

# Tulsk History Society



*Newsletter No. 9*

*June 2023*

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



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Welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. We hope you've all been enjoying the good weather! The year doesn't be long rattling along and things have been going nicely for THS over the past few months. Only last week members of the society volunteered to help paint the Tulsk Macra Hall (pictured), which turned out very nicely. Thanks to Darena for suppling the refreshments and they were most welcome. We have the Hall pencilled in for a Percy French Day during Heritage Week - we'll keep you posted on the event through social media closer to the date. It has also been confirmed that the Bishop of Elphin Kevin Doran will say Mass at Ogulla Shrine on Friday 21 July at 7pm. After completing our restoration work (Phase 1) we are delighted that this will be the first occasion in a few years that a mass will go ahead at the shrine. A great new addition to the society has been our website, which you can browse at [www.tulskhs.com](http://www.tulskhs.com). You'll find all our newsletters to date there, though firstly we hope you enjoy this one!



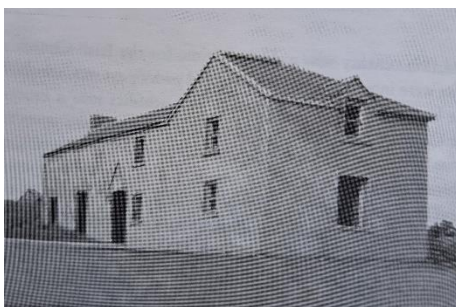
*Kicking off this issue Mike Lennon takes a look at the history of Killina National School. Manus Tiernan tells the story of a remarkable horse of the Irwin estate, while Melissa L. Keigher remembers a Tulsk emigrant who passed away 101 years ago - Peter McDermott of Corrabeg. We've a special feature on the Tulsk parish illustrations of Berna Chapman, while we also reprint our own contribution to the latest Roscommon Herald Christmas Special - the story of D-Day hero Mike Rogers (this June marks the 79<sup>th</sup> anniversary of that fateful day). At the very end of this edition you'll find our latest Tulsk Morning Howl bulletin, reproduced in digital format for all our online subscribers. Information on how to subscribe or join the society can be found at the end*

THS

**Clooneyquinn/Killina National School 1849-Present by Mike Lennon**



THE TWENTY townlands which comprise the Killina area were originally part of Elphin Civil and Catholic parishes until they were transferred to Tulsk parish in 1868. The 1824 survey of education in Ireland lists two hedge schools in the Killina area, one in a cabin in Curcreigh and the other in the old chapel on the border of Flaska and Lisnagard townlands. These hedge schools were supported by the landlord, Christopher French (father of Percy) by providing accommodation, such as it was. The history of Flaska National School (1853-1905) was published in the March 2023 Newsletter. In the early 1840s when the first Ordnance Survey maps were drawn up, Curcreigh had disappeared and schools were marked in Clooneyquinn and Killina Beg. Sometime prior to June 1849, French had moved the Clooneyquinn school to a new building on the west side of the Tulsk to Elphin road in Killina More townland and closed the one in Killina.



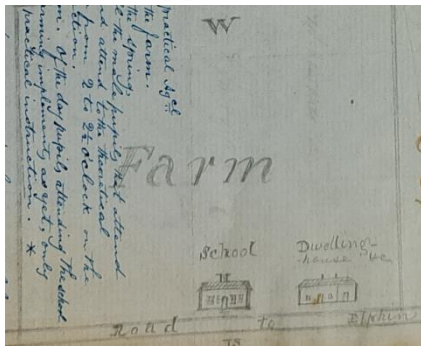
*Killina Old School 1840s-1955*

Fahy, P.P. Elphin while French, who provided the building free of rent, was the patron.

The Board of Education sponsored National School system was introduced in 1831, but it wasn't until June 1849 when an application was made by Christopher French for funds to pay the Killina teacher, Michael Owens, and to buy books for the children. The application was approved and Killina officially became a National School on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1849. It was managed by Rev. Michael

Following the death of Fr. Fahy in 1850, Rev. William Hughes continued as manager and he in turn was succeeded by Rev. Joseph Egan in 1855. This level of cooperation between the Catholic clerical manager and the Protestant landlord patron was a feature of the school system in Killina for the following five decades.

A further application to fund Michael Owens' sister Catherine as a work mistress (teaching sewing and kitting) was made in December 1850. In May 1852, Fr. Hughes requested a grant of additional salary for Michael Owens who was giving agricultural instruction to the male pupils for one hour each day in addition to his normal teaching duties. The practical teaching was done on the nine acre holding on which the school was located. A helpful sketch accompanied the



application which stated Christopher French was himself paying Owens £10 a year. A further Killina application was approved in December 1854 on behalf of 22-year old Margaret Owens as the teacher for the female pupils. Over the following years, other members of the Owens family came and went as assistant teachers: John and Patrick in 1856 and Dominick in 1858.

Michael Owens had his salary withdrawn in September 1860 due to being 'incapacitated by indisposition for efficient discharge of duty and in consideration of his state of health.' He was replaced by William Mulligan as principal and Thomas Daly as monitor. Thomas Jones became the monitor in 1865 and was promoted to assistant teacher when he reached 18 years old in 1870. In 1877 a teacher's residence was built after Christopher French received a loan of £220 from the Board of Works. It still stands adjacent to the site of the old school.

Mantua native Frank McGlynn, an assistant teacher from 1874, became principal of the boys school in 1888 when William Mulligan died. Frank's future wife, Bridget Dolan, assumed command of the female school in 1889 when William's widow, Margaret Mulligan, died. When Christopher French died in May 1897, his son, Major Arthur J. French, became the patron. When Frank McGlynn retired in 1921, he was succeeded by his son, Michael. A good musician, Michael gave lessons after school, which may account for the wealth of musical talent which emerged from the Killina area in the decades afterwards.

Meanwhile in the female school, Bridget McGlynn retired in 1925 after which the male and female schools were amalgamed with her son Michael McGlynn as principal and Agnes Mulleady (née McGlynn, a first cousin of Michael) and Annie Shaughnessy (née Conway, an aunt of Bishop Dominick Conway) as assistants. Mrs Shaughnessy taught the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> classes in a room in Patrick Coyne's house in Camogue. She returned to the main school when Agnes Mulleady transferred to Clooncullane School in 1938.

## SCHOOL STRIKE

Parents in Killina, Tulsk, Co. Roscommon, have stopped sending their children to the local national school.

They say it is insanitary and that a promise of a new school from the Department of Education three years ago, has not been honoured.

