

Rathfarnham Roads

Patrick Healy



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RATHFARNHAM ROADS

Topographical notes on Rathfarnham and the adjacent hills,
including Two Rock and Three Rock Mountains, Kilmashogue,
Tibradden, Killakee, Cruagh, Glencullen and Glendoo.

by

PATRICK HEALY

RATHFARNHAM ROADS

The material in this book was written, rewritten and updated in the period 1960 - 1985
Minimal editing has been carried out to reflect more recent developments and changes.

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Introduction

by Mayor Robert Dowds

As Mayor of South Dublin, and as a History graduate, it is a real pleasure to introduce this publication. In this work Paddy Healy presents the results of his meticulous labours as a local historian. He illuminates for all, many aspects of the history of Rathfarnham and surrounding areas. Paddy Healy's work is welcome in its own right as a major contribution to the growing body of local history in Ireland. However, it is also welcome as it provides the opportunity for both the established and newer communities in the Rathfarnham and in South Dublin to delve into their great historical heritage. It is my earnest hope that people of all ages in Rathfarnham area and in South Dublin will be enriched by what Paddy Healy has presented to us.

I would like to thank the late Paddy Healy's brother, Peter for making Paddy's work available to one and all. What a wonderful legacy Paddy Healy has left us in this book and in his other writings.

Lastly I must give credit to Kieran Swords of Tallaght Library and to all others who are making Paddy Healy's work available to the public.

Robert Dowds

Mayor, South Dublin County

April 2005

RATHFARNHAM ROADS



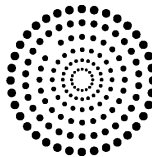
The Crest or Coat of Arms of South Dublin County reflects the ancient history of the area, its geographic features and the work of the Council.

The motto "Ag seo ár gCúram – This we hold in Trust" is an admonition to value, to preserve and to develop the economic, social, environmental, cultural and heritage assets of the area both for our own time and for future generations.



*Chamber of Commerce of Ireland
Excellence in Local Government
Economic Development Award 2004*

O₂ ability awards
2005



Author's Preface



HIS booklet is not primarily intended either for the historian or for the tourist although both may find much of interest within its cover. It is hoped, however that it will prove a convenient source of information to that large body of citizens who are already familiar with the Dublin Hills and who are to be seen on Sundays and holidays travelling the roads and laneways and rambling over high summits and mountain tracks.

The writer, at an early age came under the spell of the mountains and spent many pleasant years exploring this region. A thirst for information sent him to the local and county histories, the archaeological and historical literature and to unpublished material from various sources. This volume which deals only with the area directly accessible from Rathfarnham is the result of twenty five years of observation and investigation.

The main sources of information used were Handcock's *The History and Antiquities of Tallaght*, D'Alton's and Ball's county histories and that masterpiece of decriptive writing and local information, Joyce's "Neighbourhood of Dublin". Periodicals consulted were mainly the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, the *Dublin Historical Record* and *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*. Information was obtained also from old guide books and topographical works and from old newspapers, maps and directories. As far as possible the material from these sources was verified on the ground and every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of local information.

Acknowledgements



HANKS are due to a number of people. Firstly, to the late Paddy Healy for his meticulous research, his informative writings and his important collection of slides and photographs which have formed this book. Initial access to Paddy's collection of manuscripts and slides was graciously facilitated and supported by a number of people, most notably Michael Fewer and Con Manning. Síle Coleman of the County Library in Tallaght was a great support in preparing the book for publication. John McAleer is responsible for the professional design and layout of the book.

The greatest debt is owed to Peter Healy who in the sharing nature of his late brother Paddy, gave access to Paddy's papers so that others could share Paddy's great knowledge and deep insights.

Rob Goodbody and the Irish Times kindly granted permission to reproduce Paddy Healy — An Appreciation.

Mrs Monica O'Connor, Mrs Kitty Keating and Mr. Pat Cooke of the Pearse Museum kindly permitted images to be used in the book. The Council of trustees of the National Library permitted the reproduction of Frizell's Map of Rathfarnham.

Details were checked with and assistance sought from a number of people who most willingly assisted: Pat Sweeney, Sean Lawless, Carol Hawkins, Maurice Bryan, Dr. Christopher Moriarty, Mary Keenan, Tommy Cowzer. Gerard Lyne, Elizabeth M. Kirwan and Bernard Devaney of the National Library of Ireland were most helpful,

If anyone's name has unwittingly been omitted, please accept an apology and a big thank you for your assistance.

Thank you all — Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir

Paddy Healy — An Appreciation



ADDY Healy, archaeologist, local historian and friend, has died after a long life devoted to Ireland's past. Through his work on archaeological excavations in Dublin city and elsewhere, his meticulous collection of information, his support of various societies and his encouragement to younger generations, his influence has been widespread and invaluable.

Born in Canada in 1916 of Irish emigrant parents, Paddy moved with his family to Dublin at the age of five. After schooling in Haddington Road and Marino, he studied building construction in Bolton Street College, where his subjects included land surveying and technical drawing; both were to prove important in his later career. After graduation he worked as a silkscreen printer in Modern Display Artists while he took night classes under Sean Keating at the National College of Art.

During the Emergency Paddy served in the Army, then worked as a painter and decorator for a time. An important change came in 1949 when he joined the staff of the Land Commission as a surveyor. After eight years he moved to the Forestry Division, again as a surveyor.

In 1952 he began to attend Professor Seán P. Ó Riordáin's lectures in archaeology in University College Dublin as an occasional student. He joined the UCD Archaeological Society, becoming its vice-president, and his contact with the college led him to work as part of Prof. Ó Riordáin's team on the excavation of the Rath of the Synods at Tara during his annual holidays. In 1967 he joined Breandán Ó Riordáin's team on the second excavation at High Street in Dublin. At this stage Paddy made a major decision to abandon the security of his job with the Forestry Division to work full-time on archaeological excavations. He went on to work on excavations at Winetavern Street in 1969, Christchurch Place between 1972 and 1979, and from 1976 in Fishamble Street.

RATHFARNHAM ROADS

When the work on the Wood Quay site became controversial, Paddy stood firmly on the side of archaeology. His quiet but determined manner was a great source of encouragement to his colleagues as he sat in on the site, and he was the author of a poem written about the controversy and sold to raise funds for the campaign.

During the 1970s Paddy Healy acted as a contract archaeologist providing advice and working on excavations. Most importantly, he provided lists of monuments and sites of archaeological interest in Co. Dublin in the mid-1970s to assist in the preparation of the County Development Plan and the Action Area Plans which preceded the development of the western new towns of Tallaght, Lucan/Clondalkin and Blanchardstown.

Over the years he wrote papers and articles for a variety of publications, including several in which he described for the first time monuments and artefacts which he had discovered. Some of these were early grave slabs from the Rathdown area of south Dublin and north Wicklow and these became the topic of his MA thesis presented to NUI Galway under the supervision of Professor Etienne Rynne.

Paddy, in turn, was the subject of a publication when 29 colleagues and friends contributed papers in his honour for publication in a book, *Dublin and Beyond the Pale*, edited by Con Manning.

Among the organisations to benefit greatly from his membership were the Old Dublin Society, the Royal Society of Antiquaries, the Dublin Archaeological Society, Friends of Medieval Dublin, the Irish Architectural Archive and the Rathmichael Historical Society.

Paddy Healy was laid to rest on December 11th last in the cemetery at Mount Venus in the Dublin Mountains, close to historical and archaeological sites that he had investigated and overlooking the city which he had loved so much.

R.G. *Irish Times Monday 21st of January 2001*

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Chapter 1

Rathfarnham Road, Village and Castle



THE history of Rathfarnham in so far as we can learn from existing records, began at the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion when in 1199 these lands were granted to Milo le Bret. The name Rathfarnham suggests that a habitation existed before that time but of those who dwelt therein we know nothing. They left no remains of pre-historic burial places, no early churches and no records preserved in the annals.

Even during the centuries immediately following the invasion no event of great importance occurred. The lands were, to some extent, protected from the Irish neighbours by the existence, on the southern side, of the extensive Royal Forest of Glencree, with its inevitable wardens. It was not until this great deer park was overrun by the Clan O'Toole in the fourteenth century that Rathfarnham was exposed to the danger of attack.

There was much activity here during the stormy period of the seventeenth century but early in the following century, gentlemen's residences were being erected in the vicinity. At this period also, with the harnessing of the waters of the Owendoher and other rivers a great industrial drive began, largely in the production of paper. During the early part of the last century a number of these mills changed over to the manufacture of woollen and cotton goods and later still many were converted into flour mills. The introduction of the steam engine superseded the use of water power and as the old buildings fell into disrepair they were in most cases not replaced.

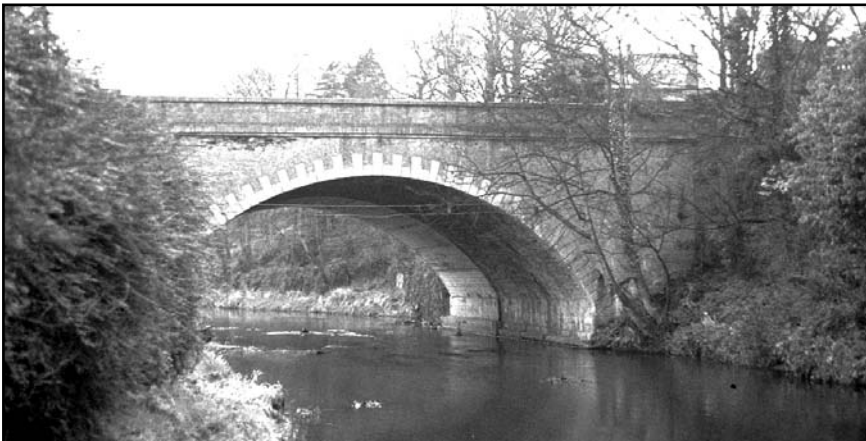
RATHFARNHAM ROADS



Six Inch Ordnance Survey map of Rathfarnham in 1843

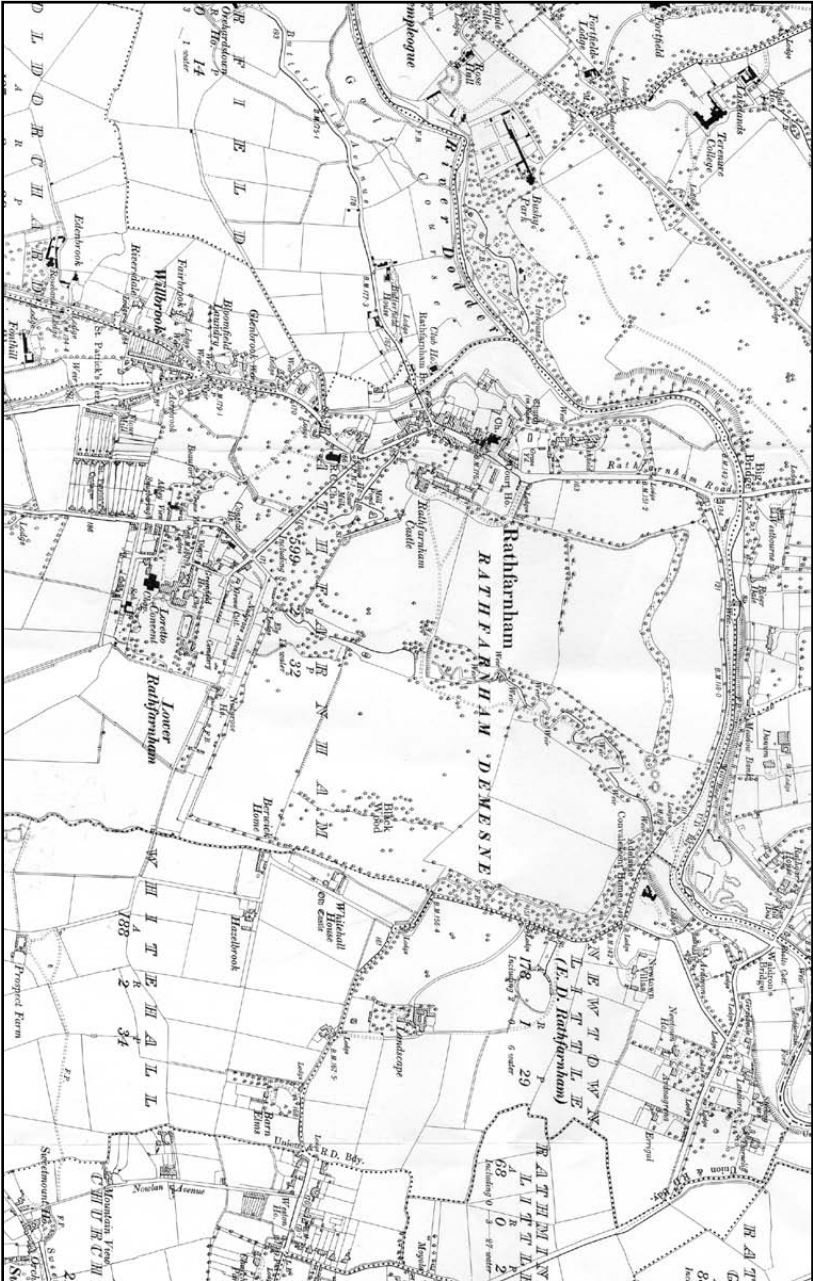
The Rathfarnham Road

The road to Rathfarnham according to many writers follows the same route as the Slighe Chualann, the ancient highway, which in the time of St. Patrick was used by travellers from Dublin to Wicklow and Wexford. This road is believed to have crossed the Dodder at the Big Bridge, now Pearse Bridge, and re-crossed it again near Oldbawn, an unnecessarily inconvenient route, considering that a road through Templeogue to Oldbawn would not necessitate a crossing at all. The first record of a bridge being built here was in 1381 and in 1652 it was described by Boate in his *Natural History* as a wooden bridge which “though it be high and strong nevertheless hath several times been quite broke and carried away through the violence of sudden floods”. After three bridges had been demolished by the river, between 1728 and 1765, the present structure of one stone arch was erected in the latter year. This was widened on the west side in 1953 when it was renamed in commemoration of the brothers Pearse.



Pearse Bridge, Rathfarnham

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Six inch Ordnance Survey map of Rathfarnham in 1912

RATHFARNHAM ROADS

In 1912 when the main drainage scheme was being laid to Rathfarnham, a deep cutting was made under the road at this point. At a depth of 23ft below the road level a stone causeway was uncovered nine feet wide and built of great blocks crossing the course of the river. Cut into the surface of the stone were a number of deep parallel grooves, as from the action of wheeled traffic over a long period. This was evidence for the existence here of a busy thoroughfare before the construction of the earliest bridge.

