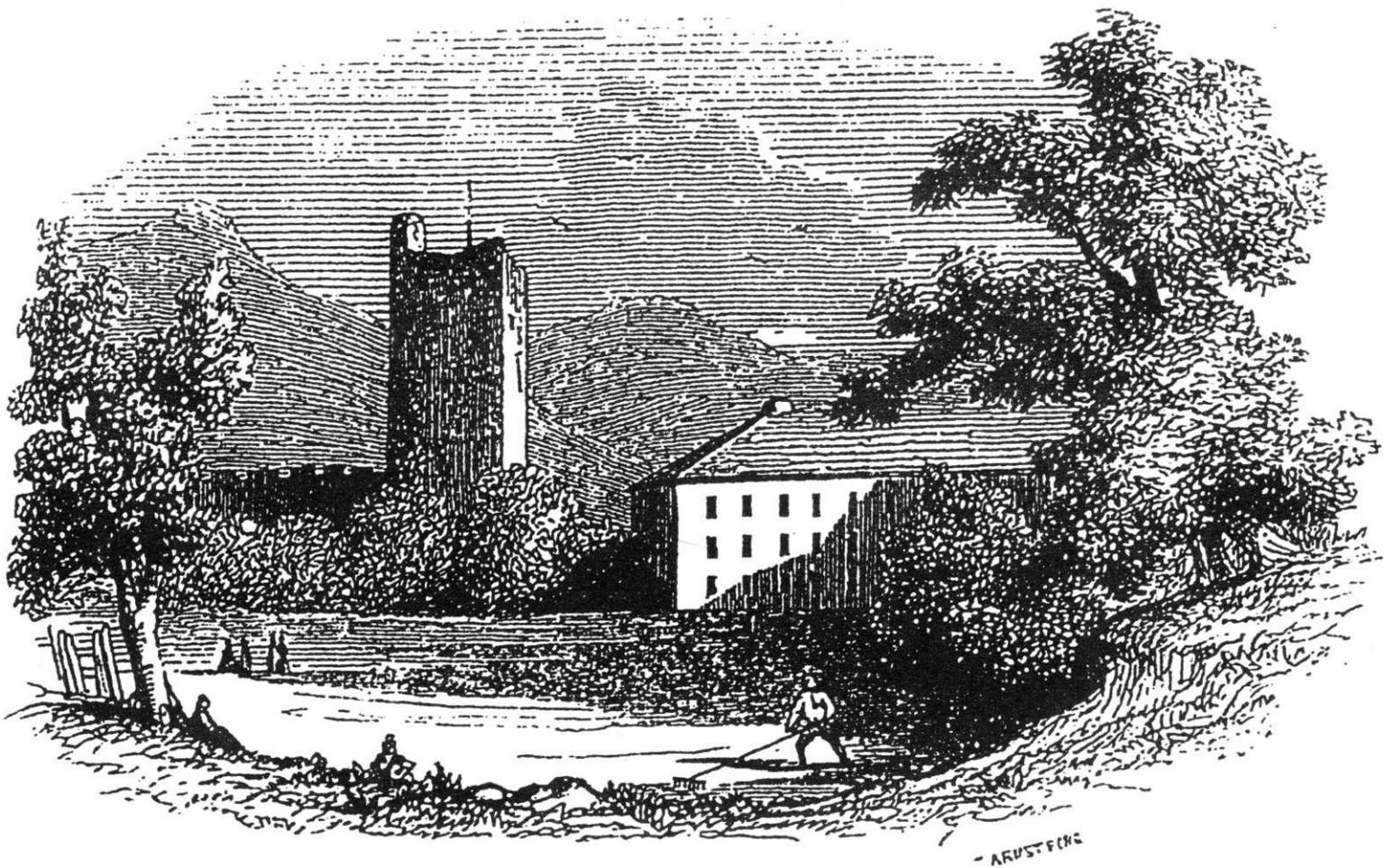


NOTES ON THE HISTORY OF MILLSTREET

by

Canon Michael Costello and Pádraig Ó'Maidin



Drishane in 1844

Aubane Historical Society

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INTRODUCTION

It gives me great pleasure to publish these two contributions towards a history of Millstreet that were prepared some time ago. Both have had a very limited availability and this publication is an effort to rectify that situation. Both involved quite a lot of work in terms of collecting very valuable information that might otherwise have been lost and therefore they deserve to be made available.

Canon Costello took a particular interest in the history of the Parish while he was Parish Priest here and collected a lot of information over a number of years. The late Pdraig O'Maidin was in charge of the County Library for many years and contributed an enormous amount to local history through his research and writings in many journals and newspapers.

Fortunately, our current Parish Priest, Monsignor Michael Manning, took the trouble of collecting Canon Costello's notes and put them in printed format in 1993 and it is thanks to him that they are available today. He has also added a lot of extra information to these notes, which are included as footnotes and annexes in this publication. I am grateful to him for allowing us to publish them and to the ever-helpful Seanie Radley for providing a copy.

Canon Costello's notes concentrate, naturally enough, on Parish and Church matters. I do hope that people from other walks of life will collect and make available similar information on other aspects of our history. As Pdraig O'Maidin pointed out in his talk, 30 years ago, there is no history of Millstreet in existence and this is a great pity as there are good stories to tell on so many subjects. For example, the eye witness account that O'Maidin himself got, almost by accident from the other side of the world, on Black and Tan behaviour in Millstreet and their wrecking of Linehan's shop is very graphic, pp 45-7, and there must be more information like this available from periods before and since.

All this kind of information deserves to be made available. Apart from its intrinsic interest there is also the very real possibility these days that we will have our history written for us if we don't do it ourselves. Looking at our present crop of professional historians that would be a truly dreadful prospect.

*

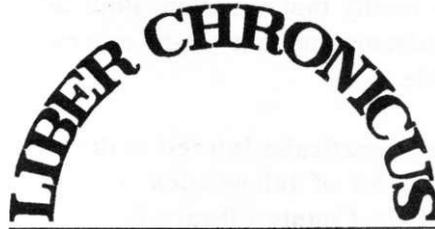
There are a number of references in Canon Costello's notes to an 'Inventory' or 'Inventory book' and this is likely to have been a reference to a diocesan property record.

The cartoon on page 33 was inspired by the visit to Millstreet in September 1884 of Earl Spencer, the Lord Lieutenant, who decided to do a tour of the 'disturbed' areas of Kerry and this included a visit to Millstreet. The RIC, the military and Canon Griffin were the only people to greet him. The town was practically closed down and festooned with banners and cartoons bearing slogans such as "Parnell forever", "God prosper Irish industries", "Faith and Fatherland", "God Save Ireland", "Millstreet loves William O'Brien", "Ireland Loves Parnell", etc. After dining with the Canon he was taken to visit the Presentation Convent where the pupils had been asked to wear their best for the occasion but none turned up for school that day. As Lord Lieutenant, Earl Spencer was responsible for the enforcement of the law and the skeleton on his back is a reminder of those he had executed as in a German folktale where the ghosts of one's crimes haunts one forever.

Jack Lane, January 2001.

Email: jacklaneaubane@hotmail.com

FOREWORD



HISTORY OF MILLSTREET

by Canon Michael Costello

Canon Costello was Parish Priest of Millstreet from 1955 to 1967. The following are notes that he wrote on the history of the parish. The copybook is entitled "Parish of Millstreet - Liber Chronicus". It is mainly a historical outline of the parish. The handwriting in a few places is not too clear as the notes were sometimes jotted down as shorthand references. I have given as footnotes some items presented as "glosses" in the manuscript. His notes generally cover a) Churches and Clergy, b) Convents, c) Schools, d) general history of Millstreet, e) the Big Houses, f) the economic history of the parish. While these sections are generally treated separately in his copybook, I have arranged them in chapters in this transcript. Any notes or comments added by myself or others have been placed in square brackets.

*Monsignor Michael Manning, P.P. V.G.,
The Presbytery,
Millstreet Town,
Co. Cork.*

CHAPTER 1

MILLSTREET CHURCH AND CLERGY

Items of Parish Interest

The first known Catholic church is in the old Drishane Graveyard, probably turned into a Protestant Church when the Wallis family took over and used as such until the present Protestant Church (demolished except for the steeple in 1959) was built in 1798.

A small thatched chapel on the site of the present gate-bay entrance to the Presbytery grounds survived until replaced by Fr. Fitzpatrick in 1838. (It was reconstructed in 1932.)

Fr. Fitzpatrick was appointed Parish Priest of the parish in 1820. He replaced Rev. James Mallowney who retired because of ill-health but lived on until 1856. He was paid a pension of £25 a year by Fr. Fitzpatrick. He is buried somewhere outside the Sacristy window but the exact place is not known. Father Fitzpatrick, Parish Priest 1820-1865, was born in Dromahoe, Droumtariffe in 1787. He was educated in Killarney, Douai and Maynooth and was ordained in Killarney in 1810 by Bishop Sugrue. He served as curate for short periods in Rathmore, Lixnaw, Firies and Dingle before being promoted PP. VF Kenmare in 1819. He baptised Dr. Moriarty when curate in Lixnaw and after his death, Dr. Moriarty erected the Fr. Fitzpatrick monument in the Church at his own expense. When he arrived in Millstreet in 1820 there was no Presbytery, no school and only the small thatched chapel in the McCarthy O'Leary property already mentioned. He arrived in Millstreet on horseback with only his breviary: the parishioners brought his belongings a few days later.¹

He first lived in a portion of the Protestant minister's house at the Glebe, Drishane. No trace of this house remains but trees still mark its surrounds. It is still known as the Glebe Field and the height on the Blackwater Bank is called "the minister's cliff". He lived next (1821) at Drishanebeg - now Thorntons - near the Archway; then at the Priest's Cross.² The ruins of the house he occupied in front of the

¹In 1770 the Cathedraticum from Millstreet parish was £ 1 - 2 - 9 which probably would be equivalent to £17 today.

In 1851 Fr. John Buckley C.C. Milltown left a legacy for Masses to the most needy curacies in Kerry diocese. The Bishop decided that these were Tuosist, Castletown, Kenmare, Dromod, Cahirciveen, Milltown, Rathmore, Millstreet and Dingle.

These two interesting items were supplied by Fr. Hanley and his source of information is authentic.

²It is very likely that his sojourn there gave the Cross its name and there is no evidence that there was ever a church at this spot. (Kevin O'Byrne, Church Cross, Skibbereen, has sent me a detailed article about Fr. Patrick Fitzpatrick and his achievements in Millstreet - a copy of an article by Padraig O Maidin in the *Cork Holly Bough* 1971, pp. 22, 27. O'Maidin got the information from Kathleen Lenihan, a grand-aunt of Maurice Lenihan. Maurice Lenihan told me that Canon Costello also got his information from her. O'Maidin mentions notes by Fr. Fitzpatrick that Kathleen Lenihan had. Maurice Lenihan told me that he had seen these notes and they were about parish administration. I asked him whether any of them contained Baptismal records because the parish doesn't have any records for the years 1820 to 1850. He said that they didn't contain any records. Kathleen Lenihan's father was a nephew of Fr. Fitzpatrick.)

present one were there up to some years ago. About 1829 he lived opposite the present church until the new Presbytery was built, probably where Enrights and Driscolls now live.

In 1830 he started on a group of buildings comprising the Church, the Convent, the Presbytery,³ the Boys' School (where the present cinema stands), the Cemetery. All were functioning in 1840. The rent for all this land - part of which perhaps was a plot of 2 acres bequeathed by Mrs McCarthy nee Ellie O'Leary in 1811 as the site of a school - from McCarthy O'Leary was £5 per annum.⁴ The farm on which he built the Presbytery was his private property held under separate lease dated 1839 - yearly rent, £ 22-6-9.⁵

The Church was the first building to be erected. It had to be used from 1834 before it was finished as the roof of the old church had fallen in. It was completed and officially opened in 1838.⁶

³The Presbytery built by Fr. Fitzpatrick was added to by Canon Griffin in 1893. The part facing the north-east was added. When the Drishane chaplain was added to the staff, Canon Casey (circa 1907) built the room over the present kitchen to accommodate him.

⁴a) By her will in 1811 Helen McCarthy O'Leary bequeathed 2 acres for the building of a school.

b) By deed between John McCarthy O'Leary and Fr. Fitzpatrick a site for church and cemetery - area in the Reading is 1'-0'-38P but later, in the deed, it is given as 3'-1'-24P and it is there stated that it is bordered(?) on the east by one acre on which a school is to be built.

c) Presbytery + Farm: Deed 1839: 11'-1'-19P- It is hard to sort out these acreages now. Bequest also included £40 per annum to pay the teachers.

⁵This is questionable. [Text of letter quoted]

"Millstreet June 27th. 1864

Fr. O'Dogherty is to receive all the revenue of the Parish and the chapel collections. He will pay Fr. Fitzpatrick £150 a year. Fr. Fitzpatrick communicates to him with the sanction of the Bishop his parochial and vicarial powers" Signed +David Moriarty.

Copy of an old letter of Miss Linehan. By his will Fr. Fitzpatrick ordered the Presbytery to be sold to pay his debts and the residue to go for a CBS School. His successor bought everything for about £300. There was no residue. He, Canon Horgan, was, consequently, entitled to dispose of the Farm etc. which he did. See Inventory.

⁶ In "The Presentation Brothers" by Br. D. H. Allen, F.P.M. (pp. 111-117), there is an account of Brother Michael Augustine (Austine) Riordan who was born in the Parish of Doneraile, Co. Cork in 1783 or 1784. He became an architect and a builder and joined the North Monastery Community in 1814 (died 20 Jan. 1848). By 1819 he was again engaged in his old profession "designing and building churches, convents and schools in Cork, Kerry and Tipperary. ... Millstreet Parish Church seems to be the only church credited to him in the Diocese of Kerry." (ibid p. 112). In a "Personal File" of D. H. Allen, a list of the "churches built by Brother M.A. Rioran" is given. In the Diocese of Cork: St. Michael's, Blackrock (1819); St. Patrick's, Dunmanway (1834); St. Finbarr's, Bantry (1826); St. John the Baptist's, Kinsale (1834); St. John the Baptist's, Ovens (1834); Ursuline Convent Chapel, Blackrock (1824-1827); St. Joseph's, Castletown-Kenneth, Enniskeane and Desertsergas (c 1835); in the Diocese of Ross: St. Patrick's, Skibbereen (1826); St. Mary's, Rossmore, Kilmeen and Castleventry (1829-1830); Rosscarbery Parish Ch., Rosscarbery (1820); in Cloyne Diocese: Doneraile Parish Church, doneraile (1826); in Kerry Diocese, Millstreet Parish Church, Millstreet (c. 1835). No specific description is given for Millstreet Church but as regards the "Distinctive Style" of Br. Riordan's work, the following account is given:

"Like the work of any artist, Augustine Riordan's work has certain features which stamp these churches with his tradesmark. Here we will confine ourselves, mainly, to two aspects of his style: the church facade and what may be termed, the altar setting. The facade (i.e. the face or front of the building), usually surmounted by the belfry, has a large round topped Romanesque window as a centrepiece, with a statue niche on either side, the main entrance door has smaller niches for holy water stoups, between it and the smaller side doors.

The Church was cruciform and Romanesque. It was similar to many churches built in that period. It was simple in design and had galleries in the transepts as well as an organ gallery. Architecturally its most striking feature was in the stone pattern of the facade retained in the new Church. Reconstruction took place 1930-1932. The back wall behind the present High Altar is all that now remains of the old Church. The galleries were removed and the side-walls of the church were moved out to give a much wider church. The width of the present nave was the complete width before. It was also lengthened but the original facade was substantially restored. The altar is still in the same position but the McCarthy O'Leary "pews" (private chapel) were converted into the present mortuary chapel. Canon Griffin's remains had been buried almost right in front of the door of the old church and were removed to their present grave. The remains of Fr. Fitzpatrick were not removed. The transepts in the old church ended where you have the old windows now. The present sacristy was the first nuns' choir. The date on the bell is 1838. The font for Baptism - made by Holland of Meelin who worked the cut limestone in the old church - has been retained in the new church.

