Cuisle na nGael

A Bilingual Community Arts Magazine

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1893 Comhaontas na Gaeilge 1993

— Eagrán Speisialta —

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Conradh na Gaeilge 1893 - 1993 - ?

le Gearóid Mac Giolla Domhnaigh
Rúnaí Chomhaltas Uladh de Chonradh na Gaeilge

In a dhialann, 1893, scríobh Dúghlas de hIde, céad-Uachtarán Chonradh na Gaeilge:

'Iúil 31. Chuaigh **** agus mé féin amach go teach na gCliffes i nDún Laoghaire. Chuaigh mise ar ais agus chuireamar ar bun Leug na Gaeilge [b'fhearr le de hIde Leug ná Conradh] leis an teanga a choinneáil dá labhairt i measc na ndaoine fós. Mac Néill, O Néill Ruiséal, Mac Cogáin, O Ceallaigh, an tAthair Hayden (S.J.), O Cuinn agus móran eile, timpeall 10 nó 12. Mise sa chathaoir. Rinneas labhairt fhada i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla agus chuaigh gach sort ar aghaidh go maith. Dinnéar le ****. Chodail mé san Ibearnach.'

Cé a shílfeadh ag an am go raibh tábhacht dá laghad leis an bhunú sin? Cé a shílfeadh ag an am go mbeadh oiread sin tionchair ag Conradh na Gaeilge ar chúrsaí na hEireann ón lá sin amach? Ba é Conradh na Gaeilge a thiontaigh muintir na hEireann ón ísealmheoin ina raibh siad le tamall maith agus a chothaigh mórtas cine agus féinmheas iontu arís. Agus ghlac muintir na hEireann leis an chothú. Chuaigh soiscéal an Chonartha tríd an tír mar fhalscaoth Bealtaine. Gineadh dóchas agus ardaíodh meanmanra na ndaoine.

Tháinig féinrialtas go 26 Contaetha agus measadh go mbeadh tacaíocht iomlán an stáit nua taobh thiar den Ghaeilge. Agus bhí - go dtí pointe. Ach, bhí géarghá fós le Conradh na Gaeilge, eagraíocht neamhspleách toildheonach. Bhí ar an Conradh anois aire a thabhairt do dhíGhalldú rialtais dhúchasaigh!

I gCúige Uladh fágadh lucht na Gaeilge ar an bhlár fholamh ach tháinig Comhaltas Uladh de Chonradh na Gaeilge i gcabhair orthu. Choinnigh Comhaltas Uladh an Ghaeilge beo sa taobh seo tíre ó 1926. Fuair lucht a bhunaithe aithint don Ghaeilge i scoileanna an tuaiscirt am na críochdheighilte, chuir sé na mílte go Gaeltacht Thír Chonaill, shabháil sé seanchas, urnaithe agus ceol na Gaeltachta agus thug spreagadh agus cothú do scríbhneoirí na Gaeltachta. O 1926 go dtí na blianta deireannacha seo ní raibh ach Comhaltas Uladh de Chonradh na Gaeilge, mar eagraíocht thoildheonach, ag tabhairt aire ar fud an tuaiscirt don Ghaeilge. Bhí cúrsaí na Gaeilge faoi aon choimirce amháin. Bhí neart sa chur le chéile.

Inniu tá Comhaltas Uladh ann beo bríomhar go fóill. Agus tá a lán eagraíochtaí neamhthoildheonacha ann agus iad uilig ag obair gan pholasaí ná scéim coitianta aontaithe eatarthu, go fiú tá eagraíocht Ghaeilge ann anois a aithníonn na 6 Chontae amháin mar limistéar dlínse dá ngníomhú! Tá comharthaí ann go bhfuil pleanáil shóisialta ar siúl ag grúpaí nua atá ag stiúradh chúrsaí na Gaeilge abhus le roinnt bliain anuas. Agus níos measa fós, dár liom, táthar ann (agus a lán de lucht déanta polasaí sa réimse poiblí ina measc, thuaidh agus theas) a deir nach bhfuil i dteanga ach 'meán cumarsáide'.

Amach anseo creidim go mbeidh oiread gá le Conradh na Gaeilge agus a bhí riamh. Cé eile a bheadh sásta focail an Dochtúra Uí Iceadha, Uachtarán Mhaigh Nuad agus Ollamh le Gaeilge, a fhógairt gan eagla, cuma deontas ó rialtas acu nó a mhalairt:

'[A language] ..is a soul, 'the very breath', the vivifying principle, the whole atmosphere and environment of a distinctive people. Among the essentials of nationality, understood aright, none is more important, none strikes deeper roots, none is more far-reaching in its results than a national language.

But a nation's language is more - much more - than a mere element of nationality. It is its most striking symbol - the one invincible barrier against national disintegration. A distinct language is the surest and most powerful bond of distinctive nationality, and most certain - indeed, the only certain guarantee of its continuance and perpetuation. But a nation's language thus regarded should not be looked at merely in itself. It should be looked at in conjunction with all it imports, holds and enshrines - all that it carries down the stream of time from the dim and distant, the storied and centuried past. It should be regarded as the vehicle of the people's history: the key to their polity and jurisprudence; the mirror in which their mind, manners and customs are reflected; the shrine of their legends, myths, beliefs and superstitions; the only reliable index to the national life of the past.... We are fast losing our national identity, our national distinctiveness, our racial characteristics...Whosoever...would know the Gael, or understand the Gaelic past, let him...master the Gaelic speech.'
As Iéacht *The True National Ideal 1898.*

"Is é an ní is deacra ar domhan d'aon chine ná scaradh lena dhúchas. Ní móide go ndéanfaidh muintir na hÉireann sin." (Seán Ó Tuama)

When Rev. Fr. Hugh O'Reilly, J.F. Small, T.B. Doyle and Dermot Foley founded the Newry Branch of the Gaelic League on 19th September, 1897, at No. 1 Basin Walk, there were fewer than 50 branches of the organisation in existence throughout Ireland. The men who founded the Branch were joined a week later by local Unitarian Minister, Rev. S.C. Pinkerton, who was elected as Vice-President of Craobh an Iúir. By 1904 there were 600 + Branches in Ireland with a total membership of 50,000 people. This figure had grown again by 1922 when the number of Branches had increased to 819. As many as 75,000 young adults each year were attending Irish language classes during their leisure time. A cultural context was provided for social interaction and the Gaelic League céilithe gave young people especially an opportunity to meet each other. At times, upwards of 500 people were attending Irish classes per week in Newry Town Hall. A cultural renaissance had clearly occurred but the impetus was lost when the War of Independence and then, the Civil War, stopped the Gaelic League in its tracks. By 1924, only 139 Branches were in existence and the number of active Branches has remained relatively small since that time.

The Gaelic League, Conradh na Gaeilge, has achieved much in its first 100 years. The seemingly inexorable slipping of the Irish language into oblivion was checked. In 1893 hardly anyone could write in Irish - the League swiftly changed this. There had been no tradition of publishing in Irish but between 1900 and 1924 the Gaelic League had published over 400 titles and had stimulated the writing of literature in modern Irish. The Gaelic League offered new hope to the Irish people after the Parnell debacle. "The Gaelic League idea" soon permeated every aspect of Irish society. Its Industrial Board, which included men like AE and Arthur Griffiths, argued for the creation of native industries and supported **Buy Irish** campaigns. There was even a shop on Newry's Monaghan Street, the Gaelic Depot, which stocked only Irish-made goods. Conradh na Gaeilge too, was one of the first national organisations to accord equal status to its female members. Earnán de Blaghd, Ulster Protestant and Irish Nationalist, was to write of Douglas Hyde, Founder of the Gaelic League :

"Few citizens of any nation have done more than Douglas Hyde to conquer apathy, revive true national pride, to turn the tide of affairs and set their people on a new course."

The Gaelic League, under Hyde's direction, saw to it that Irish became part of the curriculum of most educational institutions in Ireland. Its Adult Education programmes were pioneering and progressive, and education, indeed, remains one of the League's main concerns. The Gaelic League classes in Newry aim to deepen individual experience and awareness, instil confidence in our learners, and increase capacity for autonomous learning so that our adult students can move on to other areas of language promotion (Bunscoil Committee, Coiste na Gaeilge) or even progress to mainstream Adult Education courses on offer in Newry College of Further Education. (The Gaelic League remains outside F.E. provision because most of our tutors are not professional teachers). It is a matter of some pride to local Gaelic League teachers that individual students who have come to us from disadvantaged secondary school backgrounds have been amongst our most successful learners.

Conradh na Gaeilge is engaged in what the national President of the Gaelic League, Proinsias Mac Aonghusa, described lately as a "gentle cultural revolution". We are pragmatists who know that it took the English hundreds of years to impose their culture on us and we realise that our own work of cultural regeneration will also take a long time. In towns like Newry, we are still very much channelling our energies into creating "awareness" and even tolerance of Irish and that's the main reason for the existence of this bilingual magazine. Our community-based teaching programmes are slowly but surely producing adults who are sufficiently fluent, confident and independent to progress to actually working for the Irish Revival on their own initiative.

It is unfortunate, though sometimes amusing, to see how often the Gaelic League, which advertises its non party-political credentials, is presented as being linked with individual political groupings. In some parts of the country we are seen as the Irish-speaking Cumainn of Fianna Fáil. In the north of Ireland we are occasionally presented as a satellite of Sinn Féin or under the influence of the S.D.L.P.. The reality is that no political party can possibly benefit itself by being associated with the Gaelic League, we are now such a small organisation. All political parties, in fact, ignore us. Those who would pin party-political labels on Gaelic Leaguers, sometimes maliciously, normally only betray their own political allegiences.

There are a number of hopeful signs in the Newry of 1993 that the Irish language is at last taking root. Newry Council has an energetic, forward-thinking and highly motivated Irish Language Officer in Maolcholaim Scot. Councillors themselves have shown 100% backing for all ventures proposed by the Coiste na Gaeilge. A couple of young priests are gradually introducing Irish language prayers into the Mass. Cases of cultural harrasment by the British Security Forces have declined to a trickle. Irish language cheques are accepted without question by every major store in the town. Adults are continuing to show interest in Irish classes. Scores of children study in the Gaeltacht each Summer. Some parents are rearing their children with Irish as the principal language of the home. The British Government has relaxed its legislation which banned Irish street signs. But the small Irish language school, Bunscoil an Iúir, is our main hope for the future. This school though still has not achieved official government recognition because the Dept. of Education states that it hasn't got sufficient pupils on its rolls. The same British Government, however, (to which those of us lucky enough to be in employment, pay our taxes), gives official recognition to similar, and smaller, minority language schools in Wales and Scotland. Are the 142,000 Irish speakers in the north going to be discriminated against forever ? It is grossly unfair that Newry parents have to fund-raise, week after week, to provide a type of education that is state-funded and actively encouraged in Britain.