The low-lying fields on the west side of the road, just beside the bridge were formerly occupied by a mill pond and extensive mill buildings. On a map by Frizell dated 1779 it is called the “Widow Clifford’s mill and mill holding” and in 1843 it is named the “Ely Cloth Factory.” It was then owned by a Mr. Murray but passed in 1850 into the hands of Mr. Nickson, who converted it into a flour mill. His family continued in occupation until 1875 when John Lennox took over. In 1880 this mill closed down, the buildings were demolished and not a trace of it now remains.



Ashfield, later known as Brookvale is an 18th Century Glebe House.

RATHFARNHAM ROADS

The next house on the same side, Ashfield, was occupied by the Protestant clergy during the eighteenth century. In the early part of the last century it was the home of Sir William Cusac Smith, Baron of the Exchequer and from 1841 of the Tottenham Family who continued to reside there down to 1913. After this it was occupied by the Brooks of Brooks Thomas Ltd. down to about fifty years ago when the estate was divided up and houses built along the main road. A new road was later built along the side of the house and named Brookvale after the last occupants.

Lower Dodder Road

To the east of Pearse Bridge is the lower Dodder Road, following the course of the Dodder downstream to Orwell Bridge. Facing an open green space on this road is a fine entrance gateway, built in the form of a triumphal arch and originally leading to Rathfarnham Castle. The erection of this gateway is attributed to Henry Loftus, Earl of Ely from 1769 to 1783 who also was responsible for the classical work at the castle itself. This is named “the new gate” on Frizell’s map of 1779. After the division of the estate in 1913 this became the entrance to the Castle Golf Club but it was later abandoned in favour of the more direct Woodside Drive.



Lord Ely's Gate was erected around 1770.

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In 1841 this place was the scene of a brutal murder, when the body of an Italian named Garlibardo was found lying on the open ground in front of the gate. Although arrests were made at the time no one was convicted of the murder. The spot was later marked with a cross.

The Motte and Bailey

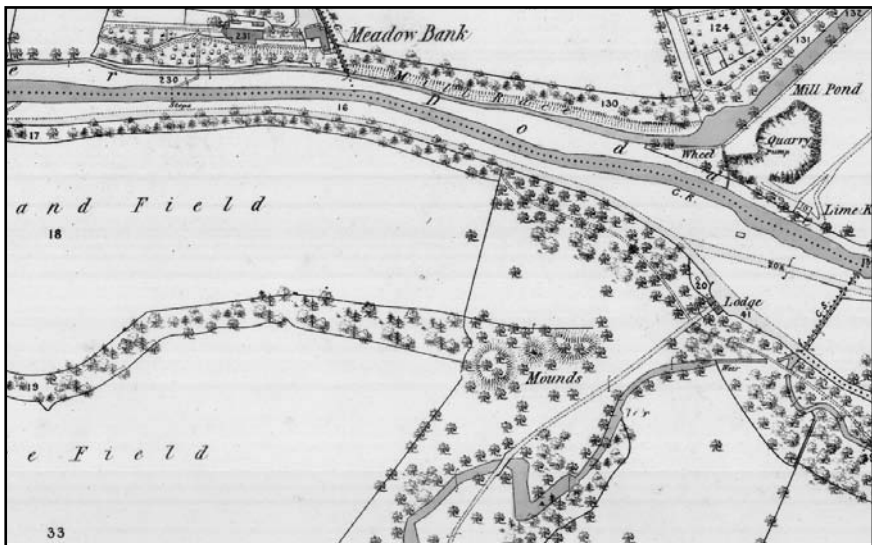
To the west of this gate is a high and narrow ridge of ground about 50 feet high which is formed between the river Dodder and the stream which flows through the Rathfarnham Estate. With a certain amount of cutting and scraping this ridge has been converted into a defensive earthwork of the motte and bailey type, which were introduced by the Normans in the twelfth century and constructed as a temporary measure until such time as stone castles and bawn walls could be built. They consisted normally of a high and steep sided earthen mound, surrounded by a deep ditch and with a flat summit upon which a wooden tower was built. Against one side of this mound a larger and lower platform was made, also enclosed by a bank and ditch.



The motte and bailey in 1977.

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The high mound was for the commander and the larger enclosure for his troops. In the case of the one at Rathfarnham which was probably built by Milo le Bret in 1199, the existing ridge was adopted. The narrow end was cut off by a deep cutting and the soil used to raise the top of the motte. Another cutting was made between the motte and the bailey and where the ridge widened, the bailey was formed and again isolated from the rest of the ridge by another deep cutting. The top of the motte is about 10 yards wide and the bailey is oval in shape and about 23 yards long.



Map shows the mounds of the motte and bailey.

The Old Graveyard

Next to Ashfield is the old graveyard containing the ruins of a church which was dedicated to Saints Peter and Paul. This was a medieval church and was used for Protestant worship down to 1795 when it was found to be too small for the congregation and a new one was erected a short way off. The end walls of the old church are

RATHFARNHAM ROADS

still standing, the west gable containing a bell turret and the east pierced by a chancel arch, the chancel itself having disappeared. The north wall is gone and all that remains of the south wall is an arched opening.



Ruins of church in Rathfarnham graveyard. Captain Kelly's grave is on the left.

Near the entrance to the burial ground is the grave of Capt. James Kelly, an old fenian who was associated with the rising of 1867. He was organiser for the Rathfarnham district and was known in the area as "The Knight of Glendoo". On one occasion when he was on the run he was hiding in the cellar of his business premises in Wicklow St. when it was raided by police. An employee named James Fitzpatrick who strongly resembled Capt. Kelly in appearance was arrested in error and was tried and sentenced to six months imprisonment, which he served without betraying his identity. Capt. Kelly died on 8th March 1915 in his seventieth year.

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On the opposite side of the road are Crannagh Park and Crannagh Road, Rathfarnham Park and Ballytore Road, all built on part of the old Rathfarnham Estate. In the garden of a house formerly named “Tower Court” in Crannagh Road is an ancient circular pigeon house, a relic of Lord Ely’s occupation of Rathfarnham Castle. The entrance to this curious structure is by a low door on level with the ground and the inside is lined from floor to roof with holes for the pigeons. A floor of more recent date has been inserted half way up, so as to make two rooms, and a second door broken through the wall at that level.



Circular pigeon house.

Rathfarnham Castle

On the east side of the main street and formerly approached through a rather ungraceful gothic archway is the castle of Rathfarnham, its great walls towering over the smaller houses in the village. This ancient fortress was erected by Adam Loftus, Protestant Archbishop of Dublin who was granted in 1583 what was then described as a waste village. His new castle was not long built when in 1600 it had to withstand an attack by the Wicklow clans and again in 1641 it was able to hold out against the Confederate army when the surrounding country was overrun. In 1649, a few days before the battle of Rathmines, the castle, which was garrisoned by the Parliamentary forces, was stormed and taken by the Royalists but they probably evacuated it again when Ormonde withdrew with his army to Kilkenny.



Rathfarnham Castle in 1977.

RATHFARNHAM ROADS

The property, of which the Loftus family had resumed possession, passed by marriage to the Whartons who sold it in 1723 to the Right Hon. William Connolly, Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, for £62,000. In 1742 the castle was sold to Dr. Hoadly, Archbishop of Armagh, and on his death four years later it passed to his son-in-law Bellingham Boyle. In 1767 he sold the property to Nicholas Loftus, second Earl of Ely, a descendant of Adam Loftus, the original builder of the castle.

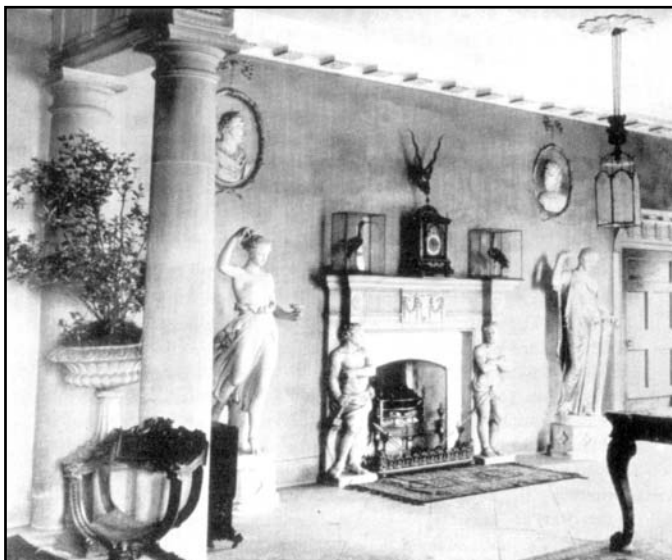
This young man died within a few years, probably as an indirect result of great hardships which he had suffered in his youth, and the estate passed to his uncle, Hon. Henry Loftus, who was created Earl of Ely in 1771. This nobleman was responsible for the conversions of the medieval fortress into a Georgian mansion. The narrow loopholes were enlarged and the battlements replaced by a coping with ornamental urns. A semi-circular extension was added to the east side and an entrance porch approached by steps, on the north.



Another view of Rathfarnham Castle in 1977.

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The interior was decorated in accordance with the tastes of the period and the leading artists, including Angelica Kauffman, employed in the work. Writers of the period who visited the house have left extravagant descriptions of its splendour. Henry Loftus died in 1783 and was succeeded by his nephew Charles Tottenham. He subsequently became Marquis of Ely, and later, as a reward for his vote at the time of the Union, Earl of Ely.



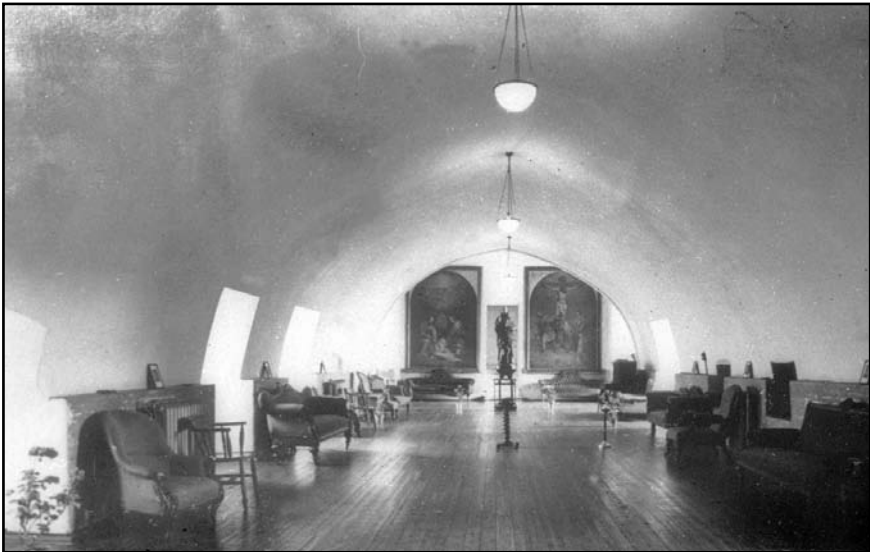
The entrance hall, Rathfarnham Castle from Ball's *A History of the County Dublin*.

Early in the nineteenth century the family sold the estate and removed their valuable possessions to Loftus Hall in Wexford. The lands were then used for dairy farming and the castle allowed to fall into disrepair. In 1852, it was bought by the Lord Chancellor, Francis Blackbourne, whose family continued to reside there until 1913. In that year the estate was sold and divided. The eastern part became a golf links. The castle and the south western portion were bought by the Jesuit Order and the north western part was devoted to housing.

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The original castle consisted of a square building four stories high with a projecting tower at each corner, the walls of which were an average of 5 feet thick. On the ground level are two vaulted apartments divided by a wall nearly 10 feet thick which rises to the full height of the castle. On level with the entrance hall were the library and reception rooms and above this the former ballroom, later converted into a chapel.

To the north of the castle was a long vaulted chamber formerly known as Cromwell's Court or Fort. This was apparently a barn or storehouse erected in connection with the castle farm and like the castle itself had narrow loop holes in its 5 foot thick walls. In 1922 it was incorporated in the new retreat house, to which it formed the ground story and its character concealed from the outside by a uniform covering of cement plaster.



Cromwell's Fort, Rathfarnham Castle.

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Not far from the Golf Club House was an attractive little temple built of stone and brick, another relic of Lord Ely's occupation of Rathfarnham. It was rather out of repair but if it had been restored it would have added much to the charm of this part of the links. Unfortunately, by decision of the committee, it was demolished in 1979.



1977 picture of the temple sited on the lands of Rathfarnham Castle. The structure was demolished in 1979.

In 1986 the Jesuits sold Rathfarnham Castle, but before leaving they removed the stained glass windows, made in the famous Harry Clarke studios, from the chapel.

Rathfarnham Village

In the castle grounds were several fish ponds which were supplied by a mill race taken from the stream which rises up at Kilmashogue and flows down through Grange Golf Links and St. Enda's. This served several mills before entering the fish ponds, whence it ran through the golf links while a smaller branch was conducted under the road to the flour mills which stood at the corner of Butterfield Lane. Described in 1836 as Sweetman's Flour Mills it frequently changed hands before it closed down in 1887. It was later operated as a saw mill. The dry mill race can still be seen here on the north side of Butterfield Avenue.

Rathfarnham Protestant Parish Church on the Main St. was built in 1795 to replace the church in the old graveyard which had become inadequate for the congregation. Beside the church is the old school house which dates from early in the nineteenth century.



Lower Main Street Rathfarnham in the early 1900s.

Immediately adjoining is Church Lane at the corner of which is a bank built on the site of an R.I.C. barracks which was burned down during the Troubles. In the lane is an old blocked up doorway of an early eighteenth century type.

Church Lane leads to Woodview cottages which are built partly on the site of an old paper mill. The mill race previously mentioned passed under Butterfield Lane to the paper mill and continued on below Ashfield to turn the wheel of the Ely Cloth Factory. It was later turned into the Owendoher river at Woodview Cottages but down to recent years when the new road was made to Templeogue



Blocked up doorway in Church Lane in 1977.

the old mill race could still be traced through the grounds of Ashfield where its dry bed was still spanned by several stone bridges.