The contractor of the renovated church was Mr. Pat Flynn. Fr. Charles Brennan C.C. directed and supervised the work and collected the money for it. Canon O'Leary was then in senile decay. (It was) dedicated in 1933. Mr. John Cronin donated the High Altar, Men's Confraternity the Sacred Heart Altar, Canon Brosnan the Lady Altar. Canon Brosnan chose the three altars, installed electric heating and the pulpit and was responsible for the Terazzo floor. The Crowley family donated the Stations of the Cross (they were in the old church), Canon Brosnan the Clark window. The architect of the Church was O'Connor, a pupil of Hynes, architect of Cullen Church and many Gothic buildings in Cork and Kerry.

A Fr. Atridge was buried in the Millstreet Cemetery. His tomb abuts the south wall. His mother was McAuliffe and his people were fruit merchants in Patrick Street, Cork. He used to stay at Fr. Fitzpatrick's when a young boy. Any other connection with the parish? The Fr. Harding window was in the old church. Fr. Harding was born in the

A ledge runs across the facade from the roof eaves, and between this and the apex of the triangle, formed by the ledge and the roof, a round niche or sometimes an inscribed stone is to be seen. Another ledge, broken by the niches and the windows, runs parallel to the upper one but some distance below, and sometimes is continued along the side walls to the rear of the church. The facade is flanked by square pillars which form part of the wall, with the replica of a Grecian Urn on the top of each. The whole centre section, taking in the main and large window to the belfry is brought out in the relief.

Over the main altar there is a slightly convex baldachino or canopy, resting on four Grecian columns. This forms an attractive setting for the altar - creating a kind of inner sanctuary. An extension of this feature, but without the baldachino, extends along the back wall on both sides, supported by one or two pillars. On the wall behind and just above the tabernacle hangs a large oil painting of the Crucifixion, as in the South Chapel, Cork.

Most of Br. Augustine's churches still have the same altar-setting of baldachino and columns, with the extension; a few have retained the Crucifixion painting. On the other hand, the facades of their very nature have endured, and apart from the addition of a porch in one or two churches, retain their particular features. These features vary from church to church, but in spite of this, his churches are easily recognized, even from a distance." For some old pictures of Millstreet Church cf. *Picture Millstreet* (Sean Radley) pp. 19,163,175.

house now part of Tangney's. Died as C.C. 16 Nov. 1876, Cahiciveen at 25. His people gave the Harding window, circular side windows at back of altar in Cullen.⁷

The Statue of the Dead Christ is a Caen Stone replica of the famous "Dead Christ" marble statue by Hogan still an altar piece of St. Finbarr's South. Davis of Cork did the replica.

Father Huggard buried in the Church yard 1910; had been curate here; went to Australia for health reasons and retired as curate. One of the Kerry Huggards and supposed to have been a convert.

Succession of Parish Priests

- 1820 Fr. Mallowney
- 1820 - 1865 Fr. Fitzpatrick
- 1865 -1872 Canon Horgan (Born 1824, buried Kilcummin aged 48, headstone erected by Millstreet people.)
- 1872 - 1899 Canon Griffin (Was born in the "Browne" house in Molahiffe.)⁸

⁷In Canon Costello's copybook there was a photocopy of a lengthy newspaper account - name and date not given - describing the burial of Rev. Jerome Harding. It begins:- "The remains of the Rev. Jerome Harding, whose premature death you recorded in yesterday's *Examiner*, arrived here from Cahirciveen on Saturday morning by the (?) o'clock train. So great was the sympathy manifested for his respectable and bereaved family that the entire population of the town and a large number of people from the country, met the remains at the railway station." A long list of priests is given as attending the funeral headed by "The Very Rev. Canon Griffin P.P., V.F."

⁸ For information about the involvement of Canon Griffin in the Plan of Campaign in 1888, cf. *The Roman Catholic Church and the plan of Campaign in Ireland* (Emmet Larkin, Cork University Press) pp. 296-298.

The following information is a transcript of an oration reported in the *Kerry Sentinel* (26/2/1899) on the occasion of his death.

"Death of the Very Rev. Canon Griffin, P.P., V.F., Millstreet.
Millstreet, Friday.

It is with deep regret that we have to announce the death of Canon Griffin, P.P., Millstreet, which took place at the Presbytery on last Wednesday after a short illness. Though by no means of robust health since his almost fatal attack of illness nine years ago, and though partially incapacitated for the discharge of missionary duties, yet there was no apprehension on the part of his friends that his long and laborious career in the Church was so soon to terminate. For the last year and more he took no active part in the public administration of the parish, but confined himself to celebrating Mass in his private oratory every Sunday and on the principal festivals of the year. Even on last Sunday, when he was seized with his fatal illness, he celebrated Mass as normal and gave no premonition of the attack which was so soon to end (in) his death. On the evening of that day a heaviness and stupor which came upon him gave great cause of alarm to his priests, who at once summoned Dr. Leader, his medical attendant, who pronounced the case as one of the gravest nature, so that it was deemed advisable to give the last sacraments to the almost dying priest, which the Rev. C. O'Sullivan at once administered. Still the end was not as near as his friends sadly expected, his originally strong constitution prolonging his life three days more, until about 6 p.m. on Wednesday he resigned his pure soul calmly and painlessly into the hands of his Creator in assured expectation of a glorious resurrection. The life of Canon Griffin, like that of most missionary and hard-working priests, must necessarily present but small scope for an extended biographical notice. A Priest's life and work are hidden from the public eye, and known only to God, and to the members of the flock among whom his sacred ministry was exercised.

The late Canon was born in the year 1830 in the village of Molahiffe, which lies mid-way in the Maine valley between Tralee and Killarney. His preliminary studies for the priesthood were made in the latter town in a classical school conducted by Fr. Fitzgerald, a Franciscan Friar. From hence in due time

1899 -1907 Canon O'Sullivan (C.C. Lixnaw 1884, C.C. here 1887, Adm 1900,
P.P. 1901 or 1902.)
1907-1918 Canon Casey
Oct. 1918 -1919 Canon Counihan
1919 - 1932 Canon O'Leary
1932- 1943 Canon Brosnan
1943- 1954 Canon O'Connor
1954- 1955 Monsignor Slattery
1955- Canon Costello.

he was transferred to the Irish College, Paris, which he entered in the year 1849, where he became distinguished for his devotion and study and his strict observance of the College rules. When his collegiate course terminated he was ordained priest in Tralee in the year 1854 and was sent on his first mission to Castleisland under the Venerable Archdeacon O'Leary, a distinguished priest of the Kerry diocese in the middle of this century. After a few years spent there he was transferred to Killarney by the late celebrated Bishop, Dr. Moriarty, who made him one of his Cathedral curates, and afterwards his Administrator, until he appointed him to the parish of Millstreet. The connection and friendship then inaugurated between himself and Dr. Moriarty continued close and unabated to the end of the great prelate's life, and the Canon never ceased to hold the Bishop's memory in veneration and benediction to his last breath. In the year 1872, after the early and lamented death of Canon Horgan, Fr. Griffin was promoted to the important parish of Millstreet, and raised to the dignity of a Canon of the diocese. The work of his pastoral charge during these 27 years in Millstreet can be best estimated by the priests who were associated in his labours, and by the faithful flock who were confided to his care. He never spared himself in the work of the ministry, and until his serious illness in 1890 occurred he laboured as strenuously in the discharge of all his priestly duties as youngest curate in the parish. His zeal for the glory of God, for the beauty of God's house, for the sacred liturgy of the Church, and for the public services of religion was well and widely known, even outside the limits of his own diocese. Of him it may be truly affirmed in the words of the Psalmist that "he loved the beauty of God's house and the place where His glory dwelt". Furthermore, he was a man of great kindness of heart and of unbounded generosity to the poor. He was scarcely ever known to refuse an alms to a mendicant, and was always ready to help the struggling farmer and decent, uncomplaining poor with his advice, his influence, and his not too plethoric purse. If the "giving of alms" as we know "delivers from sin and death" and is a "memorial in the sight of God", there can be little fear but that Canon Griffin has already received a favourable judgment at the hands of a loving and a merciful God. They who knew him best recognised in him a man of a lovable and kindly nature, most affable and easy to approach to the humblest soul in the parish, and especially remarkable for his unbounded hospitality. The priests among whom he lived and man estimable laymen far and near will remember the genial priest, the Christian gentleman, dispensing the hospitalities of his home with a dignity and grace which many could emulate but few excel. This is not the time or place to discuss the political opinions of the late Canon. Around his freshly opened grave the strife of diverse opinions may well be hushed, and all rancour and enmities cease. It would be idle to conceal that during the late agitation Canon Griffin held political opinions at variance with those of the Bishops and priests of Ireland, and of his countrymen. For the present purpose it will be sufficient to say that he held those opinions conscientiously and from conviction, thinking them - whether mistakenly or not - to be for the real good of Ireland and for the best welfare of his own people. And though holding those views staunchly and with commendable fortitude in the face of strenuous opposition, he was always tolerant of the opinions of others, and never allowed his political inclinings to interfere with the duties of social life or in his hospitable intercourse. Take him for all in all, he was a notable figure - a strong personality in the priesthood of Ireland - a man of stainless private life, high-minded, pure-souled, of open hand and generous hand, a man much to be admired and greatly loved. During his long life of 68 years, reaching nearly to the space allotted by the Psalmist, he attracted to himself the respect, veneration and love of many friends who will today mourn his loss. Truth, honour, love, respect, hosts of friends were freely given to him during life. His good works have gone before him to plead in his behalf, the labours of a good and zealous life for God and the salvation of souls in the interests of the poor and lowly and suffering members of his flock. Around his bier today, his faults if any, are forgotten; his virtues only remembered. His name and memory will long linger in the hearts of many friends who will pray fervently today that god may grant his soul eternal rest and a glorious resurrection." *Kerry Sentinel*, 26/2/1899.

Names of Curates from Fr. Fitzpatrick's Notebooks

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Rev. Jacobus Healy | 1822 - 1823 (From Reg. of Baptism now lost.) |
| Rev. McMahon | 1843 -1844 |
| Rev. McCarthy | 1845 - 1846 |
| Rev. Denis O'Sullivan | 1844 -1847 |
| Rev. Tuohy | 1846 |
| Rev. Healy | 1847-1848 |
| Rev. Maginn | 1847 - 1859 |
| Rev. Doherty | 1850-1852 |
| Rev. O'Donoghue | 1852 - 1855 |
| Rev. Jeremiah O'Connor | 1857 -1858 |
| Rev. Enright | 1858 |
| Rev. Brosnan | 1858-1863 |
| Rev. O'Dowd | 1860 |
| Rev. O'Neill | 1860 |
| Rev. Thomas Nolan | 1860 - 1863 |
| Rev. Doherty | 1864 |

The following are excerpts from *The Journal of the Cork Historical and Archaeological Society (JCHAS)* (Jan. - March 1900, Vol. VI) from an article on the Parish Priests of Cork and Kerry in 1704 drawn up for the Lord Lieutenant:

"Owen Ferris, Ballydaly age 40 years. Parish of which he pretends to be Parish Priest, Drishane. Time of his receiving popish orders 1687. Place (was) Brabant from Bishop of Antwerp....

Teige Croneen, age 43, pretends to be Parish Priest of Cullen and Nohoval. Received Orders 1685 in France from the Bishop of Montobone(bare?).....

Daniel Keefe, parish priest of Kilmeen and Cullen (pretends to be). Received popish orders 1682 in Limerick from Bishop John Dooly. Place of abode Derinatubrid, aged 57....

Donough Sullivan, Derinatubrid, 56 years, Droumtariffe and Kilcorney. Received popish orders 1669 in Dublin from Patrick Plunkett, Bishop of Meath....

From list published by Order of the Lord Lieutenant & Council, presented to the Queen 1705.

Mentioned in the will of Donough McOwen McCarthy of Drishane in Dec. 20th. 1718:- Rev. Fr. Murtagh Kelligher: Francis O' Bresca(?): Donogh McCarthy.

CULLEN CHURCH

The foundations of the oldest known church in Cullen can still be traced in the old graveyard in Cullen. This old graveyard has two division - the south-western half is the old ground and the remainder, "the new". It is probable that the older portion extended further down into the meadow on the south east as some years ago there were a few mounds believed to be old graves there. Some time towards the end of the last century the wall was built around the cemetery and was extended to the north-east giving rise to the names "old and new ground". The earliest church was about 50 yards from the holy well.' This well was covered with a canopy of stone mortar by the Millstreet District Council. This is St. Laitiaran's well. The older generation never called her "St. Laitiaran" but "Laitiaran beannaithe".

The next church, whenever built, was replaced by the present Gothic building by Canon O'Sullivan in 1907. Architect was Hynes who built a lot of Gothic churches in Cloyne and did some building in Tralee Convent. Contractor was Coffey of Midleton. The church was to the left of the road to the present old cemetery and between it and the road front there was a house for the parish clergy. The last to occupy it as cleric was Mick Evans. The ground to the right of the road to the cemetery was also parochial. The old church was used as a hall for some time. Late Fr. Brennan C.C. sold the church property there in two lots, portion east of present cemetery road to Martin Dennehy and west to Dan Cronin ("Bard", pub). The stones of the old church were taken by Tim Murphy, Coolikerane (see Inventory) and were used to build his house.

BALLYDALY CHURCH

The oldest church that can now be traced in the Ballydaly district was situated in Upper Ballydaly in the farm now occupied by Matthew O'Sullivan. The lower portion of the walls can still be seen surrounded by a dense jungle of trees. It is said that the walls and gables of this church were in a good condition as late as 1874.¹⁰

The next church was built in Rathduane (1864-5) by John McCarthy who converted three workmen's houses into a church. A letter from Bishop Moriarty to Fr. Fitzpatrick on February 23rd. 1863 of which I give an exact copy would point to 1864 or

'Legend - Tradition

This oldest Church near the Holy Well was burned by Cromwell's soldiers in 1650. During the reign of Charles II (1660) another church was built. This was thatched and in 1835 Fr. Fitzpatrick had it rebuilt and slated. In this church which served the people until 1906 was a bell erected in 1881, gift of Lady Kenmare to Canon Griffin. She had previously donated the altar and tabernacle for the church.

"Note inserted by Rev. E. Corridon in 1993:-

Pat Murphy, Ballydaly Upper (d. 1992) said that Canon P. Browne, when introducing the Novena in 1985 in Ballydaly Church - Canon Browne seemed to be quoting from an old tattered book: "The first mission on record in this parish, in 1854, was in Ballydaly Upper Church. The people came there at 4-5 a.m. for Confessions and Mass. The preachers were 3 Frenchmen and an Englishman. The people used to bring stone 'flags' to kneel on the mud floor." [A tape of Canon Browne's talk was made by Sean Radley. Among other things he said that it was an earthen floor and that the people brought in stones from the fence to kneel on. He named the Redemptorists who gave that 1854 mission as "Pectorin from Prussia, Fr. Bernard from Holland, Van Twerpin (?) and Prost". He added that there were no Irish Redemptorists at the time. He conjectured that there were "probably about 10,000 people in the parish at the time.]