*Irish Press 10 February 1954*

The next change of teachers came in 1951 following the death of Michael McGlynn at the age of 57. He was replaced by Tom Gilmore who was in charge in February 1954 when Clooneyquinn school attracted headlines in the national newspapers. Appalled by the poor condition of the school and tired of broken promises of a new building, Tom planted the idea with some parents of keeping the children at

home, in effect organising a strike, to gain publicity. The strike lasted several weeks and some pupils moved to other schools in the area. Under the circumstances, it was difficult for Master Gilmore to remain in Clooneyquinn, so he returned to teach in his native Dunmore in September 1954 and relocated to Dublin in 1958 to become principal of Drimnagh N.S. He was elected president of the INTO in 1989 and died in Dublin in 2018.

The boycott ended when the Department of Education announced that construction of a new school was imminent on a site beside Killina Church in Clooneyquinn townland. Only 26 out of 38 pupils returned after the strike. Lawrence Mannion replaced Tom Gilmore as principal and his assistant was Alice Smyth (née Dockery) who replaced Annie Shaughnessy when she retired in 1952. The opening of new school in September 1955 was warmly welcomed by the people of Killina but more change was just around the corner. The principalship of Castleplunkett School became vacant at the end of that September when Joe O'Donnell retired and was filled by Lawrence Mannion who was local to the area. He retired in 1994 and died in 2012.

The next principal was Elphin native Josie Kelly who transferred from Cloonfree School. He remained until 1958 when he retired to focus full time on his farm. During his tenure, the enrolment increased to about 40 pupils. He died in 1992. Jock Shannon was the next principal and he was replaced as principal of Rathnagly School by the Clooneyquinn assistant, Alice Smyth. Her position was filled briefly by Frances McHugh who in turn was replaced by Agnes Nerney in July 1958.

Jock Shannon had previously taught in Tulsk, Castleplunkett and Rathnagly and his rotation among the parish schools continued in 1961 when he moved from Clooneyquinn to Clashaganny. He retired in 1980 and moved to Dublin where he died in 1993. Jock's replacement was Colm Rohan who left three years later in 1964 to teach in his native Co. Kerry, where he died in 1997. Galway man, Mark Morgan, was the next principal and he remained until 1972 when he left to pursue

further studies and went on to become Head of Education at St. Patrick's Training College, Drumcondra.

After a succession of principals with short terms of service, a long period of stability was about to start in 1972 when the assistant teacher, Agnes Nerney Carley, took over as the first female principal of Clooneyquinn School. Agnes had married Paddy Carley of Grange, Fourmilehouse in 1967. She was joined by Bernadette Boland as her assistant and this partnership continued for 29 years until Bernadette retired in 2001. Agnes had completed 46 years of teaching service in Killina when she retired in 2004.

Strokestown native Michael Tunney, who was the assistant teacher from 2001, took over as principal following Agnes Carley's retirement. He was assisted by Siobhán Feeney. When Michael left in 2007, he was replaced by Áine Carroll, During her eight-year term, Áine was assisted in turn by Laura Gannon and Erica Feely as deputy principals. Erica continues in that role to the present. The current principal, Lorna Keaveney, took up her role in 2015. ♦

*Footnote - I wish to acknowledge the 2004 Killina National School publication, Mary Gormley's Tusk Parish in Historic Maigh Ai and Lorna Keaveney for the information in this article. Tusk National School will feature in the next edition of the E-Newsletter.*

## TULSK HISTORY SOCIETY ARCHIVES



**CONTACT:** [historytulsk@gmail.com](mailto:historytulsk@gmail.com)

Winners of the 2022 Digital  
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THS are seeking to preserve our  
parish history with your help

All historic documents and  
photographs are sought to add to  
our collection

**Faugh-a-Ballagh** by *Manus Tiernan*

THE TALL elegant sixteen hands-high horse stood and surveyed the scene around him. The other steeds circled him in anticipation. The horse became giddy as he realized something special was to happen, The jockey in the owner's scarlet jacket, blue belt and harlequin cap steadied the horse as the flag went down and one of the oldest race classics in the British calendar was under way.

The nine horses sped away like birds from a nest. The one mile six furlong and 132 yards was a testing distance for the three-year-olds. Turning into the straight, the long flat Doncaster run to the finish favoured horses with speed as opposed to stamina. The race favourite, The Cure, bolted to the front followed by The Princess. Faugh-a-Ballagh pricked his ears and followed suit a length behind. Two furlongs out, The Cure accelerated leaving The Princess in his wake. The Owner of Faugh-a-Ballagh saw the Harlequin cap jockey loosen the reins and let the horse loose. Holding a whip in his hand the owner lashed it against his thigh as if riding the horse. Every stroke he gave he could see Faugh-a-Ballagh eat up the ground, and with half a furlong to go both horses were neck-and-neck. The tall chestnut colt powered home and beat the favorite by one length and history was made in the 69<sup>th</sup> running of the race. Faugh-a-Ballagh in a time of three minutes and twenty eight seconds had just won the English St Ledger - the first Irish owned horse to do so. He was owned by Edward John Irwin, a trainer and stud owner from Ireland. The year was 1844 and the prize for the winner was £2,625 (£310,000 in today's money)

**Faugh-a-Ballagh**

Faugh-a-Ballagh was born at Brownstown Stud in the Curragh in May 1841, sired by Sir Hercules and out of the dam Guiccioli. The dark brown/black looking colt was called after the battle cry of the Royal Irish Regiment meaning 'Clear the Way'. Edward John Irwin who owned and ran Rahtbride Stables in the Curragh bought the horse as a yearling in 1842. He was schooled and ridden out at Rathbride - near the Curragh - by Irwin's top handler Michael Maloney, who saw the potential in the 16 hands high horse and suggested he be sent to England for training. Irwin sent the horse to Sussex to one of the top trainers at that time, John Forth. As a

three-year-old Faugh- a- Ballagh was at his prime winning the St. Ledger, the Cesarewitch, and the Grand Juke Michael Stakes. The stallion was worth more as



a breeder and he went into stud in 1846. He was kept in England for a few years before returning to Irwin's Rathbride Stables for one season. Irwin sold Faugh-a-Ballagh to the French Government in 1856. In his career Faugh- a-Ballagh sired many race winners and was well known throughout the racing world. He sired Leamington, who became famous in the US as a breeding stallion. In France he

sired the filly 'Fille de L'air' who won classics on both sides of the channel. Faugh-a-Ballagh's son Master Bagot sired many steeplechase winners in Ireland.