The paper mill, of which some old walls and brick arches still survive, has been described as the oldest one in Ireland but there does not appear to be any evidence to support this. The earliest reference to a paper mill here was in 1719 when a petition for

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financial aid was presented by William Lake of Rathfarnham but we hear of one at Milltown as far back as 1694. In 1751, paper was made here by William and Thomas Slater whose works were destroyed by fire in 1775. Archer's survey of 1801 mentions two paper mills here, Freemans and Teelings, and both D'Alton in 1836 and Lewis in 1837 state that one paper mill was still working and from 1836 to 1839 the name Henry Hayes, Rathfarnham Mill appears in the directories. If this can be identified with the mill at Woodview cottages it must have become idle soon afterwards as it is designated "Old Mill" on the 1843 edition of the O.S. map. In 1854 when this mill had neither water wheel nor machinery, an attempt was made to re-open it for the manufacture of paper but it came to nothing.



Ruins of old mill, Rathfarnham c. 1977.

At the end of the main street the road to Lower Rathfarnham passes on the right the site of the earliest Constabulary barracks which closed down in 1890 when the establishment was transferred to a house named Leighton Lodge near Loreto Abbey.

Chapter 2

Rathfarnham Lower and Whitehall



THE Catholic church of the Annunciation was erected in 1878 to replace the old chapel in Willbrook Road. Outside the church door is a primitive type of font on a pedestal bearing the inscription:

*FONT USED IN MASS HOUSE OF PENAL TIMES
IN PARISH OF RATHFARNHAM FROM 1732*

The appearance of this font would suggest that it was originally a stone bullaun and dated to a period much earlier than the penal times.



Font outside the Church of the Annunciation.

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On the opposite corner is the well-known Yellow House, a licensed premises built on the site of an inn of the same name which is marked on Taylor's map of 1816. A tradition has been recorded by Mr. Hammond that in 1798 it was owned by a Michael Eades, who sheltered wanted men in his house. It was also frequented by the soldiers of the Rathfarnham Guard whose careless talk was carefully noted by the United Irishmen hiding on the premises. In 1804 when the truth came to be known, the place was wrecked by the same military.



Yellow House and Church of the Annunciation, Rathfarnham in 1977.

The Yellow House was in the news again in the 1940s when two men broke into the premises on Little Christmas night. When the alarm was raised they took refuge in the low-lying gardens beside the bridge over the Owendoher river. When two gardaí spotted them

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and vaulted over the wall in pursuit they opened fire and seriously injured the nearest pursuer. Despite this the gardaí continued in the chase and coming to grips they were attacked with a carpenter's brace and battered into unconsciousness, while the culprits escaped down the river. The two gardaí eventually recovered and a man was later arrested, charged with attempted murder and sentenced to twenty-one years imprisonment. The two gardaí Michael Flynn and John Tighe who were promoted to the rank of sergeant were very properly awarded the Scott Gold Medal for their courage.

Nutgrove Avenue

A short distance past the church is Nutgrove Avenue, widened and extended in the 1950s to link up with Churchtown. The old quiet tree shaded avenue has been completely swept away, along with the



Nutgrove school.

“narrow lanes” a cramped passage bounded on both sides by towering walls and full of right angled bends, which wended its crooked course between Loreto Convent cemetery and the garden of Nutgrove House. A massive gateway stood at the entrance to this avenue down to about 1911 which bore the inscription “Nutgrove School Established 1802”.

In 1839 this school was under the supervision of Mr. Philip Jones, who continued to hold the post of principal until 1866 when the position was held by Mrs. Anne Jones. In 1876 the school closed down and the house was occupied as a private residence by various tenants down to recent years when it became the headquarters of the parish council. The new avenue was laid through the former school grounds and the house shorn of its ornamental gardens stood with its front against the footpath. At some time this house had been disfigured with a rather unsightly concrete porch and the old brickwork covered with cement plaster, which concealed the fact that this was a very interesting eighteenth century building containing a fine stairs and coved ceilings with good plaster decoration. Unfortunately the house was allowed to fall into very bad repair and eventually had to be demolished.

Joyce in his *The Neighbourhood of Dublin* states that this house was at one time the dower house of Rathfarnham Castle but in this he is almost certainly mistaken, as Frizell’s map of 1779 shows that it was outside the estate. It is possible that he confused it with the other old house on the opposite side of the avenue which was formerly named Ely Cottage, later altered to Ely Lodge, and which was shown as within the boundary of the estate. This house was in very bad repair but was restored in the late 1970s in a very tasteful manner. The house is now named Ely House.



Ely House, Nutgrove Avenue was formerly known as Ely Lodge.

Whitehall

The first avenue on the left, beyond Nutgrove House, is Whitehall Road where stands that curious structure known as the Bottle Tower or Hall's Barn. This was built by Major Hall in 1742 in imitation of the better constructed Wonderful Barn erected about the same period near Leixlip. The floors and other timber work have long



The Bottle Tower from Whitehall Road.

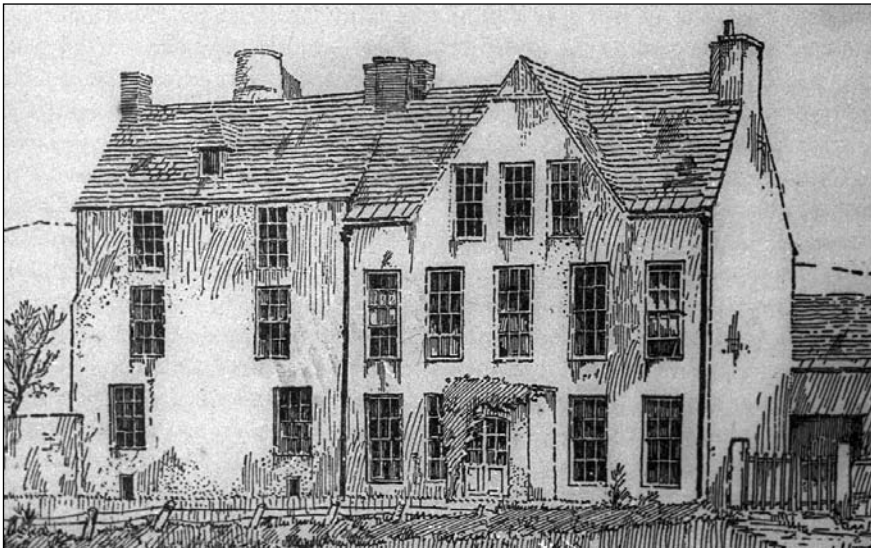
RATHFARNHAM ROADS

disappeared and the winding stone steps are not considered safe to ascend. While the ground floor may have been used as a barn, the first and second floors appear to have been residential as they are both fitted with fireplaces. A smaller structure behind the barn, built on somewhat similar lines was a pigeon house.



The Bottle Tower and Pigeon House

The old house named Whitehall which was demolished some years ago stood adjacent to the barn. It was also built by Major Hall about the same time.



Whitehall.

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In 1778 it was the residence of Rev. Jeremy Walsh, curate of Dundrum, and in 1795 it was converted into a boarding house by Mr. Michael Kelly. A newspaper advertisement in 1816 invites enquiries from prospective visitors. In a description written in the last century the old fashioned kitchen and panelled staircase are specially noted.

Berwick House

The tall house at the bend in the road, until recently occupied by the De la Salle Brothers, seems to be identical with a house named Waxfield where the death is recorded in 1766 of Mr. John Lamprey. In 1836 it was known as Hazelbrook, a name which was later transferred to the nearby milk bottling plant and ice cream venture. From 1844 to 1899 it was known as Bachelor's Hall, after which it became the headquarters of a charitable institution under the name of Berwick Home. In 1944 it again became a private residence and the name was changed to Berwick House.



Berwick House in 1977.

Loreto Abbey

The imposing buildings of Loreto Abbey in Lower Rathfarnham form a landmark visible for many miles south of the city. The mansion which now forms the centrepiece of the group was built by Mr. William Palliser about 1725. No expense was spared in its construction and decoration, as can still be judged by the beautifully preserved interior, the polished mahogany and, in one room, embossed leather wallpaper. William Palliser died in 1768 without issue and Rathfarnham House passed to his cousin the Rev. John Palliser, who was rector of the parish. After his death in 1795 the house was purchased by George Grierson, the King's Printer, who resided here for a few years. When Grierson removed to his new abode in Woodtown the house remained unoccupied for some years until in 1821 it was purchased by Most Rev. Dr. Murray for the newly founded Loreto Order.



Rathfarnham House is part of the Loreto Abbey complex.

The foundress Rev. Mother Mary Frances Teresa Ball made many improvements to the place. She is said to have added a storey to the old house although there is no evidence from the exterior to support this. Many additions have been made over the years, the church was built in 1840, the novitiate in 1863 and six years later the part named St. Joseph's wing which contains the concert hall and refectory. St. Anthony's wing was erected in 1896, St. Francis Xavier's in 1903 and the Lisieux building in 1932 for the accommodation of visiting prelates to the Eucharistic Congress. In 1999 the boarding school closed down and on the 15th August 2000, the last sisters left and moved to the newly constructed Loreto House.

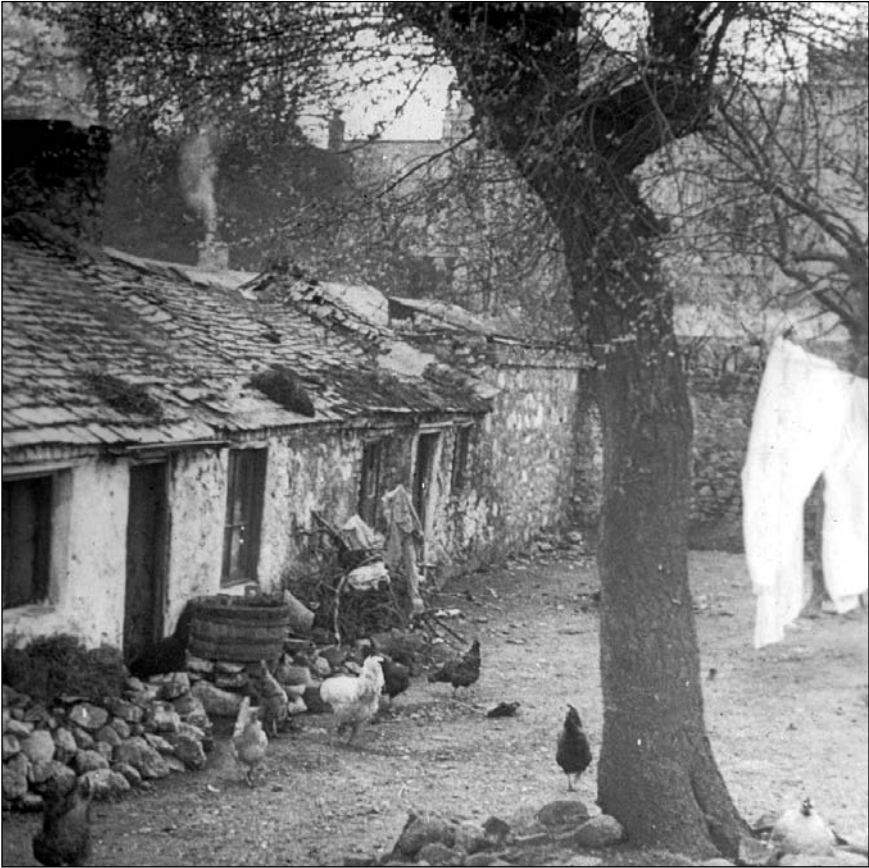


The drawing room, Loreto Abbey from Ball's *A History of the County Dublin*, was preserved in its original condition by the Loreto Order.

The Ponds

Loreto Terrace on the north side of the Abbey was formerly known as The Ponds, a name originating apparently from the large pond which two hundred years ago occupied the low lying field between Loreto Terrace and Nutgrove Avenue. This area was described in

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The Ponds, Rathfarnham (Courtesy of Mrs. Monica O'Connor).

Joyce's *Neighbourhood of Dublin* in 1912 as “the dilapidated locality known as the Ponds” but it has since been largely rebuilt. An old photograph from Mr. Larry O'Connor's collection shows what it looked like at that time.

The last of the old houses was demolished in the 1950s. It was a very early eighteenth century gabled residence named Grove Cottage and was probably the oldest occupied house in Dublin.

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This place was the scene of a skirmish at the outbreak of the rising of 1798. The insurgents of the south county assembled at the Ponds on 24th May 1798 under the leadership of David Keely, James Byrne, Edward Keogh and Ledwich. The two latter had been members of Lord Ely's yeomanry but had taken to the field with the United Irishmen. The insurgents were attacked by the local yeomanry corps but were able to defend themselves and the yeomanry were forced to retreat. A party of regular troops were then sent against them and a stiff encounter took place. A number of the insurgents were killed or wounded and some prisoners taken including Keogh and Ledwich. The survivors retreated to join up with a party from Clondalkin and a further engagement took place at the turnpike on the Rathcoole road where the enemy were successfully repulsed.



Grove Cottage, The Ponds, Rathfarnham.

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Church of the Annunciation and the Yellow House, Rathfarnham in the early 1960s.



The site of Nutgrove School c. 1977.

Chapter 3

*Grange Road to Harold's Grange
and Taylor's Grange*



THE road to Harold's Grange continues southward from Loreto Abbey past some very old houses. The first is Washington Lodge, its attractive eighteenth century facade hidden by a shrubbery. On the opposite side on Convent Lane stood Snugborough which had its gable end to the road. In recent years new avenues have been laid out here on both sides of the road.



Snugborough, Grange Road in 1977. This house was recently replaced by an apartment block.

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Washington Lodge, Grange Road in 1977.

Barton Drive, on the left, occupies the site of a house named Barton Lodge.

On the other side is Silveracre, once the home of Dr. Henthorn Todd, Professor of Hebrew in T.C.D., who was connected by marriage with the Hudson family of the adjoining estate of



Silveracre in 1977.

Hermitage. He was well known as an Irish scholar and was the editor and translator of a number of Irish documents as well as the author of a life of St. Patrick. He died here in 1869. About the middle of the last century the name of the house was changed to Silverton but it was later changed back to the original Silveracre. Most of the land is now built on. It was also the home in the early part of twentieth century of Surgeon Croly, who founded Baggot St. Hospital.

St Enda's

The next estate on the same side is Hermitage or St. Enda's, the former home of Padraig Pearse and later of his sister Miss Margaret Pearse. The house, which is entirely faced with cut granite and has an imposing stone portico, was occupied in the eighteenth century by Edward Hudson, an eminent dentist. He had a passion for Irish antiquities which he demonstrated in an unusual way by the erection of a number of romantic ruins around the estate. Inside the boundary wall near the entrance gate he built a small watch tower and further along, a hermit's cave, a dolmen, a ruined abbey and beside a deep well, a tiny chamber with stone bench and narrow



Pictured left: Watch Tower and right: Hermit's Cave and Dolmen.