1865. This Church was built by McCarthy, the Lord of the Manor of those parts and was a reconstruction of three or four workman's houses. The old door and windows show in the walls and the church was meant principally as a place of worship for himself and his workers. The (text of the) letter is:-

"The Palace
Killarney
Feb.23rd. 1863

My dear Fr. Fitzpatrick,

Mr. McCarthy asked me a short time ago for leave to erect a seat in the Millstreet Church. The morning I left you Fr. Nolan showed me a seat which he said was vacant and which Mr. McCarthy could have. I was since informed that Mr. McCarthy did not wish to take the vacant seat, and I desired Mr. Brosnan to say to him that I did not think it worth his while to erect a new one as I hoped at some future time to be able to allow Mass at his place. I had no notion (notice?) that it could be done now nor of course without your sanction. Mr. Brosnan only carried the message from me, so you need not fear any encroachment on your authority.

I am, my dear Fr. Fitzpatrick,
Yours sincerely,
+ D. Moriarty."

The building served the people until 1929. The present church was built and opened for worship in 1929. The architect was Dominick O'Connor of Cork, the contractor, Pat Flynn of Millstreet."

" [Pat Murphy of Ballydaly Upper had a great interest in local history. The following item of information was left by him in a copybook: "Rathduane Church was ready for dedication for around Aug. 15th. 1864. Seemingly Bishop Moriarty was confirming children in Drumtarriffe on or around that day. He boarded the train possibly at Rathcoole on the way from Confirmation and alighted at the level crossing at Rathduane House Avenue and he was accommodated for the night at the Great House and on the following day he consecrated the little church for Mr. McCarthy. And presumably the west bound train collected him at the level crossing and dropped him off at Killarney Railway Station, mission accomplished! I, Pat Murphy, was in the last First Communion class to receive their First Communion in that church on June 29th. 1929. In those times June 29th. was a Holiday of Obligation, the Feast of St. Peter and Paul. Half the congregation used to hear Mass in the patch of ground between Church and the road outside as the church was so limited in floor space."]

CHAPTER 2

CONVENTS

The Presentation Convent:

Fr. Fitzpatrick had the Convent building ready for the Sisters in 1840. He brought three Presentation Sisters from the Killarney community for this foundation. Vocations offered and an extension was necessary. This was erected in 1861 and comprises the second block which now adjoins the Parish Church. A third addition was made in 1907, the present refectory etc.

Drishane Convent:

Drishane Convent was founded in 1909 by the Sisters of the Holy Infant Jesus whose order was established in France in 1662 by Rev. Nicholas Barre, a friar Minim and Spiritual Director of St. John Baptist de la Salle.

In March 1909 the first members of the Community arrived and the first Mass was celebrated on May 25. The official opening took place on Sept. 8, 1909. Most Rev. Dr. Mangan presided at the Solemn Mass of Transfiguration. Canon Casey, P.P. Millstreet was celebrant and he was assisted by Rev. J. O'Connor, Bishop's Secretary.

The first Industries: To fulfil the conditions imposed by Dr. Mangan of giving employment to the workmen of the locality and thus preventing emigration, three industries were established:- Sawmills, Lime-kilns and a knitting industry. The passing of the years saw the disappearance of the sawmills and lime-kilns but to the present day the knitting industry flourishes giving steady employment to local girls who, when fully trained, are able to secure more lucrative employment in larger town.¹²

In October 1909 the Novitiate was opened for the purpose of supplying the missions in Malaya and Japan with subjects eager to devote themselves in pagan lands to the salvation of souls. During the short period of 25 years over 200 postulants have entered the Novitiate and many of them have gone to Malaya, Japan and U. S. A., where, by their spirit of apostolic zeal and self-sacrifice they have won thousands of souls to the true faith.

In September 1911, the boarding-school, providing secondary education, was opened. It accommodates over 120 pupils who, in addition to sound religious training, are successfully prepared for public examinations.

In August 1912, the first Profession ceremony took place and soon after, the first missionary sisters embarked for Malaya and Japan respectively carrying the gospel of Christ to thousands of pagan souls.

¹²Drishane Sisters came in 1907, established saw mills in 1912-3 giving employment to about 10 men. (This was) destroyed by fire and not rebuilt. A knitting factory was then established and still employs about (gap) girls. Lime kilns were opened and worked 1912 - 1934 employing 9 or 10 men.

In September 1914, the School of Domestic Science was opened. In addition to all domestic subjects, about 40 pupils are instructed annually in all branches of household management as well as Arts and Crafts, preparing them to take their place as efficient home-makers.

In 1934, the new Chapel was solemnly blessed by the Most Rev. Dr. O'Brien, Bishop of Kerry. On the same occasion the Silver Jubilee of the foundation was celebrated. The Bishop presided at the Solemn Mass, assisted by the Parish clergy.

This information was supplied by the Sisters on April 7th. 1966. (*Signed M.C.*)

CHAPTER 3

SCHOOLS

Hedge Schools:

Hedge Schools abounded in the parish in the years 1810-1870 and the names of the teachers are still available as household words. Edward Walsh, the poet, had a school in Mill Lane up to 1837. Garibaldi (sic) O'Sullivan taught in Kilmeedy, Cloghoola and Ballydaly in turn. The people in the locality described him as being tall, thin with a stoop. Today his grave is marked in Drishane Graveyard. Other teachers were Paddy Collins who taught in Claramore, Donal O'Sullivan who taught in Cullen, Thade Cronin who taught in Coolinarne (or Coolinaree?). He was a great scholar and Nationalist. Bill Desmond taught in Rathduane till (gap) when the present school was built. Wiliam O'Brien taught in Gortavehy. Teaching was in Irish and Garibaldi O'Sullivan taught Irish Catechism in Millstreet Church in 1858. Jeremiah Joseph Callanan, one of the great Anglo-Irish poets, author of "*Gougane Barra*" also taught here. He seems to have been particularly happy there as he implies in his poem "Clara".

Millstreet Boys' School:

The will of Helen McCarthy (O'Leary) of Coomlegane dated September 11th 1811 gave an endowment for the building of the first school in Millstreet. The following is the relevant extract:-

"I desire that my Trustees, their heirs and assigns, shall be seized of two acres English statute measure of that part of the lands of Coomlegane now in possession of Thomas O'Mahony where the same shall be convenient for the building of a schoolhouse for the purpose of education of 20 boys and 20 girls, children of the poor tenants of my estate and lands and not used as a public school as herein after mentioned and that my Trustees shall pay to the Titular Bishop of the Diocese in which said lands be, the sum of £200 to be raised out of the said lands of Droumanarigle to build a schoolhouse unless the said sum of £200 shall be paid by me for such purpose. And I devise a yearly rent charge of £40 to the said Titular Bishop to be paid to him and to those who in the future shall be Bishops of the said Diocese by my said Trustees and the survivor of them, his heirs and assigns out of the profits of the said lands of Coomlegane in trust to pay the salaries of the school master and mistress of such school and the repairs and other expenses thereof and if there should be any surplus after paying the expenses of the said school I desire that the same may be laid out in the purchase of clothes for the children of the poorest of my tenants and it is my express desire that no child shall be received into the said school who is not the child of a tenant of my estate¹³ unless an additional bequest should hereafter be made by some other person to support said school and that every tenant of my estate who can afford it shall pay for their children what my Trustees think reasonable. I also

¹³Presumably Helen McCarthy O'Leary expected the Wallis landlord to look after the education of the children of his tenants.

desire that the master of the said school for the time being shall have permission to cut and draw turf from Knopogue on the said estate for the use of the said school but not for any other purpose."

The annual income corresponding to the annual £40 charge in the will of 1811 is paid to the Bishop and forwarded to the Parish Priest of Millstreet to be distributed as follows :- % to the Presentation Convent, 1/4 to the Boys' School. It is difficult to know how and when this latter distribution arrangement was legally made.¹⁴

Cullen Schools (see Inventory Book)

The plot for the old school, the first in the district, was leased to Fr. Fitzpatrick in 1846, so that school, now the property of John P. Riordan, must have been built about 1847. It consisted of one room for boys and one for girls. In 1880 an addition was made of a large room 40' by 80' and allotted to boys.

The new school which replaced this was built in 1938 by Mr. Denis McSweeney. The addition above-mentioned was made at the western side of the original building. John P. Riordan's house is part of the old portion - reconstructed.

Aubane School

Built in 1912 by Mr. Coffey contractor with Mr. Flynn as Foreman. This was the first school in the district and it was thought apparently that a four-roomed school would be required. The attendance (which was expected to be about 160) started with 38 boys and 45 girls. It is doubtful if there were four teachers even at the start. After a very short time, 1917, the school was amalgamated and was served by two teachers.

This building was completely reconstructed in 1961 at a cost of £5,000. The parish contributed one-seventh, £710 + £125 for the site.

Ballydaly School

Built in 1869 (See Inventory Book for details).

Cloghoula School

Built in 1869 (See Inventory for details).

¹⁴Millstreet Boys' School was ready by 1841.

CHAPTER 4

MILLSTREET TOWN

The town of Millstreet grew up in the 18th. century - as its name implies - around the little mill situated in Mill Road and it became the centre of parish life. Several smaller mills were in operation in the parish, in Dooneen, Cloghoola and Drishane.

Gradually the town grew and the population increased. An ale and porter brewery was established in 1835.¹⁵ The site was the tanyard field or meadow. This continued and flourished until the Famine. A tannery located in the present Tanyard district gave a lot of employment until the industry went steadily down during the period of Grattan's Parliament due to the exporting of live cattle and the growth of the tanning industry in the countries which had formerly been the largest customers for Irish leather. A brick factory was also in operation at this time and weaving which survived until 1890.

The town had a very large military barrack in 1810 and the house in the west End owned by Mrs. Mahony was once an R. I. C. Barrack. The first Court-house was in Minor Row. It was sold to one Thomas Murphy and later bought by Denis Manly who now occupies it. The Court changed over to the Carnegie Hall which was built in 1910.

Wallis and McCarthy O'Leary refused to allow the Railway to pass through their lands - hence the distance of the railway and the Station from the town.

In Emancipation times Daniel O'Connell held at least one Repeal meeting at a place about a quarter of a mile from the present Railway Station. The town was well-known to him as he invariably stayed at the excellent inn which the town provided on his journeys by stage-coach from Derrynane to Dublin and London. The town in his time appears to have derived its chief support from travellers between Cork and Kerry and from the large barracks of infantry. The Liberator referred to the inn as having provided him with the warmest bed and the hottest chicken he got anywhere he went. He had a strong link with Millstreet as Mrs. McCarthy O'Leary was his niece.

Later, Michael Doheny, one of the '48 men, was befriended by Fr. Fitzpatrick and was sheltered by him when "on the run". Doheny's sister was a nun in the Millstreet Convent.

¹⁵T. W. Freeman of Manchester University in a book "Pre-famine Ireland" published in 1957 has this: "The main route to County Kerry passes through Millstreet (2,162), a town placed beside a large demesne, which had flour mills and a brewery." p. 233

CHAPTER 5

EVENTS IN MILLSTREET'S HISTORY

Rinnucini:

The castle of Droumsicane,¹⁶ across the Blackwater, witnessed a most colourful cavalcade in Irish History in 1645 with the arrival at the end of October of John Baptist Rinnucini, Prince Archbishop of Fermo and Nuncio apostolic to Ireland from His Holiness, Pope Urban VIII. He had landed at Kenmare on October 22nd. and had narrowly escaped capture by a British man-of-war. After resting for four days in Macroom, the seat of Viscount Muskerry, in the company of the Bishops of Ardfert and Ross, he arrived at Droumsicane on the northern bank of the Blackwater across the river from Drishane and at the time belonging to Dermot McCarthy, scion of a junior branch of the house.¹⁷ He had 26 Italians in his retinue as well as several regular and secular priests. He brought with him 2000 swords, 500 cases of petronels, a large consignment of gunpowder and several trunks of Spanish gold.

Before coming to Macroom, the Nuncio had been entertained at Ardtully Castle by Donogh McCarthy. He spent a night in Ballyvourney and came to Macroom via Clondrohid. At Droumsicane he met Boetius McEgan, later (1648) Bishop of Ross who was hanged by Broghil at Carrigadrohid (1650).

O'Sullivan Beare:

O'Sullivan Beare left Dunboy on Dec. 31st., 1601, (leaving his baby son with a foster mother in the mountains) with 1,000 followers. He spent the first night camped at Ahacross (Teampall Eachair) in Uibh Laoghaire. He was hospitably received by Ua Laoghaire and stayed one night with O'Herlihy in Ballyvourney. All made the rounds at St. Gobnait's well next day.

"Droumsicane Castle is a rectangular fortification, formerly the property of the O'Keeffes. Length, 41 yards; Breadth, 31 yards; walls 23 feet high and 4 feet of thickness. It is flanked by a circular tower at each corner. The N.E. tower has been completely demolished. The remaining towers are two-storied having an internal diameter of 17 feet 7 inches. Each tower is pierced in each story with holes, evidently for the use of hand-guns. In the centre of the Rectangular Enclosure was a lofty square tower demolished about 150 years ago.

The Castle is locally known as 'The Boing' (Ath Buaine), i.e. the fort of the everlasting (river) - in this case the Blackwater. Dr. Joyce in *Irish Names of Places* remarks that the Irish seem to have the custom of applying the word 'buan' (lasting) to rivers.

"This item is uncertain. Droumsicane was an O'Keeffe Castle - also Dromagh and Duarrigle - under the headship of the McCarthies. (In Canon Costello's copybook there was a newspaper article by "Bill Cody" headed: "Dromagh Castle, a stronghold of a Fighting clan". It describes the O'Keeffes as: "a fearless tribe who brooked no interference by the neighbouring clans or anybody else". It says: "Their chief stronghold was Dromagh Castle, which was built in 1601. Others of their castles were Dromsickane and Duaragil, still in a fair stage of preservation, between Cullen and Millstreet." The name of the newspaper and its date are not given.

They travelled on the side of the Ballyvourney mountains over the old track and over what is now called Healy's Mountain at Curracahill and crossed down over Coom-a-Ceo, a small hill west of Claragh and into what is now Michael Stephen Riordan's land at Kippagh. (They continued) on to the Blackwater and crossed at the Boinng Ford. There was no possibility of crossing the Blackwater anywhere else in winter except at Banteer.

They got food and hospitality from O'Keeffe at the Boinng Castle but no shelter and they had to leave quickly as O'Keeffe had settled with Carew not to give any assistance to O'Sullivan Beare. East from the Boinng at Knocanair (hill of slaughter), now Flintfield, some followers of O'Keeffe attacked them. Some years ago bones and military equipment were dug up there. The McCarthys were waiting at Kilmeedy to attack them, also the McCarthys of Drishane. All the McCarthy clans had agreed with the English not to give any assistance - hence their crossing at Coom-a-Ceo.

After Flintfield they went through Maher to Derrinatubrid and on to Clonfert. Here they were hospitably received by McAuliffe. While they were there they heard that the Barrys of Buttevant were coming to fight them so they could not go north to the Shannon but had to go east to Ardfinnan and on to the Glen of Aherlow.