### **The Irwins**

Fernhall, otherwise known as the townland of Pollranny, beside Kilmurry Church, was the ancestral home of the Irwins of Fernhall and Rathmoyle. Arthur Irwin (1700-1795) had four sons and three daughters. The first son Patrick retained Fernhall, while the third son, Richard, who was an agent for the Dillon's of Belgard Lodge (later Heathfield House) purchased Rathmoyle. Patrick's son John Irwin of Fernhall was known throughout Ireland as 'hard riding Johnny'. He was the father of Edward John Irwin, the owner of Faugh-a-Ballagh, a horse that was the first Irish bred and owned winner of the English Classic, the St Ledger.

Edward was also the uncle of May Imelda Josephine Irwin whose father Joseph Burke Irwin (born in Fernhall) was a magistrate in Limerick in the mid 1800s and a brother of Edward John Irwin. May Imelda became a famous socialite singer in the late 1800s and rose up the socialite ladder in Dublin with her music, song and beauty. May Imelda married William Henry Edmund de Vere Sheaffe Pery, who became the 4<sup>th</sup> Lord Limerick in 1890 and the 5<sup>th</sup> Baron Wentworth of Mallow in 1895 (a marriage not approved by the lord's father as the bride came with no money). May Imelda was the first aristocrat singer to tour America in 1901, where she raised money for charity.

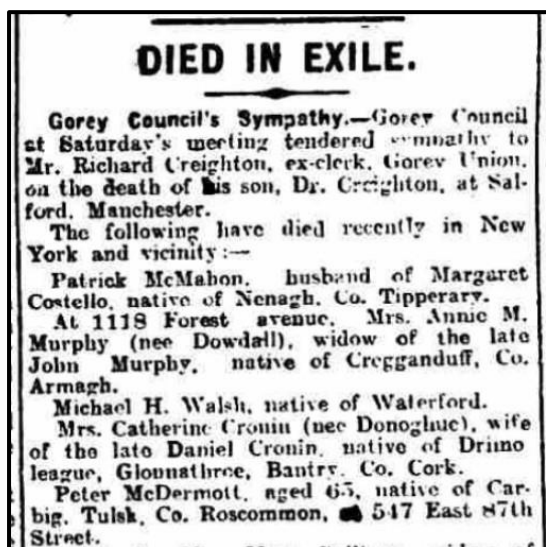
Richard Irwin of the Rathmoyle Irwin's would have been a first cousin to Edward John Irwin. This branch of the Irwin family will be covered in more detail in a later article. Fernhall was burnt accidentally around 1865-70 and was never re-built. Faugh-a-Ballagh's name was still remembered and resonated around the local area in the early 1900's as there is a record of Rathnagly 'Faugh-a Ballaghs' playing Castleplunkett 'Red Hughs' in a football match in Rathnagly in 1901.



Sources: TBHeritage.com  
 Irelandoldnews.com  
 Roscommon Herald April 1901  
 Writings James J O'Donnell Castleplunkett. ◇

**Died in Exile - Who was Peter McDermott of Corrabeg?** by *Melissa L. Keigher*

THE MARCH 1922 edition of the *Weekly Freeman's Journal* announced the overseas passing of one of their own - Peter McDermott of Corrabeg, Tulsk. THS have taken a deep dive into Peter's life and family. Here, we present Part I: His Ancestors.



Although his death was announced locally in March 1922, Peter McDermott's death occurred two months prior, on 15 January, in a tenement building at 547 East 87<sup>th</sup> Street, New York. After some research, his death certificate revealed he died aged 65 from a uremic coma - a result of kidney disease - something that may have been precipitated by his work as a building contractor. After three days of mourning, Peter was buried at Calvary Cemetery in the New York borough of Queens.

His wife Mary signed his burial documentation, and had recorded Peter's parents as Thomas McDermott and Mary Flynn, both born in Ireland. THS's continued sleuthing found his parents to be Thomas McDermott of Corrabeg and his wife Mary Ann Flynn who had married in Strokestown parish on 4 February, 1856. Peter appears to have been their first child, born about 1857, although no baptismal record has been located and no birth registration exists as civil registration only began in Ireland in 1865. Peter emigrated to America sometime in his early twenties, about 1882.

Peter's father, Thomas, had been a farmer at Corrabeg for quite some time, as per the birth records found of his children. According to the 1863 Landed Estates court sales Corrabeg townland comprised of a total of 396 acres, and had been purchased in trust for £6,450 by the landlord - a Mr Malloy, according to the records.

Thomas and Mary Ann continued farming at Corrabeg, raising their family and providing their eldest Peter with the following known siblings: Andrew, born c. 1863, Ellen, born 1866, Charles, born 1868, and Kate, born 1870. All the McDermott children whose birth records were found have their births recorded as occurring at Corrabeg.

Both parents remained at the family home until their passing: Mary Ann died aged 70 in June 1899, while Thomas passed away just seven months later, at the start of the new century in January 1900. He was 72 and died, like his wife, of old age. Both death certificates were signed by their younger son Andrew.

Unlike Peter, younger brother Andrew had remained in Ireland and therefore took over the family home at Corrabeg after the passing of their parents. Deemed a

second class house, Andrew and his younger sister Kate were recorded as occupants in the 1901 Census. The house was constructed of stone, brick or concrete, there were three front windows, a roof made of perishable material - likely thatch - and three rooms in total.

A year after the census, on 2 February 1902, Andrew married Mary Lavin - daughter of Michael Lavin and Mary Padian of Ardakillin, at Tusk chapel. Solemnizing the ceremony was Parish Priest John O'Brien. Andrew and Mary remained at Corrabeg, raising their family: Thomas, Katie, Mary, Norah, and Bridie through the Irish revolutionary period until Andrew's passing in May 1934.



