irish Spidéal, meaning hospital. Spittle Bridge is about half a mile south of Kilmallock, and somewhere in its vicinity must have been located the ancient leper hospital. Gerard Lee thinks the hospital may have been under the jurisdiction of the Knights Hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem at the hospital of Any, around which later grew the Co. Limerick town of Hospital. [18]

27

Some Lore and Songs of Kilmallock

Our Co. Limerick Kilmallock is not the only place to have been so called. There is a townland of Kilmallock (originally it was a parish) near Enniscorthy, in Co. Wexford; and it would appear that Kilmallock was the old name of the district in which the town of Gorey, also in Co. Wexford, is situated. Laois, too, had a Kilmakellocke, or Kilmallock; it is mentioned in the *Calendar of State Papers, Ireland*, 1606 - 1608, p.61. And there is a Kilmakillogue (Cill Mocheallóg) on the Beara peninsula, in South-west Ireland.

It is even possible that Scotland had a place named Kilmallock. In Scottish Gaelic poetry of the 17th century there are a number of references to a place called Cill-mo-Cheallaigh (i.e. Cill Mocheallóg). It seems however that nobody in Scotland now knows the location of any place that was called Cill-mo-Cheallaigh, so it may well be that the references are, in fact, to Kilmallock in Co. Limerick. The references, it must be confessed, are not very flattering to Kilmallock, and obviously came from a background of Scottish folklore in which the name Kilmallock had become synonymous with stupid acts, or very unfair judgements. In one of the Scottish Gaelic poems in question we are told of a great injustice done to a man; and then occur the lines:

Cha tugadh an Cill-mo-Cheallaigh
Breath bu chlaoineí [1]

(Not even Kilmallock gave a more perverse judgment)

The story behind the Kilmallock judgment is as follows: "A man stole a cow, which he carried home in a cart drawn by a horse. He was brought before the court in Kilmallock, where his case was heard before an all-woman jury. After much deliberation the jury found the man not guilty, but sentenced the horse to be hanged!

The Kilmallock Fire

Dr. Dáithí Ó hÓgáin, of the Department of Irish Folklore, UCD, told me

that he came across the following proverb somewhere in *Irishleabhar no Gaedhilge*:

Tine Chill Mocheallóg
Fód agus leathfhód.

This translates into English as:- The Kilmallock fire: A sod and half a sod. It meant that the people of Kilmallock were sparing of fuel — and who would blame them, seeing that they were remote from turf bogs!

The Fenian Route

Formerly, funerals going from Kilmallock church to the local burial ground did not take the short route up the town but went the long way, down by the North Bridge and around by Quarry Hill. And, at times, an even longer route was followed, via Garrynoe and Kilmallock Hill, and over by Quarry Hill. This route was known as "the Fenian Route".

Bean Si

Tom Clifford worked on the Mount Coote estate. There was an old building on the lands, and cows that were near calving were kept in it. On such occasions Tom would spend the night in this isolated house, keeping an eye to the cows. There was a fireplace in the building, and he would light a fire in it, so that he was quite comfortable while he kept his vigil. One night that he was keeping vigil, and reading to while away the time, he was startled to hear the sound of crying approaching the house. It came right up to the door, then slowly receded. Next morning he heard the news that his father-in-law had died in Kilmallock hospital, and realised it was the banshee (*bean si*) he had heard the previous night.

Ghost

The ghost of a woman used to be seen on the Glenfield road. Some of those who claimed to have seen the ghost described the figure as being that of a small woman in black; others thought the figure was that of a nun. On one occasion the ghost was seen leaving the road and going across the field in the direction of the mound called Crochta. One theory was that the ghost was that of a woman who had drowned herself.

Another Ghost

A man living in Sarsfield Street. Kilmallock, whose veracity is beyond doubt, told me, some ten years ago, that on a number of occasions he had seen the figure of a strange woman pass through his bedroom. She was

dressed in a style of costume that my informant considered to be several centuries old. Many of the houses in Sarsfield Street, though now with modern facades, date from the 16th or 17th century.

Address to the Members of the Kilmallock Temperance Society

O Temperance! Celestial Maid!
The joys are thine that ne'er shall fade.
In religion's pure garb arrayed
Thou comest chastely smiling.
Thrice welcome to our Emerald Isle,
All hail thy mild benignant smile.
Though bigots frown and rage the while
To thee I'll sing, thou soul and spring
Of every joy that health can bring,
Thus life's dull cares beguiling.

Kilmallock's sons, ye favoured few,
To you a nation's praise is due,
To freedom's sacred symbol true.
Your spirit never slumbering.
O R ——n, master of the lyre,
Glows with the bards' and patriots' fire,
When he instructs the trembling wire,
Or pours the song with pathos strong,
And thrills the raptured nerves along,
So sweetly flow his numbers.

Behold yon abbey's mouldering walls,
Her lonely drear deserted halls;
Each sculptured buttress strong recalls
The days of bygone splendours.
Yon shattered bastion mark it well,
Where your illustrious fathers fell.
Kilmallock's records proudly tell
Of hearts, that blest on glory's bed,
Their dearest lifeblood bravely shed
Before they would surrender.

Ye sons of temperance and love
Whose names are registered above,
Along those walls your fathers strove
In battle fierce and gory.
But hark that wailing mournful strain

Their reverend hallowed shades complain,
That unavenged they stalk the plain
And sternly cry while Fame stands by
To burst your country's bonds or die
Like them, for Erin's glory.

And while there is a patriot band
Who rise to ornament the land
And to the last will bravely stand
To free what nature gave them.
Yes! tyrants base full soon shall see,
Though Erin slumbering seems to be,
That she has sons as brave and free
As those who died in battle's pride,
And with their latest breath defied
The foe that would enslave them.

Cast but a glance on history's page
Which speaks the tale to many an age
How reckless of despot's rage
Your sires would yield to no man.
Your strong embattled archway high
Oft echoed to the hosthe cry
Of men who bravely dared to die,
And battle waged when Cromwell raged;
Each fierce despoiler's power engaged
With courage truly Roman.

Let valour linked with liberty
Preside o'er your society,
And sweet fraternal amity
Endear the tie forever.
And when you meet the shafts of fate,
Your sacred pledge inviolate,
May you ascend on wings elate,
And glorious rise to kindred skies,
And chant and sing your loves and joys
Where friends no more shall sever.

("Address to the Members of the Kilmallock Temperance Society" was written by Michael Joyce, of Glenosheen, probably in the l840s. Joyce, who was born in 1818, was a brother of Patrick W. Joyce, historian, authority on placenames and collector of Irish music, and of Robert Dwyer Joyce, the song writer. T.G. Johnson, the antiquarian, in a letter he wrote to Owen Bresnan, of Loch Gur, on the 31st July 1901, referring to

Michael Joyce, said: "Mr. M. Joyce, brother of Robert Joyce, is a marvellous old man, and possibly his brother's superior." Johnson probably meant that he considered Michael Joyce a more learned man than his brother Patrick W., as Robert Dwyer Joyce was dead since 1883. The poem has not previously been published.)

THE NAMELESS PATRIOT

Who was he at Kilmallock, the brave-hearted stranger.
That daringly breasted the fire of the foe?
Like a veteran inured to the battle's grim danger,
He fought till the red hail of death laid him low.
Nameless he fell on the frozen sward dying,
No kind hand to soothe him or bear him away;
The dreary March winds his sad litany sighing,
His death-couch and pillow the blood-moisten'd clay.
When the brave few who struck for their Old Land retreated.
Outnumber'd - not routed - betray'd - not defeated,
Their gallant young comrade, who fought so elated,
Pour'd out his heart's blood where behind them he lay.

When, gory and cold, by the wayside they found him,
Beneath the bleak freezing sky, lifeless and lone,
He wore the lov'd badge of the Virgin around him,
But the name of the patriot to all was unknown.
Was he one of those whom our flunkies, so loyal,
With the foul name, "assassins", so shamefully banned?
Whose faithful young bosoms but longed for the trial
To shed their dear blood for their suffering Land!
But prouder your fate, gallant lover of Erin!
To fall for your country, her native green wearing,
Than bear the high name that some traitors are bearing,
With the gold of the spoiler polluting your hand!

When a warrior falls 'midst his people, victorious,
With the foes of his country laid 'round him in dust,
The emblems of victory, exalted and glorious,
Encircle his statue and hallow his bust.
But, for you, son of Freedom, your fall was as noble—
You died for the Land which your heart longed to save!
No more will her sorrows your young spirit trouble,
Nor tyrant disturb the calm peace of your grave.
But serenely the sweet beams of heaven now glow there,
And greenly the fresh dewy shamrocks grow there,

And lovers of Freedom in future will go there
To bless the repose of the youthful and brave!

(This song, which can be sung to the air called "The Wounded Hussar", was written by Michael Hogan — "The Bard of Thomond" — about the Unknown Fenian who was killed in the attack on Kilmallock police barracks on the morning of the 6th of March, 1867. As told in the chapter on the Fenian Rising in Kilmallock, in this book, the identity of the Unknown Fenian would now appear to have been satisfactorily established)

"In Praise of Kilmallock Mills lately styled Creed Hall"

My desire to invite my kind muses
To inspire me in this humorous lay,
To write on the pride of all beauties
Where nature has chosen to play
With art in her wanton amusements,
To embellish this curious fine place,
On the ferthe sweet banks of the Lúbach,
The Athens of Europe to grace.

Killocia so known for its splendours*
Beautiful buildings and wall,
More glorious henceforth we'll consider
Whilst o'er it is pending Creed Hall.
Where honour, sweet candour and genius,
With charity lately combined,
To establish a mansion more famous,
Than we now of late days can find.

On the banks of this crystalline streamlet
Pan often plays on his reed;
The muses nor Cupid can't leave it,
Flora nor Ceres indeed.
Aurora was ne'er known to eclipse
This terrestrial Eden at all,
Nor Luna; her sweet radiance
Is shed on the plains of Creed Hall.

The woodcock is here in all seasons,
The cuckoo, the 'crake and the stare;
The partridge, the ostrich and pheasant,
The rabbit, the badger and hare:

*Killocia is the Latin name for Kilmallock.

The turkeys, the geese and sun eagle,
For domestic play you'll find all,
With reynard abaying with the beagles,
On the heavenly plains of Creed Hall.

From the road its bridge roaring amazes
The traveller, hero and tar,
Astonished, quite frantic he gazes,
Tho' hardened in feats, fights and wars.
From the wonders of Babel nor Egypt,
The Nile nor Niagaran great fall,
He swears there is nothing to equal
The roaring cascade of Creed Hall.

This site has invited keen comment,
Her mill for to place on this shore,
Which the pride of our isle is in earnest,
And never yet equalled before.
Its wrights they are bright sons of genius,
Who in science and rare wit pass all;
Wallace and Mac Grath are both famous
For having completed Creed Hall.

Jubal, the fine son of genius,
Who metallic bracing first taught,
Nor Vulcan, the husband of Venus,
Who surpassed the deity in thought.
From Etna's deep cells nor Vesuvius,
They never produced yet at all
Such grand works as are planned by Nunan
For mechanical use in Creed Hall.

There harmony, concord and union
For honest communion combine,
All serving to the happy infusion
Of the virtuous and prudent O Brien,
Who, for honesty, candour, demeanour,
And integrity is pleasing to all,
May long live in confident favour
With Edward and James of Creed Hall.
If the great of this neat ferthe nation
Would now but in earnest take heed
Of what good has been in his station,

By this resident great man, James Creed;
They would see how the work of poor creatures
Would be by such patrons relieved,
Then harmony, love and good nature
Would rancour and hatred succeed.

(Kilmallock Mills, which were to the right of the road, between Wolfe Tone Street Bridge and the new ring road near the creamery, were built by James Creed in 1807 — the date of their erection is given on the carved stone above the entrance to the mills, which is more of less opposite the entrance to the Church of Ireland church. The poem in praise of the mills was written in 1828 by the Gaelic poet Eoghan Caomhánach, or Eugene O Cavanagh, a native of Hospital. Eoghan's first language was Irish, and it was in that language that he wrote practically all of his poetry. He was far more at home with Irish than with English. He was a hedgeschool master, and was acquainted with the classics, as his numerous classical allusions in the poem testify. The text is from manuscript ADD 27946 in the British Museum, and is reproduced here by courtesy of the Museum. The poem has not been published before)

THE OLD KNOCKSOUNA BOAT

It was the month of August,
The truth to you I'll tell
About a little sailing vessel,
Of course you all know well.
It crossed the broad Atlantic,
I'll have you all to note,
And 'tis known in other countries
As the Old Knocksouna Boat.

Our Captain's name was Conway,
A sailor bold and grand,
And 'twas many the time, my boys,
He steered into a foreign land.
We are anchored now at present,
Near the old Kilbreedy moat,
And we're waiting for the final trip
In our Old Knocksouna Boat.

We met a great disaster
One day near Cappaquin —
We lost a noble seaman
Whose name was Edmond Finn.
Twas early in the morning

We got the single note,
And we nailed it to the mainmast
Of our Old Knocksouna Boat.

'Twas early then one morning
Our sailors woke in glee.
For we struck another seaport town,
They call it "Sweet Bruree".
Inside at Jimmy Murphy's
We changed a ten pound note,
And 'twas there we oiled the gearwheel
Of our Old Knocksouna Boat.

Our sailors are all scattered now,
And ne'er will we meet again
Back in dear old Ireland
Where we were born in;
And when we're leaving Ireland
'Tis very few will know't —
That we'll ne'er again return
In our Old Knocksouna Boat.

(This song about a fictitious craft has been attributed to that great Kilmallock man, William H. O Sullivan. It is now usually sung to the air of "The Garden where the Praties Grow")

KILMALLOCK PRIORY

Consoling thoughts and words will not restore
These broken walls, these battered towers that rise,
Like hands appealing to the heedless skies
To fill the place with life and love once more.
A prey to vandals, ivy-clad and hoar,
The naked windows stare like unseeing eyes.
Forsaken now, the noble ruin defies
The might of rains and wind that thro' it roar.

Oh, I would rather take each scattered stone,
And place it back where once it had been set;
Raise high the walls and roof: I would atone
For ages of neglect. Should I forget
That here within, Christ reigned upon His throne,
And here before Him, saint and sinner met.

(This poem. by John P. Barton, was first published in the *Capuchin Annual*, 1964).

BY THE WINDING RIVER

The winding river stills its song,
Where ' tween the ruins it rushes on,
As if it sensed the reverent air
About this holy place of prayer.

On yonder side a church in ruins
Stands circled round by rustic tombs;
There bard and soldier sleeping lie,
To wait the trumpet call on high.

Sad church that leans on Celtic tower,
In vain bewails her fateful hour,
When Geraldine, a cowardly knave,
Forswore his faith his lands to save.

Here on this bank, close river's side,
Spreads ancient ruin of abbey wide;
Its battered tower, four-cornered stands,
And casts long shades o'er abbey lands.

The eastern slender window rare
Admits the dawn to chapel bare,
Bereft, of altar, Mass and friar,
Through Cromwell's wrath and Murrough's fire.

Between the walls of ageing stone,
In dusky shade, rests many a bone.
Five gables gaunt their vigil keep,
Where prelate, monk and warrior sleep.

Ere river winds a second time,
Its pools reflect a sight sublime
Of soaring spire and towering shrine
New home of God, the Lord divine.

Beneath the church's lofty height,
Is convent home of holy quiet;
Nor dare the river raise its song,
Where here in peace it lingers long.
Now keeping guard this ancient store,
The living Church will ever more

With these old ruins concelebrate,
Conjoined in one undying Faith.

("By the winding River" was written by Fr. Thomas O Donnell, P.P., Athea, a native of Kilmallock, whose family owns the farm on which the ruined Dominican priory is situated).

KILMALLOCK TOWN

Kilmallock's town looks proudly down on Limerick's Golden Vale,
Its crumbling wall and castle tall could tell us many a tale,
Of golden fame, now but a name, where flows the Lúbach brown,
For its ancient sway has passed away from old Kilmallock town.

Twas the Geraldines with those designs who built the old town there,
To hold the land and to command the pass of dark Red Chair;
That lovely spot it chose and got its name of fair renown
From Mocheallóg's cill, upon the hill, close by Kilmallock town.

The abbey fair lies on the plain outside the old town wall,
Though many stand, in Ireland, tis the fairest of them all.
The brave, the fair, are buried there, from belted earl down,
In the hallowed soil of that old pile, close by Kilmallock town.

Some buildings rare a traveller there, saw when they were in their prime
Recalled to him a city in afar off eastern clime;
And since that day, historians say, the tale is handed down,
That's how the name of Balbec came to old Kilmallock town.

In pensive mood as I conclude, upon the town I gaze,
Where brave men tried and nobly died old Ireland's flag to raise;
The fight is done, the battle's won, the forces of the Crown
No more hold sway, they're gone for aye, from old Kilmallock town.

(Composed by Michael Normoyle, former native of Ardkilmartin, and first published in Kilmallock News, November, 1982)

KILMALLOCK

What ruined shapes of feudal pomp are there
In the cold moonlight fading silently?
The castle, with its stern baronial air,
Still frowning, as accustomed to defy;
The Gothic street, where Desmond's chivalry
Dwelt in their pride; the cloistered house of prayer;

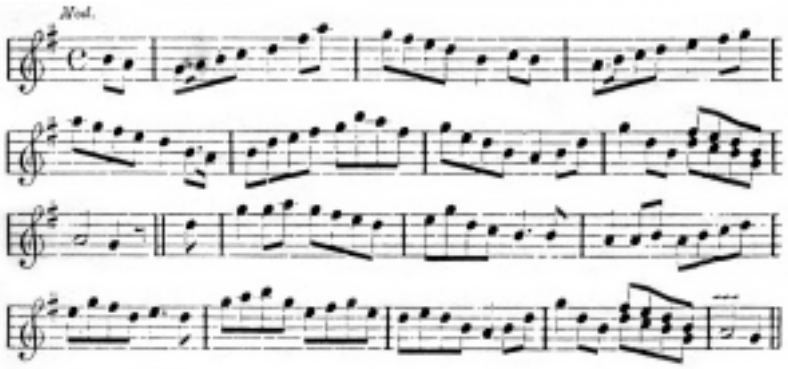
The gate towers, mouldering where the stream moans by
Now but the owl's lone haunt, and fox's lair.

Here once the pride of princely Desmond flushed,
His courtiers knelt, his mailed squadrons rushed,
And saintly brethren poured the choral strain,
Here Beauty bowed her head and smiled and blushed.
Ah, of those glories what doth now remain?
The charnel of you desecrated fane!

— Aubrey de Vere

A number of other poems and songs relating to Kilmallock will be found scattered through this book.

THE ROAD TO KILMALLOCK



This lovely jaunty tune called "The Road to Kilmallock" is taken from P.W. Joyce's *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs*, first published in 1909.

28

Churches, Clergy and Members of Parliament

Catholic Church

The foundation stone of SS. Peter and Paul's Catholic church in Kilmallock was laid in 1879. The building of the church progressed over a number of years, the formal opening not taking place until 1888. Even then the tall graceful spire had not yet been erected, nor had all the interior decoration been completed. The parish priest who initiated the building of the church was Very Rev. Fr. Thomas Downes, D.D., who was P.P. of Kilmallock from 1841 to 1890.

The builder was Walsh, of Foynes. Among the tradesmen who came to Kilmallock to work on the building were some who settled permanently in the town or its immediate environs. These included stonecutter Ned Jackson, from Foynes, and masons Tim Costello and Paddy Kelly, the former also from Foynes, the latter from near Lee's Cross, south-east of Ballingarry. The tradesmen's sheds were located along the townside boundary of the church grounds. The stone for the building was supplied free by William H. O Sullivan from his quarry at Quarry Hill.

Fr. Downes commissioned the eminent architect, J.J. Mac Carthy, to design the church, which , it is generally agreed, is one of the finest examples of parish church architecture to be found in Ireland. Mac Carthy made a close study of the ruins of the medieval Dominican priory and collegiate church in Kilmallock and adapted some of their outstanding architectural features and decorative motifs to the new church, thus, as it were, picking up the rich broken threads of the past and incorporating them into a new and splendid pattern that would symbolise the continuity of the Faith in the parish.

The window at the rear of the high altar is an adaptation of the beautiful 13th century east window of the Dominican priory; and the lovely stained glass window on the epistle side of the sanctuary, facing the sacristy, is a replica of the 15th century traceried window in the south

transept of the priory. A description of the church, published in a brochure issued in 1983. says:

"The basic design of the church, a tall nave flanked by single storey aisles, allows the use of yet another medieval feature, the elegant clerestory windows, which add further light to the nave. Some of the stone carving from the priory is echoed on the top of the red marble pillars which separate the nave and aisles. Another interesting feature is the carved heads of the twelve apostles which act as corbels for the mouldings on the arcades above the pillars and, in turn, direct one's gaze to the pitch pine timbers of the roof.

The mosaics and tiles in the church are also notable. These are richly ornamented in the fashion of the Victorian era. The mosaic of the Crucifixion, featuring a bright blue sky, studded with gold stars and surrounded by varying patterns of flowers, is particularly striking. The sanctuary ceiling has a complex design of leaves and flowers painted on wood. Indeed every feature of this remarkable church is worthy of comment, analysis and admiration. Its basic Gothic style and use of roughly dressed bluish limestone, the strong tower with its graceful spire, the excellently carved doorway with its angels and attractive rose window overhead, are further examples of the overall excellence in design of this church."

Much of the stained glass in the church came from the German firm of Mayer, in Munich; there is also an example of the work of the noted Irish Harry Clarke studios, Windows donated in recent times include one commemorating three 16th century martyrs for the Faith: Bishop Patrick O Hely and Fr. Conn O Ruairc, who were put to death in Kilmallock; and Fr. Maurice Mac Kenraghty. a Kilmallock man, who was put to death in Clonmel. There is also a window to St. Mocheallóg, and windows to two other Limerick saints, Ita and Munchin; and one to St. Brigid. There is a window commemorating Kilmallock-born Bishop Turner, and windows commemorating St. Oliver Plunkett and Padre Pio, and the visit of Pope John Paul II to Ireland in 1979.

Major repairs, including reroofing, were carried out to the church in 1985. Again, to quote the 1983 brochure: "It is important that the contribution made to the parish one hundred years ago by the priests, architect, builder, workmen and especially the people of that time who co-operated to produce such an elegant testimonial to their faith, be protected and cherished. Our church can be truly said to express both physically and symbolically, not alone the very essence of the Living Word today but also the whole heritage of the Christian faith in the parish from its foundation over thirteen hundred years ago."

Church of Ireland Church

St. Peter and Paul's Church of Ireland church, built to replace the church that was burned in 1935, was opened for service in 1938. The architect who designed the new church was F.G. Hicks, a great believer in brick work, although bricks were not commonly used in Irish church building at that time. Another characteristic of Hick's work was the recurring arch. If one stands at the west end of the Kilmallock church one finds that the arches come in series of 3, this obviously being symbolic of the Holy Trinity. There is a definite Byzantine-Romanesque influence in the design of the church. The quadruple of arches over the choir is very striking.

When Bruree Church of Ireland church — which, in its final years, was really a chapel of ease to Kilmallock — was closed, President de Valera, who never lost interest in Bruree, expressed a wish that the east window of Bruree church should be transferred to the nearest Church of Ireland place of worship, which was Kilmallock. It was a stained glass window depicting the Good Shepherd, and in due course it was taken to Kilmallock and inserted in the previously blank east wall of the new church. President de Valera subscribed generously to the cost of having the window removed. It seems that a former Church of Ireland rector of Bruree had instructed him in mathematics, and the President had always remembered that with gratitude.

Three windows at the Gospel side of the Kilmallock church are known as the Three Graces, since they depict the virtues of Faith, Hope and Charity. One of the outstanding features of the church is the lovely quality of the plain honey-coloured glass in the sanctuary, which frequently at morning service, when the sun is shining, suffuses the interior with a wonderful golden rosy colour. The delicate carvings of vines and grapes on the wooden altar table are beautifully executed.

Ballingaddy Catholic Church

This chapel of ease to Kilmallock church, a plain retangular building, dates from the post-Emancipation period, having been erected in 1838.

