



***TULSK  
HISTORY  
SOCIETY***

*Newsletter No.5*

*June 2022*





Tulsk History Society      [historytulsk@gmail.com](mailto:historytulsk@gmail.com)

*Membership: After a successful 2021-22 it is now time for renewal of membership for the year 2022-23. THS wishes to thank all members from the year gone by, and for their support and contribution in making the society a vibrant and lively forum on all aspects of our history and heritage. Membership fees are, as last year, €30 for adults and €10 for students. To become a member contact us on the above email address.*

It's been a lively few months since our last newsletter in March. Our AGM was a very positive reflection on our first year as a new Tulske society. John Higgins was elected as chairman and we wish him every success in the year ahead. While Cathal McCormack has stepped aside as chairperson due to commitments, he remains a vital part of the executive committee. Other officers remain, as elected; Mike Lennon (Secretary); Noel Sheerin (Archivist); Therese Hanley (Treasurer); Jody Moylan (PRO). Our graveyard project is reaching its conclusion and the new map and grave signage for Tulske cemetery has now entered its design phase. A new project initiated by the society is also about to begin at Ogulla Well; an exciting venture that we look forward to. We are delighted to announce that THS have just moved in to our very own office, at Tulske Macra Hall, which is a big and welcome step forward for us. New members are already making an impact and, as mentioned above, we hope to gain many more throughout the year.

*In this month's edition (something of a 1901 and 1911 census special!) Melissa Keigher takes a closer look at an old newspaper notice of an Ogulla woman in search of her brother in 1898. Our Picture Diary focuses on some images of Tulske village through the years, while John Higgins and Jody Moylan look at the rich history of Ardakillen Lough with a special 'photo feature'. New member, Marese Feeney, begins her column 'Graphic Detail', with a statistical analysis of employment in Ogulla District Electoral Division (DED), as detailed in the 1901 and 1911 censuses. A new regular feature on old townland surnames looks at the name 'Barry', which was once a surname in Bloomfield. To round up this edition we publish Mike Lennon's 'Secretary's Report' for the year just gone, which is a comprehensive record of the happenings of Tulske History Society. We hope you enjoy the read!*