Calvary Cemetery, Queens, New York. Gravestone of Peter McDermott (1857-1922). © JFonseca, findagrave.com

case of Tusk diaspora in Part II of “Died in Exile”, exploring the life of Peter in America. ♦

THS looks forward to revealing more research into this interesting

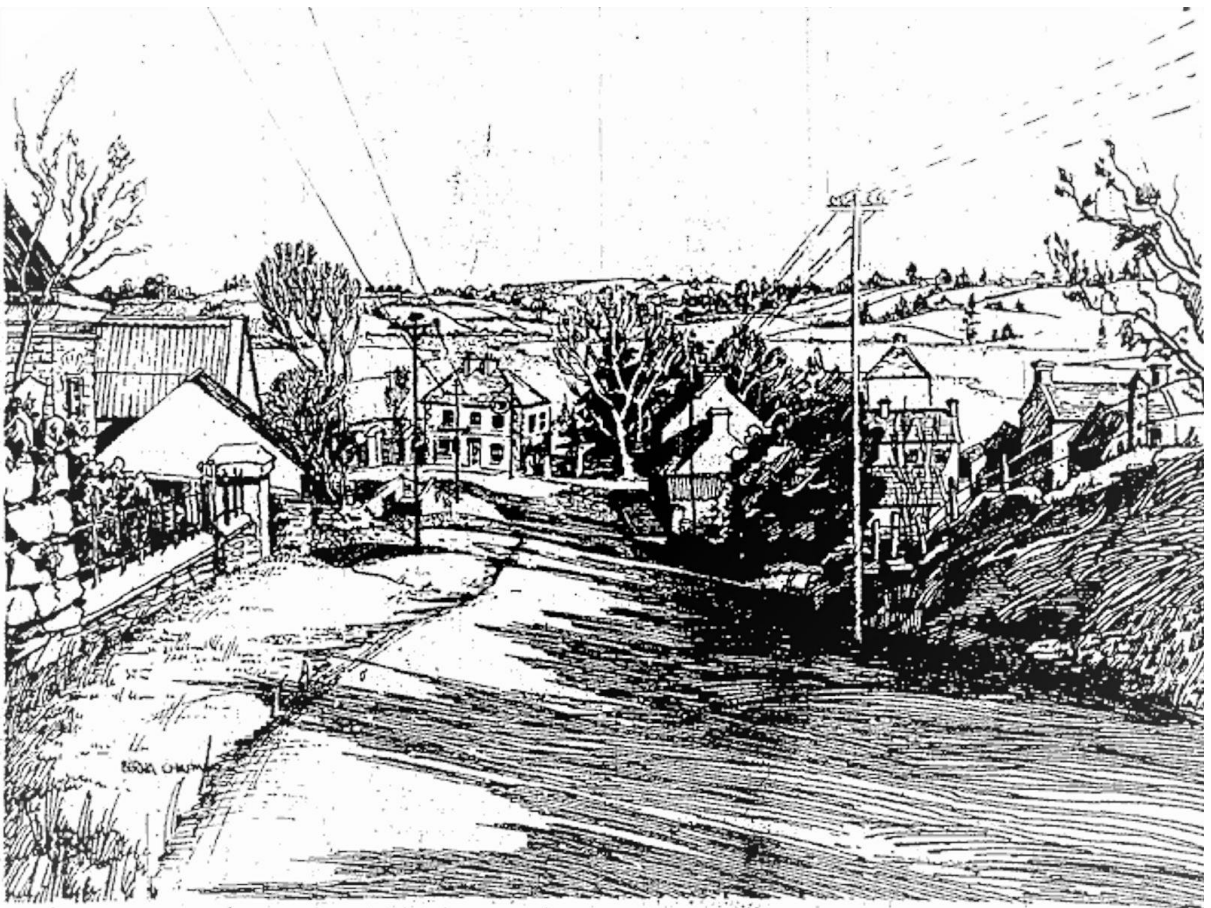
case of Tusk diaspora in Part II of “Died in Exile”, exploring the life of Peter in

## THE TULSK DRAWINGS OF BERNA CHAPMAN

IN HER lifetime Berna Chapman (1917-2004) was one of her adopted county's most notable and finest artists. Born in Derry she moved with her family to her father's original homeplace of Strokestown when he retired as an RIC officer. Berna was a frequent exhibitor at the prestigious Royal Hibernian Academy and was a winner of the coveted Taylor Prize at Dublin's Metropolitan School of Art. She taught art in both Elphin and Strokestown secondary schools (teaching numerous Tusk students) while one of her greatest artistic legacies locally are the sketches of local landscapes, villages and towns she executed in the 1960s and '70s, and which appeared in the *Roscommon Herald* at the time. We here reprint the Tusk parish inclusions in her collection. Note: the print quality varies due to the varying quality of digital scans.



Tusk Village—drawn here by Berna Chapman—is an important road junction between East and West and North and South, with the Dublin-Ballina road crossing the Sligo - Athlone road and being joined by the Strokestown-Castlerea road. The new cattle mart is shown in the background (left). Only a short distance away is the ancient Royal dwelling site of Rathcroghan.