Pre-Reformation Clergy

We have no continuous record of the parish clergy in Kilmallock before the beginning of the 18th century. Names for the earlier centuries do occasionally occur in contemporary documents for both the old parish of SS. Peter and Paul (Kilmallock) and neighbouring parishes that now form part of Kilmallock parish. The following are some of the names that

occur, and the years to which the references relate, all being pre-Reformation:

1291 *William Leynach, Walter de la Roche, Gregory, Robert Young (mentioned in connection with the expulsion of the Dominicans from Kilmallock; would appear to have been chaplains of Kilmallock)*
1318 *Thomas, chaplain*
1360 *Bartholomew Dullard*
1414 *John Archer, Thomas O Doncha*
1421 *Thomas Gowlys*
1461 *Dermot O Leyn*
1475 *Philip O Ronayn (appointed to Ballingaddy)*
1478 *John O Faelen (replaced William Akhbard, who had died)*
1480 *Thomas Cantulinn*
1487 *William Miagh*
1510 *James Radimund Maurice de Geraldinis (appointed to Tankardstown)*

Parish Priests of Kilmallock

Mortagh Moriarty registered under Penal Laws in 1704 for Kilmallock, Effin, Kilbreedy Minor, Tankardstown and Ballingaddy. He was still alive in 1726. After his death the parish boundaries were adjusted to include only Kilmallock, Tankardstown and Ballingaddy, as at present.

John O Brien succeeded, and was there in 1737, as well as in 1759. He wrote poetry in Irish, and, as An tAthair Seán Ó Briain, was closely associated with the Gaelic poets of the Maigue countryside. He died about 1764.

John O Mahony succeeded, and in 1778 was removed to Dromin.

Patrick Roche, P.P., Dromin, succeeded. Died 1786.

John Fant appointed. He died in 1808, and is buried in the nave of the old collegiate church of SS. Peter and Paul.

David Lee, Effin, succeeded, and seems to have been transferred to Fedamore in 1814.

Michael Murnane succeeded, but resigned in 1837. John Brahan was Adm. until 1840, when he was appointed P.P. of St. Mary's parish, Limerick.

Thomas Downes, D.D., Bruff, appointed, 1841. Built the new parochial church. Died 1890.

Patrick Meehan, D.D., succeeded. Died in 1904.

James O Shea was next P.P. He died in 1927.

John Begley succeeded; transferred to Bruff, 1932. He was the author of

the very fine three-volume history of the Diocese of Limerick.
Cornelius Mulcahy, professor of English in Maynooth, appointed P.P. Died 1961.[1]
James Cowper (Séamus de Cúipéir), D.D., succeeded. Took great interest in parish affairs. Retired 1975. Died same year.
Michael Minihan succeeded. Retired 1982. Died 1984.
David Wall appointed to succeed Canon Minihan in 1982. Died 1984
Gerard Wall (Gearóid de Bhál) succeeded, and is present P.P.

Rectors of Kilmallock
(Records up to late 19th century not complete)

1608	Henry Coyne
1633	Richard Burgh
1637	James Lock
1668	John Mac Neale
1683	Hugh Anderton
1693	John Moore
1766	Robert Lloyd
1778	Daniel Widenham
1787	James Ellard
1836	Joseph Gabbett
1879 - 1881	Robert Hedges Maunsell-Eyre
1881 - 1910	Thomas Aylmer Pearson Hackett
1910 - 1949	Sackville Eastwood Taylor
1949 - 1955	Thomas Victor Perry
1955 - 1971	Hugh Crawford Guernsey (retired 1971)
1971 - 1973	Maurice John Talbot
1973 - 1977	Vacant
1977 to date	Edward Brian Snow [2]

In 1976, in the Church of Ireland divisions, the diocese of Emly was attached to Limerick diocese, and the parish of Aney (Knockainy) was grouped with Kilmallock Union. The cathedral of Cashel also functions as the cathedral of Emly, the cathedral church of St. Ailbe in Emly having been demolished in 1877. In 1822, there were eleven rectors and five curates in the diocese of Emly; technically there is now only one Anglican priest in the diocese, namely the Rector of Kilmallock, the Venerable Brian Snow, who, in addition to being Archdeacon of Limerick diocese is also Rector of Emly.

Representatives in Parliament for the Borough of Kilmallock

(From the year 1585 to the Union)

1585 John Verdon, Thomas Hurley
1613 Henry Verdon, Patrick Kearney
1639 William St. Leger, John Power
1661 John Bridges, Brook Bridges (Murrough Boyle succeeded John Bridges deceased)
1689 Sir. William Hurley, John Lacy
1692 John Ormsby, Robert Ormsby
1695 Standish Hartstonge, Chidley Coote
1703 John Ormsby, Robert Oliver
1713 Sir Philips Coote. Knt., Henry Boyle
1715 Kilner Brazier, George King
1723 John Croker succeeded George King
1725 William Blakeney succeeded Kilner Brazier
1727 Robert Oliver, William Blakeney
1747 Philip Oliver succeeded Robert Oliver
1757 Silver Oliver succeeded Wm. Blakeney
1761 Silver Oliver, Edward Villiers
1768 Thomas Maunsell, Wyndham Quin
1776 William Christmas, John Finlay
1783 Rt. Hon. John Fitzgibbon, John Armstrong
1789 Charles W. Bury
1790 Peter Holmes succeeded John Armstrong, deceased
1797 John Waller, Silver Oliver, Junior
1799 Sir Richard Quin, Bart.
1800 Thomas Casey. [3]

29

Placenames

There are 35 different townland names in the parish of Kilmallock. In arriving at this number a combination such as Bawntard North and Bawntard South was treated as one townland name, Bawntard; Tankardstown North and Tankardstown South as one townland name, Tankardstown, and so on. The division of townlands into North or South, East or West, Upper or Lower, originated at the time of the first Ordnance Survey in the last century.

While the 35 townland names in the modern parish may seem a large number, this number falls very far short of the 119 placenames we find in the *Civil Survey* (1654) for the much smaller area of the old parish of SS. Peter and Paul,which was comprised of the town and its liberties. The modern townlands, all of which are listed below, have the officially recommended Irish form, of their names given in brackets in each case. In some instances, different forms from those now recommended had been in use, and these are mentioned in the discussion on the placenames.

Abbeyfarm: *(Feirm na Mainistreach)*. Older divisions of land in the modern townland area were known as *Páirc na mBrathar* (the Friars' Field) and *Gort na mBrathar* (also meaning the Friars' Field).

Ardkilmartin: (Ard Chill Mhártain) — The Height (High Ground) of the Church of St. Martin.

Ardyoul: *(Ard Uí Aille)* O Hally's Height

Ashill: *(Cnoc Cais)* — the Hill of Cas, or Cas's Hill.

Ballingaddy: *(Baile an Ghadaí)* — the Robber's Townland. Sometimes the townland was called *Baile an Ghadaí Duibh O Dubháin*, the Townland of the Black Robber O Dwan. P.W. Joyce says that the "Black Robber" is commemorated in legends and in placenames all over Ireland, as well as the Highlands of Scotland. [1]

Ballycullane: (Baile Uí Choileáin) — O Cullane's, or Collins's, Townland.

Ballygibba: *(Baile Ghioba*) — Gibbon's or Fitzgibbon's, Townland. The official spelling of this townland name in English is Ballygubba, but the local people always write it Ballygibba. Gioba was a form sometimes used for Giobún
Ballygillane: *(Baile Uí Ghiolláin*) — O Gillane's Townland.
Ballynahowan: (*Baile na hAbhann*) — the Townland of the River.
Ballynamoloogh: (*Baile na mBulbhach*) — the Townland of the Woulfes, from Bulbh, or *de Bhuibh*, the Irish form of the surname Woulfe.
Bawntard: (*Na Bánta Arda*) — the High Grasslands.
Bresheen: (*Buirisín*), the Little Burgage, or Little Borough. O Donovan gives the derivation as Brisin, meaning Broken Land.
Coolroe: (*An Chúil Rua*) — the Red Corner, or Angle: perhaps from the colour of the soil, or the underlying rock.
Cullamus: (*Colamas*) — The derivation of this name is uncertain. The name Collamair was common as a place name, according to Hogan (*Onomasticon Goedelicum*), and it may be that the word Cullamus derived from Collamair, as a slender "r" at the end of a word can sound very like an "s". The likely meaning of Collamair is "coll-amair" — hazel tree boundary, or bordered by hazel trees.
Deebert: *(An Díbeart?*) — As with Cullamus, the derivation of this name is uncertain. It has been suggested that the name came from the Irish word *díbirt,* meaning "banishment" or "expulsion". There is a ford in Deebert called Athadiberty, and in a note in the *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Society* 1870/71 p. 637, it is stated that a Mr. Walsh of Martinstown said, in reference to the ford, that "It was so called, according to tradition, from the defeat and *expulsion* from the district, of a raiding party". But the "diberty" element in "Athadiberty" can scarcely be the word *díbirt*, which is a feminine noun, for in the placename it is treated as a masculine noun (Atha a' ——). Gearóid Mac Eoin, UCG., wondered if the "diberty" in the name might not be the English word "Liberty". In the spoken Irish of Munster a slender "l" often becomes a slender "d". Gearóid cited the name Sruthán a' Líbearta (Liberty Stream) which marks one of the boundaries of the liberties of Galway city. So it is possible that the placename Deebert had something to do with the liberties of Kilmallock.
Fairyfield Glebe: (*Gort an Fhraoigh*) — the Field of Heather, or the Heather field. Here, in the recommended Irish version of the name, we have a case of going back to the original Irish name of the district.
Flemingstown: (*Baile na bPléimeannach*) — the Townland of the Flemings. The Flemings were closely associated with Kilmallock since the 13th century.
Garrynoe: (*An Garraí Nua*) — the New Garden.

Glenfield: (*An Gleann*) — the Glen.
Gortboy: (*An Gort Buí*) — the Yellow Field; perhaps so called from the fact that it produced large crops of butter cups or cowslips — or geosadáns!
Gotoon: (*Geotún*) — ? In a way this is the most puzzling of all the modern placenames of Kilmallock. It appears only at the Ordnance Survey of 1840. If it had existed as early as the mid 17th century it surely would have appeared in the *Civil Survey* in which there are no fewer than 119 placenames from the old parish of Kilmallock. There is a townland of the same name near the town of Hospital, and there is a Gotoon Bridge about three miles south-east of Kilmallock, in the townland of Flemingstown. It has been suggested that the name comes from *goat-town*, in the sense of "goat-enclosure". In Old English "town" was *tun*, and meant "enclosure", "garden", "yard", "farmstead", "cluster of houses or buildings". The pronunciation "toon" for "town" survives in the Scottish dialects of English. In the absence of anything definite as to their derivation, the three Kilmallock names, Cullamus, Deebert and Gotoon, must remain mystery names.
Grainganster: (Gráig Anstair) — Anster's Village. The Ansters were a prominent family in the district in the 17th and 18th centuries. John Anster, poet and scholar, was born in Charleville in 1793.
Kilmallock: (*Cill Mocheallóg*) — the Church of (St.) Mocheallóg
Kilmihill: (*Cill Mhichil*) — the Church of (St.) Michael.
Knocksouna: (*Cnoc Samhna*) — the Hill of Samhain. Celebrations took place on this hill at the Celtic feast of Samhain.
Millmount: (Ard an Mhuilinn) — the Height (High ground) of the Mill, or Mill Height. It is interesting that part of this townland is still known unofficially as Ardvullen, i.e. Ard an Mhuilinn.
Miltown: (*Baile an Mhuilinn*) the Town of the Mill.
Mountcoote: (*Ard O bhFaoláin*) — the Height of the O Phelans. The oldest recorded name of this townland (1201, in *Black Book of Limerick*) was Ardmacwelan, i.e. Ard Mac bhFaoláin, the Height of the Mac Phelans. The Mac subsequently became changed to an "O", and in 1615 we find the form Ardovelan, i.e. Ard O bhFaoláin, the now official Irish form of the name. The name was written Ardovelane up to the time the Cootes changed it to Mount Coote.
Mountfox: (*Móin an Bhoscaigh*) — the Bog, or Flat Lands, of Fox. The Fox family (in Irish, de Bhosc or Boscach) owned Maidstown castle (then known as Ballyvenoge castle), and possessed a large tract of land between Bruff and Kilmallock known as *Pobal Boscach*, "Foxes' Country". All their lands were confiscated at the time of the Cromwellian Plantation. Mountfox is called Moone Ivoskie in the *Civil Survey*.

Portauns: (*Na Portáin*) — the Little Banks. The name must have referred to some mounds or embankments in that area.
Proonts: (*Na Praointe*). This townland name, and the townland name Pruntus, which is found in Co. Cork, were discussed by T.S. Ó Máille in an article in Irish , "Na hAitainmneacha Pruntus, Proonts", in the J*ournal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society*, vol. LXI, No. 193, January-June l956. According to Professor Ó Máille the placename Proonts derives from the early English *fronte*, meaning land that reached to, or was fronted by, a road, a river, or the sea. Proonts would answer to this description, being bounded by a road. Professor Ó Máille was of the opinion that Prontas would he the correct Irish form of the name.
Riversfield: (*Bóthar na bPotairí*) — the Road of the Potters. This is another instance where An Oifig Logainmneacha of the Ordnance Survey has retrieved from oblivion the old name of the townland and given it a new lease of life as the official Irish name of the townland. From the old name we learn that a number of men in the townland were engaged in the making of pottery.
Steales: (*Na Stialla*) — the Portions (of land). In the *Civil Survey* the following divisions of land in the Liberties of Kilmallock are mentioned: Stiellane Inrudderie, Stiellane Inalta. Stiellane Noetie. These are respectively: Stiall an Ridire (The Knight's — White Knight's — Portion), Stiall an Fháltaigh (Wall's Portion), Stiall an Fhaoitigh (White's Portion).
Tankardstown: (*Baile Thancaird*) — Tancred's Townland, Tancred was a Christian name used by the Normans. and later the surname Fitztancred was formed from it.
Treanlewis: (*Trian Lobhais*) — Lewis's Third (a portion of land). The surname Lewis was associated with Kilmallock for centuries.

A detailed study of the Kilmallock placenames in the mid 17th century Civil Survey and Down Survey map would almost take up a volume in itself. Some of the names in the Civil Survey have been dealt with briefly in Chapter 12 of this book. There are 119 different placenames in the *Civil Survey*, but only 111 of them are indexed. Practically all of them are Irish, but rendered phonetically. though not very successfully, in English spelling. Many of the names were obviously those of fields or gardens, as 46 of them begin with the element *Gort*, meaning "field", and 8 begin with the element "Garry", from *Garraí*, mean "garden".

The great preponderance of Irish names shows the continuing strength of the Irish language in the area. We find the highway to Buttevant, now the Glenfield road, described as the "common way called

Boher More" that is, *Bóthar Mór*, the Great Road; and the road running across to Bruree, where it is mentioned as the southern boundary of Moone Ivoskie (Mountfox), is described as the "common way called Crossvoher", that is, *Cros Bhóthar*, the Cross Road.

Somewhere between the now vanished lake, which lay outside the town walls, and the Glenfield road, was Borheenysidoraghta. It is possible that the "s" in the middle of the name is a mistranscription of "f". The substitution of an "f" for the "s" would render the name intelligible as *Bóithrin na Fiodóireachta*, the Little Road of the Weaving.

That part of Kilmallock Hill from which the spectators view the races is called Cnocksiceene in the Down Survey map. Old people, up to quite recently, sometimes called that part of the hill "Chicken Hill", and this would lead one to believe that the "sickeene" portion of the name came from *sicin*, the Irish word for chicken. It has been suggested however that in this name, too, there may have been a mistranscription, the "k" in the middle of the name having been written in error for the letter "f". If this was so, then the hill name could have been *Cnoc Suí Finn*, the Hill of the Seat of Finn.

The great majority of the names appearing in the Civil Survey and on the Down Survey map have long since passed out of use and been forgotten, though it is interesting to find five of these obsolete names surviving in the Holmes Estate Rental covering the years 1831 -58. The five names were:

Ardvillan: spelt Ardovelane in earlier documents; from *Ard O bhFaoláin*, already discussed in this section. In the rental the name applied to part of Mountcoote.

Farranacrossa: *Fearann na Croise*, the Land of the Cross; perhaps church land marked by a cross.

Moneteenaparson: perhaps *Móintín na Pearsan*, the Churchman's Little Bog.

Propeens: Prappinye in the Civil Survey; from Praipíní, meaning clumps of bushes, furze, etc.

Raheenalousigh: *Ráithin an Lobhaisigh*, Lewis's Little Fort.

There is a townland called Blaerake Begg in the Civil Survey; and the Down Survey Map shows in very close proximity to each other two areas of church land called Plyrake. These are, almost undoubtedly, the area of Glebe land shown in the 1840 Ordnance Survey map in the townland of Portauns and bordering the townland of Graiganster.

Blaerake and Plyrake were probably one and the same place. Tom O Doherty, of Millmount, often heard of Plyrauk, which, he says, was owned by S.B. Walsh, but was usually rented to the Baileys. It was eventually purchased by Bill Bailey. Tom O Doherty further added that there was a Mass path along a double ditch which ran from Plyrauk, by Boreen Road, to the top of Lord Edward Street. Could this, one wonders, be a Mass path to the pre-1814 church mentioned in chapter 16?

Other now forgotten placenames appearing in the Holmes Rental include Gurtivant, Gurtnacrina, Grotto and Budaneerla. The last mentioned name would appear to have a phyallic connotation which may be connected with the shape of a division of land shown in the Down Survey map beside the Kilmallock Lough.

We meet some further interesting placenames in the 1840 Ordnance Survey map, and in *O Donovan's Field Name Books*:

Pouladrogoon: Pouladrogoon Bridge is situated on the boundary between Portauns and Tobernea, on the road from Kilmallock to Effin. The name comes from *Poll a' Dragúin*, the Dragoon's Pool. It is said that a dragoon was drowned in a pool in the stream that flows under the bridge. The field that runs east from the road, just north of the stream, was known as the Soldiers' Field.

Aughatrasnaan: *Ath a' Trasnáin,* the Ford of the Cross-piece. This is the name of a stream in the north of the townland of Bawntard North. It formed part of the boundary of the old parish of SS. Peter and Paul.

Aughdhounakirka: *Ath Dhún na Circe*, the Ford of the Fort of the Hen. This is the name of a stream that flows between the townlands of Gortboy and Portauns.

Among local names not mentioned by O Donovan are the following two:

Farranda: *Fearann Dáith*, David's Land. This was the name of the western part of Glenfield. Though long obsolete, the name is still well remembered, and is used unofficially to some extent.

Groe: This name was commonly applied until recently to part of the townlands of Ballygibba South and Tankardstown South at both sides of the road from Tankardstown cross (near Tankardstown burial ground) to Garrynoe cross. It has been suggested that it comes from the English word "grove". This is unlikely. It is more likely that it comes from the Irish. A Karrowgarrowe (*Ceathrú Ghearóid*, Garret's Quarter), is mentioned in one of the Fiants of Elizabeth as being near Kilmallock. The dropping of

the first element in such a name could leave us with a name that would sound like “Groe”.

Commandant Seán T. O’Riordan
1st Galtee Battalion I.R.A.
Who successfully commanded the I.R.A. forces during the attack on Ballylanders R.I.C. Barrack on 27th April, 1920.

30

Names from the Fiants

What are known as Fiants were official authorizations or orders that particular things be done. In the case of the late 16th century Ireland, Fiants very often related to the granting of pardons to persons who had been involved in rebellion or other action against the English Crown. The term *fiant* derives from the latin *fiat*, meaning "let it be done;" **fiant** is used in a plural sense.

Many of the old Norman names associated with Kilmallock will be found in the Fiants relating to the Kilmallock district which are listed below: Wale (Wall), Miaghe (Meade), Blewth (Bluett), Creagh, Fleming, Fitzgibbon, Lose or Lowes (Lewis), Gowle or Gooles (Gould), Lesse or Lacye (Lacy), Verdon, Burgate, Fant. The prefix "fitz" is used frequently in its literal meaning of "son".

We find also names of Gaelic origin such as O Cormaic (a variant of Mac Cormaic), Mac Connoy, Kinraght and Mac Enryckty (i.e. Mac Ionnrachtaigh. angl. Enright), Mac Gillysaghtie (i.e. Mac Giolla Iasachta; angl. Mac Lysaght), Kearney, Haly (Healy), Mac Quoyne. Mac Coyne and Kyne (Quin; the pronunciation "Kyne", etc. arose from the Decies Irish pronunciation of the letter "i" as occurring in O Cuinn, the original Irish form of the name Quin), Hannyne (Hannan), Hurryly (Hurley), Mac Kenry (Mac Eniry), Mac Moelmory (Mac Maolmhuire; this was probably a patronymic), O Follow (i.e. Ó Foghlú, angl. Foley).

The Irish form of some of the Christian names and surnames are fairly well preserved in their attempted phonetic renderings by English officials. Dermod Mac Teig I Naughtin scarcely conceals the correct Irish form, Diarmaid Mac Taidhg Uí Neachtain (Diarmaid, the son of Tadhg O Neachtain); and Donogh buoy O Haghieirn can be nothing other than Donncha Buí O hAithirn, that is, yellow or sallow, Donncha Ó hAithirn (angl. Ahern). Native Irish Christian names, apart from the already mentioned Diarmaid and Donncha, which occur in the Fiants, include Gill

Patrick (Giolla Pádraig), Moriertagh (Muircheartach), Loghlen (Lochlainn).

The trades or callings of some of those listed in the Fiants are given and include tailor, mason, piper, goldsmith, carpenter, chaplain, horseman, and yeoman (a class of small freeholders). Besides, there were burgesses of the town, merchants, and gentlemen (gents).

The year in which each separate Fiant was issued is given:

1559: Pardon to James fitz Henry Creaghe of Kilmallock.

1559: Grant of English liberty to Cornelius O Conoghor of Kilmallock, Philip Wonyn, of the same, tailor, and John O Curmok, of the same, chaplain.

1561: Grant of English liberty of Malachy fitz Davy Mac Connoy and Thady fitz David Mac Connoy, his brother, of Killocia (Kilmallock), Co. Limerick, and their issue.

1563: Pardon to John Mac Quoyne and David Wale, Kilmallock.

1566: Pardon to Gerald Mac Morish, alias Fitzgerald, of Thomastown, Co. Limerick, gent, sheriff of the county; John Myaghe fitz Robert of Kilmallock, William fitz Maurice Gibbon, Gerald fitz Maurice Gibbon, gent; William Oge Lawless, of Kilmallock, carpenter, James Creaghe fitz Henry, of Kilmallock, merchant, Gerald fitz David Gibbon, William O Grady, husbandman, of Kilmallock, and Cornelius O Hogane fitz Denyse, horseman.

1566: Pardon to William Lose, George Miaghe, William Miagh, senior, son of Henry, Stephen Miagh. John Miaghe, son of George, John Creaghe, John Miaghe, son of Henry, John Miaghe, son of Robert, William Miagh, junior, son of Henry, Piers Creaghe, David Verdon, Patrick Miaghe, John Coyne, Gerald or Gerod Miaghe, son of George, Gerald or Gerod Miagh, son of Henry, Robert Miaghe, son of Henry, Richard Miagh, son of George, William Miagh, son of Robert, Thomas Mac Enryckty, Derby Kynne. Cornelius Hanly, Richard Lose, Maladge Cownne, William Graddy, Loghlen Graddy, Gerald Gibbon, son of Philip, William Hore, James Lesse, Dominic Gowle, and James Creaghe, of Kilmallock, burgesses.

1567: Pardon to William Lowes of Kilmallock, burgess.

1570: Pardon to Richard Haly, sovereign of the town of Killocia, or Kilmallock. Co. Limerick. George Miagh, Stephen Miagh, John Creagh. John Miaghe fitz Geroge, John Miaghe fitz Henry, John Miaghe fitz Robert, Peter Creagh fitz Christopher, David

Verdon, William Lawes, John Coyne, Patrick Miaghe, Richard Miaghe fitz Henri, Gerald Miaghe fitz George, Richard Miaghe fitz Henry, David Miaghe fitz George, of the same, burgesses; Robert Miaghe of the same, merchant, and John Wale, of the same, burgess.

1570: Pardon to Richard Lowes of Kilmallock. Co. Limerick. merchant, John Gooles fitz William, John Gooles fitz Robert, William Miaghe fitz Robert, Edward Arthur, Patrick Arthur, David Miaghe fitz Robert, John Miaghe fitz George, David Miaghe fitz Richard, Thomas Hurryly, and Robert Blewth, merchants; Thomas Kinraght, goldsmith, James Creaghe and Robert Fleming, merchants, and David Wale, Philip Kearney and Mallage Connowe, burgesses; John Mallowin, mason, David Layles fitz Nicholas, carpenter, and Cornelius Hailly, burgess all of Kilmallock.