CHAPTER 6

HISTORY OF GENTRY AND BIG HOUSES IN MILLSTREET PARISH

The McCarthy Family:

Drishane Castle was built by Dermot McCarthy, second son of Tadg , the third Lord Muskery in 1450. The same Dermot built Kilmeedy Castle in order to command the wild mountain pass from Macroom to Killarney. In 1592 another Tadg McCarthy adopted the policy of "surrender and re-grant" and submitted his lands to Elizabeth receiving them back as an English feudal lord and thereby freeing himself from the overlordship of Lord Muskerry at the time. This step was important in the history of the family as it entitled Tadg to bequeath his lands as he pleased instead of being compelled to follow the ancient Irish custom of tanistry. Donough McCarthy, as a consequence, inherited all the lands, castles etc. of Drishane, Carrigaphooka and Kilmeedy. He was buried in Drishane at the age of 122 in June 1719.¹⁸ In June 1678 the lands which he lost in the Rebellion of 1641 were restored under the Act of Settlement provided he paid to one Dominick Coppinger the sums due on the mortgage put on the lands before the Rebellion. If the age and name are correct, this Donogh was born at the end of Elizabeth's reign, fought as a Colonel against the English in 1688 at the age of 94 and was one of the garrison of Ballyclough Castle when it surrendered in 1691. To retain his lands after the victory of William of Orange he passed a bond to Thomas Connor of Dublin who, as a Protestant, could be the nominal owner of the estate. The old warrior enjoyed his lands in peace and so did his widow for six years after his death when Connor died. The heirs of Connor, the Hamiltons of Meath, found the bond, closed on the property and turned out the widow who died on the doorstep.¹⁹

A variant of this latter item :- she, the widow, had been his second wife and was nee Julia Anne O'Leary of Coomlegane and she made over her life-interest in the lands to her grand-nephew, Denis O'Leary. The McCarthies of Dooneen and Kilcorney disputed this and legal warfare ensued. Meanwhile Connor who had the title-in-trust died and his executors discovered that it was a sham deed. In 1728 Wallis proved that the lands were "Papist" property and as a result the property was put up for sale and was bought by Wallis for £450. Wallis turned out the widow who died on the doorstep.

¹⁸ inscription on McCarthy family tomb in Drishane ;-

"Sacred to the memory of Donough McCarthy, Esq., whose great grand-father, Dermot McCarthy, second son of Teige, Lord Muskerry, built the Castle of Drishane AD 1450. Donogh was born 1517, died 3rd. March 1639 aged 122 years. His son Dermot McCarthy of Drishane Castle and his grandson Donogh McCarthy of Dunine who forfeited the family estate of Drishane 1641. Donogh McCarthy Oge of Dunine Esq. who died 1763 aged 96 and his three sons, Justin, Denis of Glyn and Alexander of Knock.... who died March 1802 aged 80 years. Denis McCarthy of Coomlogane who died AD 1825 aged 80 years. Alexander McCarthy of Cork Esq who died 1843 aged 72 years. His family having rebuilt the tomb 1844 erected this tablet as a pious memory of their ancestors."

Note on tombstone inscription and 17th. and 18th. century dates of the Drishane McCarthys :- The name Donogh occurs so often that in both cases where a life-span of 122 years is given for a Donogh McCarthy, it is quite possible that there were two Donoghs, father and son, covering that period.

¹⁹These notes have been culled from various sources. Their authenticity is doubtful and they are given for what they are worth.

The Drishane estate of the McCarthy's was forfeited in 1641 and was never restored. The Drishane chief at the time was Donogh and a source gives his life-span as 106 years 1619-1725. In 1645 besides the Drishane McCarthys now dispossessed there were five other McCarthys in the parish, one of them at Kilmeedy. After 1641 a son of Donogh settled in Dooneen across the Finnow river and this branch of the family during the following hundred years managed to maintain something of its old position and one member at least achieved some distinction with Clare's Irish Brigade in France. During the latter part of the 18th. century the owner of this estate was Denis McCarthy known as Denis of Glyn born 1731.²⁰

A digression is necessary at this point to explain the merger of the McCarthys now in Dooneen with the O'Leary family of Coomlogane. The O'Learys of Coomlogane were a subsidiary clan of the McCarthys and had caused the latter considerable trouble from time to time. One of them, General Arthur O'Leary, who married an aunt of the Liberator, Eileen Duv, and who was killed at Carriganimma in 1773, was the subject of the greatest elegy in Irish Literature. Arthur had been a General in the Austrian army and a friend of the Empress Marie Therese who sponsored some of his children.

The circumstances of his death (are as follows). He spurned the offer of £5 for his horse after a struggle in which Eileen helped him to beat off his attackers from his house and was subsequently shot at Carriganimma.

The O'Leary head of the clan died towards the end of the 18th. century and his only daughter Eileen succeeded to the estate. There was trouble and a lawsuit about succession. It was claimed that Eileen O'Leary was illegitimate and therefore could not inherit the estate.²¹ Her father, it was said (legend) was keeping company with a girl from Rathmore who was the mother of Eileen. By this time, as we have already seen, the representative of the McCarthys of Drishane dispossessed after 1641 and now in Dooneen, was Denis born 1731 (circa) and known as Denis of Glyn. His son, another Denis, succeeded to the O'Leary estate in the following manner. His mother died in 1780 and his father married secondly Eileen daughter of the O'Leary of Coomlogane.²² There were no children of this marriage so that Eileen O'Leary willed the property to her stepson, Denis McCarthy, on condition that he add an "O'Leary" to the family name. Hence the McCarthy family of Dooneen, now of Coomlogane merged with the family of O'Leary and became the McCarthy O'Leary family, residing at Coomlogane.²³

²⁰ This may be the Denis of Coomlogane mentioned in the family tombstone who died 1825 aged 80 years i.e. born 1745.

²¹ A man (legend again) swore that he saw O'Leary and Eileen's mother being married secretly in the old church in Rathduane. Q. What old church? Does it go back to 1800?

²²The Eileen already mentioned?

²³[There is an interesting article on "The McCarthy O'Learys of Coomlagane" by Thomas O'Flynn CM. in *Seanchas Duthalla* Vol. IX(1993) pp. 78-81.]

This Denis had a son John born 1814 who succeeded to the estate and lived in Coomlogane till 1896. Thus he was landlord of a large part of the parish during the difficult years of the land war. It was Denis of Glyn who laid out the beautiful park and the woodland that fringed the estate. Already in 1800 he had built the Georgian mansion that lasted till the War of Independence.

This John McCarthy O'Leary, born 1814, died 1896, had eight children.²⁴ His wife was Mary O'Connell according to our Baptismal Book which gives the baptism of Maurice. She was a niece of the Liberator.

John left the estate to his son William, born 1849, killed in the Boer War 1900. William married a Considine and had five children - John, Donogh, William, Mollie and Amy. His eldest son John inherited the estate. John married a Dublin woman and had one daughter, Elizabeth. He died young and his widow remarried (?). His daughter Elizabeth married Sir Maurice O'Connell and lived in Killarney. Mollie is still living in Dublin - she is unmarried and Lady O'Connell was her niece. Mollie's brother, Donogh, was the last male survivor of the family and on his death Mollie became the family representative of the estate until its final purchase.

The mansion was not burned during the War of Independence. It was looted and rough-handled. The British Army camped in the grounds and probably occupied the house. The family got compensation from the British Government.

The McCarthy O'Leary Estate comprised the following townlands in the Millstreet portion of the estate (it extends into Rathmore parish) :- Coomlogane which includes portion of the town of Millstreet, Annagloor, Clarabeg, Claratlea North and South, Ferim, Gortavehy East and West, Toorboney.

The boundary between it and the Wallis Estate is an underground stream that flows under the street between Denis Twomey's (Wallis Estate) and Tim Broker Kelleher's (McCarthy O'Leary) on the South Side and Pat Mahony's (Wallis) and John Broker Kelleher's (McCarthy O'Leary) on the North Side. This stream runs into the Mill Stream and encircles the first houses on Station Road in the O'Leary Estate but leaving all Mill Lane houses upper and lower in the Wallis Estate. Knopogue is McCarthy O'Leary Estate and Droumahilla is Wallis Estate.

²⁴From the Geneological Office, Dublin Castle, per one of the family :-

John McCarthy O'Leary(born on 19/9/1814) married Jane Frances? O'Connell (born 1812) on 29/10/1839. He died on 14/2/1896 and she on 15/3/1897. Their children were :-

John Arthur born 3/8/1840 (died 29/5/1870, Paris);

Pana Charles born 1841 (died 1886 in Australia);

Lucinda (died in infancy);

Elizabeth Mary born 1843 (died 3/1/1920. This Elizabeth it was who went to live with McCarthy of Cobh - called here 'Elizabeth'.)

Leonard ? born 1846 (died 10/3/1859 at Coomlogane);

William born 4/1/1849 (killed 27/2/1900 in Boer War.);

Amy Jane born 6/11/1851 (died 19/3/1873);

Maurice Charles born -/3/1854 (died 12/10/1933).

Maurice (same Maurice) was the last member of the family to be buried in Millstreet in the 1940's. Was he legal owner? No - purchase had been made.

The McCarthy O'Leary family lived quite near the mill until the building of the mansion in the Park. The site of the first residence is still marked by the ruins known as "The Kennels" - the entrance at that time being through the Black Gate. The mansion was built about 1800.

Purchase of McCarthy O'Leary Estate:

The good work begun by Rev. C. O'Sullivan, Adm. in the purchase of the Wallis Estate was an incentive to his successor, Very Rev. Canon Casey, to make a further effort on behalf of the parishioners on the McCarthy O'Leary Estate. After repeated efforts success crowned their combined efforts and the tenants of this estate purchased their holdings in 1907. The actual purchase took place that year but final arrangements and transfer of ownership was not accomplished until about 1921.

The Wallis Estate:

Wallis is supposed to have got ownership of all the town and country property from the Bridge to Drishane in the following manner. Wallis lent money to McCarthy O'Leary who was unable to repay. He was tricked into a bond and Wallis foreclosed and took over ownership of the property. The second portion from the Bridge west to Coomlegane remained the property of McCarthy O'Leary. This would seem to show that the McCarthy O'Leary Estate still covered all the town long after Drishane had passed into non-Catholic hands.

A rather lengthy account of the Purchase appeared recently in the *Kerryman* and I give it in full as it is most interesting :-

"In the summer of 1900 a rumour spread around the town of Millstreet, Co. Cork, that the Wallis Estate was to be sold in the Land Judge's Court. It interested the townspeople because about three fourths of the town was built on the Estate. A few of the people met and decided to interest the Rev. C. O'Sullivan Adm. (afterwards Lord Bishop of Kerry) to ask his advice and assistance.

Both were freely given and on his suggestion a meeting of the people interested was called at which the following Committee was elected :- Rev. C. O'Sullivan, Adm., Chairman; Mr. M. Murray, Hon. Treas.; Mr. D. Linehan, Hon. Sec; Messrs D. Tangney, J. Potts, T. J. O'Sullivan, T. O'Keeffe, J. Cooper, D. O'Sullivan and D. Reardon.

The Committee had two primary objects in view - first that each holding in the town be sold separately to enable the occupiers to buy their own houses and, second, that if the sale was to take place by auction, the auction be held in Millstreet.

Then began the long drawn-out battle before Mr. Justice Ross, but finally both objects were achieved and the auction was fixed for July 1901. Messrs Wm Marsh and Sons, Cork, were the Auctioneers and the auction was held in the old

Court House in the town. The occupiers were the only bidders and they had a total of £12,200. The bids were submitted to Judge Ross when the landlords were represented by Messrs Casey and Clay, solicitors, Dublin who had carriage of sale, and the tenants by T. M. Healy, KC, instructed by Mr. T. Hennessy Solr., Millstreet.

Bids were not approved. On the application of Messrs Casey and Clay, the Judge refused to approve of the bids and fixed a date at the end of the Long Vacation for a sale in his own Court in Dublin. The tenants renewed their bids, but there was a surprise bid of £12,800 from Mrs. Wallis, wife of the owner. Her counsel naively explained that she had not any money but was getting it from a Mr. Lane, a London financier. Judge Ross, whose sympathy with the landlords was well-known, gave her until Jan. 1st. 1902 to lodge the money.

When the matter again came before the Judge, Mrs. Wallis still had no money and the late Mr. D. D. Sheehan, B.L. who represented the tenants on this occasion, succeeded in getting the Judge to make a definitive order that if Mrs. Wallis did not lodge the money before March 1st. he would reject her offer.

When March came Mr. Sheehan again represented the tenants with the Rev. Chairman and the Secretary as the tenants' solicitor was unable to travel.

Mrs. Wallis again had no money and Judge Ross, after an appeal from Mr. Sheehan, made an order accepting the tenants as purchasers provided they increased their offer to the amount bid by Mrs. Wallis.

As it meant only an increase of about 2%, Mr. Sheehan agreed. This was on Monday and the judge asked that the amended bid be lodged in the court on the following Wednesday.

Instructions were wired home to the parish clerk, Mr. John M. Murphy, to have new bids signed in blank by the tenants and to send them on that night to the Rev. Chairman and the Secretary, who remained in Dublin. This Mr. Murphy did and the forms reached Dublin all right on Tuesday. Mr. Hennessy, solicitor, and some members of the Committee travelled, and the calculations were made and the amount filled in in a room very kindly placed at the disposal of the Committee by the Manager of the Clarence Hotel. The documents were lodged in Court and accepted by the Judge on Wednesday morning, and it was then the real trouble began.

Whilst the people in the Main Street had the money or could find it, how were all the weekly tenants, whose wages would be about 9/- per week, to find the money, which would be from £60 to £80 each?

Various suggestions were made and rejected as not feasible until the Secretary happened to see in an English paper news of a somewhat similar sale in that country through the Small Dwellings Acquisition Act.

The Committee jumped at the suggestion and a deputation was appointed to appear before the old Millstreet Rural District Council and ask that body to put the Small Dwellings Act in force in the Rural District which, to its credit, let it be said, the Council unanimously did and thus had the honour of being the first Council in Ireland to do so.

As the procedure was entirely new, it took some time to put things going but under the guidance of the late Mr. T. M. O'Connor, Clerk of the Council, who was an acknowledged authority on Local Government matters, and with the help in Dublin of the late Mr. P.C. Connor, Chief Engineering Inspector of the Local Government Board, matters were finally completed.

Loans under the act were advanced to the tenants for four-fifths of the purchase money at 5½% interest and Sinking Fund, repayable by weekly instalments spread over thirty years, and may I say here that not one single penny was lost to the ratepayers despite the croaking of those who prophesied all kinds of disaster.

In this necessarily short account of this unique sale, unique because it was the first moved through the Small Dwellings Act in the country, I have not been able to give any adequate idea of the immense amount of time and trouble the Committee, more particularly the Rev. Chairman and the Secretary, gave to bringing the sale to a successful conclusion. It was entirely due to the Rev. Chairman and the Secretary, who held the people together through disappointment after disappointment that the people of Millstreet are the owners of their houses today.

Contrast the position then of the weekly tenant who leaving his house before the sale, just handed up the key to the Estate Rent Collector, with his position now when if he leaves for any reason, he sells his house for the full market value in a town where prices are high.

No praise is too much for the Rev. Chairman and the Secretary, who on more than one occasion, when the funds of the Committee were exhausted, paid the Counsel's fees themselves.

Nor can too much gratitude be expressed to the members of the old Rural District Council, but for whose help, matters would have been much more difficult for the tenants.

And now in what we may describe as the Golden Jubilee Year of Millstreet, may we ask a little prayer for the soul of the Rev. Chairman and all the members of the Committee, all of whom, with the exception of the Secretary are gone to their reward. To him we sincerely say "Ad multos annos".

The Kerry man, March 1, 1952.

