



THE TULSK MORNING HOWL

August 2023

Bulletin No. 5



The following extract is from the book *Percy French and his Songs* by James N. Healy, published in 1966.

William Percy French was born on the 1st May, 1854 at the family residence, Cloonyquin House, in the midlands of Ireland, about ten miles from the town of Roscommon, and two miles from the Tulsk Cross-roads on the Castlebar-Ballina road. His father was Christopher French, a scholarly man who was a Doctor of Law, and a Justice of the Peace. His mother came from Carrickon-Shannon, a town in pretty surroundings about twenty miles to the north of Roscommon. She was the daughter of the Rev. William Percy, who was the Protestant Rector of the town.

The French family settled in Galway in Elizabethan times, and moved in the 17th century to Cloonyquin. There, they had a fine estate, and so, for many years, were part of the 'landlord' class unpopular with the Irish peasantry because of the hard application of the tenantry laws. This disaffection was the

cause of much trouble but the Frenchs had a reputation as 'good' landlords, and the good relationship of the family with their tenantry was the beginning of the love and understanding which Percy French developed for the people of the land. French had a happy boyhood around the countryside of his home in Roscommon.

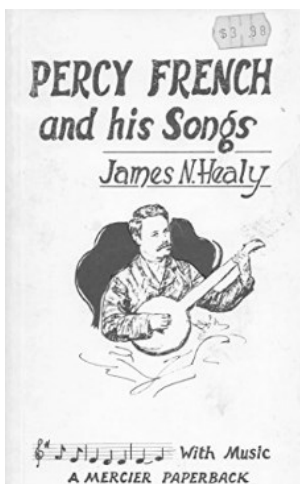
From these days, wandering around fields and misty bogs of that part of Ireland in which his youth was centred, he derived a love of the countryside and its people which expressed itself later on in the delicate water paintings and his many songs. He loved animals; disliked

people who were unkind to them; and in early years through the fashion of musical evenings spent in his own and in neighbours' houses, developed a talent for music and improvisation.

Many of the older generation will remember the little figure with flowing white hair and moustache who came to entertain them at Bundoran, Kilkee or others of the many seaside places, for it was an event of his time when Percy French came to town—whether the town was Dublin or London: Lisdoonvarna or New York. They heard him maybe once or twice a year, and then he was gone over the next horizon with his banjo, his bicycle and box of coloured chalks: leaving them happy for the humming of a new ballad, or with revived memories of one they had heard before.

Percy French was a remarkable person: a member of the gentry who became a wandering professional troubadour, and who had all the artistic talents at

his command— he was verse-maker and composer, artist and singer: storyteller par excellence. It is perhaps forgotten, or not realised, that he was one of the most popular entertainers of his time with a solo performance which lasted over two hours, and for which he wrote all his own material: an easy-going, amiable man whose inner strength, nevertheless, enabled him to deal calmly with a great amount of tribulation, and in his own surprising way, made a success of his life.





TO BE SOLD BY AUCTION

To Commence at One o'Clock,

Auction

OF

CATTLE

At Castleland,

ADJOINING

TULSK.

THE following STOCK, the property of ROBERT HENRY FRENCH, Esq., will be Sold on WEDNESDAY the 11th MAY, 1837, viz:—

Two BROOD MARES with One FOAL, one Stinted to Pilgrim, the other to Pallidore.

One FILLY, two years old, by Pilgrim.

One COLT and One FILLY, one year old, by Pilgrim.

A Draft MARE, Cart and Harness.

Two DONKEYS, with Carts and Harness.

Black Cattle.

14 three year old Heifers.	3 three year old Bullocks.
15 two year old do.	2 two year old do.
6 one year old do.	1 one year old do.
	1 two year old HEREFORD BULL.

Sheep.

62 Ewes two and thr. years old, with their Lambs.	
60 Wethers, two years old.	57 Hogget Ewes.
43 Ewes, two years old.	2 Rams.
47 Hogget Wethers.	Also 6 Sheep-Racks.

TERMS—CASH.

1st May, 1837.

KILLINA INDUSTRIAL SHOW.