**MISSING OGULLA MAN - PATRICK BARRETT NEVER RETURNED** by

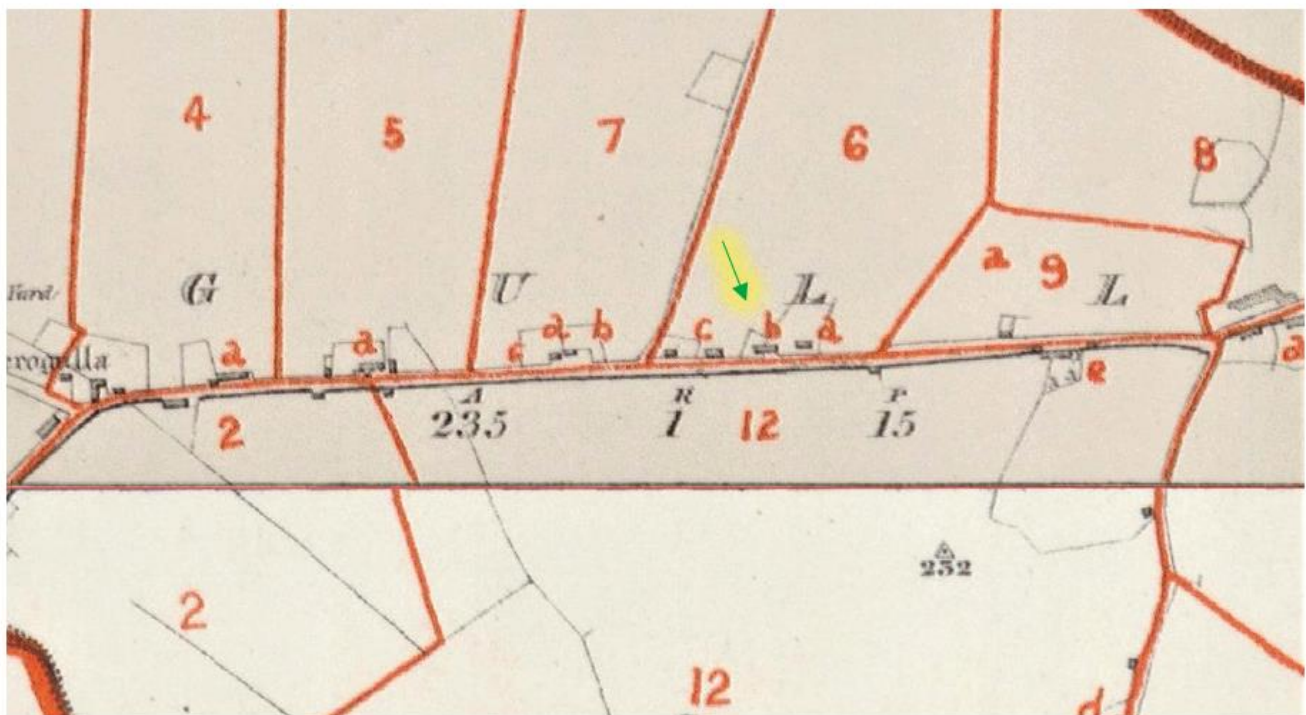
Melissa L. Keigher

**INQUIRIES.**  
**BARRETT, Patrick, native of Ogulla, Tusk,**  
**Co Roscommon; left Ireland about 30 years**  
**ago for Australia; anxiously sought for by**  
**his sister Julia. Reply to this office.**

Saturday 8 October  
 1898 Weekly Freeman  
 article - *Inquiry looking  
 for Patrick Barrett*

PATRICK BARRETT had been away from his family home in Ogulla for about 30 years by the time his sister, Julia, put out a newspaper inquiry for him in October 1898 (pictured above). Patrick had emigrated to Australia in the late 1860s, and then apparently ‘disappeared’. More than one inquiry was put in for publication but, sadly for his family, it appears Patrick was never located.

The Barrett family - with an uncommon surname for the area in those days - held a small plot of land at Ogulla - as per the 1857 Griffiths Valuation, and specifically labelled ‘6 b’ on the Ordnance Survey map. The family plot was in-between the land held by Michael McCormick on one side, and Thomas Kane on the other. The land was leased to the Barrett’s by Lessor, Thomas J. Barton,



**Ordnance Survey Map - Ogulla, Roscommon - Plot 6 b - Barrett Family land in 1857**



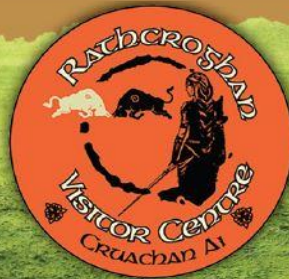
who was a significant landowner in Tulsk at that time.

When Julia and Patrick's father, John Bartlett, died in 1881 the family holding may have been intended to be passed on to Patrick, the only son located in the records, and the youngest of the family's four known children.

Instead, Julia (who never married) and her sister Mary (who lived next door in Ogulla, as the young wife of Thomas Flanagan) were both recorded, respectively, as living at house 7 and house 8 in the 1901 Irish Census, and at house 8 and house 9, in the 1911 version.

Julia had not located Patrick by the time of her death on 30 March 1924, and her small plot of land was sold on to the Kelly family.

What ever became of Patrick Barrett? Our research has yet to uncover an answer - the surname being common in Australia with little other identifying information to weed out other possible matches. We will update here should more information become available.◇



## BRINGING IRELAND'S PAST AND LEGENDS TO LIFE



Rathcroghan, Cruachan Aí, is known as the Ancient Capital of Connacht, where the festival of Samhain (Halloween) is said to originate. This majestic landscape is the oldest and largest unexcavated Royal Site in Europe, and home of the Iron Age Warrior Queen Medb. Experience Rathcroghan's rich archaeology, mythology and history through our interpretive rooms and expertly guided tours. The Rathcroghan Visitor Centre, the home of our museum, is located in the medieval village of Tulsk, Co. Roscommon.

Rathcroghan Visitor Centre is open all year round, so why not book a place on one of our tours by visiting our website.