CHAPTER 7

ECONOMIC HISTORY

Local Coal Mines

In a booklet published in 1861 by Thorn's, printed for Her Majesty's Stationary Office and titled "Explanations to accompany Sheets 163, 174 and part of 175 of the maps of the Geological Survey of Ireland", we find the following (pages 30-2): -

"Coal-pits, Duarrigle and Lisnashearshane Collieries

These collieries are situated about 3/4 miles N.N.W. of Millstreet and a mile S.W. of Cleanrath. In Coal-pits, a little to the S.E. of Church Hill, three beds of coal were formerly worked. Two of these are supposed to be the Sweet²⁵ and Rock veins,²⁶ and the highest may be the Needle vein. To the N.E. of these, on the south of Mount Justice, in the townland of Knocknagarrane, a coal was also worked which seems to be the Castle or Morgan's vein.²⁷ In Lisnashearshane and Duarrigle three beds of coal were also worked that lie to the south and appear to be higher than those in the Coal-pits. The lowest of these is a very small pindy vein and was only worked along its outcrop. The second was proved, or worked, from the road that runs north and south through the townland of Coal-pits, in a N.E. direction, to the eastern boundary of Duarrigle, where it turned and ran nearly E. and W. till it was cut off by a nearly N. and S. fault, a downthrow to the East,²⁸ that is situated about 340 yards to the east of the bounds of Duarrigle. The vein was from sixteen to twenty inches thick, with a 'dog'²⁹ two inches thick in the centre of it. Half of it was often coal, the rest culm. Under it was a 'seat' (fireclay and clunch) and over it a slate in which fossil ferns are found.³⁰ The highest coal was worked a little in Duarrigle and 'proved' in Lisnashearshane. It was from two to three feet thick, on a fireclay, with a rock roof. Further south-west, in the strike of these beds, and half a mile due east of Duarrigle Castle, there were a few pits sunk on a coal; and a mile to the S.W. of these pits Mr. Foot records a coal that is exposed in the River Blackwater. They seem likely to be the continuation of one of the beds in Duarrigle colliery. A coal smut is also exposed in the bank of the same river, two miles South East of Duarrigle Castle, and immediately west of Flintfield House.

²⁵The "Coal" or "Sweet Vein" - so called because the part first discovered was nearly free from iron pyrites and entirely coal. It is usually a coal; when not a coal, it is a good strong culm.

²⁶"Rock Vein" - this bed has usually a rock roof, from which its name. It is generally a culm but sometimes partly coal. Through this vein there is generally a "dog" - a streak of carbonaceous black shale that runs irregularly in the bed.

²⁷"Morgan's" or "Castle Vein" has received its name "Morgan's" from a man by whom it was first worked and "Castle" from having been worked under Dromagh Castle. It is a pindy and was therefore never extensively worked.

²⁸ It is worthy of note, as a remarkable fact, that all the N. and S. faults that are proved are downthrows to the E. or upthrows to the W.

²⁹"Dog" is a thin layer of clunch or grit found in some of the coal beds.

³⁰ This is the only coal roof in which ferns were remarked, and here they seem to be numerous; but on account of the decomposed state of the shale it was impossible to get any good specimens.

Drift and other Superficial Deposits:

Drift: At the N.E. corner of the district (i.e. the whole coal-measure district stretching to Dromagh), there is a drift formed principally of limestone gravel and clay, which appears generally over the limestone and in a few places runs up the valleys into the Coal Measure hills. It is of considerable depth covering near all the limestone of that part. The deep drift which spreads over all the rock in the valley at the foot of the Caherbarnagh range and entirely conceals them to the west of Millstreet, is gravel and clay formed from the debris of the Old Red Sandstone and Coal Measure rocks with here and there an odd limestone fragment. Accumulations of local drift (i.e. formed of the wear of underlying rocks), are found in various places, sometimes of considerable depth. **Bogs:** A great portion of the mountainous ground has a peat covering, which is sometimes of considerable depth; but when it is merely a growth of peat over undulating ground, it has not been inserted in the map. There are, however, large flat peat bogs in the S.W. corner of the district, one of which is called Annagh bog. **Alluvial flats,** none of them being of great size or importance, are found along the rivers Blackwater, Feale, and their tributaries.

Minerals:

The three varieties of coal found in the district are **Anthracite, Culm and Pindy.** The **Anthracite** is of a dark brown colour, and is generally, except what is got from the Sweet Vein, impregnated with iron pyrites which often occur in nodules and thin layers. **Culm** is a laminated coal which crumbles when exposed to atmospheric influence. **Pindy** is carbonaceous shale, or a highly argillaceous (clayey) culm; sometimes it has as much carbon in it that it can be used for fuel. This kind of coal in the county of Limerick is called slaty culm and in the Queen's and Kilkenny Counties, Kelve. A copper mine from which the yellow ore (copper pyrites) was taken was formerly worked in the vicinity of Millstreet and is recorded in Sir R. Griffith's published "List of Mines and Mineral Localities" but the exact place where it was situated could not be ascertained when the district was examined by us "(Ref. in the British Library catalogue: B.S. 38. GC 2/100)

Items from "A Topographical Dictionary of Ireland" by Samuel Lewis published 1837:

"Near Churchill a culm mine has been worked for the last six years which employs about 30 persons. The extensive and valuable collieries of Dromagh and Disert, the property of N. Leader, Esq. afford constant employment to a considerable number of persons. Dromagh colliery has been worked for nearly a century. Within the last 15 years a large capital has been expended by the late N. P. Leader, Esq. on useful work connected with the collieries, which are now in excellent order and capable of supplying an extensive demand. Among other improvements he erected a large boulting-mill near the new bridge over the river Allua, which in compliment to him has been named Leader's Bridge. At Clonbanin, Drominagh and Coolclough are other collieries worked by different proprietors. About 40 years since, it was contemplated to open a navigable communication between these collieries and the sea at Youghal by means of a canal cut through the vale of the Blackwater and part of the line between this place and Mallow to the extent of 3.5 miles was actually cut and still remains visible. A railroad in the same direction has also been suggested but no steps have yet been taken for accomplishing that object."

Annex 1

Drishane Castle

[The following are notes that I got from Sr. Evelyn Houlihan of Drishane (12/10/1998) about Drishane Castle and Convent. I think she said that it was Sr. Alphonsus McMahon (87) who died in 1997 who had these notes. Most of the information may have been already recorded in this document by Canon Costello. There were two separate pages but I merged into one because they were mostly repetitive]

Drishane Castle was formerly owned by a branch of the McCarthys, Princes of Desmond. After the Anglo-Norman Invasion, these chiefs came eastwards from Kerry and owned the castles at Carrigaphooka, Kilmeedy and Drishane. The Castle and a part of the residence were erected by Dermot McCarthy in 1436-1450. The McCarthys were the owners until the Cromwellian invasion, when the castle and estate were confiscated.

The Yeomen Field is the field near Coole cross - Cromwell's army came up the road from Keale bridge (not there then) and felled trees around Coole Cross. Then their horses (pulled) them into the field and started to place them as large guns to attack the Castle. The stunt worked for McCarthys put out the white flag and surrendered. That is the reason why the castle was never shelled.

Drishane became the property of a Landlord, named Henry Wallis. There was a tradition that he evicted Dermot's widow, then a very old lady - her name was Julianne McCarthy O'Leary - and that she died on the door-step of the Castle.

The Wallises built a beautiful residence and were in possession of Drishane until the early 20th century. Eventually they became bankrupt and sold the lands and castle to Mr. Stack of Fermoy.

The Architecture changed in the late 17th century or early 18th century, known by masons and architects as the levelling of the course. This is visible around the big window opposite the iron door. There were bullet-marks fired by rifle (from where the Statue of the Blessed Virgin now stands) to test the strength of the door. Its purpose was to protect the Wallises from the Fenians. (Incidentally, this statue was the first symbol of Catholicity seen in Drishane since the eviction of the McCarthys.)

In 1908 Mr. Cornelius Duggan was instrumental in the purchase of Drishane for the Sisters of the Holy Infant Jesus, whose order was established in France in 1662 by Rev. Nicholas Barre, a Friar Minime. It is interesting to know that he was closely connected with St. John Baptist de la Salle, the founder of the well-known de la Salle Brothers.

In March 1909 the first members of the community arrived and the first Mass was celebrated on 25th May. The official opening took place on the 8th Sept. 1909. His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Mangan, presided at the Solemn Mass of Inauguration. Canon Casey of Millstreet was celebrant, assisted by Rev. E. D. O'Connor, Secretary to the Bishop.

Annex 2

Industries.

First Industries: to fulfil the conditions imposed by His Lordship, of giving employment to the workmen of the locality, and thus preventing emigration, three industries were started - a Sawmill, Limekiln and a Knitting Industry. The passing of the years saw the disappearance of the sawmills and limekilns, but to the present day, the Knitting Industry flourishes, giving steady employment to local girls, who, when fully trained, are able to secure more lucrative employment in larger towns. In October 1909 the Novitiate was opened, with the purpose of supplying the missions in Malaysia and Japan, with subjects eager to devote themselves to the salvation of souls. During the short period of 25 years, over 200 postulants entered the Novitiate, many of whom went to Malaysia, Japan and America, where, by their spirit of faith and self-sacrifice, they have won thousands of souls for the true Faith.

In Sept. 1911, the Boarding School, providing Secondary Education, was opened. It now accommodates over 130 pupils who are prepared for public examinations.

In August 1912, the first Profession took place and, soon after, the first Missionary Sisters embarked for Malaysia and Japan respectively, where they devoted themselves bringing the teaching of Christ to thousands of souls.

In 1914, the School of Domestic Science was opened. Here pupils are trained in all branches of Household Management as well as Arts and Crafts. These girls are prepared for entrance to the Munster Institute, Cathal Bru, as for St. Catherine's College, Sion Hill, nursing and C.E.R.T.

A new Chapel dedicated to the Little Flower was erected in 1934 and solemnly blessed by His Lordship, Most Reverend Dr. O'Brien, then Bishop of Kerry. On the same occasion, the Silver Jubilee of the Foundation was celebrated. His Lordship again presided at a Solemn High Mass, assisted by the Millstreet clergy.

Our work consists mostly of teaching, but we hope that Vatican II will implement Social Work in different forms.

Letter of Arthur Canon S. Griffin
to *The Cork Examiner* (15/10/1877)

"THE LATE BISHOP OF KERRY AND
THE TIMES

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CORK EXMINER

The Palace, Killarney, Oct 12,1877

Dear Sir - I sent the accompanying letter to the editor of the *Times* in reference to an article published by him on the late Most Rev. Dr. Moriarty, and as he has not had the courtesy of publishing it during the week, I shall feel obliged by your giving it space in your columns on Monday next. It is bad enough to make misstatements about a distinguished prelate who is silent in his grave, but to refuse inserting a contradiction of them is worse than calumnious. There were many other misstatements in the *Times'*, besides the two I refer to, but Dr. Moriarty's devotion to the Church in which he was so bright an ornament, and so devoted to the venerable successor of St. Peter, is so well known, I considered it superfluous to utter a word of defence or explanation. As a proof of his love and veneration for our glorious Pontiff Pius IX, his last public act was to send an address (written as he knew how to write one) and an offering of £1,000 from the clergy and faithful people of the diocese -I remain, dear Sir, yours faithfully.

ARTHUR CANON S. GRIFFIN

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

The Palace, Killarney

October 6th, 1877

Sir - In your article on the late lamented Dr. Moriarty, Bishop of Kerry, you have gone a little astray on one or two points. He never advocated mixed education. He accepted the "national system" because he believed it preferable to little or no education, which would be the result of refusing it, in consequence of the poverty of his diocese; but at all times, especially at his Diocesan Synod, he warned his clergy, who are, in nearly every parish, managers of the schools, to use their utmost vigilance over the teaching and moral conduct of the teachers; in fact, he demanded from them a strict observance of the Decrees of the Synods of Thurles and Maynooth, which obliges the clergy to visit their schools at least once a week. And when the Protestant Bishop of the Diocese, in a charge to his clergy, warned them of the danger incurred by Protestant children who attended schools under Catholic management, especially convent schools, he directed me to preserve the journal in which his Lordship's charge appeared, in order that he may be able to show, if necessity arose, that Protestant Prelates had the same view on the great question of education as he and the other Catholic Bishops of Ireland maintained.

In my presence, he unhesitatingly refused parents permission to send their children to the Queen's Colleges.

When Mr. Gladstone's statement on the University Bill appeared in the public journals, he was suffering from a severe cold, and asked me to read it out to him, and after listening attentively and desiring me to repeat several passages, he said he hoped a good bill would follow. But when he saw the bill in print, he said, "It will not be read a

second time." He was a true friend of the tenant farmers of the county, and in consequence of the great influence he possessed with the gentry, both Catholic and Protestant, he did them many services unknown to themselves, and he maintained that "mild remonstrance" produced better results than violent attacks at meetings, or in the public journals; but if real wrong or injury was inflicted on any tenant farmer, he did not hesitate to demand immediate reparation - and on the other hand, he constantly advised the farmer not to be led away against his landlord by political adventurers. This moderate line of conduct gained for Dr. Moriarty the confidence and respect of all sensible men. He frequently told me that he has as little difficulty (and in some cases less) in getting sites for churches, presbyteries, and schools, from the Protestant gentry of the county as from the Catholics - and many of them now express deep regret for him, and say he will be as great a loss to them as to the members of his own church, because he always received them as a christian minister and gentleman should, and gave them sound and practical advice.

The intense grief at his obsequies, by all classes and creeds, was the most eloquent panegyric that could be preached over his lordship's remains.

By giving space to these remarks in your columns, I shall feel much obliged -
Yours faithfully,

ARTHUR CANON GRIFFIN

Annex 4

(The following is a document I found among parish files yesterday 26/7/2000)

PARISH OF MILLSTREET

Dr. Moriarty's Diary

By Rescript dated the 19th June, 1859, the Holy See granted, at the request of Dr. Moriarty "Indulgentiam Plenariam iis lucranda qui ad mensam eucharisticam accedant in ecclesia paroeciali de Millstreet festo Sancti Patricii, dummodo fideles confessi et sacra Communionem refecti aliquas preces effuderint iuxta mentem Sanctitatis Suae et pro exaltatione S. Romanae Ecclesiae."

13th August, 1864. Said Mass for the first time and opened for services the small and neat chapel which John McCarthy has fitted up at Rathduane. This is a great advantage to the people of this district who formerly had a chapel of their own closed by Fr. Fitzpatrick when he commenced to build the present Church in Millstreet

Dr. Mangan's Diary

7th February, 1905. Visited Millstreet Convent. Engaged in building addition to house.