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fireplace. At the corner of the road to Whitechurch the loopholed and crenellated structure known as the Fortification, or Emmet's Fort was another of his creations.

South of the house he put up a grotto surmounted by a tall pillar stone, a Brehon's chair and a fanciful construction consisting of two great boulders, one balanced on top of the other, which has since been demolished.

Just inside the boundary wall he cut an inscription in Ogham on the two faces of a large rock. When the letters are translated they read:

RIDENT VICINI GLEBASETS A KH A MOVENTEM
EDUARDUM HUDSON



Picture left: Ogham Stone and right: Obelisk



Picture left: Emmet's Fort and right: Temple-like structure.

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In the pretty glen adjoining the Whitechurch road he erected a sort of temple with several small chambers and flights of steps. The estate was at that time known as the Fields of Odin and is so called on maps of the period.

Within the grounds also, at the corner nearest to Whitechurch is an obelisk, stated to have been erected by a former owner, Major Doyne, over the grave of a horse that carried him through the battle of Waterloo. The date however of Major Doyne's occupation does not support this. Unlike the constructions of Edward Hudson, which were purposely of the roughest material, this monument was of cut



St. Enda's, formerly known as Hermitage is now the home of the Pearse Museum.
Courtesy of the Pearse Museum

stone with small moulded pillars. Unfortunately the heavy hand of the vandal descended on it, toppled it from its base and smashed the supporting pillars. It has since been re-erected, leaving out the pillars.

Edward Hudson was succeeded by his son William Elliot Hudson, who was born here in 1796. A distinguished scholar, he was a friend

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of Thomas Davis and Gavin Duffy and was a patron of Irish literature and art. Shortly before his death in 1857 he endowed the Royal Irish Academy with a fund for the publication of its Irish Dictionary and he also left the Academy Library a valuable collection of books.

From 1840 to 1858 Hermitage was the home of Richard Moore, Attorney General, and in 1859 it came into the possession of Major Richard Doyne, stated to be a veteran of Waterloo. From 1872 to 1885 it was occupied by George Campbell, merchant of 58 Sackville St., and after lying vacant for a few years it was tenanted by Major Philip Doyne of the 4th Dragoon Guards. In 1891 Colonel Frederick le Mesurier, barrister is returned as occupier and in 1899 Mr. William Woodburn.

St. Enda's College was founded by Pádraig Pearse in 1909 and was at first housed in Cullenswood House, Ranelagh. Pearse felt that the confined surroundings of this house gave no scope for the outdoor



Drawing room, St. Endas.

life that should play so large a part in the education of youth, so in 1910 he leased Hermitage from Mr. Woodburn and moved his college here. A long billiard room was converted into a study hall and chapel, the drawing room became a dormitory and the stables opening off an enclosed square became class rooms.

In *The Story of a Success* Pearse tells of the realisation of one of his life's ambitions and it was from here that he set off for the city on his bicycle for the last time on Easter Sunday 1916. After the rising the college continued to function under the care of Miss Margaret Pearse until it finally closed down in 1935. After the death of Miss Pearse in 1968 St. Enda's passed into the hands of the state and has since been opened as a public park.

Priory

Directly opposite to St. Enda's was Priory, the home of John Philpot Curran, at the time of Emmet's rising. The house was formerly named Holly Park but when Curran bought it in 1790 he changed the name to Priory. Here he lived for 27 years at the peak of his fame and here he was to endure the tragic events which cast a shadow on his private life. First, the untimely death of his daughter Gertrude, followed by the loss of his wife, who left him for another man, and lastly the discovery of the association of his daughter Sarah with Robert Emmet.

Gertrude Curran died in 1792 at the age of 12 as the result of a fall from a window. Curran had her buried in the grounds of the Priory and over the grave he placed a recumbent slab on which was fixed a metal plate bearing the inscription:

Here lies the body of Gertrude Curran
fourth daughter of John Philpot Curran
who departed this life October 6th 1792
Age twelve years.

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Priory, Grange Road, from *Footprints of Emmet* by J.J. Reynolds (1903).



Gertrude Curran's grave, Priory from *Footprints of Emmet* by J.J. Reynolds (1903).

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The position of the grave was clearly marked on the early editions of the Ordnance Survey maps. It was about midway along the northern boundary of the corner field facing the Fortification, on the north side of the boundary bank and a few yards from it. It was formerly enclosed by a grove of trees, which can be seen in J. J. Reynold's photograph of 1903 but these were cut down about 1928. Some time later the stumps were dug out and the stone slab broken up and thrown on the adjoining bank. The metal plate had already been taken by souvenir hunters.



Fragments of Gertrude Curran's grave slab
in 1979.

It was Sarah Curran's desire to be buried here also but to this her father would not agree as he had come in for criticism on the previous occasion for burying his daughter in unconsecrated ground.

In this district nearly every ancient site is associated in tradition with either Sarah Curran or Robert Emmet and it is not surprising therefore to find that this burial place has been suggested as the last resting place of Robert

Emmet. This tradition goes back for well over a century and it is rather surprising that this site was not investigated when the search for Emmet's remains was being made at places a great deal less accessible and no less improbable.

In October 1979 the opportunity offered itself to carry out this investigation. The Priory estate was being developed and heavy machinery moved in to lay the roads and sewers. Mrs. Bernadette Foley of nearby Barton Drive drew attention to the need to carry out

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this work before the site was buried for ever under a concrete jungle. With the cooperation of Messrs Gallaghers, the developers, a small group undertook to investigate the site. First the exact location was checked on the original large scale manuscript map in the Ordnance Survey, next the field was carefully chained and the site marked to within a few feet and then a narrow trench 3 feet deep was dug through where the burial should have been. The result was a complete blank. A second and a third trench were cut at intervals until a large area had been investigated without finding any burial, timber, brick or stone.

The developers then offered to investigate further with the excavator and carefully cleared an area of 20 yards long and 10 yards wide to a depth of 4 feet without finding any sign of disturbance. They then deepened this area by another two feet with no better result. All the accounts of the burial state that it was made in a vault and it is therefore surprising and disappointing that no evidence whatever was found and there does not seem to be any obvious explanation for it. I would like at this stage to pay tribute to the interest shown in this work by the staff of Messrs Gallaghers Ltd. especially the foreman Mr. Leslie Black.



The author pictured with spade was part of the team which undertook an archaeological investigation at Priory in 1979 in search of Gertrude Curran's grave.

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Priory was occupied by the Curran family down to 1875 and subsequently by the Taylors until 1923. At the beginning of the century the house and gardens were still in good repair but after the Taylor's time the place was neglected. And all that remains of the house are the ruins on the green in Hermitage Estate.



Adjacent to Priory was a mound with a tree growing out of it.

In one of the fields behind Priory was an artificial mound with a tree growing on top of it. There is no information available about this and it may have been a prehistoric burial site. This mound was demolished in 1986 when houses were being built on an adjoining site. An underground passage was exposed which was followed for a considerable way by local children.

Harold's Grange

Beyond Priory and the Fortification are a number of old residences, Eden, Rathfarnham Park, Highfield Manor and Grange House, and on the other side of the road the well wooded demense of Marlay. All these properties are in the extensive townland of Harold's Grange, which in former times comprised part of the lands of the powerful Harold family. The Harolds were settled here in the thirteenth century and occupied it, first as tenants of St. Mary's Abbey and later of Lord Upper Ossory. They became responsible for the protection of the Pale in the neighbourhood of their home but they were an independant and often lawless family and did not hesitate to use violence against those whom they were expected to protect. In the reign of Henry VIII they had a small thatched castle and a watermill on these lands. Early in the seventeenth century they severed their connection with Harold's Grange but continued to hold Kilmashogue until dispossessed of their rights after 1641.

Marlay

At the beginning of the eighteenth century many improvements were carried out on the lands of Harold's Grange by Mr. Thomas Taylor. After his death in 1727 the place was occupied by his sons, one of whom, Alderman Thomas Taylor, was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1750. Soon after his death in 1763 the estate passed to the Right Hon. David La Touche, whose wife was a daughter of Rev. George Marlay, Bishop of Dromore, in whose honour the name of the place was changed to Marlay. The Taylors had built a mansion and laid out ornamental gardens and had enclosed an extensive deer park on the northern slope of Kilmashogue Mountain. The house was enlarged by La Touche in 1781. There was formerly in the grounds a mausoleum and monument to the memory of Elizabeth, Countess

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of Lanesborough, a sister of John David La Touche. This was situated to the south east of the lake, it was in ruins in 1871 and has since been removed. In the first quarter of the present century Marlay was the home of Robert Tedcastle of the well known Dublin business house and for the thirty years prior to its sale had been the property of the Love family. Marlay Demense was purchased by Dublin County Council in 1972 and opened as a fine public park in 1975. The adjoining house named Marlay Grange was erected in 1874 by Hon. Hercules Rowley J.P.



Marlay House today.

Glensouthwell

Grange Road continues for nearly a mile to skirt the boundary wall of Marlay as far as the cross roads at Taylor's Grange beyond which it terminates at a group of farmhouses where there was formerly an old passage leading to Stackstown. Prior to the development of the M50 motorway, the road to Kilmashogue along College Road, passed the entrance to Glensouthwell which is now known as Danesmoate. Within the grounds is a delightful glen known as Little Dargle, watered by a brook which rises near the Ticknock rifle range. This house was built in the eighteenth century by the Southwell family and in 1787 was the residence of Capt. William Southwell. Throughout the following century it was occupied by the Ponsonbys, down to 1896 and later by Professor Stanley Lane



Glensouthwell, now known as Danesmoate.

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Poole, the author of a number of works on Oriental art and numismatics. For many years down to 1946 it was the home of Lieutenant Algernon Gainsford of the Seafort Highlanders.

An ancient monument known as the Brehon 's Chair, consisting of three tall slabs about nine feet high enclosing a small square space was located in a field which was visible from College Road. It is now located within the housing development on the site. There was formerly another large slab supported by smaller ones lying to the north east but this was unfortunately destroyed about 1876 by blasting. The existing remains are apparently the portal portion of a dolmen type of tomb and the stones which were removed would have been part of the destroyed chamber. A similar type of portal can be seen on a dolmen at Haroldstown in Co. Carlow.



Brehon's Chair.

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Beside the stream in the Little Dargle were the remains of a tall narrow tower of which only one wall composed of one jamb of a doorway with a pointed arch was standing in 1977. This building was about nine feet square and around 1900, the remaining wall with its battlements was about twenty five feet high. A little over a hundred and twenty years ago this tower was in a better state of preservation and was surrounded by the old walls of other buildings from which it has been suggested that this was the site of the original Grange of the Harolds. The remaining portion however was of very light construction and quite unsuitable for a building of that period and location, whether intended for domestic or ecclesiastical use. It was probably built in the eighteenth century for the better enjoyment of the view over Dublin Bay.



Remains of tower at Glensouthwell c.1900 and in 1977.

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Beside the house is an octagonal building with a cellar underneath. In 1977 it was filled up with boughs and brushwood to prevent cattle falling through but is said to be elliptical in shape and was apparently an ice house. On the other side of the brook there is a fine arched gateway in cut stone leading into the pasture land.

St. Columba's College

Next to Glensouthwell is St. Columba's College, a boarding school for Protestant boys which enjoys a well deserved reputation for the high standard of its students. The fine mansion which now forms the front of the college was formerly named Hollypark and was built toward the end of the eighteenth century by Geoffrey Foot of the well known snuff manufacturing family. St. Columba's was founded in 1843 and was at first located at Stackallen House in Co. Meath. In 1849 the college was transferred to this situation and the chapel and other necessary buildings erected. The old house contains some fine panelling, tapestries and antique furniture. In a grove of trees near the tennis court is St. Sabh's holy well about which no information seems to be available. It is in a deep hole faced about with masonry and approached by a flight of steps.



Hollypark is now part of St. Columba's College. (c. 1960).



Cross found on Kilmashogue
Mountain.

Nearby is an ancient ice house with its entrance blocked up.

In the chapel is an ancient stone cross which was found about fifty years ago somewhere on the lower slopes of Kilmashogue mountain behind the college. It was brought into the college chapel and has been there ever since. Unfortunately there is no record of the spot where it was found and enquiries have so far failed to elicit any information. This is a great

pity, as it must certainly have come from the site of the ancient church of Kilmashogue, which was mentioned by P.W. Joyce and the location of which is now unknown.

Above the back wall of St. Columba's College is a memorial to Volunteer Sean Doyle, erected on the spot where he was shot in 1920. It is against a low masonry wall at the side of a laneway and bears the following inscription:

In Memory of
Sean Ua Dubhgaill Volr.
4th Batt. Engineers I.R.A.
who was shot at Kilmashogue
Co Dublin
19th Sept 1920
by the armed forces of the
British Crown
Aged 19 years
R.I.P.

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Memorial to Seán Doyle, Stackstown.

Sean Doyle was the son of Alderman Peadar S. Doyle of Inchicore. On Sunday morning 19th September 1920, he was assembled with a party of No. 3 and No. 4 Coys and 5th Batt Engineers for a demonstration of the use of home made explosive known as war flour. Many of them were unarmed and when a party of military and police surrounded them and called on them to halt, some surrendered and others escaped over the mountain. About forty prisoners were taken and Volunteer Doyle was shot dead. This was one of the first activities of the newly recruited Black and Tans.

From behind the lands of Glensouthwell and St. Columba's College the ground rises with increasing gradient towards the top of Kilmashogue Mountain. Elrington Ball, in his history of the county, states that the barrier of the Pale ran across the north end of

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Kilmashogue Hill where remains of it were to be seen in the eighteenth century. This is apparently indicated on Rocque's map of 1760 where the description "old stone wall" is written against a line on the Stackstown side of Kilmashogue.

As far as can be judged from this map, which is not strictly to scale, this line coincides with a stone faced ditch which lies on the east side of the boundary between the townlands of Stackstown and Kilmashogue and which is now within a young forestry plantation. If the identification is correct this must be one of the few remaining portions of the rampart of the Pale.



Portion of the Pale ditch, Kilmashogue.

Chapter 4

Butterfield Avenue



O the southern end of Rathfarnham village, Butterfield Avenue leads to Templeogue and Firhouse. Formerly known as Butterfield Lane, it retained its rural character down to the middle of this century but housing development, road widening and the removal of dangerous bends have now altered it beyond recognition. In this connection it is interesting to note that on the map made by John Rocque in 1760 only 4 houses are shown on the entire length of the avenue. These four houses are still standing. Down to 1912 the only addition to these was a pair of council houses beside the bridge.



Butterfield Lane from *Footprints of Emmet* (1903).