The Newry Gaelic League, at considerable financial expense, has adopted Community Relations Council guidelines as regards 'neutral' venues, and most Irish classes are now held in rented accommodation which cannot be described as exclusively the resort of one section of the community. We are concerned though by some aspects of the 'community relations industry' as it has developed over the last couple of years. While government funding for Irish-medium education is clearly unsatisfactory, overall funding for Irish language projects remains a disgrace. **Millions** of pounds are invested annually by the British Government on Welsh language and Scots Gaelic arts and media projects (there are only 65,000 speakers of Scots Gaelic), while Irish language groups have to scramble for limited funds reluctantly given. Some projects, of dubious community relations value, have been sponsored by the N.I.O.'s Cultural Traditions Group. The cross-community linkage achieved by these projects, has, in the main, been artificially induced and short-lived, and the Cultural Traditions Group itself needs to seriously address its image problem. Middle class academics, with sometimes personal stakes in the publishing or Arts related industries, cannot hope to achieve credibility in the broader community, and because they live removed from districts where conflict is the norm, they can still less hope to effect changes which will enhance community relations.

Rev. Fr. Hugh O' Reilly
Bunaitheoir Chraobh an Iúir, 1897
FOUNDER OF NEWRY GAELIC LEAGUE
(pic. le caoinchead ó Seán Cúipear, Ros Treabhair)

The experience of Irish language and other voluntary groups who work within communities and who seek government funding for projects is often an unhappy one. Subtle techniques are utilised to prevent some projects from getting state sponsorship and this in itself is a form of censorship. Techniques range from the letter of grant application which apparently 'got lost in the post', or which was 'passed on to another agency' only to disappear in the bureaucratic mire, to the predictable 'X can't take a call right now, he's at a meeting' (one local group recorded no fewer than 17 consecutive instances of this fob-off in 1992 as they tried to trace a highly paid, and obviously very busy employee of a particular government quango). Other lines will sound familiar to our friends involved in Irish language and other community arts projects - 'our advertising budget for this year has just run out'; 'we'll see what we can do if you drop the photograph of Y/restrict your open access policy/call yourself anything but the Cardinal O Fiaich Branch...' The best way of all, of course, to exercise disguised censorship, is to devise a set of criteria which promotes the aims and objectives and, if possible, the vested interests of those who compose them, and if anyone else is clever enough to wriggle through that labyrinth, then the criteria can be promptly reinterpreted/revised/prioritised by a carefully selected and resourceful Administrative Officer/Director/ Development Worker.

The Newry Gaelic League publication "Cuisle na nGael" doesn't have the gloss and finish of a heavily-subsidised Friar's Bush Press publication, for example, (incidentally, we support the idea that local commercial publishers should receive State handouts), but at least it's the collective work of people who are active in the field of community development. Our home-produced magazine, for all its imperfections, remains an annual reminder to those who would sanitise Ireland's native culture that voluntary Irish language activists and Local Studies workers will keep trying to gate-crash the party to get our rightful piece of the cake. One of these days the bouncers will get tired of us and let us in.

Those employees and appointees who have a cultural brief in any of the myriad of N.I.O. backed agencies, who preach tolerance, and the value of cultural diversity in our society, must lead by example. They should shed their political agenda, ditch cultural engineering, and forge real and enduring links with voluntary groups. They should learn to take risks too, because if they don't, they'll end up like the schoolboy who buys his friends with sweets, only to be resented by all those with whom he doesn't share, and finally despised and rejected by everyone.

Linguistic variety is a fact of life in Britain, where an estimated 200 'foreign' languages are spoken, while here in the north of Ireland, Irish, and some Chinese languages, offer the only linguistic alternatives to English. But languages are fast disappearing worldwide. There are an estimated 5,100 languages spoken in the world today (99% of them in Africa and Asia) though the outlook for some of them looks bleak. The "New Internationalist" of June 1992 sent out an ominous warning :

"A patchwork quilt of linguistic areas, large and small, covers the planet. But all indicators suggest that within a generation not many more than 100 of these languages will survive.

Languages are dying out every bit as quickly as species; just as plants and animals are disappearing from the history of nature never to be seen again, with the demise of languages whole cultures are vanishing from the history of civilisation."

The challenge facing Conradh na Gaeilge and all other language organisations in the next decades is to make sure that Irish isn't one of these 'vanishing' languages.

CONRADH NA GAEILGE IN NEWRY WISHES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE GIVEN TO IT BY THE NORTHERN IRELAND COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY ACTION.

LILY FOX

Warrenpoint Road, Newry.

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"Cuisle na nGael" ar fáil anseo.

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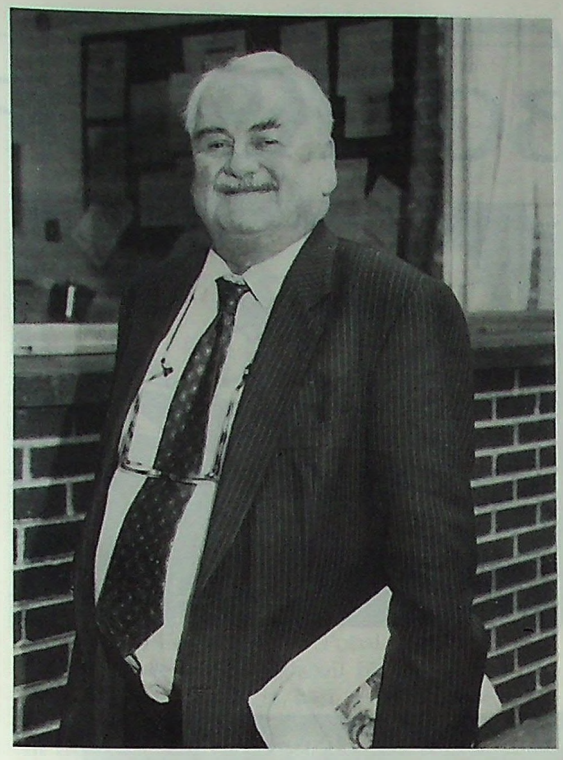
1893 Conradh na Gaeilge 1993

1993 - Bliain na Gaeilge



Scoil Shliabh gCuillinn '92

D'éirigh go seoigh arís le Scoil Shliabh gCuillinn a bhí á reachtáil, mar is iondúil anois, i mí na Samhna ar an Mullach Bán, deisceart Ard Mhacha. Bhí tinreamh níos fearr ná 'riamh ann agus bhí imeachtaí don óige agus do dhaoine fásta. "An Miotas agus na Mná" an téama a bhí leis an scoil Gheimhridh áirithe seo.

Is spéisiúil an ní é go bhfuil líon ard de scribhneoiri ban sa tír ag cumadh leo insan Gaeilge agus i measc leo siúd tá an file cumasach geanúil gealgháireach Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill. Ina cuid dánta déanann Nuala na miotais, go mórmór an chaoi a dhéilálann siad le ról na mban, a athmheas is a athchruthú sa dóigh is go mbíonn orainne, a lucht léitheoireachta, athbhreithniú a dhéanamh, as ár stuaim féin, ar ár dtuiscint ar staid na mban inniu, inné agus feasta. Tá dóigh iontach aici a lucht éisteachta a thabhairt léi, stíl nádúrtha aici a thugann cuireadh dúinn a bheith rannpháirteach léi i ndoimhneacht agus i ndiamhra a cuid smaointe.

Dúirt duine de a haoichainteoirí eile, Máirín Nic Eoin, agus í ag caint ag an Fóram a bhí ar siúl ar an mhaidin dheirannach den deireadh seachtaine, gur thug an traidisiún litriochta in Eirinn fuascailt do mhná a gcuid sainriachtanais féin a phlé, murab ionann is traidisiún liteartha i gcultúir eile a dhaoraigh ná mná scun scan is d'fhág go hiomlán faoi chos iad. Bhí barúlacha éagsúla ag na cainteoirí eile a bhí ar an phanéal maidin Dé Domhnaigh. Rinneadh ionsaí go speisialta ar an iomhá atá ró-choitianta in Eirinn go bhfuil mná na tíre, mar aicme, ciúin, féiníobartha, toilteanach a bheith tánaisteach do fhir. Mar a cháin bean amháin an iomhá áirithe seo - cuirtear mná i láthair ró-mhinic mar "coirp gan meoin, meafair gan urlabhra". Más ábhar trom, casta, cuid de préamhaithe sa saol léinn, a bhí idir chaibidil ag roinnt de na mná maidin Dé Domhnaigh, bhí teacht i láthair ag na cainteoirí ar fad agus tugadh spreagadh do dhaoine, nach meabhraíonn fá shaol na mban de ghnáth, a ndearcadh uireasach a iomlánú.

Bhí idir léachtanna acadúla (a raibh baint ag a dtéamaí leis an ceantair máguaird) agus imeachtaí éadroma á thairiscint ag lucht eagraithe na Scoile, meascán a bhí díreach feiliúnach. Labhair an t-Ollamh Francis John Byrne ar "The Lives of Saint Moninne in their political and social context". Iarnóin Dé Sathairn, d'fhreastail Iarlaith Ó Broin ar na daoine óga nuair a sholáthraigh sé imeachtaí a bhí spraíúil spórtúil. Stiúraigh Mick Quinn an oíche chaidrimh & cheoil sa Stray Leaf Club, oíche a bhíonn mar bhuaicphointe ag cuid de na daoine a thagann ar ais chuig Scoil Shliabh gCuillinn bliain i ndiaidh bliana.

Anois, agus rútaí na Scoile seo go domhain in ithir dheisceart Ard Mhacha, thig linn bheith ag tnúth le Scoil '93 (Bliain na Gaeilge) chun gruaim an Gheimhrigh a bhaint dinn. Féadann muid a bheith cinnte go mbeidh clár nua suimiúil dúshlánach leagtha síos ag Maolcholaim Scot agus ag a chairde.