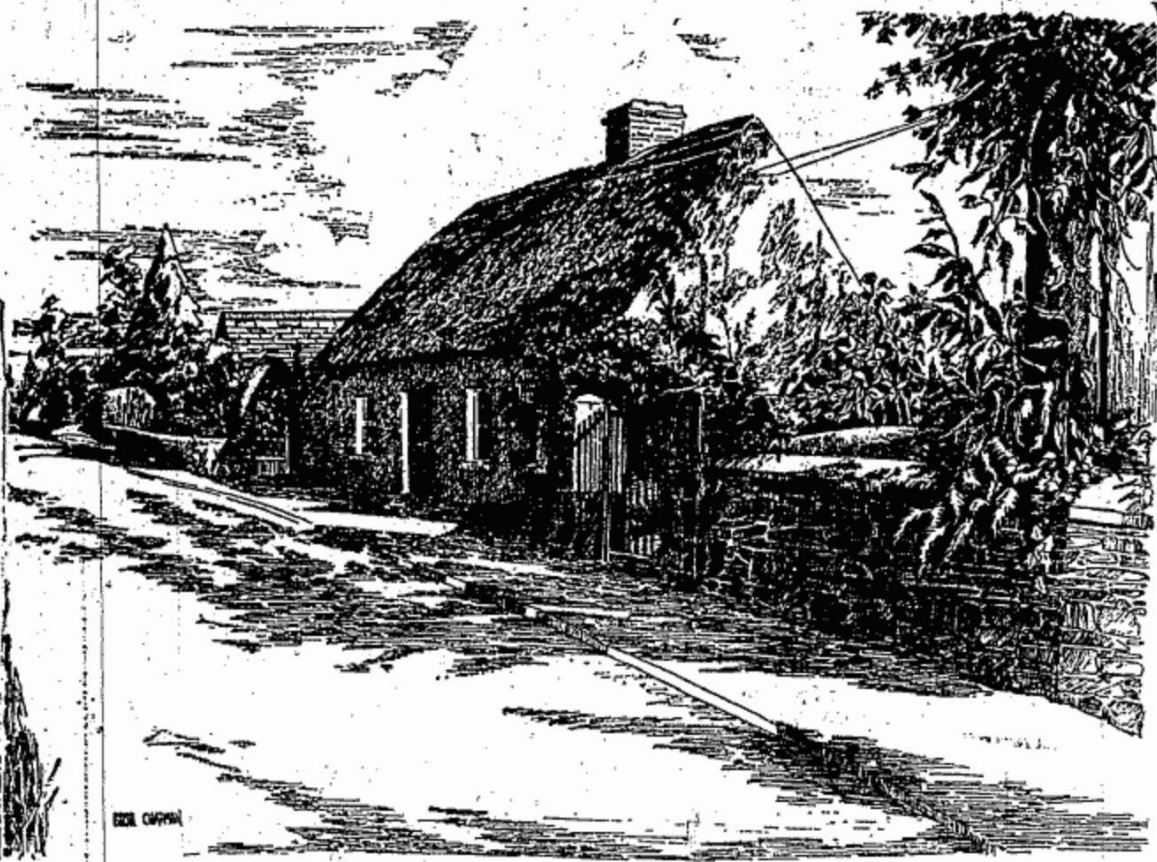


Rolling hills sweeping down to the callow form a pleasant background to the village of Castlelunkett, sketched here by Berna Chammar.



Tomona House, Tusk, the residence of the Fallon family, presents a picture of smugness and charm, silhouetted by the trees which front the dwelling.

### Round the County with Berna Chapman— (23)



The charm of a thatched cottage in the Irish countryside is well reflected in this drawing by Berna Chapman of a house on the Tusk-Castleplunkett road.

### Round the County with Berna Chapman (39)



"Trees" might be the title for this landscape which caught Berna Chapman's eye on the Tusk-Strokestown road.

The sketch above is likely at Ogulla or Carrowgarve while the landscape to the left is likely Cloonanart Beg or Ardikillan. The newspaper excerpt below is from the *Irish Weekly and Ulster Examiner* from October 1953. ♦

### Portrait of Derry Bishop at Belfast Exhibition

A study in oils of Most Rev. Dr. Neil Farren, Bishop of Derry, is attracting considerable attention at the Royal Ulster Academy of Arts exhibition at Belfast Art Gallery, Stranmillis Road.

The artist, Miss Berna Chapman, who also has two fine oil paintings on view, won the Taylor Award at the Dublin Metropolitan School of Art, and is a frequent exhibitor at the Royal Hibernian Academy in Dublin.

## **TULSK D-DAY HERO** By Jody Moylan, Melissa Keigher & Mike Lennon

*To mark the June anniversary of Tusk native Mike Rogers' heroic D-Day exploits on the beaches of Normandy (June 6<sup>th</sup> 1944) we are here reprinting the article THS wrote for last Christmas's edition of the annual Roscommon Herald Christmas Special*

### **Late Spring, 1944**

Not long before the Allied invasion of Europe, when US, British and Canadian forces planned to finally defeat Hitler's Germany with 'Operation Overlord', Private Michael 'Mike' Rogers was granted permission of leave his US Army base in the south of England, to visit his family in Tusk.

Arriving back home in his military uniform his return was, undoubtedly, a novel and happy moment for the family and friends who greeted him, but a bittersweet one for himself: great to be back home, but unsure if he'd ever see it again.

From Ogulla, Mike was born in May 1911 to James and Jane Rogers (nee Hamill), and was the third youngest of eight children (older than brothers Tom and Domnick, and younger than Nora, Mary Jane, Bernard, Patrick and James Jnr).

He'd been gone since June 1930, when himself and his brother James (Jim) emigrated to America aboard the Cunard liner SS Scythia, which they had boarded in Galway. They'd left an Ireland that had been struggling since independence, with political turmoil, widespread poverty and mass emigration embedded into Irish life. But though they joined the almost quarter of a million people who emigrated from Ireland to the USA since 1920, the Rogers brothers were amongst some of the last of that migration era after the Wall Street crash of 1929 crippled the American economy.

Facing Mike and Jim was the era of the Great Depression. They joined the infamous U.S. breadlines shortly after their arrival in the New York, with Mike picking up occasional work as a general labourer thereafter, before moving on to begin employment at the Colgate Palmolive company in New Jersey, in 1933. Jim Rogers found work at a Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock plant. Due to the fact that the plant was repurposed for the war effort, Jim was not enlisted to fight in the Second World War, with his work being deemed essential service in itself. Mike seemed to have been content with his job at Colgate,



*Figúir 1 Mike Rogers in military uniform pictured with his brothers in Tusk, late Spring 1944. Back L-R: Tom, Jim, Pat. Front L-R: Domínic, Mike, Bernard Joe. Note Jim, back middle, was in the USA at this time, with his photo being added on top of the original. The person standing in was local publican Robbie Kilgannon*

right up until the time he was enlisted into the army, in March 1941. He then went on for his basic training at Camp Gordon, Georgia state.



*Mike as he appeared in a New Jersey newspaper, late June 1944*

And so, when the USA entered World War Two in December 1941, the Rogers brothers were ready for service, though their lives had taken a turn that they had not foreseen, and was all a very long way from living on a small farmstead in rural County Roscommon.

As he set sail from Galway on that summer day in 1930 Mike must never have guessed that the next time he'd be in Tusk he'd be sitting down for a group photo (pictured) with the brothers who remained, readying himself for one of the most important missions in military history.