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Rocque's map of 1760, showing Butterfield Lane.

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The fairs of Rathfarnham were formerly held in Butterfield Lane on May 15th, July 10th and October 7th. The former was a cattle fair and that in July for horses and sheep. The fair green was beside the bridge and stretched along the west bank of the Owendoher river but as is the practice throughout the country, the business was not confined to the green but overflowed along the main street and into every lane and alley. At the edge of the green was a lime kiln which is marked on Taylor's map of 1816. Mr. Charles Bunn of Butterfield House owned the lime works here from 1836 to 1848.

Old Orchard House

On the same side of the avenue is Old Orchard House, one of four already mentioned. This name does not appear before 1845, previous to which there were apparently two houses named Butterfield House. It would appear, however, that in 1836 Old Orchard was named Brasvillanne, which was recorded by the Ordnance Survey that year. It is believed by many that this was the house occupied by Robert Emmet in 1803 but historical evidence does not support this.



Old Orchard House.

Butterfield House

On the opposite side of the road and a short way further on is Butterfield House, identified by most historians as the house occupied by Robert Emmet. In order to avoid being arrested before the rising took place, Emmet rented the house in April 1803 under the name of Robert Ellis and lived here with Dowdall, Hamilton and others. Some of the meetings arranged here were attended by Michael Dwyer and some of his men from Glen Imaal. In charge of the housekeeping was Anne Devlin, whose father Brian Devlin had a dairy farm nearby.

On the night of July 23rd, after the rising had been abandoned, Emmet and his party returned to Butterfield Lane but later in the night moved into Brian Devlin's where they remained for a few days.



Butterfield House in 1977.

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In the meantime a party of military arrived at Butterfield House to search for Emmet and finding only Anne Devlin at home questioned her about her master, Mr. Ellis. Not getting any satisfaction they tried to force her to speak by prodding her with bayonets and half hanging her but with no better success. Due probably to the uncertainty of their information they let her go but she was later to suffer many years of imprisonment and hardship for her loyalty on this occasion.

In 1843 when Dr. Madden was writing his life of Emmet he brought Anne Devlin, then old and feeble, out in a cab to identify the house. According to his statement she did not at first recognise it as the entrance had been altered but once she identified it and obtained admission she was able to point out the bedrooms occupied by each person. This house was on the right hand side of the lane going from Rathfarnham Road. From here she was also able to see, at some



Probable ruins of Brian Devlin's house, Butterfield.

distance, the house occupied by her father. Many years later another writer, J. J. Reynolds communicated with the owner, Mr. J. Hely Hutchinson, concerning the identification of this house which had been leased to Mr. Ellis in 1803. The house was renovated and partly altered about 1900 and in 1952 the lower portion was extensively damaged by fire.

The farm occupied by Brian Devlin has never been positively identified. The map of 1843 shows only two farms near Butterfield Lane and since it was still standing in that year it must have been one of these.

One was beside the lane 150 yards from Butterfield House and the other was out in the fields and approached by a passage from behind the Yellow House. This would appear to be the most likely one and the historian Dr. Dickson has stated that there is good reason to believe that this was the house. The ruined walls were still standing about 10 years ago but the whole area is now built up and all the old features gone.

Washington House and Orchardstown House

The other two old houses on Butterfield Avenue are close together, near the far end. Washington House, formerly known as Washington Lodge and also as Oulart House is beside the road. It was occupied by a family named Grimwood from the middle of the last century down to 1916. It still retains the original curvilinear gables but the porch appears to be a later addition. A case has also been made identifying this house as the one occupied by Emmet. Orchardstown House which is entered from a byeroad was used as a private lunatic asylum from 1858 to 1892 under the supervision of the Stanley family.

Chapter 5

*Rathfarnham to Whitechurch and
Kilmashogue*



WILLBROOK Road commences beside the Yellow House and passes on the right the parochial house St. Mary's, where the old chapel stood which was replaced in 1878. This was described by the historian D'Alton as a "cruciform edifice with galleries disproportionately low." Just beyond this the first bridge over the Owendoher led to an old house named Glenbrook which was occupied by Thomas A.A. Kirkwood, the dispensary doctor from 1836 to 1847. Adjoining the house was the old dispensary for the sick poor which was founded in 1801. Subscribers of one guinea had the right to nominate one patient and any member out of work through sickness was entitled to 3/- per week and free medical attention. Both house and dispensary were demolished when the area was built upon.



Glenbrook House

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The next house was a very old one named Bloomfield. This name dates back at least 170 years. The house became the headquarters of an extensive laundry business and it provides another example of an old country residence giving its title to a great industry. This house has been identified by some historians as the one occupied by Thomas Addis Emmet which is mentioned in Wolfe Tone's diary. Tone records that with Russell he walked out to Rathfarnham to meet Emmet. He was shown a little study of an elliptical form which Emmet was building at the bottom of the lawn, which he said he would consecrate to our meetings if we lived to see our country emancipated. Tone suggested that he should not omit the inclusion of a small wine cellar and he was assured that this amenity was considered to be essential. Before this house was demolished I searched without success for the remains of the elliptical study.



Bloomfield House.

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The next house on this side was Fairbrook which has also been demolished and Fairbrook Lawns now occupy the site. In the field outside the house was a curious structure like a little temple with a pillar at each corner. This of course is now gone along with the house.

Temple, Fairbrook House.



Fairbrook House.

Whitechurch Road

At Willbrook the Whitechurch road branches to the east and follows the course of a little river which flows down from Kilmashogue Mountain. On the other side of the road is a partly choked up mill race which was taken from the river higher up to serve the Silveracre Mill. This was named Brooklawn Mill on both Taylor's map of 1816 and on Duncan's of 1821. In 1836 Mark Flower had a pin and wire factory here which was then named Silveracres Mill. This closed down in 1853. The place was then converted into a flour mill by Robert Gibney who also owned the nearby Willbrook Mills. From 1864 to 1893 it was operated by Patrick Gibney, after which it was taken over by Mr. J. E. Madden. Subsequent to 1899 it changed hands frequently and the last tenant was Mr. Murray from 1922 to 1933. The mill has since been demolished but the Mill House and some out offices still remain.



Willbrook Street today.

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St. Gatien's, on the other side of the road occupied the site of Willbrook Flour Mills already mentioned. This was Egan's Flour Mills noted by D'Alton in 1836. From 1847 to 1872 it was held by the Gibneys and from 1873 to 1882 by John Garvan. After lying idle for a few years it was incorporated with a dwelling house in 1885 by Mr. J. E. Madden and named St. Gatien's.

Cliff House, some distance further along the road, was formerly named Willmount and in 1847 was the residence of Frank Thorpe Porter, a magistrate and the author of a most entertaining book about Dublin called "Gleanings and Reminiscences".



Mill House and cottages, Whitechurch Road, c. 1960.

Taylor's Lane

The next road on the west side, Taylor's Lane, links up with Ballyboden and about midway along it was Newbrook Mill, where extensive paper manufacturing was carried on for many years. The two nearby residences Newbrook House and Kingston were usually occupied by those engaged in the industry. Mr. John Mansergh who

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Kingston, Taylor's Lane.



Taylor's Lane, Ballyboden, c. 1960.

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started the business died in 1763. It continued to operate under his name down to 1846 when it was taken over by John McDonagh, in whose family it remained until 1897. At that time James McDonagh, J.P., was residing in Kingston House, since demolished, and Richard and Thomas McDonagh in Newbrook. From 1901 to 1935 the industry was operated by Sir John Irwin who lived during this time at Newbrook House. The mill was extensively damaged by fire in 1942 and has since been demolished.

Chapter 6

Ballyboden Road



ETWEEN Willbrook and Ballyboden there were a number of very old houses, some of which still survive. Edenbrook and Riversdale are both over 160 years old. The latter was the home of W.B. Yeats.



Riversdale, Ballyboden Road in 2000. Riversdale was once the home of W. B. Yeats.

On the other side of the road was Fonthill Abbey, the lands of which were originally built on without interfering with the old house, but unfortunately, it has since been demolished and four houses built on the site. Rosebank which was originally named Old Orchard Cottage has been demolished and the next house Orchardton, formerly named Barley Hill which was enclosed in the middle of a housing estate was vacant and derelict. It was demolished in 1979 and Orchardton Estate built on the site.

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Fonthill Abbey.

On the opposite side of the road to Orchardton was the Millbrook Mills otherwise known as the Little Mill. This was shown as a cloth factory on the first Ordnance Survey map of 1837. The diameter of the water wheel was 16 feet. By 1848 this mill was operated as a flour mill by Michael Nicholson or Nickson.

Owners of Millbrook Mills

1851-52	William Evans
1853-54	Michael Nickson
1854-63	James Loughery
1864-79	James Whelan
1880	James Dempsey
1881-82	R.H. Fenwick, engineer, miller and patentee of mill machinery. Worked as an iron mill.
1883-86	Richard Dempsey returned it to a flour mill.
1887	Recorded as dilapidated
1900	Recorded as a ruin of no value

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In 1935 Mr. Sean Keating R.H.A., one of our most distinguished painters, had a house built on the site of the mill. Some pieces of old masonry survive including the housing for the mill wheel. The mill stream still runs through the garden, where a small mill wheel for generating electricity has been erected by Mr. Keating's son.



*Top: Mill wheel for generating electricity erected by Michael Keating and
below: housing for mill wheel of Millmount Mills. (Courtesy of Mrs. Kitty Keating).*

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In Ballyboden village there were two very old houses. The first, Everton is now demolished. The second, Bolton Hall, which was built in 1837 is still standing. A house is shown at this location on John Rocque's map of 1760.



Bolton Hall.

At the northern end of the village was a woollen cloth mill which belonged to John Reid from at least as far back as 1836 when D'Alton in his *History of the County of Dublin* states that this mill gave employment to about 40.

1874 John and James Reid. Valuation was reduced because of disuse.

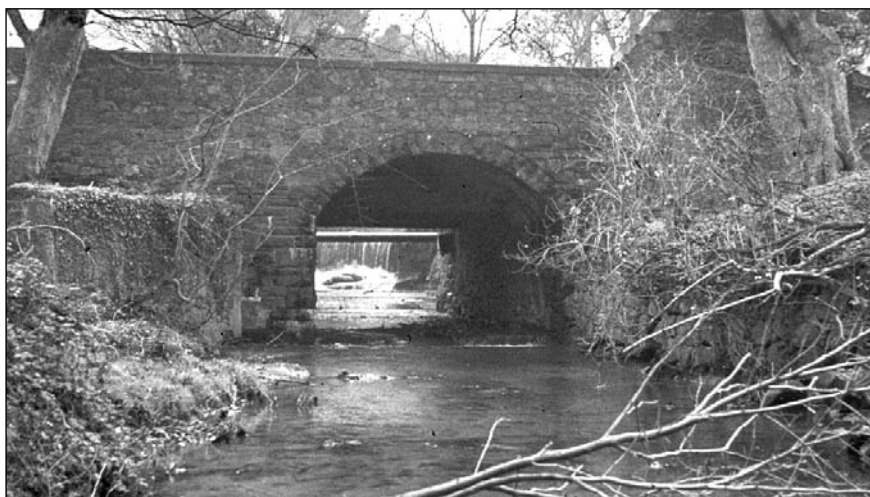
1874-96 Woollen cloth mill idle.

The ruins of this mill were demolished in 1950 when the entire village of millworkers' cottages was cleared away and a brand new village of council houses was built on the site.

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Within a stone's throw of Reid's Mill and behind Bolton Hall was a paper mill belonging to Nicholas Ryan which is shown on the map of 1837. In 1854 the name is changed to Simon Brown and in 1863 to Joseph P. Brown. The value was reduced in 1876 because of disuse and from that year it was not worked again. Each of these mills had a mill pond and they were all fed by the same mill stream, which was taken from the Owendoher river at Edmonstown where it operated a paper mill and a cotton mill and also Newbrook Papermill in Taylor's Lane before reaching Ballyboden. It continued below the Millbrook Mills to turn the wheel of the flour mill at St. Gatien's before discharging into the Glin stream coming from St. Enda's.

Just south of the village is Boden Bridge, crossing over the Owendoher river. This name was recorded in 1836 but at present it is known only as "Billy's Bridge" and has been so called as far back as can be remembered. None of the local people can say who is commemorated in this title but a tradition which was collected in 1936 by the Irish Folklore Commission may throw some light on it.

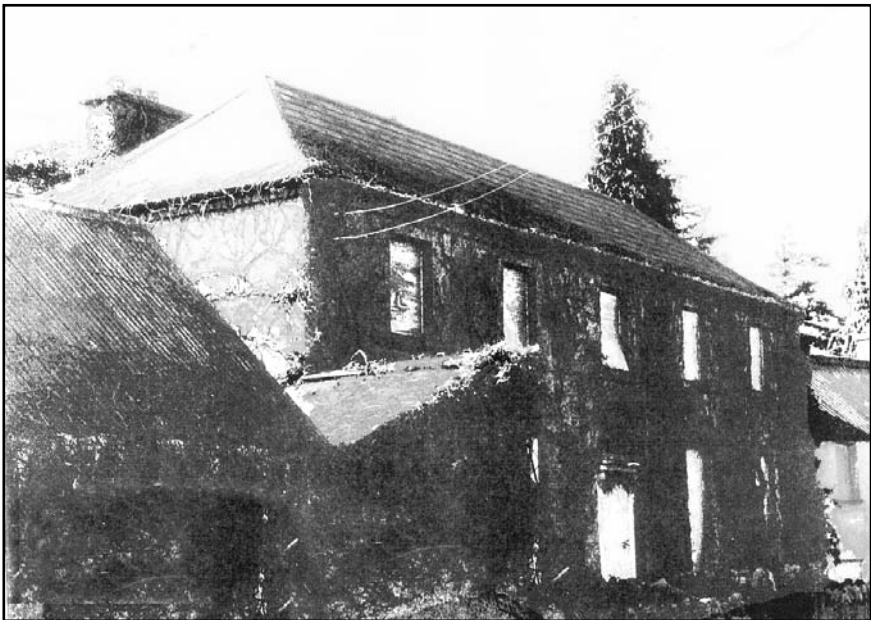


Boden Bridge or Billy's Bridge

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According to this record an old man named Billy Martin lived in a hut beside the bridge. He used spend his days leaning over the parapet listening to the river. He lived to a great age and when he died people used to say that his ghost was to be seen there.