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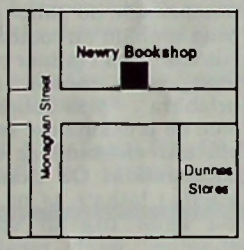

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Déanann Cumann Lúthchleas Gael i gContae Ard Mhacha agus i gContae an Dúin comhghairdeas lenár gcairde i gConradh na Gaeilge as céad bliain a bheith slán acu ag obair ar shon na Gaeilge. Is cúis áthais dúinn a bheith ceangáilte le Gluaiseacht na Gaeilge i mbliana - 1993 BLIAIN NA GAEILGE.

Dánta Nua New Poems

Is file óg é Uinseann Mac Seáin a bhfuil cónaí air i bPáirc Barcroft. Tháinig sé chuig Conradh na Gaeilge ar an Iúr sna meán 1980í leis an Ghaeilge a fhoghlaim. Ó shin tá dánta dá chuid foilsithe ar "Nuacht Feirste" agus "Pobal Rúraí". Is iar-scoláire é de chuid Ardscoil N. Iosaef, Bóthair Ard Mhacha, agus is ball é de Chraobh Uí Fhiaich.
In this poem, "The Ballybot Eviction", Uinseann Mac Seáin reflects on the notorious felling of the fairy tree which was situated behind Patrick Street. The last, poignant comment in the poem is left with the wise old Ballybot woman who maintained that she heard the rustle of the fairies' wings as they retreated to the sanctuary of the mountains, "as our forefathers did in Penal times."

Díshealbhú Bhaile Bocht

Níl 'fhios agam cé threascraigh an crann sí,
A rinne sábh-slad faoi choim.
Ach pé duine é an leagthóir,
Dála Setanta nuair a mharaigh sé an cú
Thuill sé clú thar oíche,
Mar tháinig siad ina dtáinte le breathnú
Ar an crann neamhbheo
Draíocht-spíonta.

Chaill muid rud luachmhar
An oíche a leagadh an crann sí.
Is fíor-annamh cónaí ar sióga
I lár an bhaile
Agus an tráth a fágadh gan choinne iad
Gan dídean
Mhaígh seanbhean chríonna as Baile Bocht
Gur mhothaigh sí seordán na sciathán
Nuair a chúlaigh na daoine maithe
I dtreo dítreabh na sléibhte,
Cosúil lenár sinsir aimsir na bPéindlithe.

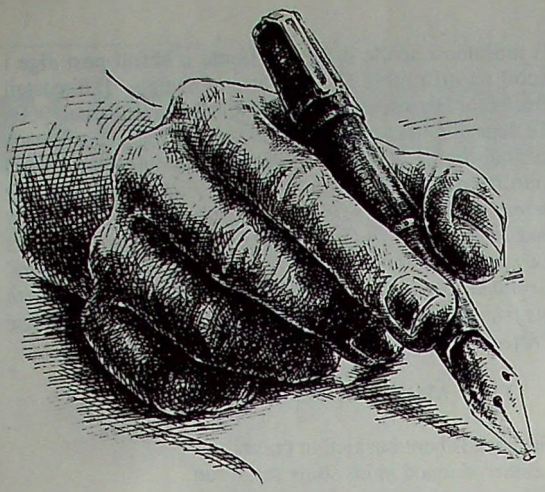
Uinseann Mac Seáin

Is múinteoir scoile é Declan Forde a bhfuil post aige i Scoil na mBráithre Críostaí ar an Ómaigh. D'fhreastail Declan ar Bhunscoil na Mainistreach ar an Iúr sna 1960í. Tá duaisdhráma do dhaltaí scoile scríofa aige, "Tar isteach sa ghairdín, a Dhaideo". Tá Declan gníomhach i gcúrsaí cultúrtha ar an Ómaigh. *Declan Forde received his primary education with the Christian Brothers in Newry and later taught in Greenpark C.B.G.S., Armagh. He is currently on the staff of Omagh Christian Brothers' Grammar School. Declan shares some of his poetry with his friends who are involved in the Fernagh Céilí House Project, Co. Thír Eoghain.*

THE MOUNTAINY MAN

His back is bent buckled in prayer,
Leather-skinned in his shiny serge suit,
He's a mountainy man from Rouskey
To the soles of his black polished boots.
He's awkward in the chapel
And shifts uneasily in his pew
As a priest in purple preaches
Over a woman he never knew.
The dark-eyed gentle Maggie,
And from the first day that they met
The mountainy man loved her
And in his heart he'll not forget
The day they walked down that aisle
So proudly hand in hand,
While the whispering neighbours wondered
If she'd changed her mountainy man;
For to them he was nothing but trouble,
With a temper as sharp as ice
And there wasn't a man in Rouskey
Who dared to cross him twice.
Yet Maggie saw behind his stare
To the soul that dwelt inside,
For the heart behind the barrel chest
Was the heart that she beguiled.
She married young and she married poor
When times were lean and hard,
But the mountainy man stayed with her
Whether days were good or bad.
Though chained to a life of grind and toil
Their love was wild and free -
Her tender, laughing mountain man
And his dark-eyed gentle Maggie.
Yet the arms that cradled Mag at night
Once cracked a tinker's skull,
And tamed the rocks on a Rouskey farm,
Stubbed the whins on a wind-swept hill.
He used to play her "Maggie",
And "The Rose of Arranmore",
But his old squeeze-box sits silent,
Like himself, by the cottage door.
Only the tin kettle sings now
And the table's set for one,
As the silent dust of loneliness
Settles around a Rouskey farm.
This munterloney farmer,
In his youth so fierce and wild,
Watched them close her coffin lid
And cried like a crumpled child.
Since the day his dark-eyed Maggie died
The house seems sparse and bare
As he patiently sits and waits for death
In Maggie's favourite chair.

Declan Forde
Meán Fómhair 1992



Four Poems

by

Howard Wright

Howard Wright is Arts Development Officer with the Magnet Young Adult Centre, Newry. His poem "IN THE KNOW" has won a £100 prize in the National Poetry Competition. The poems printed here are based on local settings.

BENCHMARK

The oldness of Killeavey's
church is such that the two centuries
difference between east
and west is not immediately apparent.

A longer look reveals casual
modification, paler stone for lintel,
a keener edge to the Norman
architraves, a Celtic concern

for building slowly, the spirit
quarried in isolation. The gate
creaks on its hinges so you tiptoe
past the waking dead, show

them a clean pair of heels, caring more
for the look-out tower
the other side of Seafin,
green soldiers making it high in a ring

or glacis around Gullion
to pierce the clouds and scan
the borderline for a shower
of hoods, a device, a command wire,

taking as a bearing this church
where, in the past, you were happy to search
for joints in the stonework,
a chiselled date, the stoneman's mark.

THINK OF A NUMBER

After we've lost another million punts in Davey's Bar,
Both of us, in the first pub over the border,
We plot immortality with more random numbers:
Birthdays, your body's mathematics, the registration
Of northern cars packing the inadequate carpark,
When we queue for the Lotto between
Lemonade children and blowsy mothers, their men glued
To the All-Ireland match on the swivelled telly.
A warship rides the narrow water between
North and south, breakwaters claw at pleasure boats,
Warrenpoint yuppies curling inside feathery wakes;
Slieve Foy's rusted helmet protects hollow earth
Where Guinness and oysters are the order of the day.
And we'll be mooching here like this,
Still relishing the richness of taste and vision,
On that day when our barge comes black-smoking down
The unlocked canal, and we escape this life
To four stout walls, a moat and burning oil,
Saying goodbye to this over-the-hill bar
Pandered by electrics, the circumspect fjord
Gloved by a cold snap of a winter so like the one
Burned into the folk-memory all those years ago.

IN THE KNOW

Either way, right or left,
they had to know what he was capable of :
did he kick with the other foot,
in which fist went the knife,
which foot took the yawning boot ?

Did he snore, and did he suppose
love was made on top of his wife ?
Which hand was used to pick his nose,
cut the cards, bet his life ?
And was dyslexia ever diagnosed ?

And where in the mirror was his shade :
did it laugh or frown ?
Did he brush his teeth side
to side to side, or up and down ?
Did he battery shave or chance a blade

or use both because each was blunt ?
Did people say he had a compass
in his head, and marooned in a desert
would he always find his oasis ?
Could he plot the North Star, cut

through the crap, stay within bounds,
be on the ball, in the know ?
Was his golf handicap a hook or slice ?
Did he play off eighteen or below ?
They wanted to know because

someone knows everything, and maybe it
was him. At one extreme or another. *Sinister*
or *dexter*, disordered or incurably neat.
What kind of mind had he got : Yahoo
or Houyhnhnm ? Did he vote with his feet ?

FROST

The biggest army base in Europe
lies beneath these black hills
made the more black
by skifflings of sleet.
We're on a flight path :
windows vibrate in their putty,
crystal shivers in the living room.

We used to go outside
to watch the helicopters,
blue shadows ripping like paper
where we short-cut the road,
the whole path at a slant
past the bare bones of walls
gone to seed in the frost.

But the exitement's worn off now
the black hills are white
and you know their names. There's even
a few idiots left who clamber to the top
only so they can tell us,
through righteous grins,
that they've seen all of Ireland.

We are pleased to publish the following two poems by Shane White. Shane White lives in Buckinghamshire, England, where he works as a civil servant. He is a past pupil of St. Colman's College, Newry. Shane is currently writing a book on South Armagh.