[www.rathcroghan.ie](http://www.rathcroghan.ie)

Cruachan Aí, Tulsk, Castlerea, Co. Roscommon, Ireland  
Phone: 00353 (0)71 9639268



@Rathcroghan





**PICTURE DIARY: TULSK VILLAGE THROUGH THE YEARS**



Clockwise from top-left: A photo from the 1970s looking towards Kilgannon's pub; a late 1970s view of Kilgannon's with Ford Cortina; Street view in the early 1980s; Tusk from the bridge in 1922 (from Mary Gormley's *Tusk Parish in Historic Maigh Ai*); Robbie Kilgannon and Rosalee Bradley (nee Lenahan) outside his pub in the late 1960s (from Robert Genders' collection)

**PHOTO FEATURE: A VISIT TO ARDAKILLEN LOUGH** by John Higgins and Jody Moylan

ONE OF Tusk parish's finest historical (and geographical) sites is Ardakillen Lough, with a medieval past made famous by significant archaeological



finds in the mid-1800s. On a recent field trip, Tusk History Society captured – through aerial photography – the lake and its impressive shoreline crannog; a lake dwelling that had been surrounded by water before the drainage works of 1852.

What is notable about Ardakillen, and what gives an explanation to the many finds, is that the area around (and including) the lake is likely to have been the one-time



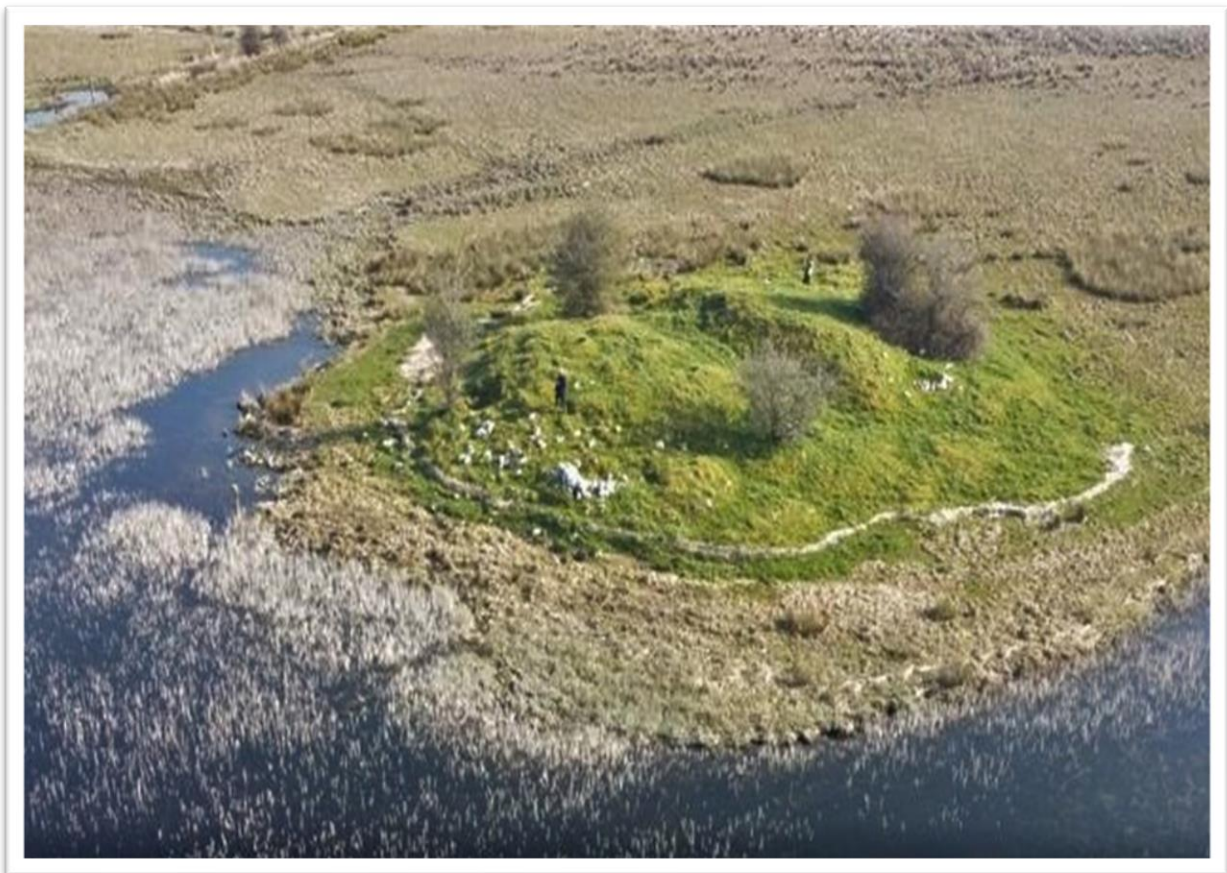
residence of north Roscommon's Gaelic elite, namely the O'Connor kings. Indeed, King Rory O'Connor has been recorded as living in Ardakillen in the year 1368, while in 1293 Magnus O'Connor died of illness on one of the crannogs. In the 1852 report of the drainage works and archaeological finds, the antiquarian William Wilde paid particular attention to Ardakillen Lough, emphasizing its proximity to the 'royal residences of Connaught, and in the vicinity of Carn Free, the crowning places of its kings, and of Rathcroghan, the Tara of the west'. Of the four crannogs of Ardakillen, the largest (as photographed by THS) offered up some 50 tonnes of animal bone – much of which was removed by nineteenth-