1576: Lease under commission . . . 26s 8d out of Peter Creaghe's lands and other tenements in Ballingaddy; 40s out of Fonteslands . . . 26s 8d out of Richard Foxe's lands in Ballinehowne: 13s 4d out of Shane boye Roche's lands in ditto.

1576: Grant of English liberty to Donagh O Gawnane of Killocia (Kilmallock) and his issue.

1579: Pardon to . . . Henry Quoyne of Kilmallock . . .

1579: Lease (under commission) to Thomas Burgate, of Courteroddery, Co. Limerick, gent, of the site of the manor or castle of Courteroddery, nigh Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, with the land appertaining, and a mill on the river of Kilmallock, possessions of John Oge fitz Gybbon called the White Knight, attainted. To hold for 21 years. Rent 40s. NOTE: Courteroddery, properly *Cúirt an Ridire*, the one time residence of the White Knight, was situated on the right bank of the river Lúbach, a short distance upstream from the North Bridge.

1583: Pardon to George Thorneton, of Kilmallock, esq., John Lacye, of Raconon, gent, and Thomas Story, of Kilmallock horseman.

1584: Lease to Nicholas Ailmer of Dullardstown, gent. all the possessions of the priory of Ballinseggart, Co. Westmeath; the manor or castle of Courte Ruddery nigh the town of Kilmallock, with the lands appertaining.

1586: Pardon to John Creaghe, of Kilmallock, Piers Creaghe and

David Creaghe, of same, burgesses, Morris Lawles, of same, joiner, William O Follow, of same, husbandman, and David Meagh fitz Robert, of same, burgess.

1588: Grant to Sir George Bowrchier, Knt., lieutenant of the fort of Philipstown, King's County, of the castle of Loughgirr Ballyhousty called the Countesse land beside the town of Kilmallock, 2 p1. . . 6s 8d sterling out of 2 tenements and a garden in Sainct Johnesstreete near the town of Kilmallock, late of William Meagh executed for murder, as in the right of the late Earl of Desmond; 10s sterling out of a decayed water mill, parcel of the manor of Glenoger, and 53s 4d sterling English, out of 3 tenements in Kilmallock in the tenure of Dermott Mac Donnell and others, with the garden and 18 acres. To hold forever, in fee farm, by fealty, in common socage.

1590: Grant to Edmond Fitzgibbon, esq., called the White Knight, of the lands of . . . Karrowgarrowe, by Kilmallock, 16s 8d. . . . 26s 8d ster out of Ballingadie, in the tenure of Peter Creaghe . . . 13s 4d ster out of Ballinaowne, in the tenure of Shane boye Roche . . . also the site of the castle of Court Rudderye near the town of Kilmallock surrounded with a stone wall, the court being ruinous, the land belonging to it, a water mill, and a third part of another upon the river of Kilmallock. Co. Limerick, 40s, all possessions of the late John Oge fitz Gibbon, the White Knight attainted. To hold in tail mail in capite by the service of a twentieth part of a knight's fee.

1594: Grant (under Queen's letter 15 April XXVI) to Nicholas Meagh, sovereign of Kilmallock, Co. Limerick, and the brethern and commonalty of that town, of the site of the monastery of the friars preachers of Kilmallock, land in the town and a water mill adjoining it. To hold forever in common socage. Rent 53s 8d. Maintaining two English archers.

1595: Grant to Capt. Robert Collum, esq of . . . two rnessuages in the town of Kilmallock of James Fant and Robert Fant, attainted.

1598: Pardon to . . .Thomas Coll, of Kilmallock, husbandman.

1600: Pardon to Edmond Mac Manus Burret, of Balicalhan. John Mac Teig I Naughtin of Kilmallock . . . Katherine Ny Tirlagh of Ballicalhan, widow, Dermod Mac Teig I Naughtin. of Kilmallock . . . Donogh buoy O Haghierin, of Kilmallock . . .

Moriertagh Mac Coyne, of Kilmallock, piper . . . Donogh oge O Teige, of Kilmallock, yeoman, Gillpatrick Mac Shane Mac Inkarrie, of Kilmallock, yeoman.

1600: Pardon to Anstace Carny, of Kilmallock.

Retreat from Kilmallock, August 1922, Seán Moylan standing front left, Dan Breen top right.

31

SOME NOTABLE KILMALLOCK MEN

CLARSON, MICHAEL: Son of Thomas and Margaret Clarson (née Ryan). Born in Kilmihill, parish of Kilmallock, 1897. Educated at Kilmallock Boys' National School, St. Colman's College, Fermoy, and St. Munchin's College, Limerick. Won first place in Ireland for Greek and Latin, and university scholarship. Graduated in Classics with First Class Honours in UCD in 1919. Devoted many years to secondary teaching at Knockbeg College and Clongowes Wood. In 1948 appointed lecturer in the Department of Classics in UCD., retiring in 1967. Also acted for a period as Professor of Classics at Maynooth College.

The Report of the President, UCD., for the Academic Year 1966/67 says of him: ". . . He built up a great reputation as a teacher through his excellent scholarship and his human and sympathetic approach . . . His experience and his personal qualities enabled him to do wonderful work for students who had special difficulties with their Greek and Latin; and with university classes there was fuller scope for his deep and exact Latin scholarship, especially in Horace and Virgil . . ."

COOTE, EYRE: Son of Rev. Chidley Coote and his wife Jane Evans. Born at Ashill, beside Kilmallock, 1726. Entered the English Army at an early age, and saw service in Scotland, the West Indies and India. Attained the rank of General. Died in 1783. For further particulars of General Coote see chapter 14 of this book.

DUGGAN, JAMES J.: Son of James Duggan and his wife Catherine Mac Namara. Born in Kilmallock, 1923. Educated at Kilmallock Boys' National School, and Christian Brothers' Secondary School, Ráthluirc. At U.C.D. obtained a B. Agr. Sc. degree with First Class Honours in 1952, and a Ph.D. in Agricultural Zoology in 1958. Appointed research assistant in Agricultural Zoology Department, U.C.D., 1952. A tireless worker on many national and internationai scientific committees, he was a founder member of the Society of European Nematologists and of the British

Society for Parasitology. He was also a member of the Society of American Nematologists and of both the Irish and British Institutes of Biology.

He was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy in 1970, and was soon appointed to its Irish National Committee for Biology. He was also an active member of the Agricultural Science Association for many years, and held various offices in it including the top post of president. Since 1959 he had been head of the Nematology Entomology department of An Foras Talúntais, at Kinsealy, Dublin. Dr. Duggan was well known to young people through his excellent biology talks on Telefís Scoile, and for his role as one of the panel of judges for the Aer Lingus Young Scientist Exhibition. He died in 1982.

DUGGAN, JOHN P.: Brother of James Duggan noted above. Born in Kilmallock in 1918. Educated at Kilmallock National School, and Christian Brothers' Secondary School, Limerick. Joined Civil Service in 1936, serving in Industry and Commerce until 1937, and with Revenue Commissioners until 1940. Had joined the Volunteer Force and was called up on outbreak of World War II in 1939. Exempted at Christmas of that year, but recalled to permanent service on the fall of France, May 1940. Given temporary Volunteer Force commission as First Lieutenant, but resigned this in 1942 and reverted to cadet in Regular Army. Recommissioned as Second Lieutenant in 1944; with School of Artillery in Larkhill, Salisbury Plains, 1947; temporary Accredited Correspondent, Berlin Airlift, 1948; United Nations service in Cyprus, 1963/64; Graduate of German Command and Staff School, Hamburg, 1969/70.

Graduate of U.C.D., B.A., 1973, H.Dip. in Ed., 1974; TCD., M. Litt, 1979. Member of Institute of Linguists. For eleven years was Instructor in the Military College (Infantry School and Command and Staff School), in the Curragh; was also School Commandant of the Artillery School, Kildare. Retired from the Army in 1976 with rank of Lieutenant Colonel. Taught for short period in St. Conleth's College, Dublin. Registrar of the Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies since 1977.

Author of *Neutral Ireland and the Third Reich*, published in 1985. In the course of his review of the book, published in the *Irish Press*, 16th November, 1985, Desmond Williams wrote: "Duggan writes with much assurance. . . As a former soldier engaged in intelligence work, and an academic and Registrar of the Institute for Advanced Studies, he has combined scholastic with military interests. He has a keen sense of history, and shows a mastery of research, objectivity, and a capacity to comprehend source material in different languages."

FLANAGAN, FR. RAYMOND, O.C.S.O.: Not really a Kilmallock man, but his mother came from Kilmallock Hill. Mary Brigid Meany, born in 1871, was daughter of James Meany and his wife, Catherine Wall, of Tankardstown. Mary Brigid emigrated to the US, and married Patrick J. Flanagan, a Roscommon man, in Boston. They had 10 children, three of whom became priests and two nuns. Joseph, one of the three boys who became priests, was born in 1903. He was ordained a Jesuit, but later became a Cistercian, or Trappist, monk in the Abbey of Gethsemani, in Kentucky. Fr. Raymond, as Joseph is known in Religion is the author of 22 books, all with religious themes. One of the books, *The Man who got even with God*, attracted world-wide attention, and became a best seller. Among Fr. Raymond's other best selling works are: *The Family that overtook Christ*, *God goes to Murderer's Row* and *Forty Years Behind the Walls*.

HANNAN, MICHAEL: Son of James and Mary Hannan; born at Garrynoe House, 1821 — his father was High Constable and collector of the public cess for the liberties of Kilmallock, 1832 - 34. Studied for the priesthood in Ireland, and in Halifax, Nova Scotia (he had gone to Nova Scotia in 1840), where he was ordained priest in 1845. Continued his studies, and was awarded a doctorate in theology in 1855. Was Professor of Humanities for six years in Halifax. Vicar General of the Diocese of Halifax, and diocesan administrator during a "sede vacant". Consecrated Archbishop of Halifax, 1877, having been unanimously recommended to the Pope for the appointment.

Worked tirelessly to build up and extend the Catholic Church in the Archdiocese, and was described as "the father of the Catholic schools' of Halifax. Also took a great interest in the various Total Abstinence societies, and in the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Was involved however in a long and bitter dispute with the Sisters of Charity in Halifax, mainly over matters of control. While still a relatively young man his health began to fail, and on the 17th April, 1882, he died unexpectedly after a very brief illness. [1]

MAC CINNÉIDE, SÉAMUS: (name sometimes given as Séamus Ó Cinnéide); Gaelic poet of Kilmallock; said to have been Seán O Tuama's closest friend. Very little now known about him. Was born probably about the year 1710. One of his poems, "A Ráib Ghil Mhilis Mhaorga", will be found in *Filidhe, na Máighe* (ed. P. Ua Duinnin), and in *Éigse na Máighe* (ed. R. Ó Foghludha). See chapter 14 of this book.

MAC KENRAGHTY, MAURICE: (name Mac Kenraghty derives from the

Irish Mac Ionnrachtaigh; is now anglicised Enright). Born in Kilmallock, where his father, Thomas Mac Kenraghty, was a goldsmith. Studied for the priesthood — presumably abroad — and obtained degree in Sacred Theology. Laboured as a priest in the Kilmallock district; was a noted preacher. Later became chaplain to the Earl of Desmond. Martyred at Clonmel, 30th April, 1585. Memorial window to him in Kilmallock Catholic church. For further particulars see chapter 9 of this book.

MOYLAN, SEAN: Born in Kilmallock, 1888. Son of Richard Moylan, of Newmarket, Co. Cork, and his wife, Hanora Raleigh, of Kilmallock — Mrs. Moylan had come back to her parents' home for the birth of her child, but it was in Newmarket the young Seán grew up and went to school. He subsequently returned to Kilmallock to serve his apprenticeship there as a carpenter. Played with the Kilmallock Senior Football team that won the County Championship in the years 1908, 1909 and 1916.

Back again in Newmarket, he played a very important part in the War of Independence in the North Cork area, first as Captain of the Newmarket Column; finally, as O/C of the Cork No. 2 (North) Brigade IRA. Participated in numerous dramatic episodes and engagements, including the capture of the British General Lucas, and the Tureengariffe and Clonbanin ambushes. Took Republican side in the Civil War, and was in charge of operations during the fight for "the Kilmallock triangle", which was the biggest engagement of the Civil War, Earned a lasting reputation for his courage and his chivalry.

Was very well read. Elected Fianna Fáil T.D. in 1932; became Parliamentary Secretary in 1936; was in charge of ARP. (Air Raid Precautions). during World War II; Minister for Lands, 1944-48; Minister for Education, 1951-54; Minister for Agriculture from May 1957 up to his unexpected death in November of that year. Honest, fortright and likeable, Seán Moylan was immensely popular with people of all political affiliations. Fr. C. O Sullivan, of the White Friars, a native of Ballydesmond, wrote a lament for him, of which the following are some verses:

For forty years your name has rung,
Through all North Cork your fame was sung
By poet and patriot, old and young —
Seán Moylan.

Loud o'er your head rings out once more
The rifle's peal, as in days of yore;
But calm you lie, life's battles o'er —
Seán Moylan.

Your voice is still, your soul has fled
To swell the ranks of Ireland's dead.
God grant you rest, may Heaven be your bed,
Seán Moylan.

O CALLAGHAN O DONNELL, THOMAS: Born in Kilmallock, 1847; was a school teacher there. Was Kilmallock correspondent of the *Irish People*, of Dublin, over the signature "Libertas", and wrote poems for *The Irishman*. He was connected with the Fenian movement before he emigrated to the US in 1866. Contributed to numerous New York papers, especially the *Daily News*. Claimed to be maternally descended from Seán O Duibhir an Ghleanna (subject of the famous song of that name); was a cousin of Patrick W. and Robert Dwyer Joyce. [2]

O DONNELL, JOHN: Born in Bruree, but when he was very young his parents moved to Kilmallock, where they kept a newsagent's shop, in Lord Edward Street. Educated Primary School, Kilmallock, Christian Brothers' School, Ráthluirc (four years); Christian Brothers' School, Sexton Street, Limerick (final two years). In 1939 awarded the Bishop's Scholarship in Limerick; graduated in engineering at University College, Dublin, 1943. After some years in the ESB and the Irish Sugar Company appointed lecturer in mechanical engineering in U.C.D. Later spent study periods at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge University and the U.K. Atomic Energy Research Establishment.

In 1957 appointed Professor and head of the newly-established Department of Chemical Engineering in University College Dublin, which position he still holds. Has been consultant to State bodies, the OECD, and the EEC on industrial development and technical education, and has been a member of advisory teams with Ministers for Education (Dr. Patrick Hillery and the late Mr. George Colley) at international conferences.

A member of many professional engineering bodies, and was founder chairman of the Irish Branch of the Institution of Chemical Engineers. Has also been a member of the Governing Body of University College Dublin and the National University of Ireland, and was chairman of Nitrigin Éireann Teo from 1970 to 1981.

Is married to Ronnie Geoghegan from Athlone; they have two daughters, two sons, and three grandchildren.

(John O Donnell's brother, Tom, kept the family newsagent business in Kilmallock for many years, and was very active in GAA affairs, captaining the Limerick Junior Hurling team that won the All Ireland Final in 1957. Tom retired to live in England, where he died in 1983)

Ó GRÍOFA, MUIRIS: Gaelic poet of the 18th century; described as being of Ballingaddy. Was a hedgeschool master there about 1778. A very fine poem of his, "An Seabhac Siúil", has been published in a number of collections. He was also the author of several other poems preserved in manuscript collections — "Slán feasta le mo chairde, le deartháir na héigse agus na dtreon", "Aréir im aisling agus me'machnainh im intinn", "Cia stopfaidh súd ar leagadh túr agus áitreabh réax", "M'aicíd, mo cheansnaí, mo chumha agus mo bhrón", etc. See also chapter 14 of this book.

O SULLIVAN, WILLIAM HENRY: Born 1829; a successful business man; owned hotel and car hire business; established mineral water factory, 1871. Strongly nationalist in outlook, his hotel being a meeting place for the Fenians. His son, William, sentenced to 5 years penal servitude for his part in the Fenian Rising in Kilmallock; he himself jailed for 12 months. M.P. for Co. Limerick 1874 to 1885 inclusive. A tireless champion of the poor and underprivileged. Supplied free from his quarry all the stone required for building Kilmallock Catholic church. Died 27th April, 1887. Is mentioned several times in this book.

TURNER, WILLIAM: Born in Ardkilmartin, near Kilmallock, 1871. Received his early education in Kilmallock. Graduated in the old Royal University, Dublin, in 1888, with the degree of B.A., taking first class honours in philosophy. Went to the American College in Rome, where he read a very brilliant course, winning on one occasion a gold medal offered by Pope Leo XIII for competition among Roman students for the best essay on the philosophy of St. Thomas. Also spent a year studying in Paris.

Ordained priest in 1893; became a D.D. with honours same year. In 1894 appointed to the Chair of Philosophy in St. Paul, Minnesota. In St. Paul he also acted as librarian, and was editor of the Catholic University Bulletin. In 1906 appointed Professor of Philosophy in the Catholic University, Washington, D.C. Resigned in 1919 when appointed Bishop of Buffalo.

As Bishop of Buffalo, Dr. Turner frequently returned to Ireland to visit the haunts of his boyhood around Kilmallock. He donated two windows to Kilmallock church: one in memory of his parents; the other to be inscribed to his memory after he should have passed away. He died on 10th July, 1936. His obsequies were celebrated in Kilmallock church, and were attended by a great number of priests. Dr. Keane, Bishop of Limerick, presided, and was assisted by Dr. Fogarty, Bishop of Killaloe, a life-long friend of the dead bishop. Bishop Turner had three brothers priests.[3]

32

EARLY ENTERPRISES, INDUSTRIES AND ORGANISATIONS

Coming of Electricity

Electricity, and street lighting by electricity, came to Kilmallock much earlier than to most other towns in Ireland, In the late 1880s, the firm of W.H. O Sullivan and Sons installed a generator to provide electric lighting in their premises. Some time after 1908, when O Sullivans had been taken over by Murphy's Brewery, Cork — who still continued business in Kilmallock under the O Sullivan name — a larger generator was installed, and electricity for lighting was supplied to a number of pubs in the town. Only one light was allowed to each premises, and the supply was only provided during the winter. The charge for the electricity was 30 shillings a year.

About 1912 O Sullivans provided some street lighting, which included a couple of lamps in Lord Edward Street, one at the junction of Sarsfield Street and Emmet Street, and one at the junction of Sarsfield Street and Orr Street. The lamps, 220 volt, were on poles, each with its own switch. The switches were high up on the pole, and were operated by a man using a long rod specially designed for the purpose.

The demand for electricity in Kilmallock was now exceeding the supply which O Sullivans could provide, and a private company, the Kilmallock Electric Light and Power Company Ltd., was formed in 1918 for the purpose of providing adequate electricity to meet the growing demand. The directors of the new company were: Henry M. Fildes, chairman; James W. Joyce, P.J. Carroll, Michael O Donnell, James O Rourke, Thomas J. Griffith, T.W.W. Bennett, Mark J. Clery and M.J. Mitchell, V.S. The Bankers were the Munster and Leinster Bank, Ltd., and the solicitors were Roger Fox and J.J. Power.

Now began what has been described locally as "a miniature Shannon Scheme", with the harnessing of the Lúbach at Strike's Mill in Glenfield. Here, a turbine operated by the river, in turn operated a DC

dynamo which charged an array of batteries placed on rows of shelves in the "Power House", which was situated where Denis O Brien had his original workshop in Gortboy. The turbine could be switched on from the power house.

Many shops were lit from the new supply, and additional street lighting was provided, one light being located near the Catholic church. The church itself had electric lighting installed in 1922. Jimmy Ryan, of Sheares Street — who won an All Ireland Junior Hurling medal with Limerick in 1935 — went to work for the Kilmallock Electric Light and Power Company straight after he had left school. Later, he went to Cork to complete his apprenticeship as electrician, returning to Kilmallock as electrician-in-charge in 1925. During Jimmy's absence in Cork Gerard Flynn was in charge in Kilmallock.

In its final year of existence, the Kilmallock Electric Light and Power Company was providing 36 public lights in the town. The ESB took over from the company on the 3rd September, 1933. Jimmy Ryan transferred to the ESB on the same day. Rural Electrificiation came to the Kilmallock countryside at the end of 1949, bringing with it a revolution in rural living.

W.H. O Sullivan and Sons

William Henry O Sullivan, Fenian, hotel proprietor, owner of a large car hiring business, and future M.P., established a mineral water factory in Kilmallock in 1871, trading as W.H. O Sullivan and Sons. The mineral water bottles bore a distinctive yellow label, illustrated with a drawing of the old Kilmallock Dominican priory and the legend "Abbey Brand". The factory, with yard containing stabling for horses and barns for corn and hay, covered an acre of ground. Business went well for the firm up to the early years of the present century; but in 1908 it got into serious financial difficulties and was taken over by Murphy's Brewery, Cork. The new owners retained the old name of W.H. O Sullivan and Sons for the Kilmallock concern, which, in addition to manufacturing mineral waters, now became a very important distributing and bottling centre for Murphy's Brewery, a fact that soon led to the Kilmallock centre being generally, if inaccurately, referred to as "The Brewery".

The first manager appointed by Murphys at Kilmallock was a Mr. Irwin; he was succeeded by John J. Quinlan, who was manager for a long period. It is said that it was Mr. Quinlan, who discovered the unique formula that, in the opinion of many people, made Kilmallock lemonade the finest lemonade produced in Ireland. The lemonade was not only

regarded as a great thirst quencher but was considered an excellent cure for the flu when taken hot in bed by the patient.

The bottling of stout and beer, and wine and whiskey, as well as lemonade, was an important part of the work at Kilmallock. Whiskey was purchased from the distillers at the time of its manufacture and stored in bond, in 50 gallon casks, at the distillery, for several years. It was then brought by rail to Kilmallock, where it was racked and bottled. O Sullivans retailed a special brand of whiskey. This was a 15 year old Jameson, better known as "Kilmallock Red", because of the red label on the bottle. It was stocked in pubs in several counties, and was much dearer than ordinary brands because of its special quality. It was a favourite drink of the gentry. The wine store formed another important part of the business. The firm also did a big trade in tea, and in corks for jars and bottles, as many of the pubs bottled their own stout. The sale of draught stout, especially at harvest time, or for wakes and funerals, was another lucrative line.

O Sullivans had a very large staff employed. When Tom Whelan began working for the company in 1918 they were bottling between 350 and 400 pint bottles a day, mainly stout. At that time they had 80 horses and carts for delivering to neighbouring towns and villages. They also had a three-ton lorry, one of the first of its kind in Ireland, which was driven by John Tolton. The lorry was mostly used in delivering 300 6-dozen cases of stout to the British military camp at Kilworth. T.M. O Donnell, Doneraile, had the contract for the supply of this consignment; he also took about 50 kegs of stout weekly. Kegs in those days were made of oak, contained 16 gallons of stout, and weighed a little over 2 cwt. A couple of hundred of these kegs arrived each week at Kilmallock railway station for O Sullivans.

The part played by W.H. O Sullivan and Sons in providing electric lighting in Kilmallock has been described in the previous section in this chapter. The hotel premises owned by the firm and situated at the junction of Lord Edward Street and Emmet Street, was sold to Patrick Lyons in 1920. In the mid 1920s the firm secured the contract for the supply of drink to the canteen at the Shannon Hydroelectric Scheme, the scheme being then in the course of construction. This involved the supply and delivery of about 50 kegs of stout and 300 dozen of bottled stout, weekly, as well as a large consignment of minerals.

John J. Quinlan was succeeded as manager of O Sullivans by Christy Duggan, and it was towards the end of his period as manager that bottling ceased at Kilmallock, Murphys, the parent group having decided

to centralize the manufacture and bottling of minerals in Cork. O Sullivans now became merely a depot. John O Leary succeeded Christy Duggan as manager, and when he retired Paddy Tierney took over. The foremen over the years were: James Duggan, Jim Ahern, Tom Whelan and Jim O Doherty.

The end came in 1978, when Murphys decided to move business from Kilmallock to Dock Road, Limerick. The following Kilmallock staff were then transferred to Limerick: Paddy Tierney, Manager; Michael Casey, John Cronin, Denis Danaher, Josephine Doherty, John Donegan, John Flaherty, Tom Hanley, Patrick Hartnett, Michael Hayes, John Mac Carthy. John Breen and John Corbett chose not to move. The Kilmallock premises were eventually sold to the present owner, Tim Cahill, of Cahill's Hardware, The Limerick centre at Dock Road was closed in 1981, and all the staff made redundant.