For Just a Moment

I thought I knew it all
Resisting your fatherly advice
When did it stop
Our hugging each other

I said so much I shouldn't
They said we were too alike
That now I'm your spitting image
Why have I left it until now
It's seeing the grass grow on your grave
Knowing that you're dead
Dead for ever

A graveyard on Father's Day
Remembering you with flowers
If only we could talk
For just a moment
I have pictures of your face
But none of your voice

I grew up too bloody late
I hope you knew how I really felt
Despite the harsh words
Of an arrogant teenager
I must have hurt you
Yet you came back for more

Were you proud of me sometimes
I am of you
Really I always was
But some male flaw silenced me

If only we could chat
For just a moment
Ah, sure I'd only want more

Troubled

If only I could flee like a bird
Or stand like the evergreen and gaze
Visit for a while then go home
That's the tide's daily task

Do cows really graze and doze all day
I'd like to try that
Or maybe just leisurely smile
Like the sun

Letting off steam
Like the gusty wind
It gets so angry though
I don't think I would

Oh to sit by a hidden stream
Listening to its ancient patter
All it has seen all it has heard
I wish I could be that stream

What's it like being the night
Hiding oneself and all around
Where does it put the sun
I wish I could hide

Does the milkman ever oversleep
Warm in bed I hear tinkling footsteps
He's out there in the cold
Soon be finished though
If only I were him

But what I wish above all
As I clock on once again
Not wealth not possessions
I wish, I truly wish
I wanted to be me

NEWRY POET REMEMBERED

Is iontach go deo é an oiread sin de leabharthaí agus de leabhráin atá á fhoilsiú in Iúr Chinn Trá na laethanta seo. Tá súil againn go raibh páirt nach beag againn i gConradh na Gaeilge i ndul chun cinn chúrsaí foilsitheoireachta ar an bhaile. Ceann de na leabharthaí is spéisiúla a tháinig amach le bliain anuas ná 'A Poet of Newry's Past' - Dánta, Liricí agus Prós, le Joe Guinan (b. 1968). Beidh cuimhne ag cuid mhór de bhunadh an Iúir ar an file céanna ach dearmad déanta againn is dócha ar raon a shaothair. Foilsíodh míle cóip den bhailiúchán agus álhas orainn a thuairisciú go raibh díol orthu ar fad.

JOSEPH CONWAY GUINAN
1890 - 1968

Ba cheoltóir den scoth é Joe Guinan agus tá a shliocht sin ar a chuid dánta. Ba mhinic é gafa le coirmeacha cheoil i Halla an Bhaile agus cuirtear é i gcomparáid le soláthraithe siamsa eile an Iúir, macasamhail Charlie Smyth, Seán Canavan, Lottie McKeown, agus P.J. McKay nach maireann. Scríobh sé fosta faoin ainm pinn "Telegraphist" ina cholún rialta "Under the Yew Tree" ar an nuachtán "Newry Telegraph". Ba chainteoir den scoth é a raibh cur amach aige ar an iliomad ábhair. Thar aon ní eile, áfach, mairfidh Joe Guinan inár measc mar fhile. Na dánta simplí, cráifeacha, áitiúla a chum sé, beidh iomrá orthu sna blianta romhainn amach, a bhuíochas sin dá chlann a raibh de chiall agus de mhisneach acu an leabhar gleoite seo a eisiúint.

Ag seoladh an leabhair i dTeach na hEigse bhí Kevin Neary, Ms. Julia Guinan agus Martin Guinan.

BENNETT'S
JEWELLERS

HILL STREET, NEWRY

Faigh sladmhargadh anseo
ar Lá Fhéile Pádraig '93
BLIAIN NA GAEILGE

TYRONE CRYSTAL
BELLEEK PARIAN CHINA
ROYAL TARA CHINA
& EXQUISITE
RANGE OF IRISH JEWELLERY

VISIT OUR FRIENDLY STORE

Gaelearraí
Iontaofa

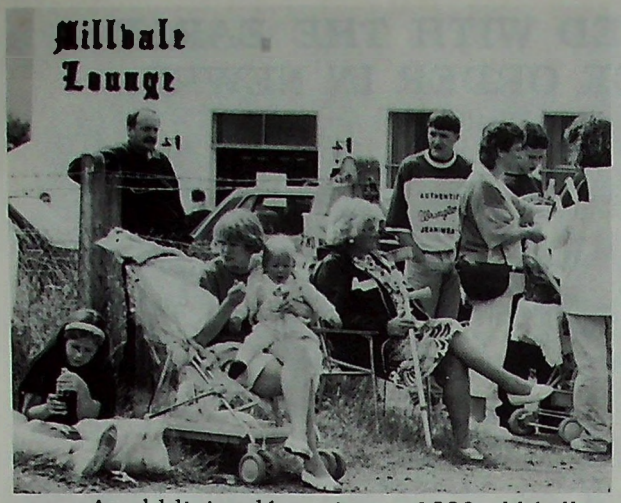
FAMILIES ASSOCIATED WITH THE EARLY DAYS OF THE ORANGE ORDER IN NEWRY.

Tuairisc le Deborah Uí Dhaibhéid

(photos from 1992 Demonstrations)

Tá sé soiléir go raibh an tOrd Oráisteach beo bríomhar i nIúr Chinn Trá i bhfad sular cuireadh ar bun an lucht stiúrtha a bhí ag obair mar Lóiste an Cheantair. Dar leis na tuairiscí atá againn, eisíodh Barántas Uimh. 117 sa bhliain 1797 agus ó shin i leith, ar ndóigh, tá Uimhir 117 bainteach le ceantar Mullaglass. Deimhníonn na tuairiscí is luaithe a cuireadh ar phár go raibh cruinniu i nIúr Chinn Trá ar 25 Bealtaine, 1818, agus go raibh na Lóistí seo a leanas páirteach ann - 117, 129, 175, 232, 233, 234, 235, 252 agus 1542. B'iad na Máistrí ar leith a d'fhreastail ar an cruinniu céanna ná Bros. Ferguson, McClelland, McCallister, Ingram, McBride, Cinegam, Edgar, Beatty agus Beatty. Fán bhliain 1824, bhí dosaen Lóiste ag feidhmiú sa cheantar.

Go mall i Mí Eanáir 1825, bhí cruinniu i nIúr Chinn Trá agus rinneadh na Lóistí ar fad a cheangal le chéile faoin teideal Ceantar an Iúir. Ba é Thomas Waring a toghadh mar Mháistir an Cheantair, agus ceapadh John Rantin mar Leasmháistir an Cheantair. As na hionadaithe a bhí i láthair ag an cruinniu stairiúil seo tá roinnt dá gcuid sloinnte coitianta go fóill i nIúr Chinn Trá : Robert Little, L.O.L. 37, Altnaveigh; Joseph Edgar, L.O.L. 99, Tullyhappy; Henry Mc Neale, L.O.L. 175, Ballymascanlon; George Riggas, L.O.L. 232, Newry; James Quinn, L.O.L. 233, Newry; James McCullough, L.O.L. 302, Benagh; William Spears, L.O.L. 1542, Shinn; James Holmes, L.O.L. 129, Newry. Sna mall 1820í ba iad na plugaí móra san Ord, seachas Thomas Waring agus John Rantin atá luaite agam ó chianaibh, ná Adam Rantin, Isaac Atkinson agus John Fowler. Tá 'fhios ag an saol Fódhlach go raibh imreas ann riamh anall idir baill an Oird agus Caitlicigh. Sa bhliain 1829, mar shampla, tharla ciréib nuair a bhí na hOráistigh ag pilleadh ó Rath Fraoilean, baile ina raibh an Dara Lá Déag á cheiliúradh ag Lóistí an Dúin. Gabhadh cuid de na hOráistigh agus cé gur tugadh os comhair na cúirte iad, ligeadh saor iad gan a dhath curtha ina leith sa deireadh thiar.



An bhliain dár gcionn, 1830, bhíodh cruinnithe an Oird á reachtáil i dteach Hooks, Sráid Ard. Sna meán-1830í, bhíodh na cruinnithe i dteach William Lockhart, Sráid na Canála, an t-Iúr, agus i dteach Boyd, Sráid Ard arís. Bhí daoine nua chun tosaigh san Ord anois, leithéidí J. Ellis, Samuel Weir, S. Robinson, Lucas Babington (fear a chuaigh chun na hAstráile sa bhliain 1850), Henry Reside agus J. Mc Cartaney. Ní raibh na cruinnithe riamh sásúil a fhaid is bhí siad á reachtáil i dtithe príobháideacha, agus sna 1840í d'aistrigh na hOráistigh áitiúla chuig Sráid Talbot go dtí an áit sin a bhfuil cuimhne ag daoine uirthi i gcónaí mar an Ragged School. Bhí halla de dhíth le fírinne agus sa bhliain 1848 ceannaíodh píosa talún ar Bhóthair Downshire agus rinneadh pleananna le haghaidh foirgneamh ar leith a thógáil. Ba chóir go dtuigfeadh daoine go raibh fás millteannach i líon na ndaoine a bhí ina gcomhaltaí den Ord. Sa bhliain 1819 ní raibh ach deich Lóistí i gContae an Dúin agus 125 ball ar fad iontu; tríocha bliain níos déanaí bhí an dá oiread Lóistí ann agus sa bhreis ar 600 ball cláraithe leo.

D'éirigh go maith leis an scéim chun Halla a thógáil. Thug Capt. Boyle (a bhí ina bhall den Ord ó 1798) síntiús £200 chun cuidiú leis na costais a ghlanadh agus ar an 1ú lá de mhí Iúil 1850 bhí an chéad cruinniu insan halla nua. Níor ghlac sé ach go dtí 1855 leis na costaisí ar fad a íoc ar ais. Sa tréimhse seo, tchím go bhfuil clanna eile chun tosaigh san Ord ag an leibhéal logánta, agus tá áthas orainn go bhfuil formhór na gclann chéanna, muintir McAlpine, Henning, Kidd, Best, Sinclair, Brown, Dodds agus Carlisle, rannpháirteach i saol an Iúir go fóill.

THE NEWRY PROTESTANT CLUB

Hugh Golding

Díle ar Shráid an Droichid

(pic. le caoinchead ó Mrs. O'Hanlon)

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AT JONESBORO, CO. ARD MHACHA

One of the most active community groups in the general Newry area has to be the Jonesboro Luncheon Club. An average of 35 older members of the Jonesboro community attend the club regularly. They are provided with a wholesome meal and a wide range of activities are organised to stimulate discussion and provide entertainment. The most exciting recent project undertaken by the Luncheon Club is a Reminiscence Programme. It is envisaged that the fruits of this project will be published later in 1993 and already considerable photographic evidence has been gathered. The project has been supported by the W.E.A. and 'Cuisle na nGael' will render some practical assistance as the project nears completion.

Tá an t-ádh ag muintir Bhaile an Chláir mar tá sagart éirimiúil díograiseach mar chrann taca acu, mar atá, an tAth. C. Vallelly. Cuidíonn sé fosta le Conradh na Gaeilge agus cuirtear fáilte Uí Cheallaigh roimh bhaill Chraobh Uí Fhiaich aimsir na Féile Pádraig nuair a bhíonn an Bailiúchán a thógáil ar shon na Gaeilge.