When Mike arrived back in England - after his 1944 visit to Tusk - all hands were on deck, including US President Dwight D. Eisenhower. On June 4<sup>th</sup>, from Southwick House on the English Channel, the Commander-in-Chief gave

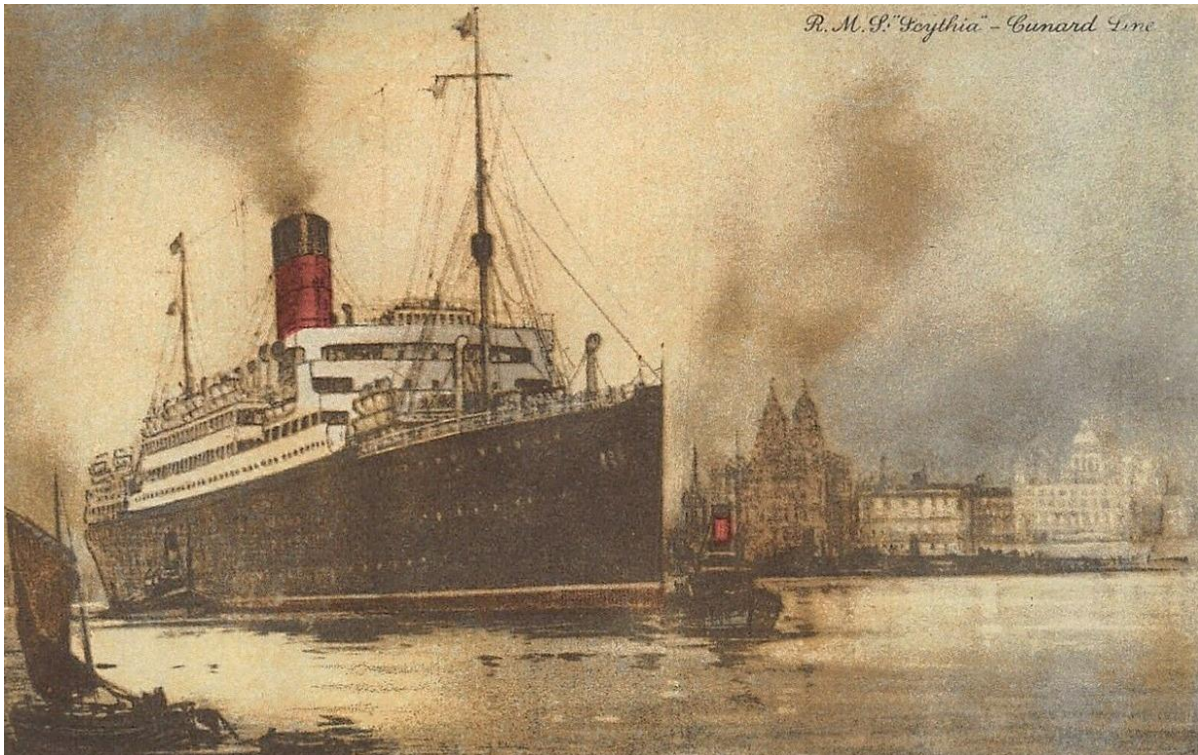
the go-ahead for the largest amphibious operation in military history: Operation Overlord - the Allied invasion of northern France.

### **June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1944, D-Day**

US Army 'Private First Class' Mike Rogers, landed into Normandy standing in the open-air bowels of a Higgins' boat, not long after dawn. The boat was one of thousands that had ploughed through the rough sea under a cloudy, overcast sky. Continuous enemy fire peppered the landing crafts as explosions ripped up the sea around them.

When the iron ramp of his boat dropped, Mike made for the water, water that was quickly - as he later recalled - becoming 'pink with blood'. Under intense bombardment Mike was hit with explosion shrapnel - 'fragments of shelling' - to the chest and ribs. And yet, despite his injuries, he kept wading forward. Amid the chaos and the terror, the wounded Private Rogers managed to grab hold of an injured comrade from beneath the water, dragging him to shore to save his life. For this act of bravery Mike would later be decorated by the U.S. military.

Because of the bad weather, and the fierce German resistance, the landings at Normandy - and particularly the first wave which Mike was part of - has become infamous in the annals of war carnage, and was depicted famously in the 1998



*Old postcard of the SS Sythia - the liner Mike and Jim Rogers emigrated to America aboard in 1930*

Steven Spielberg film, *Saving Private Ryan*. On Omaha beach alone, 2000 U.S. troops were killed, wounded or went missing.

And though Mike was amongst the wounded of D-Day, it is important to note that two of his brothers also played their part - the aforementioned Jim back in America, and his other brother Tom, who was based across the water in England.

Tom, who had emigrated to England and lived in London, worked on the construction of the many new military airfields in the south of the country, that were laid in preparation for the Allied assault. As Tom's son James relays it today - his father had woken up at 6am on D-Day in his Croydon lodgings, hearing overhead the swarm of Allied aircraft heading south - aircraft that were set to 'soften' the German resistance for the sea (amphibious) landings to come.

Tom had to wait until 9pm that night, some 15 hours after the beach landings, to hear of Mike's fate. It was not good, but it could well have been worse. Along with the first-phase success of the Allied operation, Mike had survived his injuries. He was diagnosed as receiving injury by artillery shells to the ribs and 'abdomino thoracic region' (chest). His hospital file notes that Mike's wounds took some time to heal with his stitching unable to prevent 'delayed closure'.

An interesting outcome of Mike's D-Day experience was that he became something of a star of the newsreel footage that was relayed back to the USA. In the 'Quiet Irishman' Mike re-enacted getting hit by a German shell, after which he was questioned by his superior officer. The fact that Mike was chosen out of the



thousands of troops injured, and the film named in his honour, was testament to the esteem in which he was held after his heroic exploits.

Mike's sister-in-law, Bridget 'Betty' Rogers (Jim's wife) was interviewed in an American newspaper in late June '44, about seeing the film in the State Theatre in New Jersey. It had come on, to Betty's surprise, before a showing of the film *The Song of Bernadette* - about the visions of Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes. Betty stated that she 'nearly fell off her seat' when Mike appeared on the big screen.



This article as it appeared in the Roscommon Herald Christmas Special 2022

of Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes. Betty stated that she 'nearly fell off her seat' when Mike appeared on the big screen.

After all this, Mike was admitted to a field hospital and spent the next three months recuperating, before being released and returned to service. He went on to serve in Germany in early 1945, where he guarded German prisoners of war (POWs) with the military guards. Mike was eventually released from service on October 4<sup>th</sup> of that year - one month and two days after the official end of World War Two - was awarded the prestigious Purple Heart, and has been documented as one of the Irish heroes of the war, most recently in the 2012 book *Dark Times, Decent Men: Stories of Irishmen in World War Two* by Neil Richardson.

While it was, ultimately, a time of profound upheaval for Mike, the 'quiet Irishman' started back where he left off: living at the same lodgings on Fulton Avenue, New Jersey, and working for Colgate Palmolive a few kilometres away. Stated as being an elevator operator at the company per the US Census of 1950, Mike remained there as an employee until his retirement in 1976.

He rarely mentioned the war in his post-war days, preferring to get on with life, and perhaps to ward off its haunting memory. But he did relay snippets to family, like telling his nephew James about the colour of the sea on that infamous D-Day morning. He travelled occasionally, returning home for visits in 1970 and 1982.