Creameries

In September 1886 members of the United Trades Society in Kilmallock were complaining that farmers from Kilmallock parish were involved in the establishment of creameries, thereby hitting the coopers who used make firkins for the butter made in the individual farm dairies. According to the 1893 Postal Directory, Kilmallock then had two creameries, the Glenfield and Kilmallock Dairy Company and the Golden Vein Dairy Company (the term Golden Vein was sometimes used instead of Golden Vale. While the exact limits of the expansive Golden Vale have never been defined, the Golden Vein was said to be a belt of land, of average width 3 miles, stretching from Kilmallock's Blossom Gate to the Rock of Cashel). The Cork and Kerry Company Ltd. set up their creamery in 1898, in the townland of Deebert. and in 1907 the far-flung firm of Cleeves bought Hallinan's mill (formerly Creed's mill), also in the townland of Deebert, and adapted it as a creamery. Cleeves also had a creamery at Gotoon Bridge, in Flemingstown, on the road from the Cross of Black to Kilfinane.

In addition to butter making, Cleeves also did some partial condensing of milk in Kilmallock; the milk was then carted to Bruree railway station for conveyance by train to the Lansdowne Dairy in Limerick city, where the final stages of the condensing process took place. In summer time Cleeves' staff would often work up to 11p.m.

In 1912, the Kilmallock Butter Factory (in their early days creameries were sometimes called butter factories) went into liquidation, and some local farmers then decided to establish a co-operative creamery

in the town. A committee charged with this task was elected, and held its first meeting on the 9th December, 1912. The members of the committee were: chairman, Fr. Patrick Woulfe, C.C.; secretary, James Mortell: members: Thomas Clarson, J. O Driscoll, P. O Shea, John Mac Namara, John Carroll (the Hill), Daniel Flynn, W.H. Madden, Peter Walsh, John Carroll (Mountfox), Patrick Murphy.

The creamery premises of the Kilmallock Butter Factory, at Chapel Height (between John's Castle and the river) were purchased by the new co-operative society in January, 1913, for £950, and in the same month Michael J. Houlihan, a native of Raleighstown, was appointed creamery manager, at a salary of £104 a year.

The other staff employed at the creamery — some of them engaged in carting — were: Patrick Downes, John Carroll, James Chamberlain, Terence O Donnell, James Mulqueen, Denis Hassett, Patrick Howard, Maurice Casey, William Cusack, James Dennison, Edmond Fitzgerald. Their wages ranged from £1 per week for Patrick Downes to 13/- per week for James Mulqueen. In 1915 wages were reduced by 2/- per week during January and February, "due to the bad financial position of the Society". The price paid by the creamery for milk when it opened was 4.94 pence per gallon.

In 1928, the Kilmallock Co-operative Creamery Society decided to purchase Cleeves' Creamery, which had closed, and to erect a new creamery as the old creamery at Chapel Height was not in a very suitable location. The new creamery opened in 1930. Both cheese and butter were manufactured by the creamery at that time. Early in 1931 the creamery was awarded the Read Challenge Cup for the best butter, from the viewpoint of consistency of quality, made in the State in 1930. It repeated this success the following year. The Read Cup was awarded on the results of surprise inspections. The butter maker at the time was Tom O Brien.

Kilmallock's Cork and Kerry Creamery Co. had a branch in Castletown, and the separated milk from this branch creamery was transported daily to Kilmallock in a small truck, driven at about 20 miles an hour by Tim Tierney of Castletown. In 1945 The Kilmallock Co-operative Creamery Society took over the Cork and Kerry creamery from the Dairy Disposal Board; and a few years later the old Cork and Kerry creamery building became an agricultural store run by the Co-operative Society.

The Read Cup for butter making was again won by the Society in 1957. Early in 1962 the Society's cheese factory went into the production of a special type Danish cheese, in conjunction with the firm of Harrisen and Golden Vale Food Products Ltd.

The next decade was to see great changes in the dairying industry, with the setting up of large central co-operatives to replace the smaller co-operative creameries which had existed in almost every parish in the dairying areas of the country. In September 1972 the Kilmallock Co-operative Society amalgamated with the large Golden Vale Co-operative in Ráthluirc.

Limekiln

Up to the late l930s people came from far and near to Hannon's limekiln at Quarry Hill to buy lime for the whitewashing of their houses, outhouses, piers and walls. But lime from Quarry Hill was put to more uses than that, being used for liming land, for shaking in the drills in which potatoes were being sown, and for mixing with sand to make mortar.

A man named John Hennessy had owned a limekiln at Quarry Hill, and subsequently sold it to William H. O Sullivan, who replaced the old kiln with a much larger new one. The stone at Quarry Hill was of an excellent quality for lime making, unlike the mixture of freestone and limestone on Kilmallock Hill, where James Hannon had two kilns. And so when the Quarry Hill kiln was offered for sale in 1908 it was bought by James Hannon.

Lime was most in demand during the summer, and in producing it the Quarry Hill kiln would burn about 70 tons of culm in May, about 60 tons in June, and about 40 tons in July. Culm was the fuel used in the kiln, and about three-fifths of it came from Castlecomer; the remainder, which came from Wales, was supplied by Suttons, who had a depot in Kilmallock. It took ten tons of culm to fill the kiln.

Lime reduces acidity in the soil and fixes ammonia, and much of the lime produced at Quarry Hill went to the Kilfinane and Darragh area, to be used for agricultural and horticultural purposes. In the liming of land 20 barrels an acre were spread on non-limestone land, and 40 barrels on limestone land.

During the second World War the annual allocation of fuel to the kiln was only 25 tons. This was totally inadequate, and the kiln had no option but to close. It never re-opened. Despite its catering for agriculture and horticulture, most people were inclined to associate the limekiln with one function only, the supply of lime for whitewashing. This too is what balladeer Bobby Jones, from the Crow's Mountain in the Ballyhouras, remembered when he sang:

Less than half a mile from Kilmallock,
The limekiln stands rugged and tall,

And over many a county
It has whitewashed many a wall.

Brickworks

A brickworks operated in Ashill, near Kilmallock, in the latter part of the second half of the 19th century. It was owned by S.B. Walsh and Sons. Two houses built for employees of the brickworks are now the property of Gerard Houlihan, and specimens of the bricks will be found in walls in the vicinity of the houses. The hollow formed by the removal of the clay for the making of the bricks is now marked by an extensive pond in the Ashill estate.

Farm Training Centre

It was appropriate that Kilmallock, lying as it is in the heart of one of the most important agricultural and dairying areas in the country, should have been chosen by the Limerick County Committee of Agriculture as the location for its first Farm Training Centre, which was formally opened on the 10th September, 1974, by Mr. Mark Clinton, T.D., Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, and blessed by Most Rev. Dr. J. Newman, Bishop of Limerick, assisted by Very Rev. J. Canon Cowper, P.P., Rev. Fr. T. Greene, CC., Rev. Fr. S. Mac Carthy, C.C., and Ven, Archdeacon G. Chambers.

The stated purpose of the centre was "to provide the facilities for the County Committee's advisory and educational programme". Though the Committee's services had operated in the county since 1900 the new Kilmallock building was the first property in the county to be owned by the Committee. Prior to that, classes, courses and lectures had been held in schools, halls and hotel rooms. Now the committee had a well appointed centre that included a very fine lecture hall cum classroom.

Commenting on the opening of the Kilmallock centre, the Annual Report of the County Limerick Committee of Agriculture for 1974 stated: "It is confidently expected that the centre will play an important role in agricultural progress in the area in the years ahead: professional advice will be available to all farmers, their wives, and all those who are in any way connected with farming."

These expectations were fulfilled. In the thirteen years since 1974, daytime winter farm schools have operated in the centre for young farmers in the 18 - 21 years age group. 1974 also saw the introduction of the E.E.C. Farm Modernisation Scheme, and with it the sister scheme of vocational training for young people who had taken over their home

farms, This training has been carried out in the centre, with some grant aid from E.E.C. funds to supplement local funds. More recently, two ACOT Certificate in Farming Courses have been initiated in the centre, one in 1984, the other in 1986; each to run for three years.

ACOT (An Chomhairle Oiliúna Talmhaíochta) was set up as an authority in 1979 to control the agricultural and advisory services; and on the 1st July, 1980, the property of the County Committees of Agriculture, and the staffs of the Committees (Instructors and clerical) were transferred to the new authority. In this way the Kilmallock centre became the local ACOT centre for a very large area in the south and east of the county covering approximately one third of the whole county.

Numerous courses are organised in the centre, as, for example, courses of instruction on installation aid and how to qualify for stamp duty exemption. And there are specialised courses designed to improve technical efficiency. e.g. Milking Machine Maintenance, Quality Milk Production, etc. In addition, there have been various symposia and lectures on almost every conceivable topic from dairying to horticulture to farm management.

Apart from its use by the ACOT Advisers, the Kilmallock centre is in almost constant use for meetings, lectures and short courses organised by rural organisations and groups such as Macra na Feirme, the I.C.A., I.F.A., I.C.M.S.A. and the Co-operatives. Finally, the centre has a very important function in providing a meeting place between farmers and advisers. In the centre an adviser is always available to provide guidance and counselling on individual farm problems, as well as guidance and literature on the various farm schemes which operate to help farmers and rural people in general.

Agricultural advisers at the centre also deal with correspondence and telephone calls, while other advisers radiate out on farm visits which can take them to any part of the large area the centre caters for, an area extending from Knockfierna to the Galtees. and from the Cork border to Hospital.

The People's Hall

The Castle Hall, in Sarsfield Street, where John Brazil now has his Agricultural Supplies Shop and Garden Centre, had served Kilmallock for many years as a place for meetings and stage entertainments; but at a meeting in 1914 the Kilmallock Friendly Society took the initial steps towards providing a larger and more suitable hall, to be known as the

People's Hall. The foundation stone of the new hall was laid on the 29th June, 1916, and the building was completed by the end of the year.

There is extant a letter written to the secretary of the hall on the 11th August, 1917, by the well known actor, and future Hollywood star, Barry Fitzgerald. He was writing on behalf of the Irish Comedy Company, and was answering a letter he had received from the secretary of the hall in connection with such sets and scenery as might be available locally for the company's forthcoming staging of "The Building Fund" in Kilmallock. The company, it would seem, were to play for a week, as the hall secretary had suggested a change of programme on the third night.

Within four years of its erection disaster struck the hall when it was burned by British Crown forces as a reprisal for the IRA attack on Kilmallock police barracks on May 28th, 1920. But it was rebuilt within a short time, and has proved a useful amenity for the people of the town and district ever since. Among the travelling companies who played there were those of such well known personalities as Anew Mac Master, Louis Dalton and Frank O Donovan. The Scottish priest-tenor, Fr. Sydney Mac Ewan sang there on one occasion; he was then on a visit to his friend, Canon Cowper, P.P. of Kilmallock.

Bands

At one time most towns and villages had bands, and Kilmallock was no exception. It had a Temperance Band (probably fife and drum) as far back as the 1840s, and it had a brass band during the Land League period of the 1870s and 1880s. Later still it had a fife and drum band. During a period in the early 1930s it had two bands, both pipe bands. First there was the Emmet Pipe Band, formed in 1932, and trained by Paddy Harte, a shoemaker from Newcastle West, who moved to Kilmallock. The Con Colbert Pipe Band was formed the following year, but lasted for only about a year and a half,

The Emmet Pipe Band lasted until 1948. Their uniform consisted of a green tunic with saffron kilt and shawl. The uniforms were made by Cornelius (Neily) Keane, of Sheares Street. The band was invited to play at the Munster Hurling Final in Thurles, in 1933, in which Limerick defeated Cork, and Christy Clifford, who was a member of the band, remembers. Neily Keane, and others of the tailors employed by him, putting the finishing touches to the uniforms on board the bus that was conveying the band to Thurles. On the disbandment of the Emmet Pipe Band the Instruments were sold to the newly-formed pipe band in

Broadford, Co. Limerick.

Church Choir

The present Catholic church choir in Kilmallock carries on the tradition of fine choral singing that has come to be associated with the church. As far back as 1920, or even earlier, there was a small, adult choir attached to the church. It was under the direction of Pa Mac Carthy. Miss Cecilia (Ciss) Noonan, who sang with the choir, was a noted singer. Other members of the choir were Miss O Byrne, the Burke sisters, Miss E. Campion, Miss Phil Sheehan. Among the male members were John O Sullivan (of W.H. O Sullivan & Sons, Ltd.), William Naughton and Martin Feore.

In 1929, Sister Francis Hennessy replaced Pa Mac Carthy as director of the choir. Sister Francis's choir was composed of adults and secondary school pupils. Over the years the choir was greatly encouraged by two parish priests in particular, Canon Begley and Canon Cowper, both of whom were keenly interested in sacred music.

In 1970, Sister Francis met with an accident on her way to play for Benediction, and was unable to continue in charge of the choir. Sister Emmanuel took over temporarily until 1971, when Seán Naughton and his wife, Moira, took over direction of the choir, Seán as conductor, Moira as organist. They proved a very happy choice, both being very musical, with great enthusiasm and dedication and a capacity for hard work, traits that have helped make the Kilmallock choir the superb choir it is today.

The choir consists of about twenty-five adults, and children from both primary schools and from the vocational and secondary schools. They have an extensive repertoire in English, Irish and Latin, and apart from singing at the church services, have given recitals of Christmas carols in the church, and have given other recitals outside the church.

The present officers of the choir are: chairperson, Seán Naughton; secretary, Mrs. Maureen Lynch; treasurer, Mrs. Eileen Dowling.

The GAA

In 1885 an athletic club in Kilmallock affiliated with the GAA, which had been founded the previous year. What is now almost completely forgotten is that in its early years the GAA was as much concerned with athletics as with hurling and football. Kilmallock was fielding hurling teams by 1888; by the early 1890s it was fielding both

hurling and football teams.

Larry Roche, of Ballynamuddagh, who was elected President of the Kilmallock club in 1895, was elected vice-president of the GAA in 1897. The following year, with Kilmallock team mate Tommy Campion, he played with the Limerick Commercials, who won the All Ireland Football Final. So did the first two Senior All Ireland medals come to Kilmallock.

During those years, and for several years afterwards, the GAA was still actively involved in athletics. and as Kilmallock had one of the best cinder tracks in the country, its sports meetings attracted some of the foremost athletes in Ireland. Among them Tom and John Flanagan, the Leahy brothers, Larry Roche, Bob Coll, Dr. J.C. Daly, all of them living within a radius of five or six miles of Kilmallock. Of these local athletes John Flanagan and Con Leahy were Olympic gold medal winners.

John Flanagan, of Kilbreedy, a few miles east of Kilmallock, was a weight thrower. He established ten world records, and won gold medals at three Olympics: Paris, 1900; St. Louis, 1904; London 1908.
He went to America in 1897. and became a policeman in New York. After his retirement he returned to Ireland, and died in his native Kilbreedy, on June 3rd, 1938. In America he had became very friendly with the old Fenian, John Devoy; indeed, he was the recipient of the very last letter Devoy wrote. In that last letter Devoy said:

Dear John Flanagan,

The receipt of your letter of september 3rd was one of the pleasantest events of my life. It is one of my pleasantest memories to stand in Celtic Park watching your magnificent figure as you whirled the hammer around and sent it flying into'space. I only wish I could witness the sight once more.

You have done more credit to the athletic field than any other man, except, perhaps, Martin Sheridan, and I always held you as the finest type of the old gallowglass; you reminded me of the day when they were hurling back the English men-at-arms, winning glory for Ireland.

At Croke Park, in 1924 (at the Tailteann Games), it was a great pleasure to see you again, although my failing sight prevented me from getting a clear view of what was in front of me; but I was able to pick up your magnificent figure from the surrounding groups and recognised my old demigod, I returned to America with renewed hope for the future,

saying to myself so long as Ireland produces John Flanagans there is hope for the future.

God prosper you and give you long life. You have no better well-wisher in the whole world than your old admirer, John Devoy.
Give my kindest regards and congratulations to Dr. O Callaghan.

Sincerely yours,
John Devoy.

Devoy died on September 29th, 1928.

In the early spring of 1908, Kilmallock had the distinction of having the American Olympic team complete their training there. They came as guests of John Flanagan, and the team included the great Ralph Rose, and the famous American Indian runner, Tom Longboat, who gave a demonstration run from Limerick to Kilmallock that is still remembered in the folklore of the district. The Olympic Games were held in London that year, and in the l6lbs hammer throw John Flanagan won his second Olympic gold medal.

P.D. Mehigan was elected president of the Kilmallock GAA club in 1914. He had come to Kilmallock as an Excise Officer in 1913, and played hurling and football with Kilmallock until his transfer in 1925. He was on the football team that won the 1916 County Championship. Later, he became the first person to give live radio commentaries on GAA games. He also wrote many fine articles on Gaelic games, under the pseudonym "Carbery". As well, he was the producer of the very popular *Carbery's Annual.*

Seán Moylan, future guerilla leader, T.D. and Cabinet Minister, was a member of the Kilmallock Senior Football team that won the County Championship in 1908, 1909 and 1916.

The acqusition of the old Fair Green by the Kilmaltock GAA club in 1949, and its subsequent development into a first class playing pitch was one of the outstanding achievements of the club. Another outstanding achievement by the club was the publication of Our Proud Heritage, a splendid 240 page history of the club from 1884 to 1976. And at present (February 1987) the club is in the course of providing a sports complex in the local GAA grounds.

Thirteen Kilmallock players have won All Ireland medals. The winners of the medals, and the years and matches in which they won them, were as follows:

All Ireland Senior Football 1898:	Larry Roche, Tom Campion
All Ireland Junior Hurling, 1935:	Jimmy Ryan, Willie Hannan, Patsy Quilty.
All Ireland Minor Hurling 1940:	Paddy Healy (Goalkeeper)
All Ireland Junior Hurling, 1954:	Jackie O Sullivan
All Ireland Junior Hurling, 1957:	Tom O Donnell (Captain), Denis Mac Carthy, Noel Flynn
All Ireland Minor Hurling, 1958:	Tom Hanley (Goalkeeper), Liam Canty
All Ireland Senior Hurling, 1973:	Mossie Dowling

Another much-coveted honour came to a Kilmallock player in 1985, when hurler Paddy Kelly was included in the Bank of Ireland All Star selection.

Kilmallock teams have also won the following County Championships:

Senior Hurling:	1960, 1967, 1973, 1974,1975, 1985
Senior Football:	1908, 1909, 1916
Co. Senior Hurling Cups:	1896,1963,1968
Junior Hurling:	1913, 1925, 1939, 1943,1956
Minor Hurling:	1955, 1961,1964,1972,1973
Juvenile Hurling:	1962, 1964, 1975

The Gaelic League and Irish Language Activities

The Gaelic League (Conradh na Gaeilge), whose main aim was the deanglicisation of Ireland and the restoration of the Irish language, was founded in Dublin in 1893. A branch was established in Kilmallock on the 16th January, 1903. The first officers elected were: President, An tAth. Séamus Ó Sé, S.P. (Very Rev. Fr. James O Shea, P.P.); secretary, Micheál O Domhnaill (Michael O Donnell); treasurer, Roibeard S. Seoighe (Robert J. Joyce). Subsequent holders of these offices in the branch were: president, An tAth. Pádraig de Bhulbh, S.C. (Rev. Fr. Patrick Woulfe, C .C.); treasurer, T.W. Westropp Bennett, J.P., M.C.C. (he was later Cathaoirleach of Seanad Éireann); secretary, Dáithí O Dubháin (David Dwane; he was author of first biography of Eamon de Valera); Cáit Ní Ghamhna (Katie Gaffney).

Pádraig Pearse offered a valuable camera as prize to the person securing the most subscribers for *An Claidheamb Soluis*, of which he was then editor. It was won by Dáithí O Dubháin, secretary of the Kilmallock Gaelic League branch; but he graciously declined to accept the prize, stating: “My work was for the cause, not for reward.” [1]

The Kilmallock Gaelic League branch continued very active up to the 1920s, organising many functions and bringing prominent personalities to speak at *feiseanna*, or deliver lectures. Dr. Risteard de Hindeberg, S.J., spoke at a *feis* on June 29th, 1906; Lord Ashbourne and Neillí Ní Bhriain (granddaughter of William Smith O Brien) spoke at a *feis* in 1914; and Count Plunkett and Thomas Ashe spoke at a *feis* on July 15th, 1917. Others who spoke on other occasions included Alice Milligan, the Ulster poetess, Eoin Mac Néill and Fr. Hackett, S.J.

On one occasion, Fr. Woulfe took members of the branch on a tour of the historic graves — mainly graves of Fenians — in Kilmallock churchyard. There they met an old man named Michael Gubbins, who had been living for many years in Kilmallock, but who hailed originally from the neighbouring parish of Dromin. Michael Gubbins was a native Irish speaker, and could read Irish, and he pointed out to Fr. Woulfe and his fellow Gaelic Leaguers the spot where the poet, Aindrias Mac Craith, was buried. He told how he himself had been shown the spot by a very old man who had attended Aindrias's funeral in 1795. Fr. Woulfe was still curate in Kilmallock in 1923 when his famous pioneer work on Irish surnames, *Sloinnte Gaedheal is Gall*, was published.

After a long period of inactivity, the Kilmallock Gaelic League branch was revived in 1951 at a public meeting held in the Sarsfield Cinema, at which the principal speaker was Fr. Athanasius, OFM., Limerick. At a very successful concert held under the auspices of the branch on Sunday, March 9th, 1952, Michael O Higgins, Ireland's leading baritone, was guest artiste. As part of the concert programme, a lecture, "Whither Ireland?", was given by Fr. Athanasius.

Weekly Irish classes, organised by Limerick County Vocational Educational Committee, were conducted in Kilmallock in the late 1930s by Deuglán Suipéal; in the early 1950s, by Pádraig Ó Cearbhaill; and in the late 1950s and up to 1963, by Mainchín Seoighe. The coming of James Canon Cowper, D.D., as P.P. in 1961 gave a great boost to the promotion of Irish in the Kilmallock area. An enthusiastic member of Cumann na Sagart, and a fluent Irish speaker, Canon Cowper soon had Kilmallock entered in the Glór na nGael competition, the town sharing the special prize in 1967 for the best commemoration, involving the use of Irish, of the Fenian Rising of 1867.

From 1965 onwards, Canon Cowper introduced a monthly Mass in Irish. From him, too, came the suggestion that a suitable memorial

should be erected over the grave of the celebrated poet, Aindrias Mac Craith — *An Mangaire Súgach* — in Kilmallock churchyard. A committee got to work on this project, and a monument, executed by stone cutter Jack Byrnes, of Clogher, was erected in due course. The monument was unveiled on Sunday, 12th April, 1970, by the then Fr. Tomás O Fiaich, Professor of History in Maynooth, now Cardinal O Fiaich, Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland. At the unveiling, a choir, under Seán O Neachtain, gave a magnificent rendering of Aindrias's great song, *"Slán le Máigh"*. The inscription on the monument is a quatrain from one of Aindrias's poems:—

Féach an tAspal do pheacaigh fá thrí ar dtús,
Ag séanadh a charad gur glacadh arís go humhal;
A Dhé dhil, aicim cé scaras le dlí na nÚrd,
Mar aon le Peadar an Mangaire scaoil it dhún,

Behold how the Apostle who at first sinned thrice! Denying his Friend was accepted again in his humility! O dear God, I implore, though I have parted from the laws of the Orders (Church)! That, with Peter, you'll admit the Mangaire to your mansion.

The unveiling of the monument to Aindrias took place during the first Féile na Máighe — a bilingual commemoration of the Irish-speaking poets of the Maigue countryside — which was being held in Croom. Kilmallock was the venue for Féile na Máighe in 1974 and 1975. The 1974 Féile was opened by Dónall Ó Móráin, Director of Gael Linn, and the 1975 Féile by Cearbhall Ó Dálaigh, President of Ireland. During the 1974 Féile, a plaque was unveiled by Limerick County Manager, Richard B. Haslam, on the house in Wolfe Tone Street, in which Aindrias Mac Craith died.