century farmers, for manure. Also found near the crannog was a large dug-out canoe with a human skull, a bronze spearhead and a bronze pin, with a twenty-foot-long iron chain and collar. This latter find, likely to have been slave chains



and a hostage collar, fits with historical sources that state crannogs have been used as prisons and places to hold slaves. In addition, human remains with evidence of violence, such as hacking and wounding, were also found at Ardakillen. One of our most intriguing sites, Adrakillen and its crannogs was a dwelling place for many centuries. We'll revisit it in a future newsletter, and look at the artefacts recovered in the 1800s, many of which are now housed in various museums.◇



**GRAPHIC DETAIL : 1901 & 1911 Census** by Marese Feeney

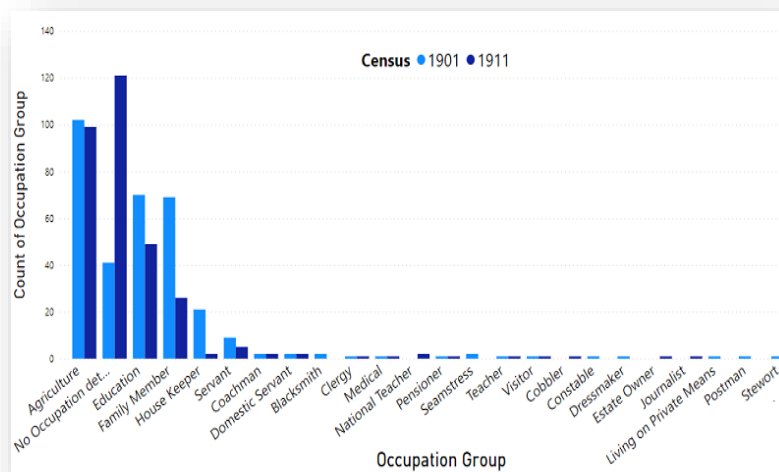
IN RECENT weeks, we have started to delve into the 1901 and 1911 census data and over the coming newsletters we will share some of our insights and observations.

The Tusk parish area, as we know it today, is captured under five District Electoral Divisions (DEDs) - Baslick, Cloonyquin, Killukin, Ogulla and Tusk.

Like today, the censuses captured many details about the individuals either living, working or visiting the various dwellings in the area; details that included names, ages, religion, literacy, and occupations. The 1911 census went into a bit more detail than 1901, and sought to capture the *'number of years married'*, *'total children born alive'* and *'children still living'*. This information, captured under the *'particulars as to marriage'* was only required to be completed for *'each married woman'*.

With regards to occupation, the 1901 census required respondents to *'State the Particular Rank, Profession, Trade or other Employment of each person. Children or young persons attending a School, or receiving regular instruction at home [were to be] returned as Scholars [sic].* Interestingly, in the 1911 census it was stated that *'[No entry should be made in the case of wives, daughters, or other female relatives solely engaged in domestic duties at home.]'*

Looking at the occupations of respondents in the Ogulla DED area over the 10-year period, a total of 316 individuals were captured in the 1911 census, which



was down 5% from 331 respondents in 1901. It is unclear what this change specifically relates to, though it is notable that a number of females captured in the 1901 census do not appear in the 1911 - this could be attributed to these women leaving the