The Rogers' memorial at Mount Olivet Cemetery New Jersey

One of his favourite things to do in his spare time was to watch and enjoy a good marching band - a nice legacy of his days in the military uniform.

Mike passed away on March 16<sup>th</sup> 1994 in Oakhurst, Ocean Township, New Jersey and was buried at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Middletown, New Jersey alongside his late brother Jim (James) (d. 1970) and James' wife Betty (Bridget) (d. 1986). While he never

had a family himself, Mike's legacy was established on the beaches of Normandy on that dark, make-or-break morning in June 1944. A day of days, when one of our own stood up and was counted. ♦

**Thanks to descendants James and Tom Rogers for their invaluable assistance**

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# *TULSK HISTORY SOCIETY*

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## *Membership*

*We hope you have enjoyed the June edition of our newsletter. New members are most welcome to join the Society. If you wish to do so, please email us on [historytulsk@gmail.com](mailto:historytulsk@gmail.com). Annual fees are €30 for adults and €10 for students. We hope you all have a wonderful summer!*





# THE TULSK MORNING HOWL

May 2023

Bulletin No. 4

Tulsk History Society PRO Jody Moylan invited me to be the guest editor for this issue of the *Morning Howl*. While acknowledging the inclusion of some items relating to my antecedents, I hope my choice of material will be informative and of interest to readers throughout Tulsk parish. *Mike Lennon*

**THE ROSCOMMON JOURNAL**  
 "LIBERTAS ET NATALIS SOLUS."  
 SATURDAY EVENING, JULY 26, 1863.

**THE CATHOLIC CHURCH.**  
 On Monday and Tuesday last, our revered Prelate (The Right Rev. Dr. BAUGHAN), attended by the Vicar General, and all the respected Clergymen of the adjoining locality, administered the Sacrament of confirmation to fourteen hundred persons, in the New Catholic Church of Tulsk.

At the conclusion of each days proceedings the Bishop and Clergy returned to the residence of the justly esteemed and much respected Pastor (the Rev. Mr. LANNON), where after the fatigue and labours of the day, and joined by a select party of his lay friends, they were hospitably and sumptuously entertained, having every luxury which the circumstances demanded or the season could afford.

We are satisfied this visit will prove fortunate to the people, so it must be gratifying to the good Pastor. His Lordship went from Tulsk to Elphin, where he administered the sacrament of confirmation on Wednesday and Thursday last.

October 1954 Advertisement

MAKE SURE YOUR CAR IS FILLED WITH **GALEX PETROL** and **HAVOLINE OILS** at **R. KILGANNON'S TULSK**

**UNDERTAKING**

ALL FUNERAL REQUIREMENTS:  
 Wreaths, Coffins, Etc.

AT **ROB. KILGANNON'S, TULSK**  
 PHONE, TULSK 1.

**Straw Rationed and No Tolls in Tulsk - Freeman's Journal, June 7, 1823**

Government has decreed that the Ration of Straw, as granted to Cavalry Regiments in Ireland, shall be revised, in consequence of the scarcity of that article, and the exorbitant high price it has attained.

"We have great pleasure in giving publicity to the following fact, as a proof amongst others, of the liberality of Luke White, Esq.:-The Lease of the Tolls and Customs of Tulsk, County Roscommon, where a considerable Fair and annual Markets are annually held, having lately expired, Mr. White, the present proprietor, has given positive directions that neither Toll nor Custom shall be charge on any commodity or Goods to be brought there for sale.

**The Land League in the Provinces - Tulsk (County Roscommon) - The Nation, July 17, 1880**

On Sunday last a meeting of the tenant-farmers of the combined parishes of Killooly, Killinora, Killinora, Ogels, and Killina was held at Tulsk, county Roscommon, in view of the ancient and historic bill of Emancipation, for the purpose of establishing a branch of the Irish National Land League. There was a very large and enthusiastic attendance, and the proceedings throughout were marked by the utmost unanimity and good sense. Mr. Peter M'Dermott, Clonsilla, was unanimously voted to the chair. Having addressed the meeting, the chairman concluded by calling on all present to give three cheers for leaves Parnell, which were heartily responded to.

Mr. Peter M'Dermott proposed, and Mr. Owen Conroy seconded:-

"Resolved-That we, the tenant-farmers of the combined parishes of Killooly, Killinora, Ogels, and Killina in public meeting assembled, having studied the aims and objects of the National Land League, do approve and endorse same, and tender to the National Land League our cordial and earnest support."

Mr. R. Flanagan proposed, and Mr. M'Dermott seconded:-

"That we hereby declare our resolve to establish a branch of the National Land League in this district, to be called the Tulsk branch of the National Land League of Ireland."

The third resolution was proposed by Mr. John Conway, Clonsilla:-

"That we do solemnly pledge ourselves not to bid for, tender for, nor take any holding from which a tenant has been unjustly evicted, nor propose for any holding the occupier of which is seeking for a reduction of an exorbitant rent, and do hold ourselves liable to the contrary in forfeits and penalties."

Seconded by Thomas Flanagan, Clonsilla, and unanimously adopted.

The officers-Mr. Peter M'Dermott, Clonsilla, president; Mr. Michael Lannon, Clonsilla, Treasurer; Mr. Peter J. Shannon, Ardara, secretary-were unanimously selected by the people. The working committee are-Hugh Heneghan, Manor; Owen Conroy, Ballynaghy; Andrew Ouilin, Tulsk; Luke Egan, Dooryville; Thomas Flanagan, Carrigan; Michael M'Dermott, Naasavagh; John Quinn, Clonsilla; John Conway, Clonsilla.

**Tulsk Notes by Snow Storm - Strokestown Democrat, Feb 12, 1916**

**Orange Blossoms**  
 We offer our hearty congratulations to Mr Edward Flanagan, Steil, on the occasion of his recent marriage to Miss Nellie Conry, Clooneyquinn, which happy event was solemnised by the Rev Father Keane at Killina Chapel, which was specially decorated for the occasion.

**Cinematographic Display**  
 A cinema performance was given in Tulsk National School by Bailey's Co. on Tuesday and Wednesday night and was highly interesting. Some war scenes were thrown on the screen, but the cowboy scenes were the most interesting and much appreciated by the audience.