Polaiteoirí ón Iúr
An traidisiún radacach

POOR ORGANISATION SPOILED ANOTHER SAINT PATRICK'S DAY

The best endeavours of Charlie Smyth, Edmund Curtis, Catherine Donnelly and Maolcholaim Scot were not enough -

Report by Síle Ní Mhurchú

Bhí na mílte ag feitheamh go foighneach, fonn ar a bhunús foireann peile an Dúin a fheiscint agus greim a fháil, b'fhéidir, ar Chorn Shomhairle Mhig Uidhir. Bhí clár cuimsitheach foilsithe ag Comhairle an lúir, curtha fríd sheirbhís an phoist chuig tithe uile an lúir, ag cur in iúl do bhunadh an cheantair go raibh lá ar dóigh gealita dóibh ar Lá na Féile Pádraig ach iad a bheith sásta fanacht sa bhaile. De réir chuma, bheadh Paráid na Féile Pádraig in lúr Chinn Trá tánaisteach do Pharáid Bhaile Atha Cliath amháin. Ní ionadh, mar sin, go raibh plód ar shráideanna an bhaile, bhí an oiread sin *hype* ann. Ach ar na lucht feithimh a bhí an diombáidh agus ar an Comhairle a bhí an locht.

D'fhan na féachadóirí, agus d'fhan siad gan toradh, ar laochra an Dúin. Mar a tharla, ní raibh barúil dá laghad ag na peileadóirí go raibh daoine ag dúil leo in lúr Chinn Trá ! Tháinig Paul Clarke ceart go leor ó U.T.V. agus shiúil sé thart le Charlie Smyth (S.D.L.P. Councillor). Má theip ar imeachtaí na Féile Pádraig ní raibh aon locht ar an Comhairleoir céanna. Agus lena gceart a thabhairt dóibh, bhí Ciarán Mussen agus Brendan Curran (Comhairleoirí iad dís) i láthair fosta. Ní fada, áfach, go raibh ráflaí ag dul thart nach raibh Kevin O'Neill, Príomhfheidhmeanach Chomhairle an lúir, nó Robert McKnight, boc mór eile atá fostaithe ar thuarastal ard ag an Comhairle, i láthair. An raibh eolas ag an bheirt acu roimh ré go mbeadh an pharáid ina praiseach ? Ní raibh iomrá ar bith ar na flótaí a bhí gealita; bhí bannaí ceoil in easnamh. Chan amháin go raibh an pharáid mall ag tolseacht ach ní raibh ord nó eagar ar na siúlóirí. Bhí an rud ar fad ina cheap magaidh, lán chomh dona le Féile na Canála.

Ba thrua gur ligeadh síos muintir an lúir. Tá creidiúint ag dul dóibh as a dtacaíocht a thaispeáint don Chomhairle a chlis orthu, agus tá muid breá sásta leis na hiarrachtaí a rinne leithéidí Malcolm Scott, Eddie Curtis agus Raymond Carroll le haghaidh siamsaíocht de shaghas inteacht a chur ar fáil d'íocóirí rátaí an lúir. Chaith lucht eagraithe an lae £3,500 ar na himeachtaí - b'in airgead imithe le sruth. I mbliana beidh mise ag dul chuig Ard Mhacha áit ina bhfuil coiste láidir **neamhspleách** i mbun na Paráide . Tá 25 bannaí ceoil le bheith ann agus an oiread céanna flótaí. Beidh bratacha in airde, Bratach Náisiúnta na tíre ina measc. Beidh léacht ann ar Phádraig Mac Piarais agus cór ón Bhreatain Bheag ag canadh ar na sráideanna. Beidh sé soiléir go bhfuil ár n-ionannas mar Eireannaigh tábhachtach dúinn. Tá rud le foghlaim againn ó Cholste na Féile Pádraig in Ard Mhacha.

SUPPORT THE ANNUAL LANGUAGE COLLECTION

CONRADH NA GAEILGE
COMHALTAS UL
PLEASE HELP THE ...
LAN AGE COLLECTION
... THIS WEEK

CHIPS

Spiorad mhuintir an Iúir
The Newry spirit
Pobal gan treoiraithe

Bunadh an Iúir

People of Newry

LETTERS LITREACHA

We received a large number of letters following the publication of last year's "Cuisle na nGael" and interestingly, most of the letters came from Newry people now living in England, America and Australia. Several writers commented especially on the photographs of the last native Irish speakers from this area and two individuals argued that we should have provided a translation of Ciarán O Duibhín's article. Providing translations of this nature, while seeming to be a good suggestion, would add significantly to our already high publishing costs. It should be remembered also, that Cuisle na nGael's individuality comes from the fact that articles in English and Irish blend naturally together in a single magazine. We could produce a much more (financially) successful English-only magazine, probably even attract funding from the Cultural Traditions Group, and additional advertisements, but that is not the business of Conradh na Gaeilge. There is no doubt that articles in English, and more importantly, our use of old photographs, attract most of our subscribers. But these same people occasionally become curious to find out more about the Irish language and the Local Studies work of Conradh na Gaeilge.

Three letters, mainly about Ciarán O Duibhín's article, were particularly interesting. Kevin McSherry, Rooney's Meadow, Newry, informed us that one of the conditions upon which he was originally employed as a solicitor's clerk in Newry was that he had some knowledge of Irish from the Christian Brothers' School and would be of assistance to his employers in dealing with Irish speaking clients from South Armagh and Co. Louth.

Dr. John O'Hanlon, Newtownhamilton, wrote to tell us that he possesses the flag which draped Paddy Fearon's coffin (that would be an interesting acquisition for Newry Museum). Dr. O'Hanlon further added that he knew of a woman called Kitty Henry from Clarkhill who was a native speaker. Another native speaker, he tells us, was a Mrs. Rafferty who lived in Meigh. She came from Ballykeel and Dr. O'Hanlon thinks that her maiden name was Bennett.

Michael O'Hare contacted us again from Birmingham. He reminded us that Mary Ann Connolly from Clontigora was one of the last native speakers in that area. She was over 90 when this photograph (now faded) was taken. Mary's small farmhouse was a céilí house and some of our readers will remember a verse from one of the poems written about her :

We sat next the hearth and listened all ears
As Mary recounted the events of past years;
But her voice it was feeble and we knew well the sign,
She neared the end of her day, the last of the line.

The Gaelic League is anxious to find out more information about the last native Irish speakers of this area (including Omeath). We are also very keen to borrow, and publish, photographs of these speakers. If you have any information, please contact either Dr. John McCavitt, History Dept., Abbey C.B.S., Newry, or, Séamus Mac Dhaibhéid, English Dept., St. Catherine's College, Armagh.

Mary Ann Connolly returning from Fathom Wood with a bundle of sticks over her shoulder.

An bhfuil an Ghaeilge acu go fóill?
Twenty years ago OUR LADY'S GRAMMAR SCHOOL, NEWRY won the Comhaltas Uladh award , Sciath Mhic Ghiolla Bhríde.

MAURICE MC CAVITT

Telephone : 69434

BEEF AND LAMB WHOLESALER

Wishes
Newry Gaelic League
every success with its
Centenary Celebrations.

Comóradh an Chéid
1893 Conradh na Gaeilge 1993
1993 - Bliain na Gaeilge

FEIDHLIM MAC AONGHUSA
Oibrí ar shon na Gaeilge agus tacaí Chomhaltas Uladh

SHORT ACCOUNTS OF THE HISTORY OF THE GAELIC LEAGUE IN NEWRY IN APPRECIATION OF THE WORK OF **FEIDHLIM MAC AONGHUSA.**

Accounts contributed by former Craobh an Iúir members.

I remember that in the early 1940's there was a group of people, inspired primarily by the late Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa, who operated as the Newry Branch of the Gaelic League. There were no formal meetings at the time and the main activity of the Branch involved collecting money for Gaeltacht scholarships for Newry schoolchildren. The annual language collection was used to send as many students as possible to the Rannafast Irish College. Appeals were sent to business people in the town and the collection was always very successful. We used to be surprised at some of the people who made generous contributions - they wouldn't normally be associated with supporting the Irish language. We usually made follow-up calls to those who subscribed, as a mark of our appreciation. The scholarships themselves were donated to local schools who then held their own examinations.

On other occasions we held receptions in the Town Hall for those who contributed to the scholarship fund. Special seating, including armchairs and couches, was arranged so as to create as informal a setting as possible. A guest speaker would explain to the subscribers the objects of the Gaelic League and impressed upon them the value of contributing to the annual collection.

The speakers were hardly ever political figures, though at one time (the Comhaltas Uladh Silver Jubilee) Eamonn de Valera and Frank Aiken were invited to speak in their capacities as Irish language enthusiasts. The guests were given light refreshments and a musical evening followed. Over the years many professional singers entertained the supporters of Craobh an Iúir, and these included Máire Ní Scolaí, James Johnston, Michael O'Higgins and Patrick Thornton. The evenings were rounded off with a céilí. The expense incurred in running these receptions was considerable and we regretted that we could not run them more often. They succeeded in bringing people of all backgrounds together, some of whom had little knowledge of Irish culture, and instilled in them an appreciation of the voluntary work of the Gaelic League.

In the mid-1940's, the local branch, with the assistance of other helpers, ran a Gaelic Feis, Feis an Iubhair, which was held in the Abbey Grounds, by kind permission of the Irish Christian Brothers. Afternoon concerts and other activities were held in the school assembly hall; exhibitions of work by well known Irish artists were organised in the Art Room; Irish dancing and football matches were held on the school playing fields. The Feis Concert took place in the evening and some of the musicians and singers who participated included Mrs. Maud Aiken, Rita Lynch, Thomas Fletcher and Máire Ní Scolaí. At least one of these concerts was broadcast on Raidió Eireann and the concerts continued to be held even after the Feis ceased to be.

Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa was the prime-mover behind all the Newry Branch activities. He was an indefatigable worker on behalf of the Irish-Ireland movement. There were others who ably assisted him of course, and none more so than Una Mc Clafferty, now a member of the Old Newry Society and a supporter of all cultural societies in Newry. **K.N.**

Sa bhliain 1951 a thosaigh mé ag freastal ar ranganna Gaeilge de chuid Chraobh an Iúir. Bhí na ranganna á reachtáil san am sin i Halla na Ridirí ar Ché na gCeannaithe. Bhí trí rang ann gach oíche Chéadaoine. Thaitin an Ghaeilge liom agus níorbh fhada go raibh mé san Ardrang le Paddy Kearns. Bhí an Bunrang mar chúram agam sar i bhfad fosta. Toghadh mé mar bhall de Choiste Chraobh an Iúir i 1953 agus d'oibir mé mar Rúnaí na Craoibhe ar feadh cuid mhaith de bhlianta ina dhiaidh sin. Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa, dár ndó, a bhí mar cheannaire againn agus faoina stiúir bhí rath ar Ghluaiseacht na Gaeilge. Fuaireamar tacaíocht ón aos-óg agus tháinig lucht na gcoláistí Ghaeltachta le chéile gach Domhnach sa Chlub I.N.F. áit ina raibh céilí acu. Baineadh úsáid as gramafón agus ceirníní 78 leis an ceol a sholáthar. Bhíodh ailt as Gaeilge i gcló sna nuachtáin logánta. Bhí muintir an tuaiscirt go háirithe ag cur suime insan Gaeilge sna meán 1950í, agus orthu siúd a bhí ag saothrú ar shon na Gaeilge, bhí Conraitheoirí an Iúir chun tosaigh. Bhí cumann drámaíochta iontach maith againn. Aisteoirí an Iúir, agus bhaineamar a lán duaiseanna ag féilte éagsúla ar fud na tíre. Chinn muid ar dhamhsaí a eagrú le haghaidh airgead a bhailiú don Chraobh, gidh nach raibh lucht Chumann Lúthchleas Gael sásta linn as siocair an 'ban' a bheith i bhfeidhm go fóill. Bhí trioblóid againn corr-uair leis an R.U.C. ar an ábhar nach raibh 'permit' againn don Bháillíúchán Náisiúnta.

Bhiodh comórtas amhránaíochta againn freisin i Halla an Bhaile agus go minic bhí céad duine páirteach sa chomótas agus an Halla féin lán go doras. Bhí an bua ag Eleanor Toner (bean céile Pat Jennings) bliain amháin sa chomórtas agus nach iontach go deo é go bhfuil Eleanor in ann an t-amhrán as Gaeilge a rá go fóill ? Nuair a tháinig an scannán "Mise Eire" chuig Iúr Chinn Trá bhí orainn trí thaispeántas a chur ar fáil in aghaidh an lae. Thug muid an scannán linn chuig ceantair eile i ndeisceart an Dúin agus in Ard Mhacha theas.

Cuireadh ar bun ciorcal léitheoireachta agus thug scríbhneoirí cáiliúla cuairt orainn, daoine cosúil le Tarlach O hUid, Séamus O Néill, Dónal Mac Amhlaidh. Micheál Mac Liammóir agus Tomás O Flaich. D'éirigh linn Aifreann as Gaeilge a chur ar fáil san Ardeaglais agus sa Dominican ar Lá na Féile Pádraig. Le scaifte nios mó a thabhairt linn, bhí léachtanna againn a bhain le stair na tíre go ginearálta agus bhí Dónal Barrington mar aoi-chainteoir againn oiche amháin. Smaointigh muid fosta ar Credit Union a chur ar bun agus ár ngnó a dhéanamh ann tré mheán na Gaeilge.

Ni raibh baill Chraobh an Iúir falsa riamh agus bhí Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa agus a chairde de shíor ag pleanáil le todhchai na Gaeilge mar theanga phobail a chinntiú ar bhaile an Iúir. Tá dea-shampla na ndaoine a chuaigh rompu á leanstan anois ag comhaltaí Chonradh na Gaeilge ar an Iúr. **J.M.**

Daisy Fearon's (née McAteer) R.I.P., notes on the Gaelic League in Newry are filled with references to Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa, though her memories pre-date Feidhlim's involvement in Irish language circles. In 1918-1919, Irish classes were organised in the Gaelic League Hall in River Street. The classes were held on Sundays from 5.00 p.m. to 6.00 p.m. and were taught by Séamus O Monacháin, a Gaelic League Timire from Banbridge, later to become a prominent I.R.A. volunteer. Séamus was assisted by an tAth. Séamus O Coinn from Bessbrook. The Irish College in Omeath was well supported by Newry people at this time.

In the 1920's, after the birth of Comhaltas Uladh, the Fáinne organisation met in the White Cross Hotel. Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa and the novelist Séamus Mac Conmara were members of the Fáinne Committee. By this stage, Irish classes were being held in the Abbey school and those directing the classes included Tom Greenan (Master of the Workhouse), Malachi Quinn, Peadar Mc Cann and Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa. Monthly meetings of the Newry Branch took place in Mrs. Kane's Hotel, the Boulevard, and these were attended by P. Crinion, Fr. Magennis and Fr. Carville, Una Mc Clafferty, Mary Donlon and Paddy Sweeney. Feidhlim sometimes chaired the meetings. Harry Lewis, later President of Comhaltas Uladh, was very much involved in Newry Branch activities. Prayer leaflets were produced by the Branch and visiting lecturers such as Fr. Bernard Mooney and Prof. T. Moody addressed Branch members. In the 1940's, Dan Corr purchased a house in Omeath and this was to be used by Newry Branch members during the Summer months. The plan collapsed when Dan Corr died. Gerry Rankin, Paddy Magill, Seán Patterson, Fr. Magee and Bro. Lynam were promoting the language in the 1940's and 1950's. Informal meetings of the Branch used to take place in Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa's office which was very much the hub of the Irish Revival in Newry.

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WISH TO
CONGRATULATE
CONRADH NA GAEILGE
ON ITS CENTENARY
1893 - *BLIAIN NA GAEILGE* - 1993

Nuair a fuair Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa bás, chaill Gaeil an tuaiscirt cara a bhí buan agus cúl-taca a bhí daingean. Rugadh agus tógadh in Iubhar Cinn Trágha é agus in Iubhar Cinn Trágha a chaith sé a shaol, mar ba dual do dhálta a shíolraigh ó fhíor-fhuil Chlann Aonghusa. Is beag gné de shaol nó de stair an Iubhair nach rabh ar eolas aige. B'aoibhinn leat bheith ag éisteacht leis ag cur síos ar sheanchas a dhúiche. Lá an tórraimh b'fhurast a aithne ar mhuintir an Iubhair gur thuig siad nár bheag an méid a bhí caillte acu. Mairfidh a chuimhne ansin i bhfad, agus dhéanfaidh aimn an Iubhair féin a chuimhne a ath-mhuscailt ionainne an lá is fuide anonn.

Ba séimh, suáilceach, pléisiúrdha, cinealta ariamh é i gcomhluadar ar bith, ach ina theach féin, teach na féile, a ba soiléire a tchíteá na tréithre éagsúla a bhí ann—an daonnacht, an léann, an grá croí a bhí aige dá thír agus dá dhúchas. Is iomaí tráthnóna a chaith cuid againn san teach chéanna ag comhrá agus ag déanamh grinn leis; agus ag dul 'na bhaile dúinn dhéanaimís iontas den eolas domhan a bhí aige ar achan taobh de shaol cultúrdha na hEireann eadar teanga, litríocht, ceol, ealaín agus stair. Agus ba mhó arís ár n-iontas go rabh an t-eolas seo aige i nganfhios do bhunús a cháirde féin. Ach bíodh sin mar atá, ni rabh Gaeil Uladh in amhras ar bith ariamh cé'n aird a rachadh siad nuair a bhéadh comhairle agus cuidiú a dhith orthu. Bhí fhios acu go rabh Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa fá réir i gcónaí acu, bíodh siad in achrann fá stiúrú choláiste samhraidh nó i bhfastodh i ndeacrachtaí an Chomhaltais nó sáite i ngnoithí casta na gcluichí Gaelach. D'aithin siad go rabh cara seasmhach acu agus níor baineadh mealladh astu ariamh.

Nuair a bunaíodh *Cumann Seanchas Ardmhacha*, bhí Feidhlim ar an chéad duine a chuaigh i mbun a stiúraithe. Bí sé ar an réamh-choiste ón chéad lá agus níor chaill sé cruinniú ariamh. Ba tobann a tháinig an bás air, ach má tháinig féin, ní thig an bás go failthí ar an fhaichilleach agus bhí Feidhlim i dtólamh fána anam. Caitliceach cráifeach, dúthrachtach a bhí ann agus grá ar leith aige do Aifreann Dé, Domhnach agus Dálach. Dá n-iarrfaí orm fíche focal a chur in aon fhocal fá Fheidhlim, ní fhéadfainn níos mó a dhéanamh ná an inscríbhinn atá ar thuamba a charad, Lorcán O Muireadhaigh, a lua leis féin :

Do Ghaoidhealaibh mé féne,
'S do Ghaoidhealaibh mo náire,
Do Ghaoidhealaibh mo léigheann,
Is d'fhearaibh Eireann mh'áille.

Padraig Mac Aoidh

The Gaelic League in Newry remains strong and active largely as a result of the unstinting endeavours of members like Feidhlim Mac Aonghusa. To celebrate our centenary, and to add a further tribute to the voluntary workers of the Irish Revival who went before us, the local branches of Conradh na Gaeilge will be organising a series of commemorative events throughout
1993 - BLIAIN NA GAEILGE.
Watch Local Press for details.
(Tribute, left, courtesy of **Seanchas Ard Mhacha**)

CIARAN RAFFERTY SOLICITOR

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Déanaim comhghairdeas le
CONRADH NA GAEILGE
in Iúr Chinn Trá
agus guím gach rath ar
BLIAIN NA GAEILGE

Dúradh linn gur glacadh an pictiúr stairiúil seo nuair a tháinig Éamonn de Valera agus Frank Aiken chuig Iúr Chinn Trá chun freastal ar shochraid John Quinn (1955). Ar chlé, ar ndóigh, tá F. Mac Aonghusa.

29 Comóáil Chonnrad na Gaeilge—Seachtain na Cásca (Cuid de na Teachtaí a bí i Rann-na-Feirste). 1935

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A FEATURE ON WELL KNOWN NEWRY SOCIALIST **HUGH GOLDING**

Hugh Golding, now living in Dominic Street, Newry, has retired from the public arena but his interest in the town's political scene remains undiminished. He is probably best known locally for his prominent role in the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association although his political involvement started in the mid - 1940's.