A hundred years ago there was a continuous line of mill ponds as far as Rockbrook. First on the left was Sherlock's Cotton Mill which was converted into a laundry in 1873 and closed down before 1920. Next, beside the row of mill workers' cottages, was a paper mill operated by Messrs. Dollards from 1848 to 1896. It was later run by the Edmonstown Paper Co., down to about 1912. Reckitt's well known factory, now occupied by Chemserve Ltd., is on the site of another woollen mill which was also operated by John Reid of Ballyboden down to 1892 and by Frederick Clayton & Sons down to 1900.



The Mill House, Edmondstown in 1998 just before its demolition.

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On the other side of the river, the new school is built on the site of Newtown Great Paper Mill, founded early in the last century by Mr. Pickering of the London House of Magnay Pickering. He was working it in 1836 but some years later it was operated by Mr. Brown, down to about 1866 when he closed down and went to America. Next are the ruins of Newtown Little Paper Mill, for the building of which Robert Randel got a grant of £300 in 1757. This was converted into a cloth mill before 1836 and seems to have ceased production soon after.

A short distance further up are the remains of Millmount Mill which was mentioned in the will of Benjamin Nunn in 1773. It is mentioned under the same name in Archer's Survey of 1801 but passed later to Messrs. Dollards who operated it in conjunction with their paper mill lower down the river. Here the rags were processed and made into the raw material from which the paper was manufactured. This mill closed down in 1899. The last mill race was the paper mill of Mr. Fry which closed down sometime before 1836. Extensive remains still survive, however, beside the avenue to Rockbrook House.



Rockbrook Village.

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The ruins of Fry's Mills, Rockbrook lie beside the avenue to Rockbrook House.

Chapter 7

Rockbrook to Cruagh



HE village of Rockbrook, three miles from Rathfarnham, was formerly an industrial centre and early in the last century had no less than six mills on the stretch of river below the village. With the decline of water power these mills fell into disuse and their ivy covered ruins are all that remain scattered along the banks of the Owendoher. Adjoining the village is Rockbrook House, formerly the home of Lord and Lady Glenavy and now a school.



Rockbrook House.

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At Cruagh graveyard a by-road branches off on the right into Killakee estate. This was one of the main avenues but the massive piers of the entrance gateway were taken down in 1941 when the lands were divided. D'Alton states that it was also the original entrance to the Military Road.

The ancient portion of Cruagh graveyard behind the old schoolhouse is surrounded by a high wall and is now closed to burials. It contains the remains of a church and a small watchtower. The few fragments of the church that still survive show that the nave was 39' 4" long and the walls 2' 8" thick. One jamb of the chancel arch is still standing but the chancel itself and both side walls of the nave have disappeared. The stones from the church were probably used in the construction of the watch tower, which is built partly on the site of the church, and is obviously of much later date. It is two stories high with a separate entrance on each level and like the watch towers in Prospect Cemetery, Glasnevin, was for the



The Old Schoolhouse, Cruagh with the Watch Tower in the background.

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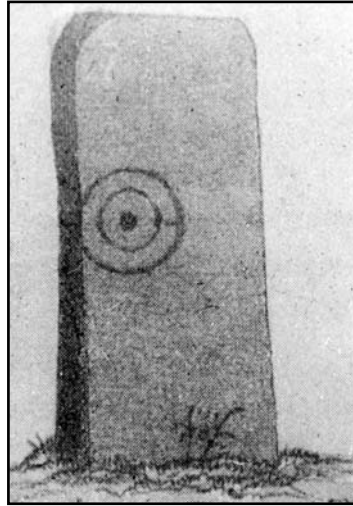


Cruagh Watch Tower.

protection of new interments from the attentions of the body snatchers. According to local tradition it was many times the scene of violent conflicts between the relatives of the deceased and the sack-em-ups and the marks of bullets could formerly be seen on the stout doors of the tower.

An ancient slab inscribed with concentric circles was seen here by George Petrie in 1816 but no trace of it can be found. From here the road descends to cross a narrow bridge, and from there onwards is a stiff climb for the next mile to the entrance of the famous Glendoo Valley.

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Left: Old baptismal font at Cruagh and right Petrie's drawing of an ancient slab at Cruagh.



Portion of the ruins of the ancient church of Cruagh.

Chapter 8

*Taylor's Lane to Whitechurch and
Kilmashogue*



FROM Taylor's Lane the Whitechurch Road continues southward past some council houses and with the boundary wall of Grange Golf Club on the left. In the garden of the house stood Jackson's Cotton Mill, of which extensive remains still existed in 1836. This may also have been the site of one of the two paper mills which operated here in the eighteenth century. In 1756 William Mondett and Moses Verney came from England and built a paper mill at Whitechurch at a cost of £1,400. By 1763 they had built another mill at the same place for making press and purple papers. The laundry mill on the other side of the road, and some distance further on, may possibly occupy the site of the other mill. This laundry was started about 1830 by Mr. Bewley in whose family it remained until 1880. It was then operated by Caroline Thacker and from 1899 by Mr. Willoughby. It closed down around 1930.

On the same side of the road and approached by a short avenue is the old graveyard of Whitechurch, in which are the ruins of a medieval church. This church consisted originally of the nave only 21' 6" x 36' 6" and with walls an average of three feet thick. A later extension was added to the east end and an existing pointed doorway in the east wall enlarged on one side to form an opening eight feet wide. In 1615 this church and chancel were in good repair but by the following century they were in ruins. A large font mentioned in 1837 by the historian D'Alton cannot now be located.

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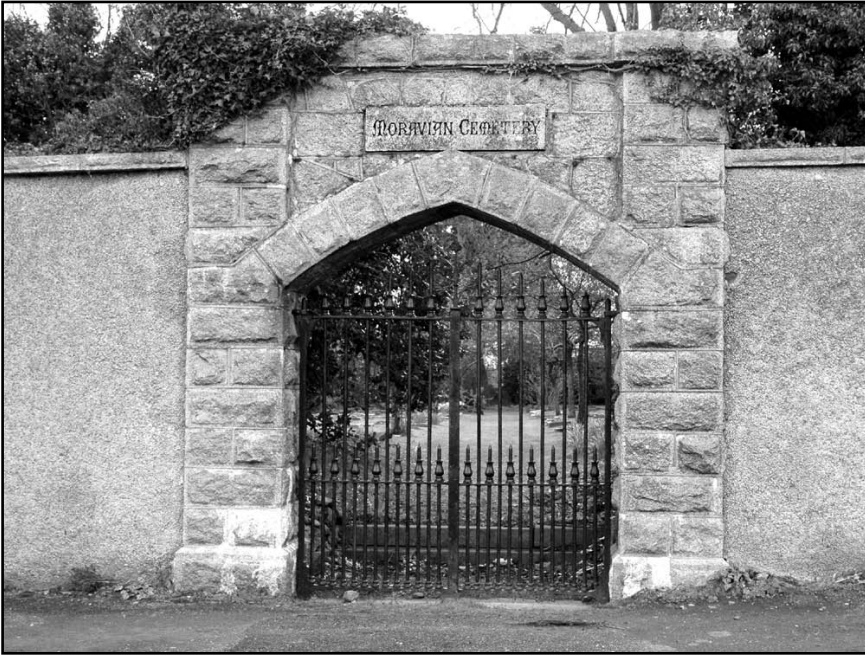
Ruins of Whitechurch Medieval Church.



Whitechurch Church.

A short distance further and on the other side of the road is the Moravian cemetery which dates from the beginning of the last century. A map of this cemetery made in 1840 sets out the names of those buried therein and it is remarkable that they nearly all belong to the three families of Porter, Harly and Davis.

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Moravian Cemetery, Whitechurch.

The earliest burials were in 1808, in which year five children were interred there. It is the custom with this sect to inter the coffin in an upright position. On the same side of the road is the schoolhouse, built in 1824, and beside it the parish church with the tall spire which is so prominent a landmark for miles around. This church was built in 1826. Beside the wall to the east of the church is the grave of Annie M. P. Smithson, the novelist, who died in 1948. On the opposite side of the road facing the church is a large flat slab of rock in which is cut a rectangular basin 15' 9" by 5' 5" deep. Beside the hole there is a small incised cross of an early type with expanded ends and two letters difficult to decipher. The hole was apparently a socket for a cross, about which no tradition survives but the water which accumulates in it is believed to be a cure for warts.

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Kilmashogue mill in 1922.

At Kilmashogue House there was formerly a corn mill, the mill race of which can still be seen. The road here crosses Kilmashogue Bridge and branches to the left past the ruins of a mill where woollen cloth was manufactured down to about 1880 by Thomas Thorncliff. Jenkins' Laundry was another local industry from 1882 to 1917.

Here commences a steep ascent which continues for the next mile and a half. At first confined between banks and thick hedges, as the higher portions of the road are reached, the prospect of the city and suburbs extends until the swing of the road around the hill cuts off the view.

To the left of the road is the house and grounds of Hillcot and above this a large area under young forestry. Here an ancient burial place was excavated in 1953 by members of the Royal Irish Academy. It was found to consist of a megalithic tomb of the gallery grave type comprising two chambers and originally covered over with a cairn of stones. At a later period parts of the chambers had been dismantled and the stones used in the construction of stone lined

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Kilmashogue Mountain in 1978.

cists which were inserted in the cairn material. In comparatively recent times the stones of the cairn had been removed for the purpose of building boundary walls and the covering stones of the cists left exposed. There were no finds associated with the megalithic tomb but the cists were found to contain two middle Bronze age food vessels and a late Bronze age cinerary urn.

Higher up on the hill above this site is a large circular enclosure bounded by a wall of large irregular stones. It is sixty yards in diameter and is situated in a slight hollow on the hillside. The summit of Kilmashogue Mountain, which is 1,339 feet high, is not marked by any ancient landmark but a little to the north is a large pile of stones put there in recent years by boys staying in the neighbourhood. The view from here is really magnificent. Despite the fact that it is the nearest summit to Dublin, the panorama is uninterrupted from Mount Pelier on the left to Dalkey Hill on the right.

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Ringfort, Kilmashogue in 1977.

Some time in the last century Dr. P.W. Joyce found the remains of a small church on the northern slope of the hill. Unfortunately the exact position of the remains was not recorded and repeated searches by interested parties have since failed to locate the site. The cross already mentioned under St. Columba's College probably came from the site of this church.



Kilmashogue Megalithic tomb in 1977.

Larch Hill

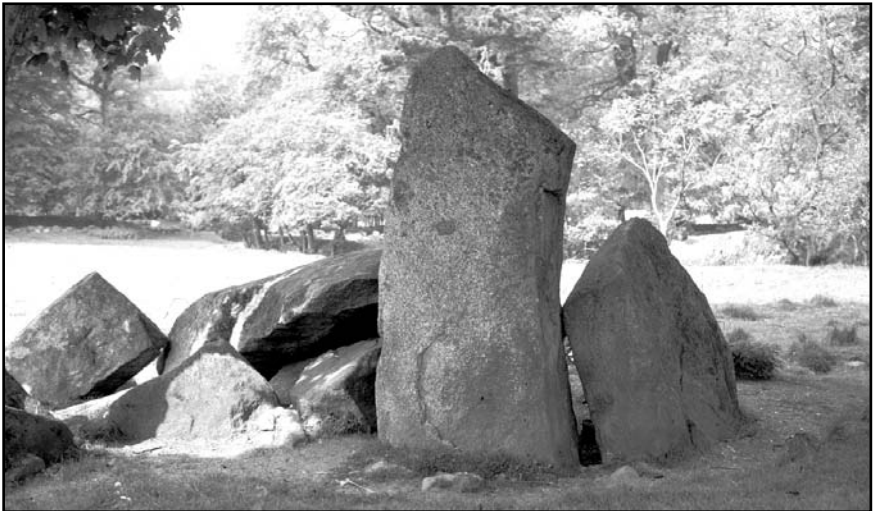
As the road continues to twist and climb around the western flank of the hill the view back over the city becomes obscured but to the south glimpses are obtained of Kelly's Glen, with Tibbradden Mountain rising behind and the small triangular plantation known as Guinness' Wood high up near the summit. Below the road the well wooded demense of Larch Hill with its extensive farm buildings comes into view. Larch Hill was built towards the end of the eighteenth century by Cllr. Calbeck. Early in the last century this house was the residence of John O'Neill J.P. who erected the sumptuous marble monument in Whitechurch burial ground in memory of his wife who died in 1835. The house later became the property of the Clarke family but subsequently passed by marriage to the Walshes. From 1907 to 1914 it was used as a sanitorium. In 1939 it was taken over by the trustees of the Catholic Boy Scout movement and is used by the members of that organisation as a training and camping centre.



Larch Hill.

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In one of the fields to the south of the house is a large dolmen. The stones are much out of position due to the supporting stones on one side having fallen inward causing the cap stone to slide down with one edge on the ground. An unusual feature is the ten foot high pillar stone at one end. Surrounding the monument are a number of large boulders almost completely buried in the ground, which seem to have at one time formed a ring of standing stones.



Larch Hill Dolmen.



Ice House, Larch Hill

Half a mile further on the road reaches its highest point having risen seven hundred feet in a little over a mile. Here it is barred by a gate beyond which is private property. In one of the fields below the road is a small ring fort 32 yards in diameter.

Calbeck Castle

In the saddle between Kilmashogue and Two Rock Mountain is a ruined building known as Calbeck Castle. It is nothing more than a rather roughly constructed dwelling house and it is on record that it



Calbeck Castle.

was built about the year 1800 and according to Duncan's map it was in ruins in 1821. Mr. Calbeck was a progressive landowner who held a large area hereabouts. In a survey made for the Royal Dublin Society in 1801, Cllr. Calbeck was commended for having planted 200,000 forest trees of various types at Kilmashogue and for improving the mountain land by roads, building, enclosures and drainage. These improvements can still be seen on the north west slope of Two Rock Mountain where an area of over two hundred acres is divided into a great number of small square fields with roads laid out to serve the various enclosures. The area now shows no evidence of reclamation and is a wilderness of swamp and heather. The remains of the cottages can also be seen but it is very doubtful if they were ever tenanted. On Duncan's map of 1821 this is named Calbeck's Hill.

Kelly's Glen

The valley lying between Kilmashogue and Tibbradden mountains is known as Kelly's Glen and the avenue which passes the farmhouse with the elaborate stone porch is Kelly's Lane. This lane crosses the brook by a high cut stone bridge which shows evidence of having been widened at some period.

The original part which is nine feet wide bears a tablet with an inscription in well cut classical lettering

DI LA SOPHANNIE

The additional portion has the date faintly incised on the keystone

C.C. MDCCCL

which I understand represents "Charles Calbeck 1850."



The upper bridge in Kelly's Glen.