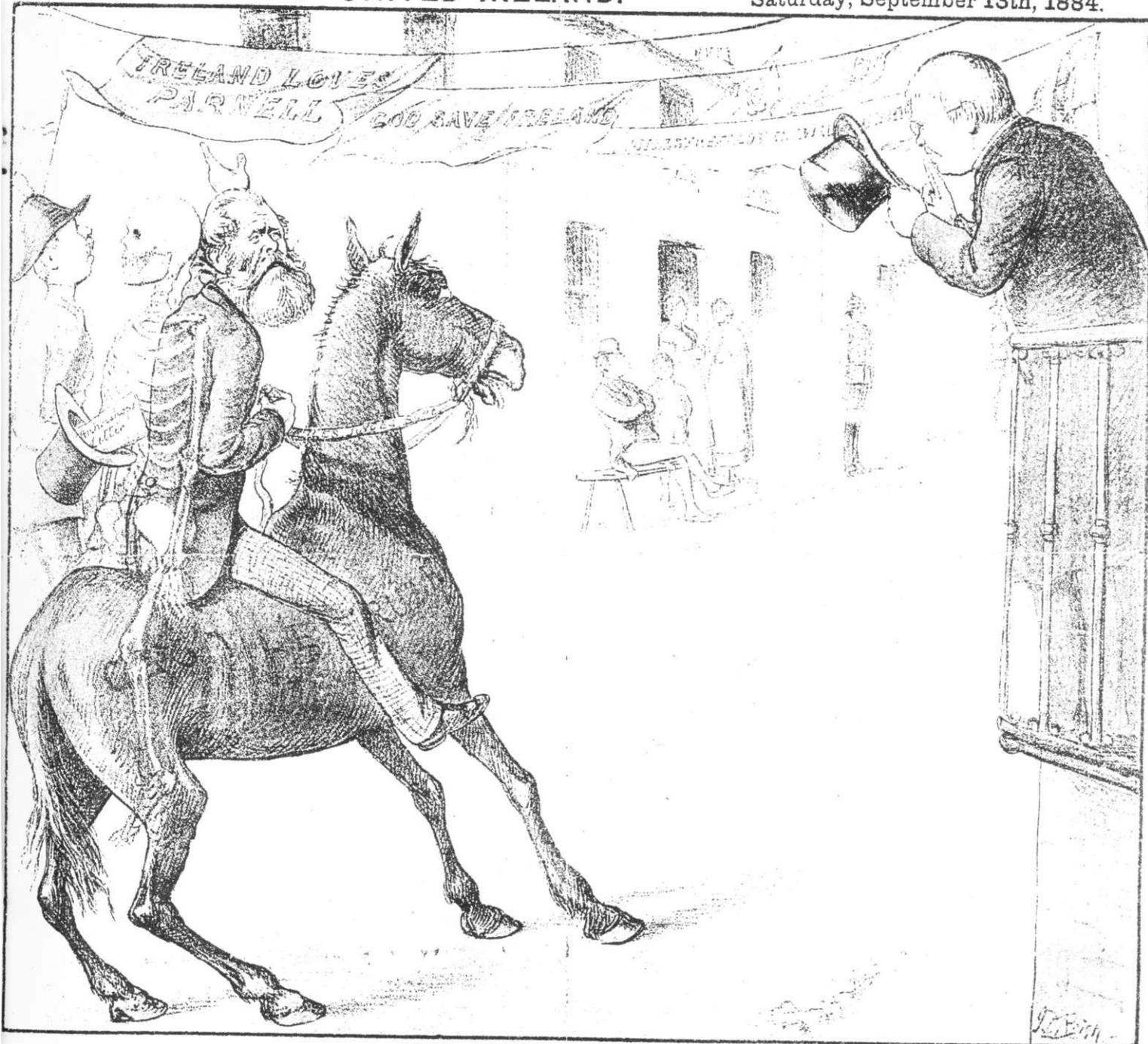
8th November, 1907. Visited the new Church of Cullen, Millstreet. Erected by Dean O'Sullivan who was P.P. here.

9th December., 1908. Visited Drishane Castle which has been purchased by an Order of French Sisters, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus. They are to found a Convent here.

31st January 1909. Visit from the French Sisters of St. Maur who are to take up the new foundation at Drishane.

8th September, 1909. Solemn opening of the new Convent at Drishane - Solemn High Mass &c.

30th August, 1911. Visited Drishane Convent. Refused request of Rev. Mother to accept boarders from the Province of Munster.



THE CONQUERING HERO.

CONQUERING HERO—Hullo, Canon, this is not part of *your* arrangements, eh?

CANON—The decorations are not—ahem!—altogether what might be desired, but your Ex——y will find the luncheon excellent.

SRÁID AN MHUILINN

Transcript of a lecture by Padraig O'Maidin in Millstreet on Wednesday, October 6th, 1971.

The late John T. Collins was fond of telling the story of how Charles Lever in one of his novels tells of a mixed group of travellers touring the Continent after the Napoleonic Wars. They were in the city of Florence, one of the greatest cities of the Medieval world, renowned for its art galleries and its architecture. The guide was pointing out one of the beauties of its architecture to the visitors. An Irishman in the group said that he had seen in Dublin buildings that were just as beautiful. His companion touched his arm and whispered "There is no use in talking about Dublin here, you may as well talk about Macroom", "And why wouldn't I talk about Macroom" he replied, "You could talk about Macroom in any part of the world and not be ashamed of it."

We could talk about Millstreet in any part of the world at any time and not be ashamed of it. A difficulty in attempting to lecture on it is that the story of this locality or rather of the human race in this part of the earth is a very long and I think a very absorbing story, We could take a whole fortnight of days and nights talking about it and still not come to an end of it, or even to the best part of it.

And yet, when we are asked in the library for a history of Millstreet we cannot produce it. True, there is a little booklet entitled "Sraid an Mhuilinn: a history of its people, by its people, for its people", incidentally a booklet that I am personally very fond of. While in its own way it is one of the most interesting publications on Irish local history, it's by no means a history of Millstreet. Yet with its help and with the help of the mass of material gathered by Father Ferris in a few hours after each Station Mass in the Parish in 1935 we may be able to get some few glimpses into the history of the area. This mass of material is lodged by Father Ferris in Tralee in the headquarters of Kerry County Library. I have been given a loan of it to show it to you this evening.³¹

Although there is no satisfactory published history of Millstreet, we find an astonishing amount of material we can use. My mission tonight is to encourage one of you to take on this task of writing a satisfactory history of your locality. We may be able to persuade either the Cork Historical Guides Committee or some other publisher to publish it. Whoever will do it will find fame because it is a story of enduring interest and importance.

I will read to you the headings of the Fr. Ferris notes as they are listed in the 15 folders that make up the collection:

³¹This was later lodged in Cork County Library and is now in the Cork Archives Institute, Christ Church, South Main St., Cork. Tel. 021 4 27 78 09. (Jack Lane)

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| <p style="text-align: center;">I</p> <p>Rivers. O'Caoimh. Roads. Roads (ancient). Roads (modern). Vandalism. Psychic. Rivers, river holes and wells. Life: flora, fauna.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">II</p> <p>Immigrants from East. English immigrants. Natives. Kingwilliamstown. Cemeteries. Schools. O'Sullivan Beare's march. Local tradition on O'S.B's march. Hygiene. Pastimes. Old list of (Par..?) names. O'Donnell's march to Kinsale. Literature. 18th Century. Capt. Tyrell's defeat.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">III</p> <p>Landlords. Townland names: Cuileann. O'Caoimh (Psychic). Ecclesiastical history. Family census(1935) Mansions. Famine. Nuns (of Cuileann). Priests Cullen Graveyard. Field names. Christian Foundation: (Cuileann).</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">IV</p> <p>Townland names: Drisean x 2. Presbyteries. Nuns (Cuileann). Brothers " Objectionable names. National Schools. Hedge Schools Muscraige&Eoghannacht.Drishane. Cardinal Rinnucini. Drisean cemetery. Townland names & subdivisions & farms. Drisean Mansions. Townland names. Lakes.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">V</p> <p>Finds. St. Ita. The Christian Religion. Configuration. Battles long ago. Danish Invasion. Industry.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VI</p> <p>Land agitation. Protestants. Drisean -Famine.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">VII</p> <p>Drisean - landlords. McCarthyes and Kinsale. Civil War x 2. Millstreet - accounts of from published sources. Fenians. Secondary schools. Churches and Registers. Landlords. Drishane convent.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">VIII</p> <p>Drishane landlords. Historic townland names Mass rocks (typed). Papal taxation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">IX</p> <p>Cullen Parish. 19th C. Crown Land Improve. Gaelic Chiefs. Drishane. Priests in Parish. Immigrants. Cullen schools. Townland name notes. Hedge schools. Rising 1821-22. Penal Day Churches. Donal na Casga. Land agitation. Finds. Priests of Penal Times. Christianising Process. Churches and Registers. Landlords. Industries. Dalcassians. Boundaries.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p> <p>Land agitation.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XI</p> <p>Fr. Patrick Fitzpatrick, 1820 -65. Xerox copy of obit, in C.Examiner.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XII</p> <p>Natives of the Parish.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XIII</p> <p>Drishane Parish-field names.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XIV</p> <p>Irish speakers. Protestants. Mass rocks. Tragedies. Scenery, O'Connell. Tithes. Churches&Penal days. McCarthy (modern). The Holy Gallaun. O'Daly.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">XV</p> <p>Priests born in parish. Christian Foundations(Drisean). Cum Logan.</p> |
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If we read one of Fr. Ferris's notes we, I think, find it strange: Cuillin district and presumably our whole parish being in the same neighbourhood was occupied by a British tribe which for centuries remained independent of the Gaelic invaders. The remoteness of the place lent itself to this. For the very same reason, for instance, it was the region least and latest affected by the Norman invasion. But because the Gaels espoused the Christian religion warmly, their British antagonists would be all the more likely to hold aloof at the start from new ideas. Hence, Christianity was slow in effecting an entrance to this locality.

We must begin to wonder who these British people were. It might well be that the people of Millstreet are still of this same race. Father Ferris was referring here to one of the early peoples who came to Ireland before the coming of the Gaels, and who apparently came to us from Britain. They were a Celtic people, like the Gaels, and we know them as the Erainn, of the Dairinne or the Muscraighe. Memories of them are preserved in the old mythological cycle, the old series of stories about Tir na nOg. We are probably dealing with a race who believed in a happy Otherworld in the Western sea where the gods live and where heroes are allowed to go after death. There was neither old age nor death there. There is Oisín and Níav Cinn Oir, Níav of the Golden Hair.

All over this area there are remains of old forts and gallauns, fulacht fiadh, dolmens and cromlechs, standing stones, stone circles, ring forts, souterrains or underground passages. All these indicate ancient habitations, places where human beings lived in the circumstances of the time. They built simple houses and then surrounded them with some protection, a wall of earth, later of stone; sometimes a double wall with a moat or dyke filled with water in between. The gallauns or standing stones were memorials to their dead; the dolmens burying places, the stone circles their temples of pagan worship.

These ancient people, the Dairinne or Iverni, have left their own memorials in the many fulacht fiadhs to be seen in the area. One of the problems for early human beings was to boil water. Neither wooden vessels nor stone vessels would allow water to be brought to the boil. Before the discovery and use of metal man had learned to make pits into which they put cuts of meat which were boiled by putting into the water red hot stones, which had been heated on a fire of black turf. This method of boiling water and cooking meat has been demonstrated. Fr. Ferris has succeeded in making a very complete list of all the old field remains of human habitation in this area. With great patience, the changes in human conditions here could be discovered from these remains. We may note this particular reference to fulacht fiadh at Baile na Tona on Jeremiah O'Riordan's farm. A bronze axe was found here about four feet from the heap of fulacht fiadh in a field called "The Crocks". There was six inches of burned stone under the area. It is now in the National Museum where it is dated at about 1,200 BC or over 3,000 years ago. It is very likely that the bronze axe was hidden in the fulacht fiadh long after it had ceased to be used as a cooking place.

Father Ferris comments:

"We had an evening session in Baile na Tona and it was held in Jer's house. When he broke the circle round the kitchen fire and went to fetch the bronze axe from the parlour, none of us realised that he was adding a new chapter, possibly of several thousand years to Irish history."

Now I am not saying that Jeremiah O'Riordan of Baile na Tona did in fact add a few thousand years to Irish history or prove that there was human habitation in any part of the country in Stone Age times. I am reminding you that your particular part of the habitable earth has been carefully examined and any evidence of human habitation has been put on record.

About the year AD 250 we hear of a strong ruling family at a place called Rath Raithleann not far from Sraid an Mhuilinn, some eight or nine miles north of Bandon near Kilcrea Abbey. This was the place called Templemaryin or Gurranes, which was to become very important a few hundred years later when a man called Amergin, a smith, set up his workshop there. He was to become the father of St. Finbarr. But back in 250 AD this new people, descended from Oliol Ollum, a famous king. Eoghan Mor was his son and all the families descended from him became known as the Eoghannachta.

The Eoghannachta at Raithleann we know as the O'Mahonys. They must have responded to the Christian missionaries far readier than the Muscraí Luachra who were the ancient settlers of the district. The efforts of Saint Ita to Christianise the Millstreet area are well described by Father Ferris. We must remember that the headquarters of the Pagan Muscraí was at Craobh Dearg under the Paps. The military centre of the area was however the splendid fort at Drisean.

St. Ita encouraged her followers to capture this fort and when the Gaels had replaced the fortifications of the fort and had settled in the area keeping away from Cullen, she decided on a site for a new convent: 'It will be in the smiling fertile valley of the upper Fionn Abha'. The Gaelic chieftains did not like this, as a convent away from their great fort in Drisean would be a very heavy responsibility. They told her that Drisean was a natural site for a convent. Ita replied, 'The upper Fionn Abha valley'. They praised the rich pastures of Drisean. Ita was adamant: 'The upper Fionn Abha valley'. Drisean was sheltered, 'The upper Fionn Abha valley'. So near the fortress. 'The upper Fionn Abha valley.' There was no use in talking.

The Gaelic warriors however took their precautions. Under the chapter in Ferris's book "The homesteads of old Drisean", under the single townland of Clochbhuaile Mor in this neighbourhood, there you will find eleven forts, nine of them with a double rampart. The Gaelic warriors took their precautions and St. Ita had her way and established her convent at Cill Mo Ide (Kilmeedy) in the upper Fionn Abha valley, protected by the Gaelic forts. The year was AD 532.

The only other early Christian settlement in the area was at Cill Eoghan. Eoghan being presumably a disciple of Ita. First of all he had to live at Carraig Eoghan at Tullagh, at least Fr. Ferris surmises this.³²

In fact many of Fr. Ferris's statements are surmises of the early history of this area and the early Christian settlements have yet to be investigated. Investigation and excavation of at least a few of the ancient remains would help to fill in the story and a closer look at the traditions and the manuscript sources for the early saints would perhaps clear up some of the difficulties.

The modern Millstreet parish includes three congregations - those of Cuileann and Bafie Ui Dhalaigh as well as Millstreet proper. It contains all the ancient parish of Drisean except two townlands and part of a third which go with Rathmore parish and all the ancient parish of Cuileann except nineteen out of its fifty five townlands one of each of which go to the modern parishes of Rathmore and Boherbue and the remaining 17 going to Dromtariffe.

When we come to consider this enlarged area we find a difficulty in that while Drisean parish is almost all in West Muskerry with the exception of six townlands in Duhallow, all the parish of Cullen is in Duhallow Barony.

There would appear to have been little or no influence by the Norse invaders on the area. Any influence would not have extended beyond Muisire. The Norman invasion was of course bound to have influences sooner or later on this area, because it was so extensive both in area and time, lasting to the present time. The Normans disturbed such Eoghannacht families as the MacCarthys and the O'Sullivans who had resided in Tipperary around Clonmel and Knockgraffan. They came to Cork and Desmond circa 1200. The old Eoghannacht at Raithleann had remained there and spread into the west towards Bantry. Now their cousins, the MacCarthys and the O'Sullivans came west affecting the lives of old Muscraí people. The MacCarthys divided into three great families: (i) Muscraí MacCarthys (ii) MacCarthy Riabhach (iii) MacCarthy Mor residing near Cill Airne and becoming chief of the other branches who paid them tribute. The MacCarthy Riabhach operated down south around Kilbriain, Dunmanway, etc. The MacCarthy Muscraí were to have considerable influence in this area for 300 years and more from 1300 to 1690. Drisean MacCarthys were a branch of these Muscraí MacCarthys. They must have arrived sometime before the building of the castle at Drisean which was in 1446. Different dates are given but there is no more than a few years between them. The date 1450 was on a monument in the old churchyard and the founder, Dermot MacCarthy, was shown to be the second son of Tadgh, Lord Muskerry. Drisean was one of a series of castles built on the frontiers of Magonihy, West Muskerry and Duhallow: Kilmeedy in 1436, Drisean in 1450, Kilmeedy to command the wild mountain pass from Macroom to Killarney, still in a fair state, minus the stonework on doorways and windows which a neighbouring farmer borrowed some years ago. Clarendon's history of the Civil War in Ireland (1721) states that:

³²Manuscript note by P O'M:- Another tradition in regard to Carraig Eoghan is that said Eoghan was a robber and that his hideout here was discovered and destroyed by English soldiers using explosives.