The role of the Irish language as a heritage which all Irish people could share was well exemplified in a little ceremony that took place on the evening of Thursday, 20th January, 1983, at an ecumenical gathering in the Church of Ireland church in Kilrnallock, at which Most Rev. Dr. G.O. Simms, retired Church of Ireland Archbishop of Armagh and Primate of All Ireland, delivered a lecture on the *Book of Kells*. Prior to the lecture a copy of a newly published book, *Portrait of Limerick*, was presented by the author, Mainchín Seoighe, to whom, in turn, Dr. Simms presented a copy of the Church of Ireland Hymnal in Irish. The dual presentation ceremony was carried out in Irish. Among those present at the presentation and the lecture were Rt. Rev. W. Empey, Church of Ireland Bishop of Limerick, Ven. Archdeacon Snow, Rector, Kilmallock,

Very Rev. David Canon Wall, P.P., Kilmallock.

Society of St. Vincent de Paul

The second oldest of the existing organisations in Kilmallock is the Conference of SS. Peter and Paul of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. It was founded in 1932, the first president being Con Randles, N.T., and the first chaplain, Fr. Hugh O Connor. The conference continues very active, seeking no publicity for its members or its good works. Its policy remains one of "doing good by stealth".

The Kilmallock Players

The history of the Kilmallock Players goes back more than half a century. In 1933, Dr. Trevor MacNamara formed the first group of players. Dr. Mac Namara had a great interest in drama, and was an excellent director and producer. When he left Kilmallock following his appointment to Dromcollogher he handed over a very vibrant group to Jack (Seán) Hayes. Jack kept the group together, and as time progressed new members were recruited.

The group had a very successful period up to the outbreak of World War II in 1939, with such productions as "The Miracle" (a play on Christ), and "The Upper Room" (a play dealing with the Last Supper and the Crucifixion). Both plays were co-produced by Alice Gaffney, and won unstinted praise from the large audiences who saw them. The high standard of these two plays was maintained in other productions by the group, including "Autumn Fire", "The Shadow of a Gunman", "The New Gossoon", "The Able Dealer", "Charlie's Aunt", "The Workhouse Ward" and "The Whip Hand".

During World War II years most people were actively involved in one or other of the voluntary organisations of the time, the L.D.F., the L.S.F., the Red Cross, the A.R.P., etc., with the result that there was very little time for drama. And so the Kilmallock Players ceased their activities.

But the drama tradition continued in Kilmallock, and in 1950 the Players reappeared on the stage, having been re-formed by Pádraig Mac an Bhaird, N.T. For the next eleven years drama flourished again, with the following productions: "The Able Dealer" "Airy Castle", "They got what they Wanted", "The Shadow of a Gunman", "The Third Visitor", "The Valiant", "Arsenic and Old Lace", "Harvey", "The Fourth Wall", "Twenty Years a-Wooing", "Paul Twyning", "Romanoff and Juliet", "The Whiteheaded Boy", and "The Devil a Saint would Be". With the

retirement of Pádraig Mac an Bhaird from the principalship of Bulgaden school, and his going to live to Dublin, local drama activities again lapsed.

It was fifteen years before the Kilmallock Players were again revived, this time by Fr. P. Bowen, C.C. The first production by the revived group was J.B. Keane's "Moll". That was in 1977; and it was followed by "Anyone can Rob a Bank", "The Black Stranger", "The Buds of Ballybunion", "The Naked Tinker", "The Money Doesn't Matter" and "The Field".

When Fr. Bowen was transferred to Monaleen in 1983, John Brazill took over as producer, and continued in the tradition of his predecessors with "The Devil a Saint would Be", "One Mad Night". "Brush with a Body", 'The Belle of Boolavogue" and "Superfluous Hair". For 1987 the Kilmallock Players will be producing "The Whip Hand".

LDF and FCA

With the sudden escalation of World War II in Western Europe in the early summer of 1940, bringing with it the definite possibility of Ireland being invaded and occupied by one or other of the opposing sides, an all-Party appeal was made to young Irishmen to join the Defence Forces. They had a choice of joining the regular Army or the newly constituted Local Security Force (LSF). Within a few weeks tens of thousands had answered the call.

At first the LSF was divided into two sections, Group A, who undertook military duties, and Group B, who undertook police duties. Shortly afterwards, however, Group A became the Local Defence Force (LDF) and Group B became simply the LSF. The original LSF (embracing Groups A and B) was established in Kilmallock at a public meeting held on the 6th June, 1940. When Group A subsequently became the LDF it had about 130 members. Seán Hayes, an Old IRA veteran, was appointed Group Leader, and William Cregan was appointed Assistant Group Leader. Later, when Seán Hayes retired, John Fitzgerald became Group Leader.

The Kilmallock LDF formed part of the Bruff District LDF, which also had groups, or companies, in Bruree, Athlacca, Bruff, Holycross, Herbertstown and Hospital. The District Leader was Liam Purcell, of Uregare, another Old IRA veteran; and the following officers served under him: Adjutant, William J. Meade, Kilmallock; Quartermaster, Arthur M. O Shaughnessy, Bruff; Transport, Fred Van Bevan, Bruff; Intelligence and Communications, William A. Lee,

Kilmallock. The District Administrative Officer was Dan Mac Namara, Garda Síochána, Kilmallock. The District Headquarters was located in Kilmallock Garda Station. Contact with the regular Army was mainly through Commandant Liam Fraher, a native of the Bruff district, who frequently visited the different groups. He too was an Old IRA veteran, and a man who was held in the highest regard by all the members of the LDF.

All through the war years the members of the LDF met regularly, once a week, for instruction, and soon became familiar with such basic military drill as double filing, numbering and sloping arms. Early on they were supplied with brown uniforms, not too unlike dungarees. Rifles, with which they had trained, and which up to then had been kept in the Garda stations, were handed over — with sixty rounds of ammunition per rifle — to the individual LDF members in May 1941.

A weekend of large scale manoeuvres, involving the Army and LDF began in Munster on Saturday afternoon, 27th September, 1941, lasted all though the night, and continued up to Sunday evening. The roads around Kilmallock, as in all the surrounding area, swarmed with military, and military lorries and motor cycles and armoured cars crowded the roads, so much so that one could almost imagine oneself in a war situation..

Kilmallock LDF took part in a great military parade in Limerick city on Sunday, 30th November, 1941. Marching with the large numbers from the regular Army were LDF contingents from Clare, Limerick and Tipperary, and from Limerick city, together with members of the LSF, Red Cross, AFS (Auxiliary Fire Service), ARP (Air Raid Precautions), St. John's Ambulance, etc. The salute was taken by the then Taoiseach, Eamon de Valera, from a reviewing stand erected at the junction of William Street and O Connell Street.

Regular style green uniforms were supplied to the LDF some time later; these were a great improvement on the brown dungaree type uniform they had worn up to this. From 1941 onwards many Sundays were devoted by the LDF to field exercises, shooting competitions and various kinds of tactical exercises. Many members did courses in military barracks and in summer camps.

World War II ended in 1945, and the LDF more or less lapsed; but the idea of having citizen soldiers was revived the following year when the LDF was formally disbanded, and a new force, An Fórsa Cosanta Aitúil (FCA), established in its stead — the name of the new force was, in fact, only an Irish translation of the old name, Local Defence Force. The former Bruff and Galtee LDF districts were now

amalgamated to form the area of the new East Limerick Battalion FCA. The headquarters of the Battalion was located in the Garda station, Kilmallock, until 1951, when it was transferred to Sarsfield Street. The officer commanding the Battalion was Arthur M. O Shaughnessy. Two officers from Kilmallock served in the Battalion: Lieutenant John Fitzgerald, who subsequently became Commandant and Officer Commanding the Battalion, and Lieutenant William Cregan, Company Commander, Kilmallock. Among the sergeants who served in the Battalion were Kilmallock men Michael Kelly and Christy Clifford. Battalion Administrative Officers over the period were: Seán Fielding, Limerick, John O Sullivan, Bruff, and Paddy Tobin, Kilmallock.

In 1959 the FCA was integrated into the regular Army, the East Limerick Battalion FCA becoming "C" Company of the 14th Infantry Battalion. The Company has had four Company Commanders since 1959: Commandant John Fitzgerald, Kilmallock (1959 - 1967); Captain Michael J. Murphy (1967-68);Commandant Edmond Magner (1968 - 1980); and Commandant Con O Connell (1980 to date). In 1981, the Company moved its headquarters in Kilmallock from Sarsfield Street to the former Church of Ireland school in the townland of Deebert.

The Company must surely have won more All Army shooting competitions, at both team and individual levels, than any other unit in the FCA. They won the All Army Light Machine Gun (team) in 1969 and 1974; the All Army Rifle (team) in 1977; the All Army Falling Plates (team) in 1977 and 1980. Private Pat Mac Carthy, of Kilmallock, has a record in the Light Machine Gun shooting championships that no other member of the force can equal, winning the All Army Individual Championship in 1968, 1973 and 1974, and winning the Southern Command Individual Championship in 1969, 1970, 1973, 1974 and 1979.

I.C.A.

The Kilmallock guild of the Irish Countrywomen's Association (ICA) was founded on the 15th January, 1946, and initially had sixty-four members. Mrs. Mary Reeves was elected president and Miss Violet Bailey was elected secretary. Three founder members, Mrs. K. Flynn, Mrs. J. Carroll and Mrs. T. Bluett, have an unbroken attendance record since the guild was established forty years ago.

The guild has been very active over the years, and has provided a varied programme of events and instruction for its members. There have been many lectures on all kinds of subjects, and demonstrations in crafts,

dressmaking, cookery, gardening, and so on. There also have been educational tours, outings and social functions, all of which have proved very enjoyable.

Since its foundation, the guild has contributed much to the area. It has at all times co-operated with other local organisations; in particular, it has helped many charitable organisations, and has run many successful functions for worthy causes. It was the guild that spearheaded the successful campaign to save Blossom Gate, when this, the sole surviving town gate of medieval Kilmallock, was under threat of destruction in the early 1970s.

It was the guild too that initiated the Flower Show in 1961, a show that was quickly to become so popular that it is now a 2-day Flower and Vegetable Show. In 1966 the guild co-operated with the Kilmallock Community Development Association in organising a party for the old and lonely of the district. And on the 20th November, 1976, over one thousand people took part in an inter-denominational Peace March organised by the guild.

The guild keeps constantly before it the ideals of the Association: Promoting a love of home and the arts of peace; preserving local crafts; providing instruction in crafts, gardening, stock raising, etc; preserving and improving the amenities of the countryside; encouraging the use of the Irish language.

Members of the guild were actively involved in the preparation in Killarney for the triennial conference of the Associated Countrywomen of the World (ACWW), which was held in Killarney in May 1986; and when 200 members of the world group visited Kilfinane on the 26th May, the Kilmallock members assisted the members of the Kilfinane guild who were playing host to the visitors.

Kilmallock guild, though now over 40 years old, has still got a substantial membership, but would welcome more young people.

Macra na Feirme

During World War II, the farmers in the Kilmallock area, in common with farmers everywhere in Ireland, were compelled by Government Order to sow grain on one third of their arable land. In many cases the farmers had neither the equipment nor the skills to handle the quantities of tillage crops they were required to produce, and they came gradually to realise that there was a need to educate themselves in the methods of modern farming. And so when a young Agricultural Instructor named Harry Spain commenced an agricultural class, under the auspices of the Limerick County Committee of Agriculture, in the Courthouse,

Kilmallock, in the winter of 1943, he had little difficulty in attracting an enthusiastic group of local farmers.

Harry Spain had a profound influence on the development of modern farming, not only in the Kilmallock area, but all over South Limerick, where he was the only agricultural adviser at that time. Indeed, his Soils Survey of Ireland, for which he was awarded his Ph.D., and his later work as Chief Adviser to the Minister for Agriculture, made a major contribution to the development of Irish farming as we know it today.

While Harry Spain was conducting his class in Kilmallock, two colleagues of his, Stephen Cullinane, in Mooncoin, and Paddy Donnelly, in Athy, were conducting similar classes in their areas. During the course of the winter of 1943 and the spring of 1944, groups from the three class areas held inter-group discussions, and at some point at these inter-group meetings it was decided to form Young Farmers' Clubs. The three clubs, Kilmallock, Mooncoin and Athy, were formed at about the same time, in September 1944; and in May, 1945, a national executive was set up to co-ordinate the growth of clubs in all parts of the country. The club in Kilmallock was known as the Kilmallock Young Farmers' Club. The National Association of Young Farmers' Clubs subsequently changed its name to Macra na Feirme, the name the organisation bears today.

The founding members of the Kilmallock Young Farmers'Club, or Macra na Feirme branch, as far as can be ascertained today, were: Tom Bailey, Gortboy; John J. Carroll, Mountfox; Tom Mac Namara, Effin; Gerard Quillinan, Laurencetown; John P. Lyons, Ballyfookeen, Bruree; John Quinlivan, Clash, Ballyagran. Ned O Leary, Mountfox; Pat Scanlan, Dromin; John Lynch, Ballynaught, Bruree; Harry Spain. John Quinlivan was appointed chairman, Ned O Leary, secretary, and John J. Carroll, treasurer, the latter holding office for twenty years.

Among others who held the post of chairman, subsequent to John Quinlivan, were Paddy O Donnell, Pat Reeves, Dan Flynn (whose son, Henry, was chairman in recent years), Pat Halpin, Michael Quinlan, Bertie Mullane, Harry Hogan, Jimmy Bourke and John Brazil. Tom Bailey was secretary for many years, and was succeeded by Kevin Barry. Later holders of the office were John Brazil and Peggy O Grady (now Mrs. Murnane).

In the early years membership of Macra na Feirme was confined to men, but from the mid 1950s women were allowed full membership. The Kilmallock Macra group played a prominent part in the setting up of two major farming organisations: the ICMSA, whose first secretary was Liam Barry of Kilmallock; and the NFA (National Farmers

Association), now the IFA. The first chairman of the Co. Limerick NFA was John J. Carroll, Mountfox.

The original Young Farmers Clubs arranged lectures, farm walks and practical demonstrations. Of great importance at that time to many local farmers was the work done by the Club in organising the sale and transport of wheat and barley to grain merchants, and the bulk purchasing of seeds and fertilizers. Today, Macra na Feirme, while primarily concerned with the development of farming, also has among its aims the promotion of educational, social and cultural activities.

NOTE:
More recently formed organisations are dealt with in the Appendix.

Kilmallock ICA Guild members and friends at function in early 1950s: (1) Mrs. E.O Regan, (2) Mrs. F, Randles, (3) Mrs. M. Hannon, (4) Mrs. M. Reeves, (5) Marie Clery, (6) Mrs. L. Halpin, (7) Mary Martin, (8) —, (9) May Carroll, (10) Marie Devine, (11) Mrs. Martin, (12) Mrs. F. O Riordan, (13) Mrs. V. Fogarty, (14) Mrs. M. Treacy, (15) Maureen Feore, (16) —, (17) —, (18) Patsy O Grady, (19) Mrs. Condon, (120) Mrs. Gilbert, (21) —, (22) Eileen Mortell, (23) Eily MeAuliffe,(24) Mrs. K. Flynn, (25) Nellie Houlihan, (26) Marie O Sullivan, (27) Aileen Clery, (28) Teresa Murphy, (29) Peg O Donnell, (30) Mary Scanlan, (31) Mrs. D. Aherne, (32) Mary Joyce.

SUMMARY REPORT ON EXCAVATIONS AT TANKARDSTOWN AUTUMN OF 1986*

BGE SITE NO:	**1/4/2**
TOWNLAND:	**Tankardstown**
COUNTY:	**Limerick**
NAT. GRID REF:	**R584 282**
E. NO:	**372**
SITE:	**Neolithic House**
EXCAVATED BY:	**Christine Tarbett**

REMAINS: During removal of topsoil an L-shaped trench filled with boulders and burnt material was revealed. When this proved to be the obvious foundation trench for a neolithic house, a request was made to BGE and the landowner to extend the excavation into the wayleave outside the fenced-off corridor. Permission was granted and further excavation of a 10m x 12m area was carried over a five-week period which revealed the full ground plan of the house.

It is hoped to return to the site in 1987, with the help of an RIA grant, for a short season to test the immediate area around the house for related features.

No archaeological deposits survived on the site except in features cut into the boulder clay subsoil. This truncation of features appears to be the result of agricultural activity, though no ploughing had occurred in the area in recent memory. The remains of the house consisted of a rectangular foundation trench 7.40m long and 6.40m wide (external dimensions) varying from 40 - 80cm in width and 58-69cm in depth.

The house had eight main structural posts. Six of these were set into the foundation trench; one at each corner, and one midway on each of the long sides of the trench. The latter were set on a line with a pair of interior post holes. Thus, the four central, structural posts run mid-way across the short axis of the house. Only one other internal post hole was noted in the northeast corner of the house which may have been associated with the entrance or subsidiary roof support in this corner of the house.

The archaeological remains showed that the house had been destroyed by fire. This was indicated by heavy oxidation of the trench sides and the

presence in the fill of the trench and post holes of a high concentration of charred material, much of it disturbed.

During excavation, concentrations of charcoal displaying a vertial grain were noted and sampled. Three of these have been identified as "Quercus". This appears to indicate that the house may have been built of split oak planks. Identification of further samples of charcoal recovered from the trench fill is to be carried out.

One of the two main internal post holes yielded a cache of charred grain, some of which has been identified as emmer wheat. Evidence for the position of possible hearth site occurred as a concentration of slightly oxidised clay in the centre of the house between the two main interior posts.

The entrance appeared to be placed at the north side of the house and was only indicated by a deposit in the trench of primary, unburnt backfill 1.20m wide.

Finds include a range of small fragments of Western Neolithic pottery, several flint implements, including a fine, lozenge-shaped arrowhead and a number of quartz implements and struck fragments. All the animal bone found on the site was severely burnt. It is unlikely that these remains were burnt in a domestic refuse context. Also it was clear during excavation that the bone fragments had not been burnt in situ within the foundation trench. It may therefore indicate some sort of ritualised deposition during the construction of the house.

The charred plant remains from the site appear to be one of the best samples from a Neolithic context in this country. Examination of the remains is being carried out by Mick Monk U.C.C.

* This Summary Report is being published in 1987, in *Excavations '86*. The Tankardstown site will also be dealt with in a publication by archaeologist Margaret Gowan, the tentative title of this publication being *The Archaeology of Three Irish Gas Pipelines 1986.*

I am grateful to Margaret Gowan for providing a copy of the Summary Report for this book.

KILMALLOCK RACES AND FAMINE MEMORY

Kilmallock Races

According to notes compiled in 1932 by Larry Roche, of Bailynamuddagh House, Dromin — who is mentioned a number of times in this book — Kilmallock Races were held annually at Quarry Hill up to 1878, when a fierce riot took place there between combatants from Kilmallock and Kilfinane. Larry Roche says he was present at the 1878 races, and that hundreds became involved in the riot, a kind of faction fight. Sticks, stones and "maggie wattles" were freely used. No races were held at Quarry Hill after that year.

(Larry Roche's notes were kindly lent to me by Mrs. Eileen Duhig, Uregare).

Famine Memory

Regarding the Famine victims who sought shelter in Kilmallock abbey (see Chapter 18), Joe Gaffney told the present writer that his, Joe's mother (née Hawthorne) remembered seeing her father and a Dr. Hussey going over to the abbey to visit the Famine fever victims who had taken refuge there. Dr. Hussey, according to Joe, was a kind of recluse, who did most of his work at night.

NOTES ON SOME MORE RECENTLY ESTABLISHED ORGANISATIONS IN PARISH

Comhaltas Ceoltóiri Éireann

Kilmallock branch founded 23 June, 1961. Officers elected: chairman, Jimmy Clifford; vice-chairman, Tommy Prendergast; secretary, Mainchín Seoighe; treasurer, Pat Lyons. Committee: Jerry Kennedy, Willie Clifford, John Quinlivan, William O Sullivan, Maurice Joe Walsh, Lorcán Ó Maonaigh, Cristín Uí Mhaonaigh, Michael Casey, William Higgins; Canon Cowper elected patron 1962.

Other early members: Jerry Connell, Paddy Gubbins, Noel Flynn, John Cronin, Paddy Collins, Richard Keane, Dáithi Carroll, Paddy Casey, Christy Clifford, Mrs. Kitty Prendergast, Johnny Riordan.

A very successful Munster Fleá Cheoil held in Kilmallock 17th and 18th July, 1971.

Present Officers: president, Jimmy Clifford; chairman, Michael Casey, secretary, Tim Mac Carthy. Number of members — between 50 and 60.

O.N.E.

Branch of O.N.E. (Organisation of National Ex-Servicemen and Women) founded in Kilmallock 1967. First officers: chairman, Thomas Conba; Vice-chairman, Jack Ahern; secretary, Roger Gould; treasurer, Michael Fitzgerald; committee members: Paddy Hartnett, Tim O Donovan, Christy Clifford, Paddy Flaherty, Francis Lewis, Paddy Connolly. Branch holds simple ceremony each Easter Sunday to commemorate patriot dead of Kilmallock.

Present membership 30. Present officers: Life president, Roger Gould; chairman, James Moloney; vice-chairman, Paddy Tobin; secretary, Seamus O Kelly; assistant secretary, Paddy Flaherty; treasurer, Christy Clifford; PRO., Tommy Bohan.

Knights of Columbanus

Kilmallock Council of the Knights of St. Columbanus founded in 1950, largely on the initiative of John Dynes, Postmaster. First officers: Grand Knight (equivalent of chairman), Con Randles, N.T.; secretary, Pádraig Mac an Bhaird, N.T.; treasurer, Leonard Carroll.

One of main objectives of Knights of Columbanus: "To promote by personal and group action the extension of practical Christianity in all phases of life". In recent times Order active in defence of the Christian family. The Kilmallock Council took the initial steps towards establishment of Kilmallock Credit Union and Kilmallock Social Service Council. Present Membershup of Council 24.

Credit Union

The Kilmallock Credit Union, founded in 1963, as a result of a public meeting organised by Kilmallock Council of the Knights of St. Columbanus. Following Board of Directors appointed: president, Very Rev. J. Canon Cowper, P.P.; vice-president, Rev. H.C. Guernsey, Rector; secretary, Timothy J. O Donovan; treasurer, Pádraig Mac an Bhaird. Other directors: Patrick Halpin, Christy Clifford, Dr. D.T. Costello, Denis O Brien, Michael O Brien, Tom Mac Guane, Mrs. Mary O Connor, Mrs. Mary Reeves, Mrs. Helen Stone, Miss Eileen Fleming. Supervisory committee: John K. Houlihan, Charles J. Stone, Harry T. Robinson.

The Credit Union opened its doors to the public 16 November 1963. At first intended to serve only those living in, or working in Kilmallock parish, this being called the area of common bond. Common bond area later extended to embrace all adjoining parishes; now covers the enthe Kilmallock postal district.

The growth of the Kilmallock Credit Union slow at first, but for past ten or twelve years growth rate has ranged from 30 to 40 per cent each year. Savings of members now exceed £1,500,000. Since its foundation has granted loans in excess of £15 million.

Social Service Council

Group called Kilmallock Voluntary Social Workers (chairman, Jerry Fogarty; secretary, Paddy Tobin), established in 1964, had been catering for the elderly of the parish. In 1971 Kilmallock Council of the Knights of St. Columbanus, believing that more people should be involved in this work, called a meeting at which the Kilmallock Social Service Council was formed.

First officers of the Council were: chairman, Fr. T. Greene, C.C.; vice-chairman, Timothy J. O Donovan; secretary, Sister Máire; treasurer, Mrs. M. Talbot. Canon Cowper, P.P., and Dean Talbot, Rector, were named as patrons.

Present officers are: chairperson, Mrs. H. Noonan; vice-chairperson, Timothy J. O Donovan; secretary, Mrs. Nora Tobin; assistant secretary, Sister Máire; treasurer, Michael Barry, MCC.

Services provided by the Council include supplying dinners to an average of 15 people, five days a week, at cost of £4 per person; providing a good chiropody service (house-bound treated in their own homes); running of three clubs (one that organises classes in domestic management, etc., for the wives of itinerants); a Thrift Shop; two senior citizens' parties annually; annual outing for senior citizens.

Community Council

A forerunner of the Community Council, the Golden Vale Development Association, founded in Kilmallock, 1960. Officers: chairman, Fr. J. Culhane, C.C.; secretary, T.J. O Donovan; joint treasurers, C.J. Stone and Fr. Culhane. Committee: J.K. Houlihan, M. Ryan, C. Keane, M.M. Power, H.T. Robinson, M.J. Houlihan, T. Hannon, J.A. Fogarty,M. Lynch.