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Just above the bridge is a spa well which over two hundred years ago enjoyed a period of popularity with wealthy invalids and others who could either journey to Kilmashogue and drink the water fresh from the spring or purchase it bottled in the city.

It was first noticed about 1748 and was considered to be superior to that of Templeogue which at that time was losing its curative properties. Kilmashogue spa however was never accorded the popularity of Templeogue, probably because of its remote situation and difficult access. The spa is easily located by the brown deposit left by the water as it flows into the adjoining brook.



Lower bridge in Kelly's Glen.

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A few hundred yards upstream is another smaller bridge which bears the inscription

DI SVORE AMABILI

On the former bridge the date 1850 refers apparently to the alteration but the original bridges with the Italian inscriptions are older and were probably erected at the beginning of the century as part of the improvements scheme of Mr. Calbeck. The translation of these inscriptions reads

DI LA SOPHANNIE

— To my Sophannie, and

DI SORE AMABILI

— To my beloved sister.

According to Weston St. John Joyce they were intended as memorials to Calbeck's deceased sister. I was informed by the late Mrs. Calbeck of Pembroke Rd. that they were always known as the sisters' bridges.



Spa well, Kilmashogue.

Chapter 9

Cruagh to Glendoo and Glencullen

THE most direct route to Glendoo is that from Rathfarnham through Ballyboden and Rockbrook but for those who do not object to a more roundabout approach at a higher altitude the road across Cruagh Mountain is recommended. This branches left from the Glenree road at the point where the latter emerges onto the windswept Featherbed Bog, just five miles from Rathfarnham and drops for over a mile across the face of Cruagh Mountain with magnificent views northward over the Dublin plains. Whichever route is followed the way leads to the site of the tea rooms named Fraoc Halla opposite to which is the road to Glendoo and Glencullen. This road immediately crosses the Owendoher River by a bridge which was widened and straightened recently but which was formerly a most dangerous hazard on this long steep hill. It has been the scene of several fatal accidents which are commemorated by rough crosses set in the parapet. Much of the timber in this area was cut down during World War I and at that time a tree also disappeared which bore the initials of a number of Abbey actors who had visited here in the early days of that theatre and left this memento of their visit.

For over a mile from here the road ascends between steep wooded or heather clad slopes. On the right and separated from the road by a pleasant green sward flows the mountain stream of Owendoher, beyond which rises the steep flank of Cruagh Mountain with its plantation of larch and spruce. This road through Glendoo and Glencullen was constructed in 1840 by Mr. Fitzsimons, a local landowner, previous to which there was no means of access to

Glencullen from this side of the mountains. There was indeed a track of sorts which lay on the other side of the stream but this led only to the cottage which can still be seen high up on Glendoo Mountain and which was then occupied by a gamekeeper employed by Mr. White of Killakee. I was informed by Colonel Fitzsimons, a descendant of the man who built the road, that it cost all of £127 for 3 miles of road including culverts and walls.

Half a mile beyond the bridge the plantation on the right terminates at a point where the brook comes splashing down from the heights above, defining the boundary between Cruagh and Glendoo mountains. A track follows the course of this stream upwards and is the most convenient route for the ascent of Cruagh Mountain. This track can be followed until the gradient becomes somewhat easier, when it is advisable to cross over to the other bank and continue along the cleaned firebreak outside the forestry fence. This fence presently turns off at right angles and after following it for another three hundred yards a small pile of stones will be seen nearby on the left, marking the highest point in this extensive heatherclad upland.

From this spot, 1,714 feet high, there is a fine distant view northward of the city and suburbs but the area lying nearer to the mountains is obscured by the slope of the hill. In the foreground to the east are Kilmashogue and Tibradden and the Three Rock and Two Rock mountains. To the west is Mount Pelier and further away the high summits which bound the far side of Glenasmole.

To the south west and only half a mile away is Killakee Mountain, another great flat area, where the turf is gradually being eroded away by the elements, leaving islands and hummocks of heather-clad bog in a sea of weathered quartz and gravel. The highest point here, 1,761 feet, is also marked by a small pillar of stones. The view from Killakee hardly justifies a special visit, except for those who

intend to continue on the further half mile down an easy dry gradient until they strike the Feather Bed Road. The view to the south of Cruagh is cut off by the high ground sloping away towards Glendoo Mountain. This elevation is a little less than a mile away across a great flat bog which is very easy to cross in dry weather but a much easier approach to Glendoo Mountain is from the new bog road in Old Bolies on the Glencrea side of the Feather Bed. If it is not proposed to visit either Killakee or Glendoo mountains the return to Glendoo valley should be made by the same route.

Tibradden Mountain

Lying along the left-hand side of the glen is the long ridge of Tibradden Mountain rising to a height of 1,540 feet. The fine old timber which covered the lower slopes of this mountain was nearly all cut down during The Emergency but much of this has since been replanted. The ascent of Tibradden can be made either by leaving the road just past the cottage or following the track in the belt of old trees, three quarters of a mile further on. The area in between is not recommended as it is covered with deep heather which conceals a treacherous rocky slope dangerous to the most careful climber. In addition it is now cut off by forestry fences erected for the protection of the young plantations. A well defined path traverses the entire length of this ridge, with fine views into Kelly's Glen on the far side and over Kilmashogue to the city and bay.

The highest point of Tibradden Mountain is marked by a circular grassy mound composed of stones in which is an ancient burial place known locally as Niall Dhu's Grave. This site was opened up in 1849 by members of the Royal Irish Academy when it was found to contain a pottery vessel in a stone lined cist. A fragment of another vessel was found among the stones of the mound. The

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Tibradden mountain.

existing remains, which were recently restored by the Board of Works, now comprise a circular compartment ten feet in diameter, open to the sky, and entered by a very narrow passage. Around the wall of the compartment is a narrow shelf or seat and in the middle of the floor is the rectangular cist which contained the burial. This was formerly covered with a flat stone which is now missing. The circular compartment which is neatly built of small stones is an unusual feature and it is not at all clear that this was part of the original monument.

A little to the south is an area of huge tumbled rocks which can provide shelter from wind and rain on the worst of days. On a vertical face of one rock is carved a cross and a crowned figure with upraised arms. The cross is seventeen inches high and has expanded terminals of a type commonly used in early Christian times but the figure is rather unusual. It suggests the figure carving found on early slabs but may possibly be quite recent work done by local stonecutters in the last century.

A report made in 1837 describes a number of small circles to the south of the cairn but a detailed examination over a wide area has failed to locate any trace of them.



Rock carvings, Tibbradden.

This hill is called Tibroden on many old maps and documents and on Taylor's Map of 1816 it is named Garrycastle. In documents of the seventeenth century it is named Tibroden alias Killmainham Begg because it was formerly held by the Priory of Kilmainham.

At the upper end of Glendoo is a high granite rock upon which an inscription was cut in recent years. This reads "O'Connell's Rock 23 July 1823". According to Col. Fitzsimons, who got this work done, the local people of that day were celebrating Garland Sunday in the usual way, by an excursion to the mountain to pick fraughans followed by a dance at the dance floor and a few barrels of stout. Daniel O'Connell was visiting his daughter, who was married to a Fitzsimons of Glencullen House. When he saw the assembled crowds he addressed them from this rock.



O'Connell's rock.

Glencullen Valley

The road through Glendoo continues to wend its way, confined between steep rocky slopes and with pinewood obscuring the view in front, but once this plantation is passed it emerges into an open green valley with a view extending over Glencullen village to the



Glencullen valley.

hills beyond. To the left of the road the ground rises away towards the great flat top of Two Rock Mountain nearly a mile away. The highest point of this mountain, 1,763 feet above sea level, is distinguished by a great cairn of stones called the Fairy Castle, thirty yards in diameter and about ten feet high. No enclosing kerb can be seen and there is no evidence that it has ever been opened. It probably contains a chamber built of large stones similar to that on Seefin Mountain. Southward of this is a large outcrop of rock and further to the south the two smaller ones which can be seen from the Glencullen side and give the mountain its name. On the lower slope of the Two Rock Mountain formerly known as Slieve Gearr, there is an oval enclosure sixty four yards long and containing in the centre the foundations of a small square building. Against the inside of the enclosing bank are remains of two more structures.



The author with friends at Fairy Castle, Two Rock Mountain.

A little more than a hundred years ago this district was noted for its barren aspect and the extreme poverty of its inhabitants. There was no road or lane of any description between here and Glencullen village and no arable land except little patches between the rocks which scarcely repaid the labourer for the immense trouble of cultivating them. The principal occupation was the manufacture of brooms or besoms from the heath of the adjoining mountain and even this they had to procure in spite of the strict watch kept to prevent them. Conditions have changed much since then. The road built by Mr. Fitzsimons is now a main tourist highway and the many new houses and well cultivated plots are evidence of a contented and industrious community. It is remarkable that the fields on both sides of the Glencullen river are divided into very small plots and strips by fences and low baulks, a remnant of the ancient and uneconomic system called rundale, which was the result of repeated subdivision of the original holdings. This was probably the only place in Leinster where these conditions still existed.

On the far slope can be seen the compact village of Boranaraltry which is reached by a steep byroad branching off on the right and descending to cross the bridge below. This road continues on across the face of Glencullen Mountain to serve the old granite quarries which are such a conspicuous landmark on the far side of the valley. These quarries which once supported so many families are now almost deserted and the hillside, both above and below them, is rapidly disappearing under a blanket of afforestation. To the west of the quarries a passage has been left through the plantation to give access to the higher part of the mountain for turf cutting and other purposes. In one of the fields below the quarry is a small ringfort. In 1836 when O'Curry was collecting place names in connection with the Ordnance Survey he recorded a place called Baile an Araldaigh in Glencullen. This is probably identical with Boranaraltry and would indicate that this place was associated with the family of Harold who held large areas in County Dublin down to the seventeenth century.

RATHFARNHAM ROADS



Bornaraltry village.

The village of Brockey is next passed, situated in a hollow below the road and approached by a laneway on the right. The arrangement of this group of thatched houses and outoffices surrounded by little gardens and loose stone walls is very suggestive of the villages along the western seaboard. On the



Brockey village.

southern side of this village there was formerly a fine ringfort which was known from time immemorial as Old Glencullen House but no remains of it can be traced on the site and not even a memory of it survives. The same fate, unfortunately, befell a megalithic tomb which was situated on a little summit over the main road and just past Brockey village. This was known as Leaba na Saigh (The Hound's Bed) and was covered with a large stone ten feet long and eight feet wide. A drawing of this ancient monument was published by the Royal Society of Antiquaries in 1855, some years before it was completely cleared away. It is now regarded as a natural formation of boulders.



Leaba na Saigh or The Hound's Bed in 1855.

The next laneway on the right leads down by some farmhouses to Glencullen River and was part of an old road leading to Boranaraltry. In a field beside this land was a holy well known as the Butter Well, which was visited by those suffering from stomach disorders. In former times dairy vessels were washed with its waters as a precaution against the loss of butter by witchcraft, which no doubt accounts for the title of the well. Another well known as Fanny's Well, used only for domestic purposes, is at the side of the lane, outside the field.



The Butter Well in 1985.

A short way past this laneway is Glencullen Village from which roads lead to Stepside, Kiltiernan and Kilmalin. The lands of Glencullen were at one time the property of the Abbey of St. Mary the Virgin. After the Reformation they were held by the Fitzwilliams of Merrion who sold them about the end of the seventeenth century to Mr. Thos. Fitzsimons whose descendants continued to reside there down to recent years. Glencullen House is situated in a picturesque setting on the south side of the village. Here resided during the last century Christopher Fitzsimons D.L. who was clerk of the Crown and Hanaper and a Member of Parliament. He was married to a daughter of Daniel O'Connell.

Beside the entrance to Glencullen House on the site later occupied by the dispensary was the constabulary barracks which was attacked and captured by the Fenians on 6th March 1867. The party, under Capt. Patk. Lennon, had assembled at Rathgar the night before and marched through Dundrum and Stepside where they

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had successfully attacked the barracks. On approaching Glencullen, rifle men were deployed to surround the barracks. The police were called upon to surrender and refused, whereupon an exchange of rifle fire commenced, which did little damage to either side. When a party got onto the roof and opened up a hole in preparation for an attack from above the inmates surrendered. Enriched by the arms and ammunition from the barracks, the Fenians then marched over Glencullen Mountain taking the prisoners with them. Capt. Lennon, on seeing one of his men urge on a straggler with the butt of his rifle, drew his revolver and threatened to kill the first person he found insulting or abusing a prisoner.



Old R.I.C. barracks, Glencullen.

In a field beside the road opposite to Glencullen House is a large pillar stone of white quartz about 6 feet in height.

In the village is a fine granite church built in 1908 and a short distance away in the burial ground is the old church, now roofless, which fell into disrepair when the new one was built. This bears a tablet with the inscription “St. Patrick’s Chapel erected A.D. 1824 to the Honour and Glory of God”.

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Pillar Stone, Glencullen.



Remains of St. Patrick's Chapel, Glencullen.

Before the erection of this church Mass used to be celebrated in a thatched barn which was located about half a mile to the north, in the townland of Newtown. This old barn is still standing and the field in which it is situated is known as the Chapel Field. On the corner stone of the wall is the inscription "1737 T.L.". It is still remembered locally that Mass was celebrated here in penal times and that the initials are those of Tom Langeran. (*see picture page 114*). This was marked as a "chapel" on Taylor's map of 1816. The old schoolhouse was built about 1835 under a bequest from Lord Castlecoote, previous to which there was no school building and classes had been held in the chapel.

The field directly behind the burial ground, and at present the property of the parish, is known as the monastery field. Here in 1835 a small monastery for Cistercian monks was founded on land given to them by Mr. Fitzsimons. This was known as Mount Saint Bernard and was occupied by some of the community from Mount Mellary. Only four years before this all the Irish and English monks had been expelled from France and they were at this period seeking a suitable location in which to reorganise their community life.

Mount Saint Bernard was described as a neat house and a farm of about 20 acres. Two monks resided here and worked uncommonly hard and for long hours on very meagre fare. In addition they used to go around soliciting help to build a school. It was intended at first to increase the numbers of the community, but the project does not appear to have been successful, as by 1845 the house had been evacuated by the Order and was occupied by the curate of the parish, Rev. P. Doyle. By 1856 it had become ruinous and was apparently demolished soon afterwards. It does not appear on the Ordnance Survey map of 1871. Not a trace of this house has survived but against the boundary fence is a roofless carthouse or barn which was there during the occupation of the monks and was likely built by them. One of the monks was Bro. Macarius Moore, a tailor by trade.