**Death of the Rev Michael Lennon P. P. Tulsk - Freeman's Journal, Dec 12, 1871**

Today we record the death, at the patriarchal age of 81, of the Rev Michael Lennon P.P., Tulsk. Trained for the holy ministry in our great national college of Maynooth, he was ordained at Pentecost 1818. He then spent upwards of half a century labouring unceasingly in the vineyard of his Master. It were difficult indeed to tell the works of zeal and love done by this holy priest during that long period; through the trying years of famine and cholera; the children whom he instructed, the sick whom he visited, the mourning whom he consoled, the sinners whom he gained for God. Although the venerable pastor had not been cut off in the prime of life, with promise unfulfilled and mission unaccomplished; though he has fallen "like a ripe fruit into his mother's lap", still the parishioners amongst whom his voice was so familiar were stricken as for the loss of a dear and venerated parent. Fr Lennon was four years CC of Athlone, eight years PP of Oran, and forty one years PP of Tulsk, were his ashes now repose, and where his memory shall be held in benediction from generation to generation. He was buried on Friday within the church which he had raised to God's glory. The Bishop and a large number of priests of the diocese attended.

*Roscommon Herald, Sept 20, 1924*

**GASTLEPLUNKETT, CO. ROSCOMMON.**

**BUSINESS PREMISES FOR SALE.**

I AM favoured with instructions by the Administratrix of Edward Mulligan, deceased, to Sell by PUBLIC AUCTION, on the premises, ON SATURDAY, 11th OCTOBER, 1924 (Fair Day), (or previously by Private Treaty). The Business Premises, and Residence situate in Castleplunkett, and known as "MULLIGAN'S," together with the Plot of Ground at rear of same. The Premises are held in Fee-Simple, Free of all rent for ever.

Further particulars in future advertisement or on application.

S. G. SINNETT,  
 Auctioneer and Valuer,  
 Roscommon.

301004

*From A Dictionary of Roscommon  
Biography*

**Patrick Moran (1796-1878), medical doctor, landowner and magistrate.** A native of Gloria, Cootehall, he practiced as a medical doctor in Galway for many years before coming to reside in Ardkeenagh, Tusk through his marriage to Catherine Plunkett, daughter of Richard Plunkett (1742-1855). Richard Plunkett got into financial difficulties in the mid-1800s. His estate were purchased by his son-in-law, Patrick Moran, in 1852 on the understanding that the property would be returned to Plunkett ownership when the purchase money was refunded. By his will of 1869, Dr. Moran directed that the terms of the sale be carried out and appointed Richard Plunkett's grandson, Hyacinth Plunkett, B.L., as the executor. His wife died in 1871 and he entered a second marriage to Honoria O'Malley in 1873. He died in January 1878 following a prolonged illness. After his death, codicils dated 1876 and 1877 were produced by which all the property was left to his wife and Hyacinth Plunkett was removed as executor. Plunkett contested the validity of the codicil citing Dr. Moran's lack of capacity and the undue influence exerted by his wife and sister-in-law who resided at Ardkeenagh. In June 1878, a jury found the will of 1873 was valid and that the codicils were executed when Dr. Moran was not of sound mind and understanding. This decision was appealed by the widow in February 1879 and a new jury trial was ordered. At the end of the June 1879 trial, the jury reversed the result of the first case by finding that the codicils were valid.

*Additional Note:*

In February 1851, Strokestown Union rented Ardkeenagh House from Dr. Moran as one of its Auxiliary Workhouses during the two year period the Cloonslanor Workhouse was being constructed. Three months later, it was reported there were 363 inmates in Ardkeenagh. Considering that the house had only 2 reception rooms, 5 bedrooms, kitchen and a servant's room, most of the inmates must have been accommodated in what was described later as "extensive out offices, consisting of stabling for several horses, haylofts, turf-house etc."

**The Co Roscommon Draghounds and Mid-Roscommon Harriers.**

MEET MARCH AND APRIL, 1903.  
APRIL, 1903.

Monday, 6th ... Castleplunket  
At 2 o'clock.  
Monday, 13th ... Point-to-Point Races  
at Boho at 12 o'clock;  
there will be a hunt  
after the Races are  
over to wind up the  
season.

*From Roscommon Herald, Oct 8, 1949*

**After Sixty Years.—Mr. John Dolan, of Clifton, New Jersey, U.S., is spending a short holiday with his relatives, the O'Donnells and Dolans, at Castleplunket and area. Mr. Dolan emigrated to the U.S. in 1888 and served with distinction in the U.S. Army during the Spanish-American war from 1895 to 1898. He subsequently served in the American police in Jersey City for twenty-five years and retired in 1935. He is nephew of Mr. Thomas O'Donnell, of Castleplunket, and first cousin of Ven. Archdeacon O'Donnell, P.P., V.P., Roscommon.**

*From A Dictionary of Roscommon  
Biography*

**Thomas O'Donnell (1855-1951), teacher, postmaster and farmer.** A native of Carnalasson, Fourmilehouse, Roscommon, he was appointed principal of Castleplunkett National School in 1873 after completing a three-year course as a teaching monitor at Carnalasson National School. He continued in that position until retiring in 1918 after forty-five years teaching. After retiring, he was appointed postmaster at Castleplunkett Post Office. He was also a keen farmer and livestock breeder. He died in April 1951 and was interred in Toberelva Cemetery.

*John Dowell Grace (1736-1811) who was interred in the family vault in Tusk*



*From Irish Independent, March 8, 1957*

**Air Corps  
Pilot  
Killed**

**T**WENTY-ONE years old Second Lt. Patrick L. O'Connor, of the Irish Air Corps, was killed yesterday when his Provost training plane crashed in the Wicklow Mountains while he was on a training flight.

He was a native of Corbane, Clooneyquinn, Castleroa, Co. Roscommon, and was educated at the Roscommon C.B.S. and Summerhill College, Sligo. He was commissioned last September and would have celebrated his twenty-first birthday on Monday.

The crash occurred at Caenmalogue Mountain, three miles west of the head of Glenmalure valley and about 2,220 feet above sea level. At the time of the crash a very heavy thick fog enveloped the mountain so that visibility was down to zero.

The plane struck a turf bank on the side of the mountain which ripped the engine from the plane. Portions of the fuselage were found within a radius of 50 yards of the scene of the crash. The crash was discovered by forestry workers who were working on the opposite side of the valley on Cunanalla Mountain. Just before lunchtime they heard the plane pass overhead and then they heard the crash.

When they arrived at the scene they discovered the body of the pilot thrown clear and he appeared to be suffering from severe head injuries. He was alive then and spiritual and medical aid was summoned.

**Victim Of The  
Crash**



Second-Lt. Patrick L. O'Connor