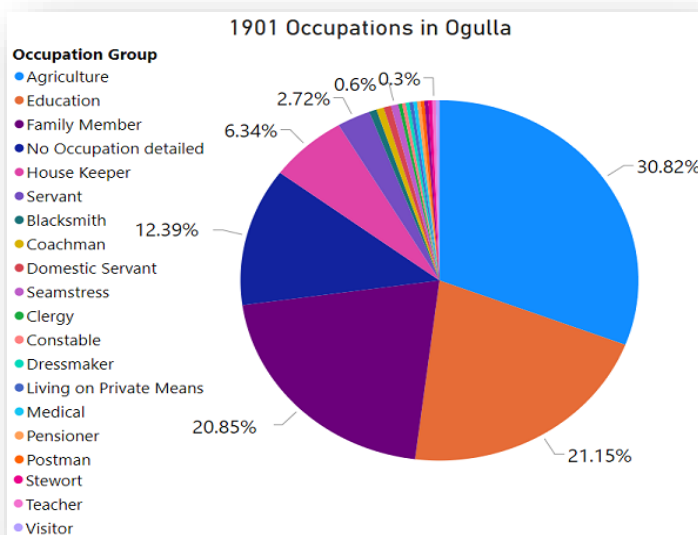
area for marriage purposes. Many of the occupations in the area were certainly focused on the agricultural space, with herdsmen, shepherds, farmers, farm labourers etc. accounting for an average of 30% of all recorded occupations in the area at the time.



For some, farming was not the only means of income as John Flannery - a 34-year-old unmarried man from the townland of Ogulla - demonstrated in his response to the 1901 census, where he identified his occupation as both a farmer and a commission agent.

There are also examples in Ogulla DED of changes to individuals' year 'born', from the 1901 to the 1911 census. These adjustments were widespread nationally, with the disparity being attributed to the introduction of the Old Age Pensions Act in 1908, which introduced a non-contributory pension for 'eligible' people aged 70 and over. From January 1, 1909, those with an income less than 10 shillings a year, had passed a 'character test' and been found to be of 'good character', could receive a weekly pension of 5s a week (approx. €20 in today's market) or 7s 6d for married couples (approx. €35 in today's market).

Matthew Flanagan of Toomona, on the other hand, appears to have defied the ageing process. Being '54' in the 1901 census (and confirming his occupation as 'Farmer and Magistrate') he had aged just eight years by 1911 - being just '62'. There were ten occupants in Mr Flanagan's home on the night of the census in 1901, including a Maria Dowde (55) whose relation to Mr. Flanagan was recorded as 'servant'. In 1911, a Mary Josephine Flanagan (28) was recorded as '*Nurse Midwife and General*'. Though a namesake, it is not clear if there was a blood connection between Mrs Flanagan of the townland of Ogulla and Mr. Matthew Flanagan from the townland of Toomona.



Some more unique occupations for the area (and indeed the time) can be found throughout Ogulla DED. In 1911, Mr Joseph A. Feeney, a married 40-year-old man from the townland of Drinnagh, gave his occupation as a journalist. It is not clear what Mr Feeney's occupation was during 1901 as he does not appear on the census.

A father and daughter team from Rathnaglye, Stephen Dockery (53) and Marian (24), held the flag high for education with both being National School teachers. Stephen's wife, Maria, the

mother of nine children, had been married for 30 years by the time of the 1911 census. She was recorded as having no occupation, though it's safe to conclude that with nine children she had a full-time occupation!

Other occupations captured in the 1901 census for Ogulla includes the details of 28-year-old Michael Gilroy, who was a Constable in the R.I.C - Mr Gilroy was not from the local area - he was born in Co. Sligo and was not recorded in the 1911 census.