Association reorganised in 1964 so as to give representation to all organisations and clubs in they locality. Name changed to Kilmallock Community Development Association. Canon Cowper elected chairman; T.J. O Donovan, secretary; C.J. Stone, treasurer.

Main objective of reconstituted Association, to promote industrial development in the area. Deputations from Association went to Department of Industry and Commerce, the IDA and Shannon Free Airport Development Company. Brochure, setting out attractions of Kilmallock from industrial point of view, prepared by Association, and circulated on continent by IDA.

Association dissolved 1979 and replaced by the Kilmallock Community Council, organised on an area representation basis. First officers of Community Council: chairman, Michael Barry, MCC.; vice-chairman, Fr. P. Bowen, C.C.; secretary, Risteard de Barra; joint treasurers, Rev. Brian Snow, Rector, and Michael Fogarty; PRO., Noel Collins.

The Community Council has continued good work of predecessors. Achievements include taking over of, and renovation of, the Peoples Hall, involvement in the successful campaign for footbridge over Lúbach giving access to abbey; highlighting of Blossom Gate with flowers and shrubs; the holding of the annual St. Patrick's Day parade; the running of the annual Kilmallock Festival in conjunction with the GAA.

Tidy Towns Committee

A Tidy Towns Committee established in Kilmallock 1962, and following officers elected: president, Canon Cowper, P.P.; chairperson, Leonard Carroll; vice-chairperson, Mrs. Etna O Regan; secretary, C .J. Stone, treasurer, Rev. H.C. Guernsey, Rector.

Committee undertook to have ambitious programme of improvements carried out: better signposting to neighbouring towns; signposting of local historic ruins; the provision of litter bins, the planting of tubs and flower beds; the development of the river banks, etc. Many of these objectives achieved, with marked improvement in appearance of town and a substantial increase in number of marks awarded in the national Tidy Towns Competition.

Committee actively involved in the successful resistance to proposal to demolish Blossom Gate. Lack of sufficient funds negatived its plans for a Garden of Remembrance at Chapel Height. Tributes still being paid to late Leonard Carroll for his great work for the Tidy Towns Committee. He spearheaded practically every project of the committee in its early years.

With establishment of Kilmallock Community Council in 1979 the Tidy Towns Committee became sub-committee of Council. In this role much involved in various steps taken to secure access to abbey by means of footbridge across the Lúbach.

P.T.A.A.

Branch of Pioneer Total Abstinence Association (PTAA) established in Kilmallock 1956. Original officers: spiritual director, Fr. D. Crowley; president, Tom Mac Guane; secretary, William Parkinson; treasurer, John Fitzgerald. Branch continues very active, sending teams to compete in various competitions. Present officers spiritual director, Fr. L. Madden, C.C.; president, Mrs. D. Leahy; secretary, Mrs. N. Murphy; treasurer, Mrs. N. Tobin.

Boy Scouts

First troop of Catholic Boy Scouts of Ireland established in Kilmallock 1964 by Canon Cowper, P.P. First officers and committee members: chairman, Ned Cronin; secretary, Jim Moloney; treasurer, Jack Kelly; chaplain, Fr. T. Greene; scout leader, Jimmy Fraser; committee members:- Sgt. P. O Connor, Jack Frazer, Jim Mac Carthy, Jackie Lynch, Bill Allen, Jim O Connor.

Present Officers: chairman, Jimmy Frazer; secretary, Tom Allen; treasurer, Joe O Connor; chaplain, Fr. J. Leonard; unit leader, Liam Byrnes; scout leader, Christy Murphy; cub scout leader, Helen Donegan.

Brownies

Two Brownie Packs and a Guide Company formed in Kilmallock in 1978 by Mrs. Pat Snow, Regional Commissioner Irish Girl Guides, and Fr. P. Bowen, C.C. Guiders appointed at that time: Sister Teresa, Anne O Sullivan, Claire Kenny, Rita Murphy, Mary Hanley, Joan O Rourke and Joan Kelly. Three Brownie packs in parish at present, the Guiders being Sister Helen, Katherine Heffernan, Betty O Connor, Betty Russell, Anne O Sullivan, Rita Murphy, Mary Carroll.

Soccer Club

Kilrnallock United Soccer Club formed 1977. Original officers: chairman, Charlie Todd; secretary, T.J. Moloney; treasurer, Bill Allen. Present membership of club 180, of whom 40 are playing members. There are 9 teams, comprised of 2 junior, 1 minor, and 6 schoolboy. Club fielded its first team in 1977, and has had numerous successes to date. Present officers: president, Denis Blake; chairman, Michael Collins; secretary, Dan Hennessy; treasurer, Tom Barrett.

Tennis Club

Had been previous tennis clubs in Kilmallock; present club came

into existence 1984. Was founded by: Mike Gammell, Elaine Power, Breda Hayes, Siobhán Murphy, Shane O Grady, Barra O Dwyer, Eddie Wiley, David O Riordan, Sinéad Murphy and Eamon Cronin. Since its foundation, present club had to concentrate on restoration of club grounds. Present membership almost 100. Present officers: chairman, Shane O Grady; secretary, P.J. Mulcahy; assistant secretary, Marita O Doherty; treasurer, Barra O Dwyer; assistant treasurer, Breda Hayes.

Anglers' Club

Kilmallock and District Anglers' Club formed 1954. First officers: chairman, Michael J. O Sullivan, vice-chairman, Ned Noonan; secretary, Jackie Houlihan; treasurer, Michael Dowling.

Club bought perpetual cup, 1957, for its annual fishing competition. Canon Cowper donated trophy later; The Thomas Conba and Dick O Donnell trophies donated 1986. When Lúbach polluted, 1960, club took steps to have it restocked with 2000 trout fingerlings.

Present officers: chairman, Michael Garvey; vice-chairman, Denis Holly; secretary, Eamon O Riordan; treasurer, Raymond Breen; assistant treasurer, Kieran Donegan; PRO., Michael Donegan.

Flower Club

Kilmallock and District Flower Club established spring of 1970. Club meets once a month, and over the years has arranged many very interesting lectures and film shows covering various aspects of the cultivation, care and artistic presentation of flowers. Outings have taken place to many of the famous Irish gardens. Influence of the Flower Club reflected in the high quality of the flowers and other exhibits at the annual Kilmallock Flower show, and in the success of the club members at all the local shows.

When Féile na Máighe was held in Kilmallock in 1974 the Flower Club's contribution to the Féile programme was a truly memorable presentation in Harris's show rooms in Lord Edward Street, consisting of a series of beautiful and imaginative floral arrangements depicting the chequered history of Kilmallock from the time of St. Mocheallóg to modern times.

Present membership of club about 45. Present officers: chairperson, Mrs. Helen Noonan; vice-chairperson, Mrs. B. Brickley; secretary, Mary Carroll; treasurer, Kathleen O Mahony.

Kilmallock and District Men's Association

The Kilmallock and District Men's Association, founded in

London, 1968, now operates from Kilmallock. Founder members: Noel Flynn, Tom Clifford, Mary Clifford. Ned Mulcahy, Maurice Brazill. Cal O Donnell, Tom O Donnell, John Barrett, Mrs. Josie O Kelly, P.J. Clifford and Jim Moloney.

Association organises functions in aid of Welfare fund of Irish Centre in London, and co-operates in organising Parish Reunion Dance held annually in London; also contributes to Social Service Council in Kilmallock.

Present officers: president, Ann O Donnell; chairman, Tom Danaher; vice-chairman, John Cronin; secretary, Paddy Flaherty; assistant secretary, Ann O Donnell; treasurer, Tadhg Enright.

Cycling Club

Kilmallock Cycling Club formed 1974. Officers elected: chairperson, Mrs. Lilian Costello; vice-chairperson, James Mac Carthy; secretary, James Moloney; treasurer, Mrs. Mary Gammell. Club is now one of leading juvenile clubs in the country, and successes to date include: All Ireland U/16 Schoolboy Champion (Alan Enright); All Ireland U/12 Champion (Barry Sugrue); All Ireland U/12 Team Champions (Barry Sugrue, Dermot Sugrue, A. Houlihan).

Majorettes

Kilmallock Majorettes established by Mrs. J. Moloney, Sarsfield St., 1983. Since then have displayed their skills at many events, including Cobh International Folk Dance Festival. Total membership at present 57. Present officers: chairperson, Mrs. Ann Collins, Portauns; secretary, Mrs. Mary Ryan, Tobernea; treasurer, Mrs. Annette Heffernan, Sarsfield Street; vice-chairperson, Mrs. Mary O Riordan, Mountfox; assistant secretary, Mrs. Mary O Riordan, Graiganster; assistant treasurer, Mrs. Bernadette O Keeffe, Glenfield.

Parents' Association

Kilmallock Parents' Association founded 1970. Original officers: chairman, Seamus Sheedy; vice.chairman, William Parkinson: secretary, Christy Clifford; treasurer, Mrs. Claire Kenny.

In first year of existence Association members involved in discussions with the convent authorities on matter of co-education in secondary school; also assisted in fund raising to help equip science room; later helped to raise funds for provision of new class room and all-purpose room in girls' primary school. Actively interested themselves in having Irish dancing taught in girls' school; now run the school's

annual dancing *feis*.

Also campaigned for second refuse collection in town, for improved water supply and for retention of Kilmallock railway station as stopping place for passenger trains. Have provided talks and films on drug problem, and have organised National Manpower lecture for students and parents.

Present officers: chairperson, Mrs. Josie Leahy; vice-chairperson, Mrs. Kay Culhane; secretary, Mrs. Nuala O Grady; assistant secretary, Mrs. Rita Murphy; treasurer, Mrs. Jenny Moloney; assistant treasurer, Mrs. Catherine Slavin; PRO, Mrs. Eileen Quirke.

Catholic Secondary School Parents' Association

Kilmallock's St. Joseph's Catholic Secondary School Parents' Association founded 1977. First officers: chairman, Seamus Sheedy, vice-chairman, Christy Clifford; secretary, Mrs. Margaret Murphy; treasurer, Mrs. Maisie Madden. Present membership, 28.

Present officers: chairperson, John O Connor; vice-chairperson, Mrs. Nora Tobin; secretary, Mrs, Teresa Moloney; assistant secretary, Mrs. Chrissie O Brien; treasurer, Mrs. Nancy Murphy.

Historical Society

Early in 1986 group assigned by Kilmallock Community Council to arrange for the writing of history of Kilmallock formed itself into Cumann Staire Chill Mocheallóg, Kilmallock Historical Society, and elected from its members the following officers and committee: chairman, Mainchín Seoighe; secretary, Treasa Ní Dhochartaigh; treasurer, Noel Collins; committee members: Michael Donegan, Christy Murphy, Seán Naughton, John O Leary, Society decided to concentrate all its initial efforts on the preparation and publication of book on Kilmallock, to be called The Story of Kilmallock. After that would set about expanding its membership, organising outings and lectures, and, perhaps, publishing an annual journal.

PATRONS OF THIS EDITION OF "THE STORY OF KILMALLOCK"

North Bridge Express Shop

Fitzgeralds Electrical

Allied Irish Bank

Kilmallock Credit Union

O'Sullivan's Butchers

Supervalu, Kilmallock

Davitt Herlihy, Solicitor

Lee's Solicitor

Power's Solicitor

Kerry Agri. Kilmallock

Golden Vale Mart, Kilmallock

'Vale Star' Newspaper

Deebert House Hotel

Pat and Aileen McAuliffe, Railway Road.

Councillor Michael Donegan

Councillor Michael Houlihan

Catherine Nicholas, Glenfield

Pat and Kathleen McCarthy, Glenfield

Esther and Eamon O'Riordan, Ballinahown

Noel and Kit Collins, The Hill.

Paddy Carroll, Auctioneer.

O'Neills Oil, Charleville.

Rita Greene, Dromin.

Maureen Feore, Sarsfield St.

Dansko Foods, Kilmallock

Míle Buiochas

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CAR Carew MSS.

CDI Calendar of Documents relating to Ireland.

CSPI Calendar of State Papers, Ireland.

DD Memoirs of David Dwane (unpublished).

GJPB Limerick County Grand Jury Presentment Books.

HDL History of the Diocese of Limerick, J. Begley (3 Volumes) Dublin, Browne and Nolan: Vol. 1, 1906; Vol. 2, 1927; Vol. III, 1938.

JRHAAI *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Association of Ireland.*

JRHASI *Journal of the Royal Historical and Archaeological Society of Ireland.*

JRSAI *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland.*

KCMB Kilmallock Corporation Minute Books (1692 - 1745). MSS. 9450-51,Nat. Lib. of Ireland.

MBKU Minute Books of Kilmallock Union.

MCIA *Municipal Corporations (Ireland), Appendix to the First Report of the Commissioners for the Southern Circuit.* H.M. Stationery Office, London, 1835.

NG Manuscript notes of Nicholas Gaffney (unpublished, in possession of author of this book).

NMAJ *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*, The Thomond Archaeological Society, Limerick.

OSL Ordnance Survey Letters.

PRIA *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy.*

RCL *Round about the County of Limerick*, J. Dowd, Mac Kerns, Limerick, 1896.

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INDEX

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Abbeyfarm, 2, 105, 118, 278, 332, 353
Abington (Mainistir Uaithne), 87
Adams, Bernard, Bishop, 102, 104, 106
Adams, Richard, 209
Adams, Thomas Travers, 186
Adare, 17, 39, 73, 74, 90, 107, 117, 146
Affane, 52, 77
Ahearn, Thomas, 213
Aherlow, 72, 76, 95-97, 217, 225
Ahern, Jim, 374
Akhbard, William 40, 350
Aldworth, Boyle, 129
Almansa, battle of, 126
Anderton, Hugh, 123, 351
Anhid, 150, 151
Annacarty, 285
Anster, John, 355
Anster, Stephen, 115
Archer, John, 350
Ardkilmartin, 2, 118, 329, 353
Ardovelane (see Mountcoote)
Ardpatrick, 2, 4, 16, 28, 84, 118, 119, 130, 135, 186, 187, 249, 258, 294
Ardvullen, 251
Ardyoul, 2, 181, 333, 353
Armstrong, John, 352
Arundle, Capt. Paul, 93
Ashbourne, Lord, 258, 384
Ashe, Thomas, 263, 264, 384
Ashill, 2,118,150,152,153,168, 209, 272, 273, 276, 277, 326, 353, 365, 377,
Askeaton, 36, 66, 70, 73, 74, 90, 93, 99, 107, 174
Athanasius, Fr., OFM., 384
Athlacca, 104, 120, 134, 146, 155, 172, 225, 227, 249, 258, 328, 387
Athnanessy (or Athaneasy), 47, 103, 104
Athy, 322
Audley, Lord, 93
Aughinish, 107
Baalbek of Ireland, the, 1, 162
Baggot, James, 166
Bailey, Tom, 391
Bailey, Violet, 389
Ballenvestelladon (see also Mitchelstowrdown), 64
Ballincrana, 26
Ballingaddy, 2, 4, 11, 26, 27, 40, 47, 84, 103, 104, 118, 119, 130, 133, 146, 147, 151, 169, 171, 172, 177, 217, 261, 270, 271, 278, 282, 288, 329, 333, 349, 350, 353
Ballingarry (Co. Limk.), 39, 88, 117, 137, 166
Ballinlough, 186
Ballinscaula, 28
Ballinvana, 186
Bailyagran, 172
Ballyallinan, 56
Ballybeg, 166
Ballycullane, 2, 118, 177, 205, 263, 278, 290, 298, 353
Ballyfaskin (or Ballyfauskeen), 28
Ballygibba (or Ballygubba), 2, 4, 11, 83, 95, 120, 137, 146, 149, 168, 169, 198, 209, 217, 261, 276, 283, 286, 288, 291, 328, 332, 354, 358
Bailygillane, 2, 4, 177, 354
Ballyhea, 122
Ballyhousty (see Ballynaught)
Ballylanders, 28, 186, 196, 233, 265-267, 270, 278
Ballymacshaneboy, 186, 249
Ballynahown (or Ballyinahown), 2, 84, 119, 354
Ballynamoloogh, 2, 4, 354
Ballynaught (or Ballyhinnaught), 83, 217, 283, 329
Ballyneety, 124, 145
Bailyorgan, 135
Ballytiegue, 267
Ballyvorheen, 70
Barrett, Mrs., 254

Barrett, Patrick, 213, 217
Barry, Garrett, 108
Barry, James, 186
Barry, Kevin (executed 1920), 282
Barry, Kevin, 298, 391
Barry, Liam, 298,391
Barry, Michael, 186
Barry, Robert, 187
Barry, Schoolmaster, 104
Barry, William, 250
Bawntard (or Bantard) 2, 118, 135, 156, 181, 353, 354, 358
Beckham, Thomas, 201, 202
Beckingham, Bentham, 121
Begley, John Canon, 294, 350, 380
Begley, Miss M. 225
Bennett, Thomas, 186
Bennett, T.W.W. 371, 383
Benson, George, 121
Bermingham, Richard, 208, 209, 217
Berry, Robert, 175
Berwick, Duke of, 125, 126
Bevan, Frederick, 186
Bhriain, Neilí Ní, 258, 384
Birmingham, John, 129
Black and Tans, 273-275, 278, 283-285
Blake, Daniel, 209, 211, 248
Blake, Rev. Fr., 189
Blakeney, George, 129, 155
Blakeney, Robert, 134
Blakeney, William (f. 1692), 155
Blakeney, William (f. 1732), 134, 155, 352
Blakeney, William Lieut. 326
Bliúit (see also Bluet, or Bluett)
Bliúit, Séamus, 144
Bluet, or Bluett (see also Bliúit)
Bluet, James, 113
Bluet, John (f. 1291), 24, 25
Bluet, John (Dist. C11r.), 249
Bluet, Patrick, 130
Blythe, Ernest, 259
Boismeral, Lt. Col., 124
Bondman, Henry, 129
Bound, William, 121
Bourchier, Capt. George, 66, 67, 74, 77, 83, 88
Bourke, Albert, 261, 267, 270, 271, 288
Bourke, Jimmy, 391
Bourke, Miss, 275
Bourke, Thomas, 91
Bourke, Toby, 283
Bowen, Fr. P., 387
Boyle, Henry, 352
Boyle, Murrough, 352
Bracken, Brendan, 251
Bracken, Joseph Kevin, 251
Bradley, Daniel, 205, 208, 209, 212, 213, 216, 248
Brahan, Fr. John, 350
Brazier, K.B., 221, 222
Brazier, Kilner, 129, 352
Brazil, P., 228
Brazill, John, 387, 391
Breen, John, 374
Breesheen, 2, 118, 354
Bresnan, Owen, 250, 339
Brian Boru, 4
Bridges, Brook, 129, 352
Brien, Terence, 153
Brittas, 117
Broadford (Co. Lirnk.), 72, 222
Broghill, Lord, 122
Brouncker, Sir Henry, 100
Brown, Lieut., 273, 277
Browne, Michael Carginal, O.P., 320, 321
Bruff (see also Brú na nDéise), 3, 39, 86, 88, 90, 92, 98,104,124, 126, 137, 161, 163, 165, 168, 169,175,186,187,189,196, 208, 209, 211, 242, 254, 258, 264, 277, 290, 291, 292, 332, 350, 387
Brú na nDéise (see also Bruff), 3
Bruree, 3, 9,10,11,13, 39, 83, 112,134,137,149,168,169, 184,186,196, 209,211, 233, 237, 242, 249, 258, 261, 262, 270, 271, 278, 283, 285, 288, 290-292, 328, 329, 349, 357, 369, 374, 387
Buckely, Denis, 168
Buckely, John, 175
Buckley, Mr. (antiquarian), 320
Budaneerla, 181, 358
Bulgaden, 84,144, 212, 249, 258, 287, 291, 292
Bullock, Black and Tan, 285
Burgat, Henry, O.P., 123, 322
Burgat, Lord John, 322
Burgh, Rev. Richard, 351
Burke, Edmund, 164
Bury, Charles, 352
Butler, George, Bishop, 222

Butler, Joan, 322
Butler, Thomas, 88
Byrnes, Edmond, 261
Byrnes, Jack, 385
Cagney, Joseph, 245
Cahercorney, 186, 249
Cahill, Edmund, 186,
Cahill, Fr. John, O.P., 321
Cahill, George D., 222
Cahill, John, 259, 268
Cahill, Tim, 374
Callinan, James, 172
Callow, 107
Campion, Miss E., 380
Campion, Tommy, 381, 383
Cantillon, Robert, . 213
Cantulinn (or Cantellon), Thomas, 41, 42, 350
Canty, John, 249
Canty, Liam, 383
Canty, William, 250
Caomhánach, Eoghan, 149, 184, 198, 199, 342
Cappagh, 107
Carew, Sir George, 92 - 99, 102
Carew, Sir Peter, 55
Carmody, Miss, 225
Carpenter, James, 129
Carr, Fr. John, 293, 321
Carrigafoyle, 73
Carroll, John (Creamery staff), 375
Carroll, John (Dist, Cllr.), . 250
Carroll, John (Mountfox), 200, 375
Carroll, John (The Hill), 375
Carroll, John J., 181, 200, 391, 392
Carroll, Kevin, 175
Carroll, Leonard, 175
Carroll, Michael (Poor Law warden), 187
Carroll, Michael (South Ho.), 283
Carroll, Patrick (Poor Law Gdn.), 186
Carroll, Patrick (Poor Law warden), 187
Carroll, P.J. 371
Carroll, Thomas, 249
Carroll, William, 272, 278
Casement, Roger, 257
Casey, Henry, 130
Casey, James, 175
Casey, John (tenant on Holmes Est.,1830s), 181
Casey, John (IRA), 271
Casey, Maurice, 271, 288, 375
Casey, Michael, 374
Casey, Thomas (tenant on Holmes Est.,1830s), 181
Casey, Thomas (M.P.), 352
Casey, Timothy, 250
Casey, William, Bishop, 47 - 49
Casey, William (IRA), 288
Cashel (or Mountcashel), John, 217
Castlehaven, Lord, 109
Castleishen, 93
Castlemahon, 107
Castlematrix, 107
Castleoliver, 84, 119, 120, 152, 162, 163, 325
Castletown Kenry, 107, 117
Castletown Mac Eniry, 70
Chamberlain, James, 261, 266, 271, 278, 288, 375
Chambers, Archdeacon, 377
Chambers, Thomas, 213
Chapman, Christopher, 129
Charleville (see also Ráthluirc), 122, 126, 127, 134, l48, 160, 161, 169, 170, 175, 184, 186, 188, 190, 206, 208, 209, 211, 222, 225, 226, 228, 237, 242, 244, 292, 297, 304
Christmas, William, 352
Cill-mo-Cheallaigh, 335
Clancy, David, 274
Clandy, Paddy, 274
Claonghlais, 70, 72, 75
Clare, Lord, 160, 161
Clarke, Mrs., 265
Clarke, Tom, 233
Clarson, James, 270, 271
Clarson, Michael, 365
Clarson, Thomas, 375
Cleary, Elizabeth, 187
Clery, Dr. Michael, 210, 211, 248
Clery, John, 217
Clery, Mark, 217
Clery, Mark J., 371
Clery, P., 235
Clery, Paddy Peter, 217
Clery, P.D., 222
Clifford, Christy, 379, 389
Clifford, Fr. Edward, C.C., 212
Clifford, Tom, 336
Clinton, Mark, 377
Clogher, 256, 283
Cloghnarold, 107
Clonodfoy, 84, 119, 325
Cloonygarra, 168