*"In 1651 Charles MacCarthy of Killmydy being in a party with Colonel Phayre at the gate of his castle, Colonel Ingoldsby rides up to the gate with a span 'd pistol and shot him dead, at which action the said Phayre was much dissatisfied being commander-in-chief of that party."*³³

Another of the MacCarthy castles was at Dromsicane nearer to Cullen. This castle at Dromsicane had an unusual moment of glory in 1645 when the Papal Legate, Rinnucini, stayed there on his way to Kilkenny to take part in the proceedings of the Irish parliament known as the Confederation of Kilkenny. One account of the Nuncio's visit to Dromiscane sates: "Having past four days in Macroom, the Nuncio accompanied by the Bishop of Ardfert and Boetius Egan, Bishop of Ross, set out for Dromsicane, the residence of Dermot MacCarthy, a junior branch of the princely house. Here he was met by Richard Butler, brother of Lord Ormond, at the head of two troops of horse. The Lord of Dromsicane, MacDonagh, surnamed Donogh MacCarthy, then a widower, and Donogh his son, whose wife was Lord Muskerry's sister, entertained the Nuncio and all who came with him splendidly. From Dromsicane they proceeded to Clonmeen, the castle of Donogh O'Callaghan, chief of his name, who entertained with rare magnificence the crowd of nobles and gentry who flocked thither to do homage to the representative of the Holy See."

It is often said that the MacCarthys lost Drisean and the other castles and lands in this area under the Comwellian settlement and that Wallis got the lands, as it were from Cromwell. This was not so. What really happened was that the owner of the castle at the time in 1642, Donogh MacCarthy, had mortgaged the castle and lands to his near relation also called Donogh MacCarthy who was Lord Muskerry and who was the last of the Irish leaders to hold out in 1652 when he surrendered Ross castle to Ludlow. Muskerry was tried as being a war criminal after his surrender but found not guilty and went to France where he supported Charles II who was waiting for a favourable occasion to get on the throne of England. He was able to return in 1660 and he then set about rewarding those who had helped him in exile. Many of you will remember that this Lord Muskerry was in charge of the Irish forces at the battle of Knocknaclashy near Millstreet on July 26 1652 having marched from the battle of Dromagh. After the defeat he retired to Ross Castle and when he surrendered Ross his estates were confiscated but his wife was allowed full use of the estates except for £1,000 a year which she had to pay to Lord Broghil - the man who hanged the Bishop of Ross in 1650 at Carraig an Droichid. After the coming of Charles II to the throne Muskerry got back all his lands with the exception of Castlemore with some townlands. In 1658 Charles had made him Earl of Clancarty. On his return to Ireland he found himself owner of the Drisean estate which had fallen to him through mortgage. In 1677 Donogh got a 99 year lease of Drishanemore on which stood the castle of Drishane. Another Donogh, Donogh MacCarthy, Lord Muskerry, Earl of Clancarty backed the wrong king in 1688 when he

³³ Manuscript notes by P O'M:

- Phayre was one of the regicides, one of the desperate men who killed their monarch, Charles I. He settled in Cork.
- O'Sullivan Beare's march from Dunboy Castle near Glengarriff at Xmas 1602 came across Cum an Cheo beyond Claragh into O'Riordan's land. Crossed the Blackwater near Millstreet railway station: Boinng Ford opposite O'Keefee's Castle. Keeping away from McCarthy territory.
- Why McCarthy did not join O'Neill.

favoured King James II, and of course when William III whom we know as William of Orange won the war, Clancarty found all his 200,000 acres confiscated.³⁴

In 1703 the confiscated lands were put up for sale by the Forfeited Estates Court and much of it including the Drisean estate was included in the purchase made by the Hollow Sword Blades Company, who had financed William of Orange's campaign, at a cost of £93,000. In 1709 the company sold the fee simple of the lands, castle, houses etc. of Drishane to Henry Wallis of Ballyduff, Co. Waterford. Donogh MacCarthy had the 99 year lease which had been given to him in 1677 by Clancarty; this he demised to Henry Wallis at a rent of £30 for 40 years in 1716. At this time Donogh MacCarthy was residing in Millstreet while Wallis was living in Drisean and building a house there. MacCarthy died in Millstreet in 1719 so the story that Wallis threw McCarthy's widow out of the castle and she died at the door of the castle does not appear to be correct. In his will MacCarthy appointed Wallis to oversee his will and describes him as his well-beloved friend.

Drisean remained in the Wallis family until 1902. It had been garrisoned again by British military in 1865 when the Fenians threatened to upset the established order of things. The Wallis family put the castle in perfect repair. It was sold in the Court of Chancery on June 4, 1902 before Judge Rose to a Mr. Stack of Fermoy. At the time a French priest, Father Nain, was in Ireland in search of a home for the Paris house of the Sisters of St Maur, the Congregation of the Holy Child Jesus. The infidel governor of the French Republic had restricted the Paris nuns to the house they occupied and they were faced with the threat of expulsion from France. They had extensive responsibilities in the East - in Singapore their schools etc. covered seven acres - and were offered a home in Germany but preferred Ireland. It was a happy day for Millstreet and Ireland and the foreign missions when they came here.

Some of you will want to hear mention of Art O'Laoghaire's association with Drisean Castle. In a little booklet of 85 pages written by a Michael Pyne, a native of Macroom, printed some time in the early 1800s. Pyne states:

"Arthur O'Leary, Esq. lived at Raleigh, two miles west of Macroom, where he married an aunt of Daniel O'Connell (a wilful lassie named Eibhlin Dubh and a widow). Having had a dispute with Abraham Morris Esq. of Dunkettle, too lengthy to be put on record, who was living at the time at Hanover Hall, part of his estate, three miles north of Macroom. The said Morris spending some time at Drisean Castle together with Dominick Harding, father of Philip Harding of Macroom. On these gentlemen travelling home, Mr O'Leary having determined to meet Morris on the road and settle the dispute, travelled through the village of Carriganima and pulled up at the house of Daniel Reardon Barrett where he called for quart of rum, partaking of the drams and sharing the rest with the bystanders. Reardon used all his influence he could to alter his plans and turn him back but to no effect. He proceeded until he reached Liscahane, fronting Kilmeedy Castle, where he waited in

³⁴Manuscript note by P O'M:

- He was at the Siege of Derry where he nearly got through the Gate known as Butcher's Gate. He defended Elizabeth Fort in Cork in 1690 and was taken prisoner.

ambushed, armed with sword and forearms; but the party from Drisean had been warned by an express messenger of the impending danger and they turned back to Millstreet, where they procured a guard of soldiers to bear them company and renewed their journey. Shortly after O'Leary made his appearance but out of musket range and going in the same direction till they came to the village of Carriganima, midway between Macroom and Millstreet. On its appearing to him that he was out of danger he halted his horse and rested his musket on his thigh on the pommel of his saddle. When the officer drew up his men alongside of a pound ditch, which may still be seen at Mr. O'Shea's house, one of the men resting his forelock on the ditch asked Morris if he should fire and on being told to do so shot O'Leary above the ear who fell bleeding to the ground. The horse set at liberty galloped home to Raleigh four miles off and Mrs O'Leary full of gloomy foreboding rode back to find her husband bleeding and attended by a few aged women, to the great grief of the surrounding country . He was carried off, waked, and buried in the old graveyard of Teennadroman, and in six months after was removed to Kilcrea Abbey where the following inscription marks his resting-place:-

'Lo ! Arthur O'Leary, generous, handsome, brave, slain in his youth, lies in this humble grave. Died May the 14th, 1773, aged 26 years.' (JCHAS, Vol. XI, 1905).

Michael Pyne's account of Art O'Laoire's death was given to him by a man called Jeffrey O'Herlihy of Macroom and a respectable farmer, Daniel Hugh Kelleher, 'who was a marriageable man at the time' and who occupied the ground on which O'Leary was shot and was an eyewitness to the event.

But let us look at the town of Millstreet itself. Lewis (in 1837) states:

"Before 1736 the place consisted only of an inn, a mill and five small cabins. A hundred years later it had one long street, with several smaller one diverging from it, and contained 312 houses, the greater number of which though small, are neatly built. It is situated on the south side of the Blackwater, amidst the lofty mountains of Muskerry and derives its principal support from being a great thoroughfare. A small market is held every Thursday during the winter and fairs were held on March 1st and 12th and on 1st and 12th June, Sept. and Dec. for the sale of horse, pigs and cattle. An ale and porter brewery was established here in 1835, which produces 1,000 tierces annually and there are extensive flour-mills which have proved very advantageous to the farmers in encouraging the growth of wheat. There is a small courthouse, in which petty sessions are held on alternate Mondays, connected with a small bridewell. It is a constabulary police station and there are large barracks for six officers and 100 men where a detachment of infantry has been kept since the riots of 1822. "

A barracks for 100 men would be very large. Lewis says that the town had 1938 inhabitants in 1837.³⁵

³⁵Manuscript notes by P O'M:

118 very early settlements in Drisean,

59 " " " " Cuileann, total 177, BC 2000.

- Black Death AD 1350 Drisean 156, Cuileann 40, total 196. In 1935 there were 905 houses in Drisean and Cuileann.

One of Fr. Ferris's helpers wrote "One might say that the town had its origin however humble soon after 1700 when somebody started a mill and it's not likely that any enterprise of the kind would be started in the troubled period before 1700." In 1749 the Rev Charles Smith, the historian of Cork and Kerry was here, he described Millstreet as "the last village of any consequence in this part of the barony of Muskerry."

The figures given by Fr. Ferris in 1935 were:

"the number of houses- Cuileann 187, Millstreet, country 464, town 254, a total of 905.
the number of forts - Drisean 118 and Cuileann 59, a total of 177. "

The number of streets are given but there are only notes of the names Minor Row and West End. Of Minor Row it is said that at the time that it was built Henry Aubrey Beaumont Wallis was a minor and he was given the honour of opening the houses. Of the West End it's said that the people of the West End put this name on the street so to be as good as the West End of London. Coomlegane Street is the original name for this street.

FAMINE

Many traditions have been recorded which indicate that the memory of the people was of considerable hardship and suffering and of many dying from hunger.

I may mention a few of these traditional tales:

"Johanna Morley who was born in 1819 said that there were several house on Michael Fitzgerald's land at Min na gClocharan and that several of the persons living in them died of hunger. She recalled the people going out before breakfast trying to find enough good potatoes for breakfast.

John Philpott of Cnoc na Gaoithe, a Protestant married to a MacCarthy, a Catholic, gave much relief during the famine. His house was better than a workhouse. The Justices of Mt. Justice gave much relief although they were poor themselves.

In Hanna Sweeney's house in Doire, Cuileann was an auxiliary workhouse for about a year and half in 1847. About 50-60 paupers kept sick in cells underneath; cemetery at the back of the house where the paupers were buried... headstones still there....

Many of the people in 1935 recalled that Michael Noonan, 1815-1910, of Athan went into Sraid an Mhuilinn one evening to sell turf from Athan bog; when returning after dark by Dubh Aireagal at a house in Lios an Uisce an old woman came out of a house and knelt before him asking him to bury her daughter, dead for five days or more. He buried her in Cuileann at midnight helped by Nick Singleton of Cuileann.

At Cill Mide bridge people died of hunger. One woman was buried near the Slan-an, near the holy well in her clothes...even these were not covered by the earth.

The population of Millstreet in 1821 was 2,000. The workhouse had accommodation for 700 but was not big enough in 1847. Altamont House had to be taken as an auxiliary workhouse. Men died working on the relief scheme and there are accounts of whole families dying of hunger."

LAND AGITATION

During the Land War Millstreet suffered in the same way as the rest of the country. On one occasion over 80 young men were arrested and were held for 10 months in Cork prison. One of the heroes of the time was Pat Fitzpatrick of Abha na gCeallur a nephew of the Parish Priest, Father Fitzpatrick; he had been evicted and he built a hut on a stream as no one was allowed to build on his land. One of his sons was born in this hut. After six months the land was redeemed by Thady Lenihan of the Square, Millstreet.

Pat Fitzpatrick on one occasion led a deputation of tenants to MacCarthy O'Leary for a reduction of rent. McCarthy O'Leary is reputed to have said to him: "Give you a reduction of rent, who don't pay a cent!" Pat was a member of the Rural District Council; in 1902 he proposed a resolution at a meeting of the council condemning landgrabbing and was sent to prison for two months and lost his seat on the RDC; the poet Peter Rahilly from Derinagree got three months for seconding the resolution. Another of the heroes of the day was Paddy O'Connor called Paddy Castle (or Cashel) Boyne. A field is called after him in Clarach an tSleibhe. He lived in a dilapidated house, ironically called Cashel Boyne and was himself called Paddy Castle Boyne.

ANGLO-IRISH WAR

During the War of Independence Millstreet was under the Cork No 2 Brigade led by Liam Lynch. Millstreet was one of the most active areas in support of the Volunteers. In this parish there were 7 Companies with over 90 men in each. Almost every man of military age was in the Volunteers, over 800 of them in all. Liam Lynch in August 1920 decided on setting up a Brigade Flying Column. A number of things happened to delay the work and it was not until September 15, 1920 that Ernie O'Malley started the training of the Column. There were sixteen in the first training camp at Glenville, including Paddy Healy and John Healy from the Millstreet Battalion. The Column was involved in the capture of Mallow military barracks on September 28th 1920 when all the arms there were captured and taken away on three motor cars, one of them driven by Paddy Healy.

An extraordinary event happened in Millstreet in November 1919. Early on the morning of November 17th two bank officials travelling in cars from Millstreet to open their branch offices in Knocknagree for a fair day there, one carrying £10,000 and another £6,700 were held up at Ballydaly by armed and disguised men and robbed of the whole sum. The local RIC did nothing about it except they arrested a local Volunteer who had clearly nothing to do with it. In the British press the crime was attributed to Sinn Fein. Liam Lynch was so annoyed that crime should be hurled at the Volunteers that he set out to solve the robbery and punish the criminals. The robbers had done

their work well and had laid their plans well in advance. By March 1920 nothing had come to light. Liam Lynch moved into Drishanebeg and personally took charge of the case. A complete check of the whole population of Ballydaly convinced him that the robbery had been committed by local men. Then a few clues appeared; he was told of a light seen on a mountain six miles from the scene of the crime in the early hours of that morning; an armed man on horseback at a place no armed man should be without the knowledge of the local company captain. Then there was the story of a search made suspiciously in an old graveyard. On April 24, 1920, the Millstreet Battalion was ordered to arrest eight men in the town. The search for the men took several hours during which time the RIC stayed in their fortified barrack and did not interfere. Seven of the men were found guilty; five deported and two excluded from the Battalion area;³⁶ £9,208 was recovered and returned to the Bank. This action showed that the Volunteers were highly serious and efficiently organised and also that the morale of the RIC had collapsed. One of the bank robbers was not arrested until the beginning of October 1920 when the Column was billeted near Keale Bridge for a week during preparations for the ambush at Ballydrochane.