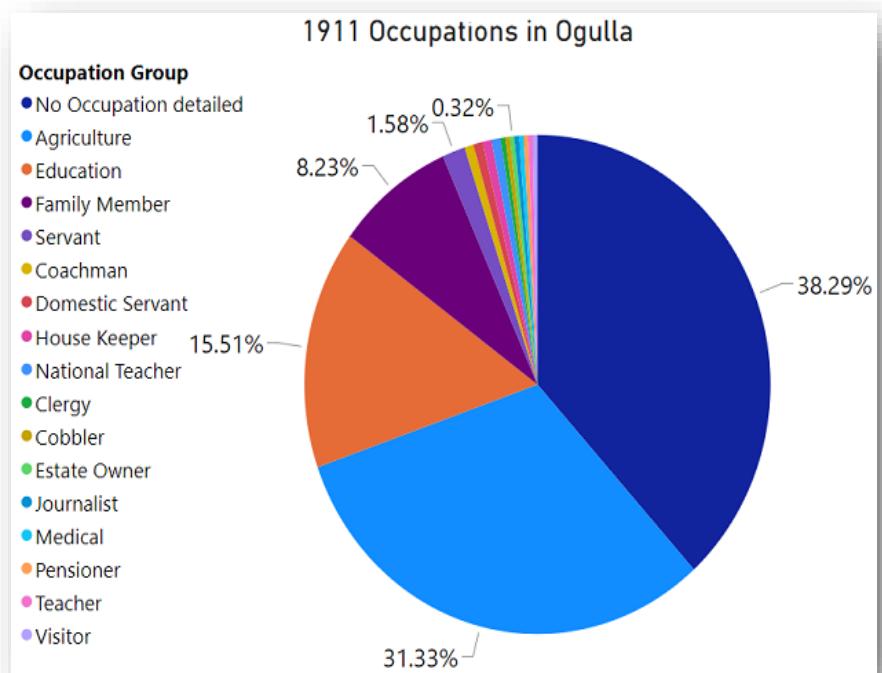
Ms Anna Sophia Drought (of Cargins Demesne) - a 71-year-old widow - was noted in the 1901 census as being '*Owner of Land*'. In the 1911 census, the Wicklow native had revised her occupation to '*Estate Owner*'.

There were two coachmen noted in both the 1901 and 1911 census: James Dwyer of Toomona (captured as Dyer in 1901) and Joseph Smith of Cargins Demesne (captured as Smyth in 1911).

Two siblings in their late teens - Ms Sebina McGann and Ms Mary K. McGann, from the townland of Rathkeva, were noted as seamstresses in the 1901 census but don't appear in 1911 records. It may be the case that they married and/or left the townland between 1901 and 1911.

Michael Monaghan, who moved to the area after the 1901 census, was noted

in 1911 as being a '*R C Clergyman*'. Other occupations in the area included approx. 30 housekeepers/servants in the 1901 census which reduced radically to seven in the 1911 census. A comparison of the two census indicates that there was an increase in the number of occupations not detailed, from 40 in 1901 to 122 in 1911 - 96 of these were females and may have been due to the guidance referenced earlier i.e. '*No entry should be made in the case of wives, daughters, or other female relatives solely engaged in domestic duties at home.*'