Clounleharde, 73
Cobbett, William, 182, 184
Coll, Bob, 381
Coll, Dr., 228
Coll, Edmond, 237
Coll, Pat, 237
Coll, Patrick, 249
Collegiate Church, Kilmallock, 1, 15, 18, 20, 26, 37, 41, 42, 46, 47, 49, 65, 96, l00, l03,109, l10, 171, 296, 323-327, 329, 347
Collerus, 181
Collins, Michael, 266
Collins, William, 186
Collum, Capt. Robert, 84
Colmanswell, 250
Conba, Thomas (merchant), 213
Conba, Thomas (IRA), 263, 271, 275, 278, 282
Conba, Thomas & Sons, 245
Condon, Denis, 250
Condon, Ed., 228
Condon, Edmond, 187
Connello, 2, 44, 45, 58, 73, 93, 99, 101, 134
Connolly, James, 178
Connor, George, 175
Connor, John, 129
Connors, Bob, 256
Connors, Denis, 213
Cooke, Richard, 121
Coolroe, 2, 118, 354
Cooper, Walter, 129
Coote, family of, 120, 152, 154
Coote, Charles, 152
Coote, Chidley (Cromwellian Planter), 118, 119
Coote, Chidley (M.P., 1695), 129 152, 352
Coote, Chidley (f. 1752), 152
Coote, Chidley (f. 1837), 153, 154, 174
Coote, C. John, 154, 220, 224, 246
Coote, Elizabeth (w. of Chidley Coote, f. 1752), 152
Coote, Elizabeth (w. of Charles Coote) 152, 153
Coote, Eyre, Gen., 142, 143, 152, 365
Coote, Rev. Chidley, 152
Coote, Philips, 129, 152, 352
Coote, Robert, 134, 152
Coppinger, Walter, 325
Corbett, John, 177, 374
Corporation of Kilmallock, 37, 38, 41. 48. 63, 79-81., 84,106,129-131,156, 160,161, 165,179,180
Cosgrave, W.T., 265
Costello, Edmond, 285
Costello, Fr. R., 321
Costello, Jimmy, 285
Costello, Tim, 347
Courtaruddery (see Cúirt an Ridire)
Cowhey, Patrick, 271
Cowper, James Canon, D.D., P.P., (see also de Cúipéir, Séamus, S.P.), 301, 321, 351, 377, 379, 380, 384
Coyne, Rev. Henry, 106, 351
Creagh, Christina, 142
Creagh, Dean, 47
Creagh, Francis, 113
Creagh, Piers, 118
Creagh, Richard, 119
Creagh, William, 119
Creameries, 242, 245, 248, 252, 298, 374-376
Creed, Edward Moore, 181, 184
Creed, James, . 342
Cregan, William, 387, 389
Croker, Crofton, 172, 173
Croker, John, 129
Croker, John (M.P., 1723), 352
Cronin, J., 167
Cronin, John (Dist. Cl1r.), 250
Cronin, John (W .H. O Sullivan's staff), 374
Cronin, T., 167
Croom, 39, 73, 90, 99, 107, 144-146, 151, 184
Crotty, John, 271
Crotty, John J., 245
Crowley, Fr. Mark, 237, 305
Crowley, Tadhg, 274
Cuff, Hugh, 93
Cúirt an Ridire, 23, 28, 84, 114, 118, 171, 319, 332
Culhane, David, 278
Culhane, James Canon, 321
Cullamus, 2, 118, 181, 354
Cullane, 28
Cullinane, Stephen. 391
Cummins, John, 217
Curraturk, 28
Cusack, William, 285, 375
Cush, 28, 274

Cussen, family of, 149
Cussen, Thomas, 149
Dalton, Chris, 285
Dalton, Louis, 379
Dalton, Paddy, 255
Daly, Dr. J.C., 381
Daly, Simon, 217
Daly, Thomas, 213
Danaher, Denis, 374
Daniel, James, 89
Darby, John, 121
Darragh, 72, 104, 250, 375
Darranstown, 28
Davis, Capt., 273, 275-277
Davitt, Michael, 223, 226, 249, 294
Deasy, Liam. 290
de Barra, David, 21
de Bhál, Gearóid, S.P. (see also Wall, Gerard Canon, P.P.), 351
de Bhál, Tomás, Canonach, 282
de Bhulbh, An tAth. Pádraig (see also Woulfe, Fr. Patrick), 383
de Brún, Monsig. Pádraig, 321
de Burg, William, 17
de Burgh, Hubert, Bishop, 18-20
de Cuipéir, Séamus, S.P. (see also Cowper, James Canon, P.P.), 351
Deebert, 2,118,156,168,181, 184, 245, 248, 252, 296, 333, 354, 374, 389
Deegan, Sgt., 202
de Geraldinis, Rev. James Radimund Maurice, 42, 350
de Hindeberg, Rev. Dr. Risteárd, 384
Déis Bheag, An, 3, 4
Déisi, 3
de Lacy, family of (see also Lacy, family of), 39,77,137,332
de Lacy, David, 137, 142
de Lacy, Odo, 39
de Lacy, Peter, 137
de la Roche, Walter, 350
Delee, John P., 267, 271, 282, 285
de Marisco, Geoffrey, 17 - 19
de Marisco, William, 19
Dennehy, Denis, 285
Dennehy , John, 285
Dennison, Ellen, 187
Dennison, James, 375
Desmond, Earls of:
Gerald, 14th Earl, 51-55, 65-67, 69-77, 81, 82, 86, 324
James, 12th Earl, 43
James, 13th Earl, 48
James, "English Earl" 65, 72, 87, 94-97, 324
James, "Súgan Earl", 87, 88, 90-98,101, 318
Maurice, 1st Earl, 17, 36
Desmond, Eleanor Countess of, 54, 65, 66, 71,72, 74, 76
de Stanley, John, 38
de Valera, Eamon, 233, 237, 256, 263, 265, 292, 294, 295, 349, 383, 388
Devoy, John, 205, 381, 382
Dillane, Denis, 201, 202
Dillane, Patrick, 245
Dillon, Capt. 93
Dinneen, Larry, 271, 278, 279
Dinneen, Timothy, 250
Doheny, Michael, 198
Doherty, Josephine, 374
Dominican Priory, Kilmallock, 1, 16, 24-26, 28, 37, 47, 58, 84,101, 109,110, 123,127, 132,133,171, 194,195, 305, 318-323, 347
Donegan, John (IRA), 257, 282, 288
Donegan, John (W .H. O Sullivan's staff), 374
Donegan, Owen, 208
Donnelly, Paddy, 391
Donyrish, 47, 103
Dowling, Eileen, 380
Dowling, Mossy, 383
Dowling, Thomas, 174
Downes, Fr. Thomas, P.P., 226, 347, 350
Downes, Patrick (Paddy), 255, 285, 288, 375
Downgadmond, 47, 103
Drew, Francis, 169
Dromacummer, 291
Dromin, 104,134, 186, 256, 258, 292, 328, 350
Drury, William, 69 - 72
Duggan, Christy, 373
Duggan, Fr. John, 321
Duggan, James, 374
Duggan, James J., 365, 366
Duggan, John P., 366
Dullard, Bartholomew, 350
Dunamag, 86
Dún an Óir, 75
Dundon, Richard, 116
Dunmoylan, 117

Dunne, Capt. John, 206-209, 211, 217 , 218
Duntryleague, 8
Dunworth, Jeremiah, 250
Dunworth , William, 172
Dwane, David (see also Ó Dubháin, Dáithí), 252, 253, 256, 257, 259, 261-264, 281, 383
Dwane, Roger, 245
Dwyer, Elizabeth, 127
Dwyer, Irish Brigade soldier, 127
Dwyer, Thomas, 194.
Effin, 47,92,97,104,l30, 133, 189, 212, 258, 328, 329, 350
Electricity in Kilmallock, 244, 253, 371, 372
Ellard, Rev. James, 174, 351
Elton, 28, 202, 258
Elys, Alexander, Provost, 23
Emly, 29,65, 351
Emlygrennan, 250
Emmanuel, Sister, 380
Emmet, Thomas (Burgess), 129
Emmet, Thomas (Poor Law Warden), 187
Empey, W., Bishop, 385
Enraght, Fr. J., P.P., 233
Enright, Sgt., 286
Eoghanacht, 3
Essex, Earl of, 67, 90-92
Evans, Eyre, 153, 154,168, 169, 172, 174, 186
Evans, Eyre, Jnr., 186
Evans, George, 152
Evans, J . Eyre, 326
Fairyfield, 2, 278, 354
Fanningstown, 73, 88
Fant, Fr. John, 149, 167, 327, 350
Fant, J., 164
Fant, James, 85
Fant, Nicholas, 118
Fant, Robert, 85
Fantstown (or Fanstown), 116, 144, 149, 164, 198
Farranacrossa, 118, 181, 357
Farranda, 118, 224, 358
Farrintanckly, 88
Faunt (Fant), Nicholas, 105
Ffant, Geneta, 322
Ffant, Nicholas, 129
Feenagh, 72
Fellows, Robert, 120
Feore, Martin (Union teacher and rate collector), 187, 188
Feore, Martin (draper), 380
Feore, Lawrence, 245
Fetherstone, Robert, 186, 192, 193
Fielding, Seán, 389
Fildes, Henry M., 371
Finlay, John, 352
Finn, Babs, 286
Finn, Mary, 286
Finniterstown, 90
Fionnchu, St., 89
Fitton, Edward, 77, 78
Fitzedmond Fitzgerald, John, 75, 76
Fitzgerald, Barry (actor), 379
“Fitzgerald, D.”, 275-277
Fitzgerald, Dick, 271
Fitzgerald, Edmond (f. 1820), 169
Fitzgerald, Edmond (creamery staff), 375
Fitzgerald, Elena, 325
Fitzgerald, Fr., C.C., 200
Fitzgerald, Francis, 200 - 202
Fitzgerald, Gerald, 14th Earl of Desmond (see Desmond, Earls of)
Fitzgerald, Gerald (student) 110
Fitzgerald, Gilbert, 24, 25, 318
Fitzgerald, James, “English Earl” (see Desmond, Earls of)
Fitzgerald, Joane, 325
Fitzgerald, John (f. 1820), 181
Ftizgerald, John (Dist. Cllr.), 250
Fitzgerald, John (FCA and GAA), 387, 389
Fitzgerald, Lord Edward, 166, 182, 247
Fitzgerald, Mary Caroline, 200, 201
Fitzgerald, Maurice (repaired Kilmallock church 1420), 323
Fitzgerald, Maurice , Justiciary, 19
Fitzgerald, Maurice (d. 1635), 325
Fitzgerald, Maurice (of Decies), 51
Fitzgerald, Patrick, 271
Fitzgerald, Sir James of Desmond, 70, 74, 77
Fitzgerald, Sir John of Desmond, 53, 54, 65-67, 70-72, 74-77
Fitzgerald, Thomas (d. 1630), 325
Fitzgerald, Thomas, Jnr., 186
Fitzgerald, Thomas Óg, 96, 97
Fitzgerald, William Vesey, 101
Fitzgibbon, David, 50
Fitzgibbon, Edmond (last White Knight), 58, 84, 88, 92, 97, 98, 101, 318,
Fitzgibbon, Gibbon, 50
Fitzgibbon, John, 2nd White Knight, 47, 49
Fitzgibbon, John, 3rd White Knight, 49

Fitzgibbon, Lord Clare, 160, 161, 352
Fitzgibbon, John Óg, 4th White Knight, 50, 58, 84, 319
Fitzgibbon, Maurice, Archbishop, 56
Fitzgibbon, Maurice, lst White Knight, 26, 319
Fitzgibbon, Maurice (son of John, 2nd White Knight), 49, 50
Fitzgibbon, Maurice (son of last White Knight), 101, 321
Fitzgibbon, Maurice (Fenian), 213
Fitzgibbon, Michael, 266, 278, 282, 288
Fitzgibbon, Thomas, 50
Fitzharris (or Fitzharry), family of, 84
Fitzharris, Sir Edward, 119
FitzHarryes, Elena, 325
Fitzjohn, Adam Fitzgeoffrey, 23
Fitzjohn, John, 46
Fitzmartin, William 21
Ftizmaurice, Thomas, 17
Fitzmaurice Fitzgerald, James, 54 - 58, 62-73, 77, 113, 324
Fitzthomas Fitzgerald, James (see also "Súgán Earl"), 87, 88, 91, 94
Fitzthomas Fitzgerald, John, 19, 20
Flaherty, John, 374
Flanagan, Fr. Raymond, OCSO, 367
Flanagan, John, 381, 382
Flanagan, Tom, 381
Fleming, Burke, 166
Fleming, Eliner, 327
Fleming, Michael, 327
Fleming, Thomas, 130
Flemingstown, 2, 4, 26, 116, 119, 288, 355
Flood, Commdt., 291 - 293
Flynn, Dan (Macra), 391
Flynn, Daniel, 375
Flynn, Gerard, 372
Flynn, Henry, 391
Flynn, Noel, 383
Fogarty, Michael (teacher), 177, 188
Foley, Michael, 213
Foley, Ned, 267
Fontymkill 4, 17, 19
Forthingham, Francis, 103, 104
Forty Acres, 291
Fox, family of, 83
Fox, Arthur, 176
Fox, David, 110
Fox, John, 114, 115, 118, 119
Fox, Roger, 371
Foynes, 212
Fraher, Commdt. Liam, 388
Gabbett, Rev. Joseph, 224, 351
Gaffney, Francis, 186
Gaffney, Joe, 256, 257, 260
Gaffney, (?) John, 166
Gaffney, Katie (see also Ghamhna, Cáit Ní), 383
Gaffney, Nicholas, 166, 197, 204, 206, 207, 227, 241, 242, 257
Galbally, 8, 117, 186, 196, 225, 279
Galwey, Sir Geoffrey, 116
Galwey, Widow, 195
Gammell, Michael, 270, 271, 279
Garrouse, 283
Garryfine, 192
Garrynoe, 2, 118, 168, 194, 196, 201, 298, 336, 355, 358
Garryvoneare, 116
Gascoigne, Richard Oliver, 180
Ghamhna, Cáit Ní (see also Gaffney, Katie), 253, 383
Gibbingstown, 208
Gilberson (or Gilbertson), family of, 135
Gilberson, Henry, J., 222, 226, 231
Gilberson, Miss H., 225
Gilberson, Michael, 176
Gilberson, Richard, 168
Gilberson, Thomas, 257
Gilbert, Sir Humphrey, 55, 58, 62
Gilbertson, Henry (blacksmith), 153
Gilbertson, Henry (Poor Law warden), 187
Gilbertson, Michael, 187
Gilbertson, Nicholas, 175
Gilbertson, Richard, 175
Gilhooly, John, 250
Glasheen, William, 186
Glenbrohane, 9, 28, 186, 250
Glenfield, 2, 114, 118, 168, 184, 245, 334, 336, 355, 357, 358, 367, 371
Glenageenty, 76
Glenogra, 84, 88
Glenosheen, 188, 339
Glenroe, 186
Glin, 68, 274
Glin, Knight of, 28, 57, 77, 93, 96, 101
Glover, Henry, 121
Golden Vale Co-op Marts, 298
Gonne, Robert, 155
Good, Richard, 103, 104
Gortboy, 2, 115, 118, 288, 355, 358
Gort na Tiobraid (see also Springfield), 71, 72, 117
Gortnepequiney, 326

Gotoon, 2, 4, 254, 302, 332, 355
Gould (or Goold), family of, 83
Gould, Annabella, 137
Gould, George, 121
Gould, John, 118 - 120
Gowlys, Thomas, 350
Grady, Standish, 156
Graeme, Capt. Richard, 93-95
Graiganster, 2, 116, 355, 358
Grange, 124, 258
Greene, family of, 166
Greene, Fr. T., 321, 377
Grenville, Sir Richard, 55
Grey de Wilton, Lord, 75
Griffin, Matthew, 121
Griffith, Arthur, 265, 287
Griffith, Thomas J., 371
Griston, 250
Groe, 201, 206, 358, 359
Groome, Owen, 93
Grotto, 181
Gubbins, Michael, 222, 384
Gubbins, Joseph, 186
Gubbins, William, 249
Guernsey, Rev. H.C., 351
Gurtivant, 181, 358
Gurtnacrina, 181
Hackett, Fr., S.J., 384
Hackett, T.A.P., Canon, 246, 351
Halliday, William 129
Hallinan, John, 245
Halpenny, Sir Moriertagh, 102
Halpin, Pat, 391
Haly, Alsona, 325
Haly, Matthew, 119
Haly, Robert, 118
Hamilton, John, 129
Hanley, Fr. William, O.P., 133
Hanley, Tom, 374, 383
Hannan, Michael, Archbishop, 367
Hannon, family of, 149, 180, 181, 194
Hannon, Connie, 150, 188
Hannon, Daniel, 153
Hannon, Edward, 187
Hannon, J., 168
Hannon, James, 169
Hannon, James (limekiln), 376
Hannon, Josephine, 149
Hannon, Thomas (f. 1705), 131
Hannon, Thomas (coach builder), 245
Hannon,Willie, 383
Harris Brothers, 298, 302
Harris, Edward, 121
Harris, George, 236
Harris, John, 250
Harte, Paddy, 379
Hartigan, George, 249
Hartnett, Lawrence, 240
Hartnett, Patrick, 374
Hartstonge, Standish, 129, 352
Harty, James, 249
Haslam, Richard B., 385
Hassett, Denis, 375
Hassett, John, 242
Hassett, Patrick, 212
Hawthorne, family of, 135, 150, 151, 209
Hawthorne, Christopher, 209, 213
Hawthorne, Francis, 151
Hawthorne, Francis (son of above-mentioned Francis), 151
Hawthorne, Meta, 151
Hawthorne, Michael, 151
Hawthorne, Michael (son of above-mentioned Michael), 151
Hawthorne, Patsy, 151
Hayes, Dr. Richard, 267, 268
Hayes, Lieutenant, 200
Hayes, Michael, 374
Hayes, Professor Michael, 295
Hayes, Seán (Jack), 261, 266, 288, 386, 387
Healy, Bartholomew, 285
Healy, James, 217
Healy, Paddy, 383
Heffernan, Michael, 200
Heffernan, Elizabeth, 177
Heffernan, James, 64
Heffernan, Thomas, 64
Hennessy, Denis, 213
Hennessy, John, 376
Hennessy, Michael, 261
Hennessy, Sister Francis, 380
Hennessy, Thomas, 250
Herbertstown, 225, 242, 276, 387
Herlihy, Con, 272, 278
Hickey, William, 329
Hicks, F.G., 349
Hill, James, 129
Hill of Ward, 9
Hill, Will, 121
Hill, William, 129, 165
Hiring Fairs, 238-240
Hogan, Dan, 282
Hogan, Harry, 391
Hogan, Jim. 168

Hogan, John, 267
Hogan, Lizzie, 285
Hogan, Margaret, 286
Hogan, Michael ("Bard of Thomond"), 211, 212, 340
Hogan, Mick, 282
Hogan, Paddy, 282
Hogan, Patrick, 249
Hogan, Seán. 256, 270
Hogan, Thomas, 261, 263, 266, 271, 278, 282
Hogan, Tom, 279
Holmes, family of 326
Holmes, Henry, 129
Holmes, John (f. 1659), 121
Holmes, John (Burgess), 129
Holmes, Peter, 352
Holmes, Robert, 129
Holmes, Sir Leonard, 181
Holmes, Thomas, (f. 1659), 121
Holmes, Thomas (Burgess), 129
Holy Cross (Co. Limk.), 387
Honner, John, 177
Hope, Col., 273, 276, 285
Horan, Fr. Martin, O.P., 133
Hospital, 163, 169, 186, 198, 242, 250, 334, 387
Houlihan, Fr. Edmond, 321
Houlihan, Michael J., 285 , 375
Howard, Patrick, 375
Howard, Tom, 274
Howardstown, 116
Hunt, Edmund, 129
Hurley, Michael J., 252, 273, 275, 276
Hurley, Sir Maurice (f. 1608), 102
Hurley, Sir Maurice (f. l654), 118
Hurley, Sir William, 124, 352
Hurley, Thomas, 352
Hussey, Mary, 178
Hussey, Patrick, 174, 175
Inchiquin, Lord, 108, 109, 110
Irwin, Liam, 306
Ivers, Robert Holmes, 186
Jackson, Ned, 347
James, Thomas, 121
Johnson, T.G., 338, 339
Jones, Bobby, 376
Jones, John, 250
Joyce, James, 217
Joyce, James W., 222, 226-229, 231, 241, 242, 245, 254, 371
Joyce, Michael, 338, 339
Joyce, Patrick, 262
Joyce, Patrick W., 127, 188, 262, 338, 339, 346, 353
Joyce, Robert Dwyer (poet), 127, 228, 338, 339
Joyce, Robert Dwyer (grandnewphew of above-mentioned R.D. Joyce), 127
Joyce, Robert J. (see also Seoighe, Roibeard S.), 251, 383
Jubbs, Thomas, 121
Keane, Constable, 272
Keane, Cornelius (Neily), 278, 279, 379
Keane, John, 266
Keane, Matthew, 177, 178
Kearney, John, 250
Kearney, Patrick (M.P., 1613), 352
Kearny, Patrick (f. 1654), 118
Kearny, Patrick (d. 1733), 327
Kelly, Andy, 255
Kelly, Michael (coach builder), 245
Kelly, Michael (FCA), 389
Kelly, Michael (IRA), 285
Kelly, Mick, 255
Kelly, Paddy (mason), 255, 347
Kelly, Paddy (GAA), 383
Kelly, Patrick, 168
Kenna, Matthew, 177
Kenneally, Fr., O.P., 322
Kennedy , Jack, 217
Kennedy, P.N., 217
Keogh, John, 271
Kilbreedy Major, 130, 131, 381
Kilbreedy Minor, 130, 174, 176, 350
Kilclooney Wood, 217, 218
Kildimo, 185
Kilfinane, 4, 17, 72, 84,104,115, 119,132,133,135, 165,186, 205, 210, 222, 225, 226, 228, 229, 242, 250, 254, 258, 282, 328, 375
Kilfinny, 88, 107
Kilflynn, 84, 103, 186
Killogholehane, 44
Killmakillogue, 335
Kilmallock Hill, 2, 13, 14, 15, 50, 118, 124 - l26, 156, 159, 16l, 168, 169, 188, 189, 200, 254, 255, 305, 327, 334, 336, 357, 367
Kilmallock Workhouse, 187, 191-197, 254, 273, 288-290
Kilmihill, 2, 4, 17, 261, 267, 327, 333, 355, 365
Kilquane, 119
Kilteely, 91, 250

King, George, 352
King, John, 177
Kingston, Earl of, 101
Knight, of the Golden Spur (see Verdon, John)
Knockainy, 9, 17, 186, 250, 258, 351
Knockanoss, 110
Knocklong, 28, 63, 64, 186, 250, 267, 270
Knockmore, 237
Knocksouna, 2, 4, 8-10, 13, 83, 94, 95, 119, 120, 137, 146, 168, 261, 268-270, 285, 286, 288, 292, 293, 307, 308, 342, 343, 355
Lackelly, 285
Lacy, family of (see also de Lacy), 39, 83, 137
Lacy, Count Peter, Field Marshal, 137
Lacy, Edy, 116
Lacy, Hugh, Bishop, 53, 54
Lacy, John, 124, 352
Lacy, Neil, 119
Lacy, Piers, 86, 87, 93, 95-97
Lally, Count T.A., 143
Langford, John, 129
Langton, Colthurst, 134
Lawless, Sir David, 102
Leahy brothers (athletes), 381
Leahy, Con, 381
Leahy, Denis, 240
Leahy, James, 217
Lee, Francis, 136
Lee, Fr. David, 350
Lee, Gerard, S.C., 305
Lee, William A., 387
Lee, William J., 250
le Fleming, Robert, 25
Léis, Ead. 39
Leo, John, 169
Leonard, Michael, 261, 270, 271, 278
Lewis, David, 118
Leynach, William, 350
Lionel, Duke of Clarence, 37
Lisheendarragh, 105, 106, 118
Lloyd, Clifford, 225, 226, 228-231, 233
Lloyd, Rev. Robert, 351
Loch Gur, 5, 15, 16, 66, 73, 83, 88, 93, 107, 117, 250
Lock, Rev. James. 351
Longboat, Tom, 382
Lottera, 137
Lynch, Daniel, 217
Lynch, Debbie, 271
Lynch, German, 39
Lynch, John, . 391
Lynch, John A., 279, 285
Lynch, Johnnie, 270, 271, 274
Lynch, Liam, 289
Lynch. Maureen, 380
Lyons, James (Dist. Cllr.), 249
Lyons, James (Fenian), 209, 217
Lyons, John P., 391
Lyons, Patrick, 373
Lyons, Tim, 267
Mac an Bhaird, Pádraig, 386
Mac Carthy., Callaghan T., 224
Mac Carthy, Colour Sgt. Charles, 213, 216, 219, 220
Mac Carthy, Daniel, 271, 282
Mac Carthy, Denis, 383
Mac Carthy, Fr. Timothy, 167
Mac Carthy, J.J., 347
Mac Carthy, John (W.H. O Sullivan's staff), 374
Mac Carthy, John (Fenian), 213
Mac Carthy, Michael, 226, 231
Mac Carthy, Pa, 293, 380
Mac Carthy, Pat, 389
Mac Carthy, Richard, 257
Mac Carthy, Seán, 282, 377
Mac Carthy, schoolmaster, 188
Mac Carthy, William, 288
Mac Cinnéide, Séamus, 144, 146, 367
Mac Connell, family of, 135
Mac Connell, Arthur, 135
Mac Connell, Francis, 135
Mac Connell, Henry, 174
Mac Connell, Sam, 168
Mac Corymyler, Dermot, 49
Mac Craith, Aindrias, 135, 144, 145, 148-151, 198, 199, 209, 301, 384-385
Mac David, William, 130
Mac Diarmada, Seán, 216, 233
Mac Domhnaill, Seán Clarach, 148-151
Mac Donnell, Dermot, 84
Mac Donnell, Thomas, 217
Mac Eniry, family of, 77
Mac Ewan, Fr. Sydney, 379
Mac Ginn, John, 217
Mac Grath, Fr. Ambrose, O.P., 133
Mac Grath, James, 228
Mac Grath, Thomas, 176
Mac Kay, Edward Percy, 282
Mac Kenraghty, Fr. Maurice, 82, 83, 348, 367, 368