In October 1920 it was decided that the Battalion should build up its own Flying Column. The town of Millstreet was suffering much from the terrorism of the RIC and the Black and Tans Garrison. Michael O'Riordan has recorded: "None but the bravest dared to venture about after nightfall. There were murders, destruction of property, regular searches and highway robberies committed by members of the RIC and the Black and Tans, not to mention the constant danger caused to the people caused by the flying bullets fired by drunken hoodlums employed by the British government to crush the Irish." At a meeting on November 21st 1920 it was decided that from that moment the Volunteers would not leave the town without protection. Thanks to the unceasing efforts of Battalion commander, C. J. Meany and the Battalion Adjutant Jerry Crowley the men of the Millstreet area had been turned into as fine a fighting machine as could be in the circumstances of the time. Father Joe Breen, chaplain at Drishane Convent, had been forced to go into hiding after an attempt on his life. A fight took place on the night of November 22 between a party of Volunteers and Black and Tans in which two of the Tans were wounded. The Volunteers suffered a severe loss however when captain Paddy MacCarthy was killed by a chance bullet from a passing RIC. Liam Lynch decided to occupy Millstreet on the following Tuesday night, November 23, as he anticipated British reprisals for the shooting of the Black and Tans; but the British garrison did not move out and the Column which consisted of nine men whose names were on the Black and Tan list for execution moved back into their billets. The Column was to be considerably reinforced later on when an effective Column of 40 men was formed from the Millstreet Battalion.

There were a number of other actions in the Millstreet area. In Father Ferris's notes there is an account of the Millstreet train ambush of February 11, 1921 written by Jer Long; an account of the Banteer or Rathcoole ambush of August 26, 1921 taken from 'An t6glach\ Early in May 1921 over 1,000 British soldiers passed through Millstreet to a round-up on Claodach mountain; 600 to 800 soldiers were encamped at Leacadoite just before the round-up. The notes here say that that all, young and old,

³⁶ This episode did not end so benignly. (Jack Lane)

anyone able to walk was rounded up; all Mullach Ruadh and Gort na Creiche and Lios na Buidhe and Aon Ghleann were combed by the soldiery. As a result four men were taken into internment at Spike Island: John O'Leary, Mullach Ruadh; Roger Kiely, Mullach Ruadh; Dan Joe O'Riordan, Lios Cathain; Humphrey O'Donoghue, Fort na Creiche.

I may say that the amount of material collected on the War of Independence in these notes is disappearing. Somebody should get down to collecting whatever else can be collected at this stage.

In 1969 I published in the Cork Examiner a note on the death of Paddy MacCarthy. I was severely taken to task and rightly so by two Millstreet people living in San Francisco to whom a cutting of the article had been sent, on the grounds that I did not get the core of the story. "Michael O'Riordan is dead good many years" they wrote me, "he would not have sent such a lame account of our awful times in Millstreet; he was not that kind.:" So they gave me information which led me to St Patrick's Guest House in Cork and there I interviewed Miss Katherine Linehan and confirmed the story of the attacks on the Linehan home and business on Saturday, 20 November 1920 and I began to understand why Paddy MacCarthy gave his life. May I read this account to you?

"I am far from Millstreet now and the Old Brigade but one of them thought of me and sent me your fine article of the fight there (Nov. 1969).

But why only record the reprisal for the blackguarding of the RIC and the Black and Tans? You did not get the core of the fight Michael Riordan is dead a good many years, he would not have sent such a lame account of our awful times in Millstreet, he was not that kind.

Saturday, Nov. 20th., the Black and Tans were raving around the town all day mad drunk. I was a young lad working in the town at the time. About 6 o'clock we heard all the hammering and crashing of glass, everyone ran out. The barrack across the street is an old military three storey high building, ten windows on each floor, the top row hard steel shutters with a hole for a machine gun. The RIC and Tans were breaking into Mrs Linehan's house, a long house right across from the barrack and the guns. They broke in through the shop windows, threw shutters and bars in, threw out all the stock in the shop and counter cases, took out the safe and blew it up. Came into the house, lit all the lamps, no chimneys on them, spilled oil on papers and furniture and clothes, took all the best of clothes, everything they could even the pillows off the beds. The family and their girls had escaped out the back, you will find afterwards how they got word to run. They raved all over the house, sorted out presses, took clothes and everything they wanted even pillows off the beds.

We could see them taking the loot, set fire to everything and stayed until 3 o'clock Bloody Sunday morning, machine guns and bombs going all night. Give honour where honour is due. There were two clean Irishmen in the barracks, Constable L(a/e?)ydon and Barry (Jim). They met in the street, one said to the other we will not stand for that work, came down and crashed through the devils. They could not stop them exploding and setting

fire, got buckets, found the bath full of water and flung it all over the floor and ceiling and burning furniture, they found 7 blazing fires, heaps of clothes and papers, strangest thing of all Sacred Heart badges never burned, windows and doors did not burn.

A crowd of us were down near the Fair Field. The machine gunk and all the firing prevented us coming down the street but one of our boys, Dan Kelleher (Fox) said 'I will go down the field at the back to see if Mrs Linehan and the girls have escaped'. Another boy went with him. They found them gone. Thanks to the fact that the youngest girl, afterwards Dr. Bridget Linehan, was standing at an upstairs window she saw the RIC and the Black and Tans coming across from the barrack, trying doors and windows they could not open them. Some of them went back to the barrack, got a hacksaw, cut bars, flung bars and shutters through the window. She got her mother, sisters and girls and Stephen Riordan out at the back in time.

A neighbour, Mr Tommy Murphy was waiting, took them in. They did not stay there. They called the other neighbours, Buckleys and Dan Linehan, his wife and young children to try to get them over to the convent. They called Mr JP Hegarty farther down to let them through. He made them all stay until morning, Bloody Sunday, Nov. 21st. All were at first Mass so all the boys came to see if they could do anything, upstairs and down it was wrecked, we only tried to block doors and windows.

Stephen Riordan, Dan Lucey and their cousin Neilie O'Leary who had come in to Mass, they with the boys and girls were all there again on Monday, no work for anybody that day, we started to clear the shop. Heaps of tea, sugar, rice, fruit, peel, everything, bottles of temperate wine, no use in the barrack, pots of jam, broken glass in heaps on the floor, all the hardware out in the street with the safe and small furniture.

We had to get wheelbarrows to try to clear it up, the shutters were under it. A policeman came to say a military officer wanted to see the owner. They had gone to the country to sleep. When they came in, Stephen Riordan went to tell him. He came across, a khaki dressed officer; he asked to see the wreckage. Miss Linehan brought him in. The crowd of us stopped working to see and hear. He had a dozen war medals on his breast. He said 'Boys, I have to say now what I never thought I would, I am ashamed of the uniform I am wearing, to see this wreck where only a woman and girls lived.' One of our lads up and said 'They are all English military.' The officer said 'They are not under the control of the military, they are the sweepings of English jails and asylums, not under our control.' The RIC had told him at the barrack that the IRA used to hold meetings in the house. The boys laughed at him and said 'Do you think they are fools, opposite the barrack. Anyhow, nobody could get into this house after 7 o'clock, it is always locked up.' After looking around he went away.

Some time after we heard someone trying to come through the ruins of the hall door. I was nearest so I went out and found Sergeant Mulcahy and the DI. They wanted to see the owner. I had to take them upstairs to find Miss Linehan. When she saw them she told them what she thought of them. Mulcahy said 'You can get compensation'. She said 'I will but not one penny will our own neighbours pay of it, it will not fall on them, we will take it to the Courts and England will have to pay.' For that speech all the hay, corn and farmyard at Mr Linehan's farm two miles from Millstreet at Tullig were burned the next

Saturday night leaving 21 head of cattle to feed for the winter. I was standing listening at the conversation.

The Court in Macroom came in January 1921. Willie Kelleher (Broker) risked taking them to Macroom. Two daughters who had got a room in the hospital, they had to call for the other who was with her mother in the country and found Nelie O'Leary (cousin) waiting in the road. He would not let them go alone. Willie said they would not go the main road, they would not be safe so he took them across Musherah into Masseytown and the Courthouse. Mulcahy wanted to get out of it, but the youngest daughter, medical student, stood up in the middle of the enquiry and asked to be sworn. She swore on the RIC and the Black and Tans, she saw them breaking in and going for the hacksaw. I had this from other drivers and people who were in the court. There was not another word. The judge said the RIC and the Black and Tans were guilty of both the house and farm. That evidence saved Millstreet, no other house was attacked and no more hay was burned. Millstreet and the farmers should thank her. Mulcahy then had to admit that the Linehans had to live opposite them every day and go to the hospital every night to sleep for a long time. Mulcahy and the Tans had to keep fairly quiet.

Nov. 22nd it was decided to give the RIC and the Tans their lesson. The town was all taken up by our Volunteers. Captain Paddy McCarthy (was) a member of Commandant Dan Vaughan's North Cork Brigade who were going north that night on their own work. Paddy McCarthy asked permission to go to Millstreet instead that night. He passed another old friend cycling down the Black Road alone with his rifle on his back. He came and was put in charge of the big company in Mill Lane. He was at the corner of the house with his rifle when the RIC and Tans were leaving a nearby pub. They fired and shot him dead. The body was moved quickly and was gone before they came searching. They raged all over Mill Lane, turned out all the people. When they saw traces of blood a girl had the good thought of saying it was a bag of salmon (out of season) some fellows had caught that night. Paddy (RIP) was taken to O'Sullivan's, Gortavehy, before dawn, next a silent funeral went by bye roads up Lisnabue and took him to Kilcrumper where he was until after the Truce. One Sunday then we had a grand public funeral bringing him to his own at Clonfert. I was there too.

What brought him to his death in Millstreet? There was a generations old relationship between the McCarthys and the Linehans, both families were old stock and he came to avenge them. God rest his soul. Some people never forget their own.

Denis Murphy asked me to write this in his own words. I have done my best.

Ellie O'Sullivan, now San Francisco."

FATHER PATRICK FITZPATRICK (1787-1865)

On St. Patrick's day in 1787 at Dromahoe in Drumtariffe parish a boy was born who was to have a considerable influence on Millstreet. That was almost 200 years ago. He was Patrick Fitzpatrick who was ordained a priest at Killarney on February 5, 1810. Ten years later he came to Millstreet, but not with any enthusiasm. The Parish Priest of the united parishes of Drisean and Cuilleann was an invalid although still a young man - he was to live until 1857. Fr. Fitzpatrick was Parish Priest of Kenmare when he was approached by the people of Millstreet who asked him to take up the Parish. It was a formidable task; he would have to find £25 a year pension for the retiring Parish Priest in a parish where there was no priest's house, no schools, and only a small thatched chapel. He refused. They went to him again and told him that they would help him in a any way possible. He came in 1820.

I need hardly stress the terrible conditions of life in Ireland in 1820. The people were in open rebellion of the government and there was widespread famine. The years of plenty had come to an end with the ending of the war against France and there was increasing unemployment and hunger. We must therefore all the more admire the courage of Fr. Fitzpatrick then aged 33 when he undertook the daunting task of taking over pastoral charge of the parish here. By 1830 he had started on building the group of buildings which comprise the church, the Presentation convent, the old boys' school and the presbytery and on laying out the cemetery. All were completed by 1840. He spent every penny as it came in on the church, schools and convent. By his will he ordered the presbytery and his furniture to be sold to pay any small debt that might be due, and having provided for two relatives, he asked that any residue should be used to establish a Christian Brothers school in the town. However no provision could be made. His will was in the possession of Miss Katherine Linehan until that fateful night of November 20, 1920 when it was destroyed by the Black and Tans.

Fr. Fitzpatrick was intimately friendly with Daniel O'Connell and was actively associated with him in the Repeal Movement. His sympathies appear however to have been with the Young Irelanders. A sister of Michael Doheny's was a nun in the Presentation convent and it was at Fr. Fitzpatrick's Michael Doheny took refuge. An officer in the British garrison stationed here used to get word to Fr. Fitzpatrick each time his house was due to be searched for Doheny, who would go across the boundary wall to visit his sister until the raid was over. Doheny escaped from Millstreet as a cattle drover.

In Fr. Ferris's notes we find this tribute to Fr. Fitzpatrick:

"He was known as An Sagart Mor. He was the people's banker, law-giver, adviser and leader in every way; fighting their battles against landlordism and the ills of the time. On his death, the bishop, Dr. Moriarty erected a monument to him now in the church at the bishop's own expense. Fr. Fitzpatrick transformed Millstreet; first public procession of the Blessed Sacrament in 1851; first mission - the Oblate Fathers in 1863."

It would be a pity not to tell one other story from these notes: Father Fitzpatrick added the block of the Convent adjoining the Church and the new block of schools in

1831. To start the work he borrowed £1,000 from a Quaker banker in Cork and also various sums from neighbouring priests; the one most frequently mentioned was Fr. John Twomey P.P. of Droumtariffe - his first cousin - paying him back the principal and 5%. There was £700 still owing to the Cork bank in 1846 when the bishop Dr. Egan gave him that sum to clear off the debt. This was part of the endowment of the Presentation Convent, and the interest of £35 a year was payable to the sisters. As a security for the £700 Fr. Fitzpatrick took out a life insurance with the Royal Exchange Insurance in Cork on the life of Sister Anne, a young lay sister in the Convent. The annual premium on the policy amounted to £17.17s. This and the £35 a year for the Convent had to come out of the collections at the chapel doors every Sunday and Holyday. Sister Anne died within a short time thus relieving Fr. Fitzpatrick of the heavy burden.

PRESENTATION CONVENT³⁷

I should have mentioned a famous teacher, John O'Mahony, from Macroom who taught classics and maths here in 1864 and 1876 and produced some of the outstanding scholars in the Kerry diocese. I may conclude by reference to the families of the parish as written by Fr. Ferris in 1935: "Murphy families are the most numerous in the parish, including 68 families in Sraid an Mhuilinn and 30 in Cuileann.; our parish contains what is probably the greatest concentration of Murphys in all Ireland. We suggest that their distinguished ancestor is Murchu, son of Brian Boru." But lest anyone else gets jealous, let us see what the note says about the Kellehers. Obviously it is one of that great family who wrote the note, for he says: "Now that I am speaking of the Kellehers it is better to quote my authority verbatim, lest there should be people evil-minded enough through jealousy of our illustrious descent to say that I am making it up. Here is Father Wolfe's article on the Kellehers ("Irish names and surnames")- 'O'Ceileachair - descendant of Ceilechar, companion, dear, spouse-loving; the name of a well-known family in Cork and Kerry. They are of Dalcassian origin, being descended from Donnchua, brother of Brian Boru. They were the second most numerous clan in Sraid an Mhuilinn, having 57 families; in Cuileann they share the honour of fifth place with the O'Keeffees and O'Sullivans numbering 8 families. We are not finished yet with Brian Boru, for example the O'Hickeys were the hereditary physicians to the O'Briens of Thomond. They were the second most numerous clan in Cuileann numbering 17 families. There were 15 families in Sraid and Mhuilinn so the clan was the tenth most numerous there. The Twomeys had 12 families in Drisean but only one in Cuileann and of course the O'Tuama clan was also Dalcassian. The O'Regans too were descended from Brian Boru's brother".³⁸

³⁷ Script not available. (Jack Lane)

³⁸ Manuscript notes by P O'M:

- Eoghannachta: Riordans, Corkerys, Twomeys, Dineens, Lucys and so forth. McCarthys.
- Miss Katherine Linehan has informed me in St Patrick's Guest House, Wellington Rd., Cork on Friday 30 Sept. 1971 that Mahon's death occurred near Millstreet. The spot is marked by a cairn. To find it you go by the Tanyard road to Tullig cross - the old coach road up the hill to the Kerryman's table. Down below in a deep ravine (or 'depression', JL) is a cairn of stones that marks where Mahon fell, killed in battle with Maolmuidhe King of the Ui Eachdadh, the O'Mahonys,
- Poets: Sean Clarach, Edward Walsh.
- Dr. Moylan who became bishop of Kerry in June 1775 elicited a promise from Nano Nagle to extend her work to Killarney at the earliest opportunity. She died in 1793.

AUBANE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Aubane, Millstreet, Co. Cork

Email: jacklaneaubane@hotmail.com

Secretary: Noreen Kelleher, tel. 029 70 360

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