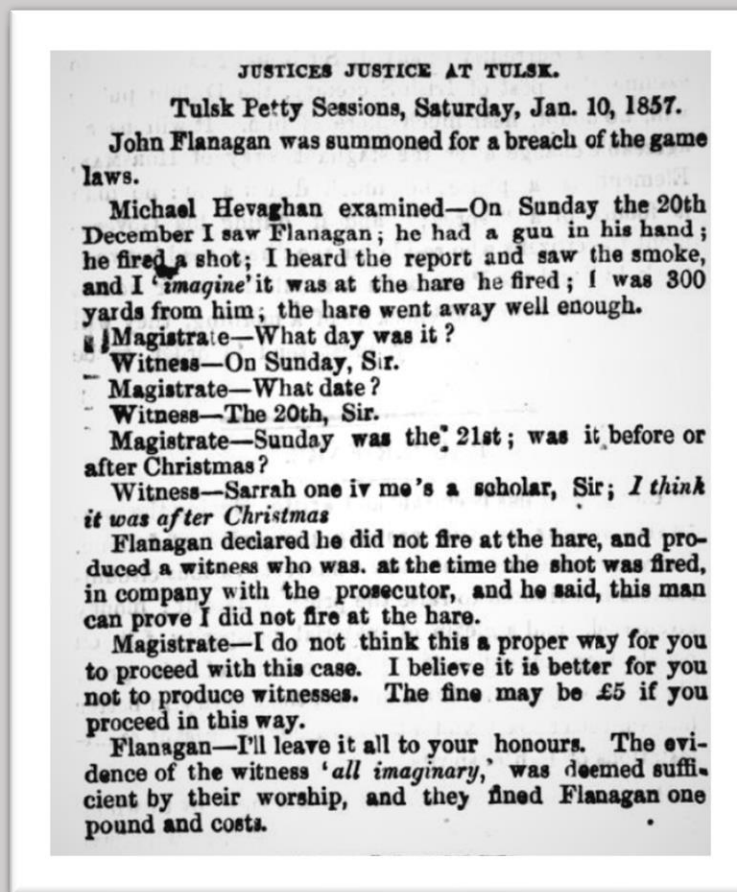


In two instances, the occupations were captured as 'visitor'. The Dufficy household in Carrowgarve had the pleasure of Margret Nertney's company on the evening of the census in 1901. Whilst the relationship is unknown there's no doubt widower Bridget Dufficy had a warm welcome for her.

Edward Scott, a 48-year-old 'herd' from Carrownaskeagh in 1911, also had a visitor on the evening of the census; in the form of his mother-in-law, Catherine Harrington. Mr. Scott had been married for 11 years before his wife sadly passed away. His daughter, 22-year-old Marcella, was the housekeeper whilst the remaining younger children Mary Josephine, Edward and John James were in school. It may be the case that Ms Harrington (aged 74), also a widower, was there to provide support to Mr Scott and the children - as a woman who had 11 children of her own, there's no doubt she had knowledge to share!

From our review of the occupations of Ogulla from the first decade of the twentieth century, it is clear that there were many talents and certainly many changes over those ten years. We look forward to delving into more key data e.g., names, ages, religion, literacy, places of birth, occupations and marital status from the censuses for the five DEDs and sharing more with you over the coming newsletters. ♦

### PAPER CLIPPINGS: TULSK PETTY SESSIONS 1857



## OLD TOWNLAND SURNAMES

### **BLOOMFIELD: 'BARRY'**



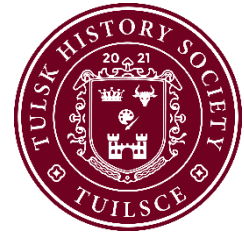
In 1901 Ellen Barry is listed in the census as being a 50-year-old widow residing in Bloomfield in Tulske District Electoral Division, parish of Kilcooley. At this time, she was noted as living with 65-year-old Eliza Coonin, who was a 'boarder' with Ellen, with Ellen being the 'head of family'. The Barry dwelling - indexed as 'house 1' in the Bloomfield census data - was a 'third class' thatched house, with two rooms and two front windows. Ellen Barry's maiden name had been McLoughlin, noted by the fact that her brother, Michael McLoughlin, had moved back into the house in 1911 (information reflected in that year's

census returns). Having lived, in 1901, at 'house 3' in Bloomfield, Michael had joined Ellen at 'house 1' a decade later along with Michael McCaffrey - a 55-year-old lodger and 'general labourer'. By this stage Eliza Coonin is not listed as living in the house (Eliza was 65 in 1901). What is notable by the entries for both census years is that Ellen Barry had jumped in age, in ten years, from '50' to '76' (a common census feature reflected in the previous article). Also notable is that 'house 3' was undoubtedly Bloomfield House, a large dwelling - or a small 'big house' - with both Michael McLoughlin's profession and the profession of the sole resident at 'house 3' in 1911 (a Patrick McGarry) being 'caretaker'. Was the Barry name, which emanated from the late husband of Ellen Barry, somehow connected to Bloomfield? What is certain, if one goes by the *Roscommon Messenger* of April 1911, is that the landlord of Bloomfield, a Mr Hector Toler Alward, who was an absentee living in Kilkenny, was coming under increasing pressure to sell his estate. As with most census entries, a listing that appears simple and straightforward can yield much information, and ultimately, many questions.◇





**TULSK HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**MACRA HALL, TULSK**  
**22 APRIL 2022**



***SECRETARY'S REPORT***

## **Formation**

Tulsk History Society was founded on 20 April 2021 when the following officers were elected: Chairperson - Cathal McCormack; Secretary - Mike Lennon; Treasurer - Therese Hanley, PRO - Jody Moylan. Noel Sheerin was subsequently elected to the position of Archivist on 18 May 2021.