Mac Kenraghty, Thomas, 82
Mac Mahon, Bryan 250
Mac Mahon, Thomas, 186
Mac, Manus, Terence Bellew, 204
Mac Master, Anew, 379
Mac Namara, Dan, 388
Mac Namara, Dr. Trevor, 376, 386
Mac Namara, Fr., 228
Mac Namara, John, 375
Mac Namara, Laurence, 327
Mac Namara, Mary, 327
Mac Namara, Tom, 391
Mac Neill, Rev. John 351
Mac Néill, Eóin, 384
Mac Rory, Cardinal, 296
Mac Sheehy, gallowglass family of, 55, 57, 62, 72, 88
Mac Sheehy, Maurice, 66
Mac Sweeney, Fr. Denis, 137
Mac Swiney, Terence 282
Madden, James, 250
Madden, Matthew, 186
Madden, W.H., 250, 375
Magner, Commdt, Edmond, 389
Magrath, Miler, Archbishop, 92, 95
Maguire, John, 217
Maguire, Patrick, 213
Maguire, Sgt., 276, 277, 283, 284
Maher, Patrick, 267
Maidstown, 115, 119, 120, 260
Mainwaring, William, 88
Malby, Nicholas, 69, 72-74
Malone, Thomas, 186
Malone Tomás ("Sean Forde"), 272
Manahan, Liam P., 265
Manister, battle of, 72
Manisternenagh (or Manister), 72, 186
Martinstown, 268, 270, 282
Massy, Hugh (f. 1695), 129
Massy, Hugh (member Kilmallock Bd. of Gdns.), 186
Massy, Samuel, 129
Maunsell-Eyre, Rev. R.H., 351
Mead, John Fitzdavid 130
Meade, Family of (see also Meagh and Miagh), 21, 42,115
Meade, Fr. Dominick, O.P., 322, 323
Meade, Fr. Patrick, 130
Meade, James, 249
Meade, Matthew, 123
Meade, Thomas, 327
Meade, William J., 387
Meagh, family of (see also Meade) 21, 42, 115
Meagh, David, (f. 1583), 76, 79
Meagh, David, (f. 1654), 113
Meagh, Garrett, 114
Meagh, John, 119
Meagh, Lawrence, 113
Meagh, Nicholas, 84
Meagh, Thomas, 118
Meagher, Martin, 250
Meany, Jeames, 367
Meany, Mary Brigid, 367
Meehan, Rev. P., D.D., 350
Meehan, Thomas, 213
Meghen, P.J., 238
Mehigan, P.D., 382
Miagh, family of (see also Meade and Meagh)
Miagh, Nicholas, 320
Miagh, Rev. William, 42, 350
Miagh, William, 84
Mídheach, Tomás, 147
Milford, 205, 265, 266
Milligan, Alice, 384
Milling, Sub-Inspector, 210, 211
Millmount, 2, 4, 115, 167, 332, 355
Miltown, 2, 4, 119, 355
Minihan, Michael Canon, 321, 351
Mitchell, M.J., V.S., 371
Mitchelstowndown (see also Ballen-vestelladon), 28, 64
Mocheallóg, St., 13-15, 305, 327, 348
Moloney, Daniel, 250
Moloney, Patrick, 186
Monteenaparson, 118, 181, 357
Moore, Rev. John,. 351
Moriarty, Fr. Murtagh, 130, 131, 350
Moroney, Michael, 271, 278, 279, 282
Moroney, Miss, 225
Morrison, Sir Richard, 102
Mortell, James 250, 375
Mortell, John, 271
Mortell, Michael, 271, 278, 288
Morton, Constable, 260, 272
Mountblakeney, 134, 155, 326
Mountcashel, William, 151
Mountcoote, 2, 4, 23, 118, 119, 152-154, 174 ,181, 246, 327, 336, 355, 357
Mountfox, 2, 11, 116, 118, 156, 181, 200, 201, 355, 357
Mountgarrett, Lord, 108
Mountjoy, Lord, 92, 98, 99
Moylan, Seán, 217, 290, 368, 369, 382

Moynihan, Michael, 271
Mulcahy, Cornelius Canon, 291, 321, 351
Mulcahy, Gen. Richard, 295
Mullane, Bertie, 391
Mulqueen, Edmond, 271
Mulqueen, James, 375
Murnane, John, 186
Murnane, Rev. Michael, P.P., 174, 350
Murphy, Capt. Michael J., 389
Murphy, Cornelius, 217
Murphy, Daniel, 217
Murphy, Donal, 291
Murphy, Fr. John O.P., 133
Murphy, Henry, Bishop, 298
Murphy, Maj-Gen., 291, 293
Murphy, Paddy, 255
Murphy, Patrick, , 375
Murphy, Seánáin (John), 265, 266, 270, 271
Murphy, Tom, 274
Murphy's Brewery, 252, 302, 371, 372, 374
Murray, John, 285
Murray, May, 286
Muskerry, Lord, 110
Naughton, Moira, 380
Naughton, Seán (see also Ó Neachtáin, Seán), 305, 321, 380
Naughton, William, 267, 271, 380
Neil, Robert, Bishop, 20
Neolithic house site, Tankardstown, 4 -7, 393, 394
Newcastle (West), 72, 73, 107, 135, 165, 198, 307
Newe, Elizabeth, 246
Newman, Jeremiah, Bishop, 302, 304, 377
Nixon, John, 217
Noonan, Cecilia, 380
Noonan, Michael, 213, 216
Noonan, Tim, 279
Norris, Miss M., 225
Norris, Sir Thomas, 86-92
Nugent, Col. Richard, 125
Nugent, Patrick, 172
Nunan, Miss A., 225
Nunan, William, 172
Ó Briain, An tAth. Seán (see also, O Brien, Fr. John), 148, 350
O Brien, Con, 301
O Brien, Daniel (IRA), 285, 288
O Brien, Daniel (teacher), 177
O Brien, Denis, 301
O Brien, Donal Mór, 17
O Brien, Edmond, , 266
O Brien, Fr. John (see also O Briain, An tAth. Seán), 350
O Brien, John (Ex-RIC), 261, 262
O Brien, John (Fenian), 213
O Brien, John (IRA), 270, 271
O Brien, Michael (Poor Law Gdn), 186
O Brien, Michael (teacher), 176
O Brien, Morgan, 250
O Brien, Patrick, 175
O Brien, Tom, 375
O Byrne, Art Mac Hugh, 88
O Byrne, John, 278
O Callaghan, Callaghan, 322
O Callaghan, Cornelius, 257
O Callaghan, Ellen, 327
O Callaghan, Jeremiah, 244, 245
O Callaghan, J.J. (Dist. Cllr.), 250
O Callaghan, Joe Joe, 257
O Callaghan, Matthew, 137
O Callaghan O Donnell, Thomas, 369
Ceallacháin, Donncha, 47, 48
Ó Cearbhaill, Pádraig, 334
O Connell, Commdt. Con, 389
O Connell, Daniel, 182, 188-191, 294
O Connell, Dr. Morgan, 191, 192, 194-196
O Connell, John, 175
O Connor, Dermot, 87, 92, 93
O Connor, Fr. Hugh, 386
O Connor, Jeremiah, 176
O Connor, Michael, 278, 279
O Connor, Thomas, 186
O Dálaigh, family of, 44
O Dálaigh, Cearbhall, President, 301, 385
O Doherty, Jim, 374
O Domhnaill, Micheal (see also O Donnell, Michael), 251, 383
O Donncha, Thomas, 350
O Donnell, Hugh, 86, 98, 99
O Donnell, John (IRA), 288
O Donnell, John (Kilbreedy), 174
O Donnell, John (Millmount), 167, 170
O Donnell John (Poor Law Gdn), 186
O Donnell, John (Poor Law warden), 187
O Donnell, John Professor, 369
O Donnell, Margaret, 228
O Donnell, Michael (see also Ó Domhnaill, Micheal), 251, 371, 383
O Donnell, Miss E., 225
O Donnell, Miss N., 225
O Donnell, Paddy (Macra), 391
O Donnell, Patrick (IRA), 274
O Donnell, R., 228

O Donnell, Terence, 375
O Donnell Thomas (Fenian), 213
O Donnell, Thomas (Land Leaguer), 226, 231, 249
O Donnell, Tom (GAA), 369, 383
O Donovan, Frank, 379
O Donovan, T.J., 393-395
O Driscoll, J., 375
O Duane, Fr. John, O.P., 133
O Dubháin, Dáithí (see also Dwane, David), 383
O Duffy, Gen. Eóin, 292
O Dwyer, Eamon, 260
O Dwyer, Fr. K., O.P., 321
O Dwyer, Thomas, 250
Offaelen (Ó Faoláin), John, 40, 350
O Fiaich, Tomás Cardinal, 150, 301, 385
Ó Fionnghail, Pádraig, 146
O Flanagan, Fr. Michael, 267-269
O Gorman, William (Dominican), 111
O Grady, Henry, 257, 259
O Grady, Maurice, 245
O Grady, Miss M., 225
O Grady, Peggy, 391
O Grady, Standish, 186
O Grady, The, 352
O Grady, W., 252
O Grady, William, 257, 259
O Gríofa, Muiris, 147, 370
Ó Hannigan, Donncha, 274, 285, 287-289
O hAodha, Fr. Scan, 144
O Harnan, Conor Rua (see also Ó hEarnáin, Conchúir Rua), 64
Ó hEarnáin, Conchúr Rua (see also O Harnan, Conor Rua), 64
O Hedderman, Donncha, O.P., 132, 147
O Hely, Patrick, Bishop, 68, 70, 348
O Heyne, Fr. Vincent, O.P., 127
O hIcí, Uilliam, 148
Ó hlfearnáin, Liam Dall, 64
O hÓgáin, Dr. Daithí, 335
Ó hUiginn, Fr., 144
O Keeffe, Joseph, 271
O Keeffe, Laurence, 261
O Keeffe, Michael, 261, 270, 271
O Kelly, P., 241
O Laoire, An tAth. Peadar, 248
O Leary, John 374
O Leary, Ned, 391
O Leyn, Dermot, 350
Oliver, family of, 120, 131, 135, 154-156, 160,161,179
Oliver, Charles, 129, 130, 166
Oliver, Charles Silver, 155
Oliver, G., 176
Oliver, Philip, 135, 154, 155, 352
Oliver, Robert (Cromwellian Planter) 120
Oliver, Robert (M.P., 1695), 129, 154, 155, 352
Oliver, Robert (f.1732), 134, 154
Oliver, Robert (f.1800), 155
Oliver, S., 176
Oliver, Silver, 154-156, 160-162, 164, 352
Oliver, Silver Jnr., 154, 160, 161, 352
Oliver Gascoigne, Richard, 160, 180
O Mahony, Fr. John, 350
O Móráin, Dónall, 385
O More, Owney, 86, 87, 90
O More, Rory, 107
Neachtáin Seán (see also Naughton, Seán), 335
O Neill, David, 176
O Neill, Eoghan Rua, 108, 110, 111
O Neill, Hugh, 86, 87, 89-91, 96, 98, 99
O Neill, Sir Daniel, 102
O Neill, Sir Phelim, 107
O Neill Crowley, Peter, 218
O Regan, M. 249
O Regan, Richard C., 249
O Reilly, Capt., 93
O Reilly, Major Myles, 200
O Reilly, John Boyle, 213
O Riordan, Seán T., 257, 259, 261, 263-267, 270, 271, 278, 285, 288, 293
Ormsby, Charles, 120
Ormsby, John, 127, 129, 155, 352
Ormsby, Robert, 127, 352
O Ronayn, Philip, 40, 350
O Ronayn, Thomas, 40
O Rourke, Conn, OFM., 70, 348
O Rourke, James, 245, 371
O Rourke, Jeremiah, 172
O Rourke, Michael, 217
Osborne, John, 217
Sé, An tAth. Séamus (see also O Shea, Fr. James), 251, 383
O Shaughnessy, Arthur M., 387, 389
O Shea, Fr., 227
O Shea, Fr. James, P.P. (see also Ó Sé, An tAth. Séamus), 251, 350, 383
O Shea, Jim, 291
O Shea, P., 375
O Shea, Patrick, 250
Ó Siocháin, Seán, 251
O Sullivan, Fr. Donal Aidan, 298
O Sullivan, J., 244

O Sullivan, Jackie, 383
O Sullivan, John (FCA), 389
O Sullivan, John (of W.H. O Sullivan & Sons), 380
O Sullivan, Sister Dympna, 294
O Sullivan, Thomas J., 249
O Sullivan, William Henry, 205, 208-210, 211, 213, 218-224, 231, 235, 236, 238, 244, 249, 343, 347, 370, 372, 376
O Sullivan, William, Jnr., 209, 212, 213, 2l6, 222, 231
O Sullivan, W.H. & Sons, 244, 245, 252-254, 298, 302, 371-374
O Sullivans, Coach Builders, 254
Ó Tuama, Seán, 144, 145, 147-150, 367
Oughtred, Henry, 77, 88
Owens, Jeffrey, 129
Pallace, 107
Parnell, Charles Stewart, 216, 222-224, 226, 233, 234, 294
Parnell, Fanny, 224, 225
Particles, 47, 103, 119, 250
Patrickswell, 292
Pearse, Pádraig, 216, 269, 383
Pelham, Sir William, 73 - 75
Perrott, Sir John, 63-65, 160
Perry, Rev. Thomas Victor, 351
Placenames, 116, 117, 353-359
Plunkett, Count, 263, 267, 384
Pole, Cardinal, 49
Pollard, Thomas, 175, 326
Ponsonby, Thomas, 129
Portauns, 2, 11, 118, 156, 334, 356, 358
Powe, Samuel, 104
Power, John, 352
Power, J.J., 371
Power, Mrs., 195
Prappinye (or Propeens), 181, 332, 333, 357
Prendergast, James, 250
Proonts, 2, 118, 181, 356
Prytherch, Rev. Lewis, 328
Purcell, Liam, 387
Purdon, Ann, 152
Quaid, Fr. David, PP, 227
Quarry Hill, 156, 169, 205, 222, 279, 291, 336, 347, 376
Quigley, Miss E., 225
Quillinan, Gerard, 391
Quilty, Patsy, 383
Quin, Henry, 103, 104
Quin, James, 103, 104
Quin, John, Bishop, 46, 48
Quin, Sir Richard, 352
Quin, Teige, 130
Quin, Wyndham, 155, 352
Quinlan, James, 175
Quinlan, John J., 372, 373
Quinlan, Timothy, 270
Quinlan, Michael, 391
Quinlivan, John, 391
Raleigh, Batt, 217
Raleigh, Edward, 217
Randles, Con, 386
Rathcannon, 39, 48, 283, 326
Rathgogan, 122
Rathkeale, 72, 73, 87, 88, 107, 135, 165, 169
Ráthluirc (see also Charleville), 122, 267, 278, 292, 293, 297, 302, 376
Red Chair, or Red Shard, Gap of, 108
Redgate, Philip, 155
Reeves, Mary, 389
Reeves, Pat, 391
Rinuccini, Cardinal, 109-111, 296, 320
Riordan, James, 186, 324
Riordan, Michael (Poor Law Gdn.) 186
Riordan, Michael (Fenian), 213
Riordan, Patrick (The Driver), 209, 212, 213, 216, 248
Riordan, Patrick (The Smith), 213, 216
Riversfield, 2, 4, 119, 174, 181, 292, 356
Roche, Eamon, 261
Roche, Fr. Patrick, 350
Roche, Larry, 256, 258, 381, 383
Roche, Michael, 181
Roche, Patrick, 186
Rockhill, 250
Rogers, John, 129
Rose, Ralph, 382
Ruffus, William, 23
Russell, James, 186
Ryan, Anne, 244, 245
Ryan, Christopher, 285
Ryan, Darby, 240
Ryan, Fr., P.P., 193
Ryan, George, 217
Ryan, Jimmy (IRA), 257, 266, 271, 273
Ryan, Jimmy (ESB), 372, 383
Ryan, John (Workhouse staff), 187
Ryan, John (Dist. Cllr.), 250
Ryan, Michael, 186
Ryan, Roger, 187
Ryan, Thaddeus, R., 186
Sanders, Dr. Nicholas, 69, 73, 74, 75

Sarsfield, family of, 247
Sarsfield, Edmondo, 137
Sarsfield, Patrick, 137, 247
Sarsfield, Sir Dominick, Chief Justice, lst Viscount Kilmallock (f. 1609), 102, 247
Sarsfield, Sir Dominick (Mem. Irish Parlmt. 1641), 107, 247
Sarsfield, Sir William, 247
Sarsfield, 4th Viscount Kilmallock, 247
Scanlan, Michael, 259, 266, 270, 271, 279
Scanlan, Pat, 391
Schools of Kilmallock, 131, 132, 171, 176-178, 188, 235, 246, 294, 298, 301
Scully, Liam, 270-272, 274
Scully, Ned, 255
Scully, Timmy, 255
Searson, Kathleen, 260
Seoighe, Mainchín, 301, 384, 385
Seoighe, Roibeard S. (see also Joyce, Robert J.), 251, 383
Shanagolden, 72, 165
Shanid, 19
Sheahan, John, 213
Sheahan, Miss Phil, 380
Sheedy, Joseph, 278, 279
Sheedy, Michael (publican), 175
Sheedy, Michael (Mike: lion tamer) 306
Sheedy, M.M., 245
Sheedy, Thomas F., 257, 271
Sheedy, David, 250
Sheedy, Dr. Michael, 222
Sheehy, Fr. Eugene, 222, 223, 225, 226, 229-231, 233, 234, 256
Sheehy-Skeffington, Hannah, 233
Sidney, Sir Henry, 52-54, 57, 58
Silver, John, 129
Simms, G.O., Archbishop, 385
Slattery, James, 245
Slattery, John, 226, 231
Slattery, Michael, 169, 197
Slattery, Paul (father of Fenian), 217
Slattery, Paul, Dominican, 133, 144, 169
Slattery, Paul (United Irishman), 169
Slattery, Ter, 198
Slingsby, Capt. Francis, 93
Smalle, Thomas, 200
Smith, W., 228
Snow, Archdeacon Brian, 351, 385
Spain, Harry, 390, 391
Spittal, 28
Springfield (see also Gort na Tiobraid), 71
Steales, 2, 149, 168, 188, 356
Stevens, John, 124
St. Leger, Lord Deputy, 46
St. Leger, Sir Warham. 55, 90
St. Leger, William. 108
St. Leger, Sir William (M.P. 1639), 352
Stopphil, Nicholas, Provost, 22
Strickland, Maj-Gen., 278
Sugán Earl (of Desmond), 87, 88, 90-98, 101, 318
Suipeal, Deaglan, 384
Summers, John, 130
Swain, Hugh, 129
Swyny, Dr. 189
Talbot, Rev. Maurice J., 351
Tankardstown, 2, 4, 5, 11, 26, 27, 42, 83, 94, 95, 104, 118, 120, 130, 137, 146, 168, 171, 172, 177, 185 - 187, 201, 205, 209, 217, 251, 261, 270, 271, 274, 279 , 283, 286, 288, 291, 306, 307, 328, 332, 334, 350, 353, 356, 358, 367
Taylor, Rev. Sackville-Eastwood, 351
Thomastown, 290, 326
Thornton, Sir George, 77, 86, 88, 89, 91-93, 96
Tierney, Constable, 286
Tierney, Paddy, 374
Tierney, Tim (Castletown), 375
Tierney, Tim (Dromin), 261, 266, 271, 288
Tilly, Jonathan, 121
Tobin, David, 274
Tobin, Paddy, 389
Tobernea, 39, 250, 358
Tolton, John 373
Toomey, W., 168
Townsend, William, 229
Tracey, James, 187
Treacy, David (father of Fenian), 217
Treacy, David (Dist. Cllr.), 249
Treacy, Seán, 260
Treanlewis, 2, 105, 116, 118, 185, 356
Trench. Hon. C.W., 250
Trustrim, Sir Henry, 102
Tuogh, 117
Turner, William, Bishop, 348, 370
Turner, William (Fenian), 213
Uí Cairbre Aofa (or Uí Cairbe), 2, 3, 4, 11
Uí Conaill Gabhra (or Uí Conaill), 2
Uí Fidhgeinte, 2, 3, 4, 11
Uregare, 104, 186, 250
Van Bevan, Fred, 387
Vavasor, Sir Charles, 108
Verdon, Alsona, 325, 326
Verdon, Anastasia, 326

Verdon, George, 326
Verdon, Henry, 352
Verdon, James, 326
Verdon, John (M.P., 1585), 352
Verdon, John (Knight of the Golden Spur) 325, 326
Verdon, John Óg, 101
Verdon, Richard, 76, 79
Villiers, Edward, 352
Walker, Josias, 103
Walker, Sgt., 120
Wall, Catherine, 367
Wall, David (d. 1790)., 329
Wall, David, Canon, 351, 385
Wall, Gerard, Canon, P.P. (see also de Bhál, Gearóid, S.P.), 305, 321
Wall, James (f. 1700), 142
Wall, James (Fenian), 217
Wall, John, 79
Wall, John (Jack), IRA, 271
Wall, Matthew, 142
Wall, Michael (f. 1641), 108
Wall, Michael (Fenian), 217
Wall, Patrick (d. 1764), 329
Wall, Ricardo, 142
Wall, Seán, 266, 271, 272, 282, 285
Wall, William (Fenian), 206, 207, 217
Waller, John, 352
Wallis, Patrick ("Staker"), 156, 166
Walsh, Dick, 205, 209
Walsh, James, 201, 202
Walsh, Jane E., 225
Walsh, Jeffry, 187
Walsh, John, 213
Walsh, Michael (IRA), 271, 278, 279, 288
Walsh, Michael (Poor Law Gdn), 186
Walsh, Michael L., 222
Walsh, Michael Stephen, 213
Walsh, Patrick (Fenian), 205-209, 210 212, 213, 216
Walsh, Peter, 375
Walsh, Peter J ., 249
Walsh, Richard, 271
Walsh, Stephen, 187
Walsh, Stephen Barry, 204, 206, 207, 226, 231
Walsh, S.B. & Sons, 237, 240, 245, 254, 298, 301, 302, 377
Ward, Patrick, 209, 213
Ward, Thomas, 175
Webb, Bishop, 104, 106
Webb, Daniel (f.1684), 129, 326
Webb, Daniel (f. 1732), 134
Webb, Elizabeth, 326
Webb, Thomas, 129
Weldon, John Henry, 248
Weldon, Thomas, 174, 181
Whelan, Tom, 373, 374
Whiteboys, 164, 165
White Knights, 25, 28, 29, 64, 84, 101, 318, 319
White, Sir Patrick, 102
White, Victor, 82, 83
Widenham, Rev. Daniel, 351
Wilconson, Miss, 225
Wilkinson, William, 186
Williamson, Col., 262
Wilson, Richard Ivers, 186
Wingfield, Joseph, 302
Wingfield, Robert, 302
Winters, Michael 285
Winters, Patrick, 285
Wood, Robert, 101, 102
Woulfe, Fr. David, 68
Woulfe, Fr. Patrick (see also de Bhulbh, An tAth. Pádraig), 258, 294, 375, 384
Wynne Jones, Vere, 246
Young, Arthur, 162-164, 236
Young, John, 21
Young, Robert, 350

Kilmallock Historical Society 1987

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