Hugh belongs to a long established Newry family which has strong affiliations to the cause of Irish Labour. For generations, the Goldings were connected with merchant shipping and Hugh's brother, the late Paddy Golding, was a prominent trade union representative. Hugh's own working career began in 1935 when he joined the Standard Printing Works, near Sands' Mill, as an apprentice printer on a wage of 4 shillings a week. Charlie Ivors owned the works in partnership with Ben Weir. Hugh was to serve his seven year apprenticeship with them. The Standard Printing Works had fared well in pre-Partition years and attracted most of its business from what later became the Irish Free State. But the Second World War saw lean years for the company. A combination of bad debts and a shortage of ink and paper meant that profits were reduced. Most of the work at the time involved printing posters, calendars, bookies' dockets and bill-heads. Others who worked with Hugh in the Standard Printing Works included Eric Agnew, from New Street, and four girls - Rose Hunter from Caulfield Place, Susan Keenan from Ballyholland, Nancy Ivors and Ms. White.

Hugh left the Standard Printing Works in 1942 when the management were unwilling to offer him tradesman's wages. Other printers operating in the town in the early '40's included Magowan's, Hodgett's, Bennett's and Murray's (where Louis Boyd now has his shop at Mill Street corner). The Commercial Printing Works, in New Street (an eye-sore at present and surely due a new tenant ?) was a family affair and was run by Bob and Walter Gray. Peadar McArdle, a friend of Hugh's from Erskine Place, was a printer with the Grays.

Hugh Golding, Dan Mussen agus Sam Dowling.

Having left his trade, Hugh was lucky enough to get a job with Northern Ireland Road Transport. He sat an examination, did three days training, and became a bus-conductor on the route to the aerodrome at Cranfield. Other conductors who worked with Hugh were : Norman McKinley; Paddy Duffy from Crossmaglen; Eamonn Murphy from Newtownhamilton; and Pat O'Callaghan from Crossmaglen. Hugh stayed with the bus company until 1948 and worked most of the routes out of Newry, but principally the Newry-Belfast-Newry run.

In 1948 Hugh returned to his trade with the local firm of Magowan's. He was offered good money and had the advantage of a five-day week. Magowan's was a big outfit in the 1940's, with a shop in Hill Street and premises in Dundalk. Most of Magowan's work came from outside Newry. H.M. Stationery Office contracts kept them busy as did the production of timetables and brochures for the public transport network in the north. Horticultural colour catalogues for nurseries were expertly printed by Wallace Girvan, the foreman printer. Hugh also did colour work, mainly postcards. As Hugh had served his time in a non-union firm, he initially found it difficult to get recognised by the printers' union, the Typographical Association. Magowan's at that time was a closed shop.

Hugh stayed with Magowan's until 1950 when better wages beckoned from Dublin, where printers were scarce and hours were attractive. The Dublin adventure lasted only six months and Hugh returned to Magowan's at the invitation of Jimmy Hollywood and remained there for another eleven years.

In 1961, Hugh abandoned his trade again to take up a job as a bread-server with Willis'. He eventually became Sales Supervisor. Hugh's run in the electric delivery vehicle was around Newry and into Burren and Ballyholland. Jack Craig, from the Armagh Road, was the Manager in Willis' at the time and Hugh's fellow bread-servers were Vincie McLaughlin from Edward Street, Mick Campbell and George McAteer. The bakers with Willis' were the two Paddy

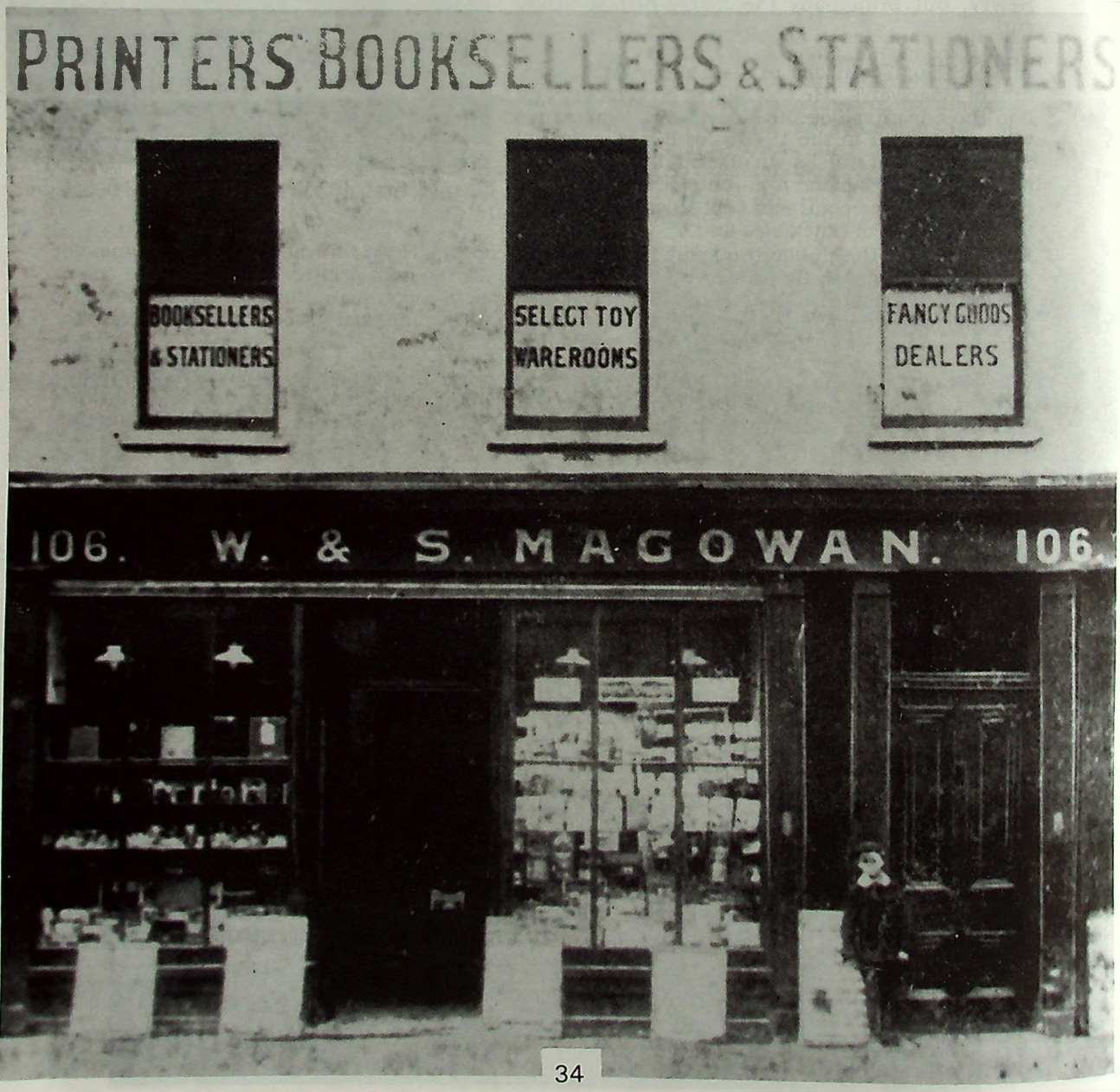
Tom McKeown, Hugh Golding, Tommy McGrath, Roderic Connolly, T. Kelly.

McMahons, Pat Evans and Pat McConville. Molly Healy from Chapel Street and Sheila Hughes from Daisy Hill Gardens also worked at Willis'. Hugh describes both Magowan's and Willis' as fair employers and that is praise indeed for companies in pre-Fair Employment Agency days.

In 1968 Hugh made his last comeback as a printer when he joined Hodgett's. "It was the best job I ever had, and while I always had good employers, Hodgetts were the best", commented Hugh. Unfortunately, illness was to prematurely terminate Hugh's working career and he was forced to retire in 1970.

If Hugh Golding's working life was varied, his political life was even more so - the one constant being his concern for the ordinary, working class people of Newry. Hugh became a member of the Northern Ireland Labour Party in the mid 1940's when he joined with Charlie O'Donnell, Dan Boyd, Charlie Smyth's father and Tommy Kelly. Tommy Kelly indeed rated highly in Hugh Golding's estimation as did the late Tommy McGrath. The party's meetings were held in the Labour Hall.

Labour Party politics in Newry have always excited great controversy. The acceptance of Partition by some Labour activists in the north of Ireland was to split the Labour movement and most Labour supporters in Newry were to turn to the 26 Counties based Irish Labour Party. Hugh Golding temporarily pulled out of local politics only to become re-involved in 1961 when James J. Campbell of Chequer Hill asked him to join the Newry Branch of the Irish Labour Party. The I.L.P. met in the Parochial Hall and some of the prominent figures in the party by this stage were Pat McMahon, Matt McAteer, Tom Kelly and Tommy McGrath. The I.L.P.'s main political rivals