The Constitution and Rules of the Society were adopted on 4 May 2021. The objects of the Society are (a) to pursue and promote research into all aspects of local history, (b) to collect, record and publish local history information and (c) to undertake other activities consistent with the name and objects of the Society. The Society is affiliated to the Federation of Local History Societies. The Society intends to submit an article for the 2022 Journal of the Federation of Local History Societies.

## **Membership**

From just ten attending the first meeting, the membership has since increased to twenty-six. This includes two members based in Canada, one in Australia and one in the United States.

## **Meetings**

Because the Society was founded during the Covid 19 pandemic, the twenty-four meetings during the past year were held electronically via Zoom with an average attendance of ten members.

## **Projects**

Tulsk Cemetery Memorials - Following a training session, the updating of previous surveys of Tulsk Cemetery headstones commenced in September 2021 by a team of volunteers under the supervision of Cathal McCormack and was completed a month later. Mike Lennon and Noel Sheerin provided administrative support. Mike Lennon created an updated database of the memorials and donated a computer on which the database can be researched. Milo Lowry has created a new map of the cemetery to be used on information

panels which are planned to be erected in August. The Tusk Cemetery Committee are consulted and are kept informed as the project proceeds.

Townland/Field Names - Led by Jim Dockery, work on gathering townland field name information has commenced and is ongoing.

Wells and Pumps - John Higgins proposed the Society identify, record and photograph the district's remaining wells and pumps. This project is still at an early stage and only Cloonmurray well has been featured in the E-Newsletter so far.

### **Archives**

At our first meeting, it was decided to set up a library of local publications and an archive of other historical material. The physical space was kindly made available upstairs in the Cruachain Ai Heritage Centre by the manager, Daniel Curley. Archivist Noel Sheerin has assembled almost 100 local history books, many of which were donated by Mike Lennon. Noel also took possession of a large collection of typed material, mainly cemetery inscriptions and copies of parish registers, which was produced during an ANCO project in the early 1980s. This material was previously stored in Tusk parochial house. The discovery of American letters from the 1890s in the thatch of Kilgannon's cottage in Steil led to the Digital Repository of Ireland awarding Noel free digital preservation training, only one of two such awards under its 2022 Community Archive Scheme.

### **Communications**

Having designed the Society's logo, PRO Jody Moylan created the Tusk History Society Facebook page on 1 May 2021. Since then, almost 150 articles, photos and films have been posted on the page. There are 590 followers located in 13 countries. Jody has edited and produced five issues of the Society's E-newsletter which is distributed by email to 160 recipients. The newsletters contain short articles of historical interest on individuals, events and places connected with the parish. The *Roscommon Herald* and *Roscommon People* regularly publish Society news items.

### **Fundraising**

The Society's first fundraising event, a Pub Table Quiz, had to be postponed twice due to Covid circumstances. It was finally held in O'Connor's on March 5<sup>th</sup> with 17 tables taking part. Following the success of the quiz and in recognition of contemporary events, the Society made charitable donations of €250 to the Zoe Cryan Trust Fundraiser and €120 to the Irish Red Cross Ukraine Crisis Appeal.



Department of Rural & Community Development Community Activities Fund – We make an application for funding of €900 to purchase storage and office equipment items and it was approved by the Roscommon Local Community Development Committee in April 2022. This will allow the Society to set up an office and store its archive material and records in Tusk Macra Hall. The space in the hall was generously provided by Tusk Macra Hall Committee. The Society’s library of local history books will continue to be located in Cruachan Ai.

### Conclusion

Despite being founded in the middle of the Covid pandemic with its associated restrictions, our Society quickly found its feet and accomplished much, thanks to the enthusiasm of our membership. The challenge for the year ahead is to show some tangible results of our work and to showcase these to the community at large, now that normal life has recommenced.◇

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## *TULSK HISTORY SOCIETY*

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### *Membership*

*We hope you have enjoyed this edition of our newsletter. The next edition will be circulated in September. New members to the society are most welcome. If you wish to join, please email us on [historytulsk@gmail.com](mailto:historytulsk@gmail.com). As mentioned, annual fees are €30 for adults and €10 for students. We hope you all have a wonderful summer!*