From *The Strokestown Democrat*, November 1919

Killina Industrial Show will be held on Saturday next, 1st Novr. The number of exhibits surpass by far those of previous years and include knitting, needlework, cookery, laundry, darning, patching, butter, etc. A special feature of the show will be the section for school children (presently on rolls) which include sewing and knitting for which very good money prizes will be given; arts and crafts, etc. All exhibits, sent by post to the president Rev M Keane, will be in their proper place on day of show. The Secretary, Mr J J Toolin, in conjunction with the Committee, have the necessary arrangements complete for the holding of this popular and instructive annual fixture.

United Irish League Branches.

KILLINA.

A meeting of the Killina branch U I League was held at the Camogue cross roads at 7 o'clock on Sunday evening last. Mr T Rorke, C C, president, presided. There were a large number of members present. The president read a communication from the National Directory re the Parliamentary Fund, and after a short discussion it was decided to forward the subscription to Mr A Webb after Sunday next. A letter was read from the Kilmore branch of the U I League re a subscription for the boy Roche who received some injuries recently at the Broadstone station, which was discussed at some length. The alleged malicious killing of a donkey at Raheen was discussed at some length, after which the following resolution was unanimously adopted: "That we condemn the action of these insignificant people who killed the poor donkey at Raheen in their excitement on the night of the 7th June last." The recent elections were next discussed, and the action of the so-called Nationalists who called the local land grabbers and their connections to their assistance was severely criticised, after which the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—"That we consider the action of Mr Jas Fagan, Elphin, at the late L G Elections as inconsistent with the principles of the National cause."

But we are pleased to learn that this action is not going to be overlooked. We also consider the action of the imported factionist candidate highly improper in writing a letter the morning of the election to the Corraslira tenants stating that all the small tenants on the O'Connor property would have their turf bank free in future, as said turf bank is now let to outsiders and thus disappointing the poor tenants who were cajoled into supporting the candidature of the imported factionist at the Co Council Election." After transacting routine business, it was decided to hold next meeting at Loughauk cros roads at 7 o'clock p m on Sunday, 10th July.—I I M'GRATH, hon sec.

The above from *The Roscommon Messenger*, June 1908

Back to the Old Land.

A right royal welcome was accorded Mr. Con Finneran, Flaska, on his return from the States, where he has been for some fourteen years. He has prospered in the land of his adoption. He is accompanied by his wife, and after a short visit to his old home he proposes to visit some of Ireland's beauty spots and then return to the States, but with the hope that when things settle down here he will return and live in the land where his youth was passed.

Emigration.

For the past few weeks a large number of young girls and boys have been bidding adieu to the old home, it "may be for years or it may be for ever," and emigrating to Australia, U.S.A., and Canada, in order to earn a decent livelihood which they are unable to earn at home although they have their own Government now. Why cannot our Free State Government take over the ranches in the county and parcel them out to these young men and keep them at home?

Above from *Roscommon Herald*, October 1924

TULSK HISTORY SOCIETY can be contacted at history-tulsk@gmail.com

Tulsk Notes (Co. Roscommon).

Tulsk Parish Court.

The business of Tulsk Parish Court was adjourned on Saturday last to 2nd September in respect to the memory of the late President Griffith.

Continuous Rain.

There has been almost continuous rain for some time and farmers are finding it pretty difficult to save their hay crop. A great deal of good hay has been made up during July and the early days of August, but a decided change has come in the weather for the past fortnight and a certain amount of cold accompanied to the rainfall. At one time in the early summer it looked odds on another dry summer, but from observations of the trees in the spring it was evident to an experienced eye that there would be a very wet autumn. Notwithstanding the adverse meteorological conditions, farmers are getting up the hay crop very well, but turf has suffered greatly and the greater part of it will be held in the bogs as it can't be removed owing to the wet nature of the ground, unless removed at once, and this will cause fuel to be very scarce next winter. The oat crop is coming to hand well and promise a heavy grain crop, and turnips have recovered their early failure. The blight is apparent in nearly on all potato fields, but in a slight degree where the crop was sprayed secondly while the "tuebrs" are very large and an exceptional fine crop is expected by agriculturists.

Above from *Roscommon Herald*, August 1924

TAILORING

—0—
THOMAS O'CONNOR,
Ladies and Gents Tailor, Tulsk.



—0—
Announces that he has opened
a Tailoring establishment at
Tulsk, where he is in a position
to execute all orders at shortest
notice and reasonable prices.

—0—
Style, Fit and Finish

Guaranteed.

The above advert appeared in the *Strokestown Democrat* in January 1938. If you know where Mr O'Connor operated from we'd love to hear more!
historytulsk@gmail.com