The Monks' stables, Glencullen.

To the north of the village is Newtown Hill, a rough stony height on which were noted a number of stone circles and alignments. Some of these must be regarded as doubtful, since the hill is so covered with boulders and stones that it would be possible to group many of them into lines and circles that they were never intended to form. There are three monuments however which are definitely ancient and these are in line on the slope of the hill, just above the monastery field.

The first is a very fine ring fort known as the Raheen. This is 27 yards in diameter and has a high bank around it with a ditch outside. The space within is divided by crosswalls and along one side is the foundation of a rectangular building containing three rooms and the remains of a circular hut.

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Circular enclosure, Newtown, Glencullen in 1977.

To the north of this is a low circular enclosure of loose stones 19 yards in diameter. Higher up, on the summit of the hill, is a pre-historic burial place of the bowl barrow type, a circular mound 5 feet high, surrounded by a fosse and low bank. Beside it is a single standing stone 5 feet 6 inches high.



Hut sites, Ballybrack, Glencullen in 1977.

Chapter 10

*Ticknock, The Two Rock Mountain,
The Three Rock Mountain,
Barnacullia and Ballyedmonduff*



THE summit of the Two Rock Mountain, 1,763 feet above sea level, is the highest point of that group of hills which comprises the Two Rock and Three Rock, Kilmashogue and Tibbradden Mountains. This highland area is bounded along the southwest side by the long deep defile of Glendoo and Glencullen valleys, on the west by the valley of the Owendoher River and on the east by the road from Barnacullia to Glencullen village.

On the northern side the mountain block is divided into three separate hills, Kilmashogue being in the centre while to the east across the Ticknock valley is the Three Rock Mountain and to the west is Tibbradden on the far side of Kelly's Glen. All the roads from these valleys lead towards the north, following the slope of the valley bottoms and all are linked together by the road leading from Rockbrook on the western side to Sandyford on the east.

The higher portion of this vast area, bounded approximately by the 1,000 feet contour, is covered by a uniform blanket of heather-covered peat, interspersed with bracken and furze and dotted over with grey boulders of the underlying granite. Across this desolate moorland the pale green of young forestry plantations is beginning to make itself apparent.

On the lower slopes of the hills and in the sheltered valleys are the farmhouses and cottages of the hardy folk whose ancestors were such a scourge to the English settlers and the great walled demesnes of the landlords and gentry who were not slow to appreciate the attractions of this region. Sir George Carew complained in 1590 that “those who dwelled within sight of the smoke of Dublin were not subject to its laws.”

The Ticknock area has always been a popular one with the Dublin people, not only on account of the convenience with which it can be reached from the city but also because of the variety of scenery it offers and the magnificent prospects which can be obtained from the adjoining heights. Ticknock cross roads is reached from Rathfarnham by the Grange Road. The portion of this road from Harold’s Grange through Ticknock to Sandyford was not constructed until about 1840.

In a prominent position just below Ticknock cross roads is an old house named Kingston, where in 1892 an interesting find of ancient coins was made. Mr. Shiels, the owner, was erecting a shed when he uncovered a granite slab under which was an earthen pipkin full of money. This comprised 650 coins of the brass money of James II dated 1689 and 1690 of which about 440 were shillings, 6 were half crowns and the remainder sixpences. The pot was of old tortoise shellware and was unfortunately smashed at the time of discovery. About eight years previous to this, another hoard of coins was found on the same farm. This consisted of 200 half crowns of the same period which were found in a recess inside an old wall and were neatly stacked in piles. This had protected them from corrosion except around the edges. It is not known in what way this place was associated with the cause of the Stuarts or if any significance can be attached to the townland name of Kingston.

Ticknock

From this point the Ticknock road trends away in a southerly direction rising all the time until it terminates at the rifle range not far from the top of Three Rock Mountain. To the right of this road and situated in private land is the holy well popularly known as Grumley's Well. This name is at least as old as 1836 but these lands have not been occupied by any one of that name for over 170 years. Within living memory rounds have been done here and pieces of cloth left tied to the bushes, in accordance with the old custom. Cures have also been claimed, especially for complaints of the eyes. The date on which the pattern was held each year, which might supply a clue to the patron saint of the well, is no longer remembered but is believed to have been during the month of August. The existing covering, on which are carved two chalices, was constructed about 70 years ago by the landowner. As the water which flows from this well is used for domestic purposes, the indiscriminate visits of people suffering from every type of disease had to be discouraged.



Grumley's well, Ticknock in 1977.

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Further up the glen and on the same side of the road is a small rocky hill known as Telshaun behind which is a row of council houses in a very secluded situation. A spa well was discovered at Tiknock about 1787 and was pronounced to be the most efficacious remedy against scorbutic disorders. This was stated by a writer as recently as 1917 to be situated on the upper slopes of the eastern side of the glen and to be surrounded by the remains of some kind of protective structure. No well or spring can be located in this area now and no information can be obtained from the local inhabitants concerning it.



Telshaun Hill.

The road leading to the rifle ranges forks to the left and in one of the furze covered fields just below the road is a ring fort 30 yards in diameter. It is built on the slope of the hill but the area inside is levelled. The stream that flows through, the Little Dargle, rises in a hollow known as Lugdoo. Beside the ranges a number of pits here were made in former times by people looking for freestone which was then in demand for scouring purposes and provided a livelihood for several families in Ticknock. According to local tradition General Holt hid his arms about here before surrendering to Lord Powerscourt in 1798.

Three Rock Mountain

To the east of the ranges and less than half a mile away is the top of the Three Rock Mountain, 1,479 feet high and easily identified from the city and suburbs by the large outcrops of granite on the summit. These masses of rock are weathered by exposure into great horizontal blocks which appear to have been superimposed one on top of the other. This deceptive appearance led the eighteenth century antiquary Gabriel Beranger to write a description of the sacrificial altars on the Three Rock Mountain.

The upper faces of the rocks are covered with initials and names carved by visitors over the years and on the top of the centre block are four shallow bowl shaped hollows, of the type known as bullauns, believed to have been used for grinding purposes in early Christian times.

On the eastern side of the centre outcrop are the remains of a house 40 feet long, 17 feet wide, and with walls only a few feet high. Local tradition is very definite that this was a public house. Near the rocks, the mearing ditches of the three townlands of Ticknock, Barnacullia and Ballyedmonduff meet at a point on the ditch. About 250 yards south of the junction is a small ring fort 20 yards in diameter. In the saddle between this and the Two Rock Mountain



Three Rock Mountain

are a number of old overgrown passages, slightly below ground level, and cleared of loose stones. These old passages are to be found in many places on the mountains and were probably used in former times for the hauling of either stone or turf using slide carts.

Barnacullia

Around the eastern side of the Three Rock Mountain is the road from Ticknock through Barnacullia to Ballyedmonduff. This road passes the popular premises known as Lamb Doyle's which have been in the possession of this family for well over a century. A short distance to the east and approached by a narrow lane is the remains of the house which was occupied by Countess Markievicz up to the time of the 1916 Rising. This cottage was taken by Countess Markievicz about 1907 and was visited by many whose names were later to become by-words in the national movement. During Easter Week 1916, the wife and children of James Connolly stayed here. The cottage was occupied down to about 1945 when the last tenant was moved to a council house. It was then condemned and the roof removed. A committee was later formed to restore the cottage as a memorial to the Countess but when they were informed that they would be required to rebuild the walls, the project was abandoned.



Barnacullia village in 1977.

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Markievicz cottage in 1977.

From Lamb Doyle's the road rises to the scattered village of Barnacullia, formerly occupied by stonecutters, whose craftsmanship can be seen in masonry of cottages, walls and gate piers. Over a hundred years ago the bulk of the orders for cut stone came from the Dublin Corporation Paving Board. In Fulham's Glen, high up above the village there is a small cave in an old quarry, known as the soldier's cave. This name originated in olden times when a soldier, to avoid corporal punishment, came out and hid here. He died of exposure and his body was later found in the cave. During the War of Independence a camp was established in Barnacullia by the 6th Battalion of the Dublin Brigade. This was raided on the same day as the round up in which Seán Doyle was killed.



The 6th Battalion of the Dublin Brigade camp in Barnacullia during the War of Independence.

An old road leading from Barnacullia to Kilgobbin graveyard is shown on Taylor's map of 1816. It is now represented by a footpath through the estate of Fern Hill which is used by local people as a short cut to Stepside. This passage was the cause of litigation in the nineteenth century when an attempt was made by Judge Darley of Fern Hill to close or divert it. It is now enclosed on both sides and the avenue of Fern Hill is carried across overhead. The extension of the road from Barnacullia to Ballyedmonduff was made subsequent to 1843. On the hill above this part of the road is a very interesting group of five ring forts surrounded by small enclosures and with traces of house sites. Running up the hill from here are remains of an ancient field system, consisting of narrow stripes divided by low stone walls. Two hundred yards to the south is another ring fort. This area is now planted with trees and these structures are gradually disappearing from sight.

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The road now passes below an extensive granite quarry and joins the main road from Stepside. A short distance further, on the left hand side, is a ruined house with the unusual name of Taylor's Folly. Over the front door is a stone bearing the inscription "W. T." 1817. This house was described soon after it was built as having been erected at a great expense but with little regard for convenience or comfort. The house was occupied by the Taylors down to the middle of the century and by the Moores in the latter half of the century. It fell into ruins early in the twentieth century.



Taylor's Folly.

On the opposite side of the road and situated on top of a round green hill is a small circular structure 16½ yards in diameter with low walls about nine feet thick. Although superficially of the ringfort type the small size and unusually thick walls would suggest that it may be the remains of a circular house.

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Half a mile further on, a short byroad on the left leads to Newtown, where it terminates at a large farmhouse with extensive outbuildings. Behind the house, in a field known as the Chapel Field, are the remains of an old barn where mass was celebrated before the erection of Glencullen chapel in 1824. (*see page 102*).



Ruins of Penal chapel.

To the right of the road a heather covered hillside rises away towards the top of Two Rock Mountain. At a point about a quarter mile from the road is an interesting megalithic tomb known locally as the Giant's Grave. This was originally covered with a cairn of stones and was opened up as far back as 1832 by Alderman Blacker of St. Andrew Street but unfortunately no record was left of the excavation. The tomb lay in this open condition for a century and from time to time the larger stones were removed by stone cutters. In 1935 the site was investigated by Professor De Valera and in spite of its wrecked condition yielded up a considerable amount of information.

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Giant's Grave, Ballyedmonduff in 1988.

The tomb was of the northern wedge shaped gallery grave class and contained a gallery divided into three chambers. The outline of the cairn was defined by a kerb of large stones and was horseshoe shaped with a straight facade at the west end, in which was the entrance to the ante-chamber and central chamber. There was no means of access to the eastern chamber before the roof was



Soldier's Cave, Fulham's Glen, Barnacullia in 1978.

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removed early in the last century. Buried underneath the accumulated soil there, were found a stone hammer, some pieces of worked flint and many fragments of pottery. Some of these belonged to the Neolithic or late stone age tradition but most of them belonged to the early Bronze Age beaker class. This type of tomb was in use down to the middle Bronze Age or about 1,000 B.C.

For the next half mile the road drops gradually to Glencullen village. The road on the right here goes by Glendoo to Rathfarnham and that to the left leads to Kiltiernan on the Enniskerry bus route.

Chapter 11

Firhouse Road



FROM the western end of Butterfield Avenue the Firhouse Road continues straight ahead towards Firhouse and Oldbawn. On the right where a sweep of the river Dodder touched the road was a deep pool known as Pussy's Lep, a popular swimming place with boys of the neighbourhood.

Further along on the same side is an old house named Cherryfield, formerly known as Cherrytree. A proprietor named George Fowler who lived here prior to 1865 enlarged the house and reclaimed an area of waste land along the bank of the Dodder. This portion of the road was laid out about 1800 when Templeogue bridge was built. Previous to that the road from Templeogue crossed the river by a ford directly below Cherryfield and joined the existing road about a quarter of a mile further on where it could be seen, overgrown and closed by an iron gate. The Templeogue Ballad which describes the entertainment at the chaleybate spring at Spawell was printed at the Cherrytree in 1730 and dedicated to the worthy manager, which suggests that it was an inn or guest house.

On the opposite side of the road was Delaford. In the eighteenth century this was a carman's inn and was known as Clandarigg. The road then ran past the front door and out by the present avenue but was subsequently altered by a Mr. Birmingham, who lived here

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about 1800 so as to leave a lawn in front of the house. He also built two fine rooms and a hall in front of the inn, constructed fish ponds and otherwise improved the place, the name of which he changed to Springfield. In 1820 Mr. B. J. Ottley, then a commissioner of Public Works, took the place and called it Delaford. In the middle of a field opposite to Delaford is a stone cross erected about 1849 to secure immunity against cattle plague.



Field Cross, Firhouse Road.

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On the left is the road to Orlagh and just beyond it the village of Firhouse, formerly consisting of a long row of cottages which have been replaced recently by fine new houses built on an adjoining site. A narrow lane leads down past the new houses to the City Weir on the Dodder where a considerable body of water is diverted into the old City Watercourse. This weir was built in 1244 in order to ensure a constant supply of water to the city and continued to serve this purpose down to 1775. Prior to 1846 there was a shallow ford below the weir and this was then the direct route to Tallaght and Greenhills but the force of the water subsequently cut out a deep channel at this point undermining the toeing of the weir and making the river impassable to vehicular traffic. For many years pedestrians continued to cross by wading along the top of the weir, a dangerous practice when the river is in spate as a false step could result in a fatal accident. A wooden footbridge was later put up by subscription



The City Weir.

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Firhouse footbridge.

below the weir but was soon washed away in a flood. This was replaced about 1860 by an iron lattice-work footbridge which was raised about twenty feet above the bed of the river. This footbridge was replaced by the current bridge which was officially opened in 1995.



Sally Park.

Behind a high wall on the left of the road is Sallypark, the home of William Domville Handcock, the learned author of *The History and Antiquities of Tallaght*. The house at one time belonged to the Earl of Clanwilliam and was purchased in 1796 by Handcock's grandfather, who in 1801 was praised by the Royal Dublin Society for having planted 7,000 trees of various kinds on his lands. William Domville Handcock was born in 1830 and was educated at Nutgrove School, Rathfarnham and at Trinity College. He took a keen interest in local history and collected a great store of local information from inquiries among the old inhabitants, from notes left by his grandfather and from recollections of his father, together with extracts from annals, newspapers and unpublished sources. His book *The History and Antiquities of Tallaght* preserves much valuable information concerning old houses, mills, roads and local characters.

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