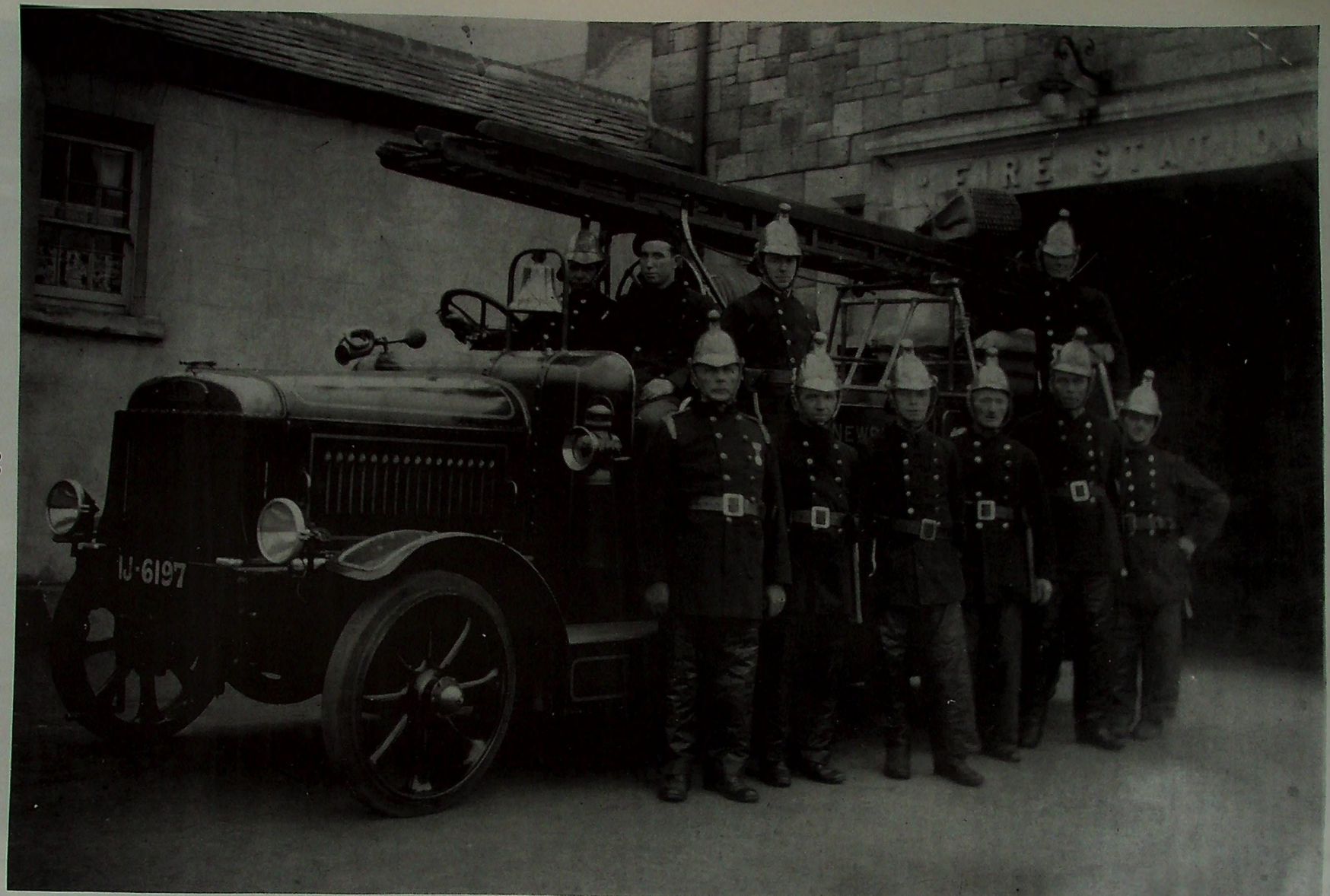


were the closely related Newry Labour Party and Hugh Golding, like all others involved at the time, is unwilling to discuss in any great detail the rift between the Labour parties in Newry. "These were bitter years in Labour politics, though the I.L.P. and N.L.P. Councillors themselves remained fairly friendly with each other", commented Hugh. The famous Tommy Markey led the Newry Labour Party and some of Markey's allies were Tom Mulligan from O'Neill Avenue, Owen McKevitt, Gerry Sloan and Robert Dixon. While remaining ideologically opposed to Tommy Markey, Hugh Golding saw Markey's qualities :
"He was a straight talker and had a genuine interest in the welfare of the less well-off." Hugh beat Tommy Markey in the Down County Council elections in 1967, possibly the only electoral defeat suffered by Markey.

The issue that was to dog local politics for years was the whole question of the allocation of Council houses. There had been a two-way distribution of houses when Tommy Markey's Newry Labour Party and the local Unionist Councillors agreed on tenancies, thereby excluding any input from the Irish Labour Party. The Unionists could never fill their agreed quota of houses and passed on their share to the Newry Labour Party which undoubtedly reaped the political rewards at election times. The Irish Labour Party Councillors were eventually given a say in the allocation of Council houses though the I.L.P. was to introduce its own points system when it later gained 10 out of the 18 seats on Newry Urban Council. The points system was an idea imported from Labour controlled councils in England and while it was an equitable system it only served to rent asunder the Newry Branch of the Irish Labour Party. Several I.L.P. Councillors fundamentally disagreed with the points system and after an acrimonious war of words, sometimes conducted openly on the pages of the local newspapers, these Councillors were finally expelled from the Party by Head Office in Dublin. Hugh Golding believes that it was a great pity that party solidarity could not have been maintained. The party was strong in Newry, with over 90 card-carrying members at one point and with hard-working Councillors like Mick Murphy, Colman Rowntree and John McKevitt. Hugh believes that many of the members were genuine socialists and drew their political ideas from the teachings of Connolly and Larkin.

Hugh Golding was first elected to Newry Urban Council in 1967 and from then on was to play a leading role in civil rights and civil disobedience agitation. He helped in the now legendary Fergus Woods' (People's Democracy) election campaign. He stood as a Unity Candidate in the 1970 Westminster Election for the South Down seat and was narrowly defeated by the Unionist Candidate, Capt. Orr. He was still in the Irish Labour Party at that stage and remembers well the support he got from men like Eddie McGrady at the time. Incidentally, the Newry Labour Party delegates walked out of the meeting which was held in the Ardmore Hotel to select Hugh Golding as Unity candidate. Labour rivalries ran deep. Hugh was later asked by Paddy O'Hanlon to join the emerging S.D.L.P. and he declined, though Hugh's long time friend Tommy McGrath did become a member of the new, mainly nationalist party. Hugh himself joined the Republican Clubs in 1973 and a year later stood once more in the Westminster elections. His support fell this time from over 21,000 votes to 4,000+ votes, though this strong turnout for the Republican Clubs is generally believed to have prevented Seán Hollywood (then S.D.L.P.) from taking the seat from the Unionists. Hugh subsequently resigned from the Republican Clubs in 1976.

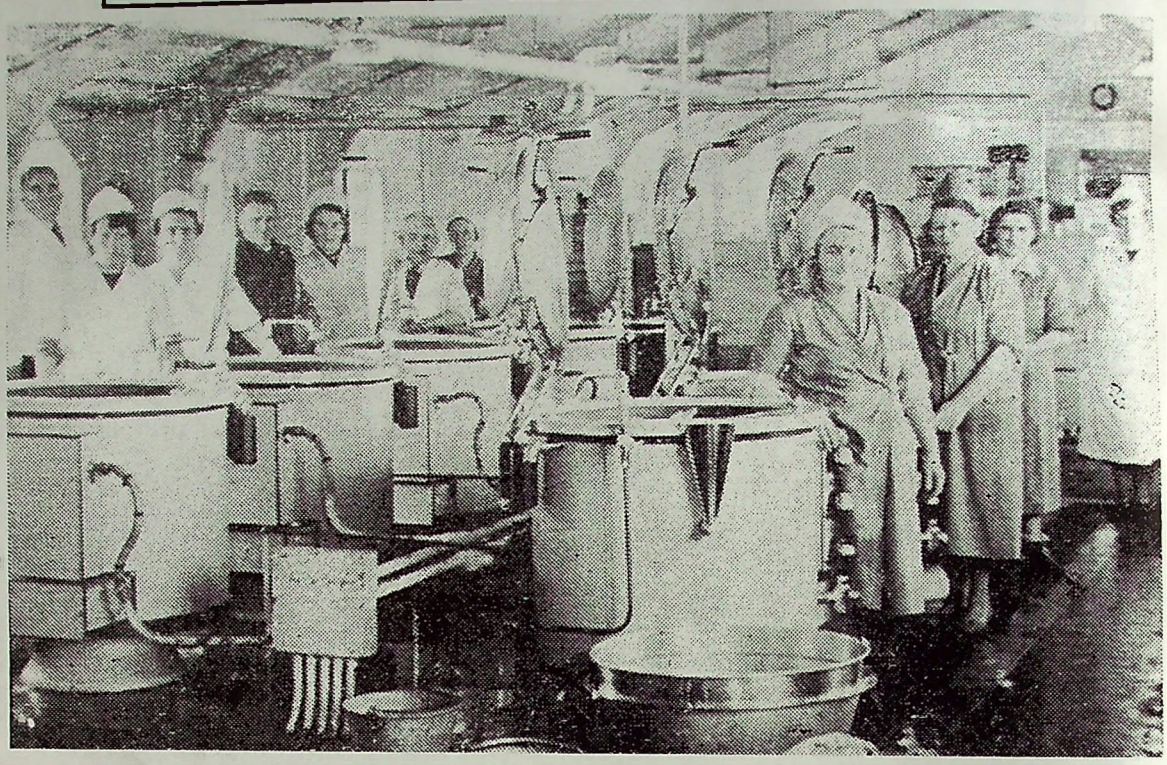
Hugh Golding, ever in the thick of things, has never held political grudges. One of his arch political opponents was Max Keogh (Irish Citizens' Association) but the two remained good friends from their early days in the Newry Shamrocks' Running Club of which Hugh Golding was a founder member (formed 1935). Hugh restricts himself now to the activities of the Glenside Bowling Club. He spent twelve years on the D.H.S.S. Appeals Tribunal where, as a representative of the Newry & District Trades Council, he looked after the interests of the working class people of Newry. He still takes a keen interest in Irish politics and retains his political objective of an Ireland united, prosperous and rid of sectarianism. Hugh hasn't lost his radical edge though he was reticent about commenting on the current political stagnation in the north of Ireland. On the question of politically motivated violence, Hugh was only prepared to quote a view often expressed to him by Roddy Connolly - "all armed struggles end in talks and all talks end in compromise".



Ar chúl Halla an Bhaile a bhí an sean stáisiún dóiteáin

Bhí siad ann in am an ghátair

ANOTHER VISIT TO LINENHALL SQUARE
by Brendan Curran



Sa lá atá inniu ann tá sé ar chumas beagnach gach scoil, diomaite de chorr-scoil bheag iarghúlta, dinnéar agus milseog a sholáthar dá gcuid scolairí, agus an bia ar fad ullmhaithe i gcistin na scoile. Níl á mhaíomh agam go bhfuil na béilí thar moladh beirte, i mbarúil na ndaltaí pé scéal é, ach ar a laghad is féidir leo trath bia te a chaitheamh gach lá más mian leo é. Sna 1950í/1960í ámh, ní raibh trealamh cócaireachta ar fáil go leitheadach, insna bunscoltacha ach go háirithe, agus bhí na páistí insna scoltacha siúd ag brath ar an freastal a rinne an School Meals Service orthu. Ag an am sin bhí cistin mhór ag an Seirbhís seo insan Iúr, suite i gCearnóg Halla an Linéadaigh. Is cuimhneach liom a' dhul thar bráid na cistine, mar bhí gaolta de mo chuid lonnaithe sa cheantar sna luath-seascaidí. Bhíodh boladh na bprátaí de shíor san aer agus bhíodh na hoibrithe féin dofheicthe nach mór fríd néal gaile na cistine. Bhíodh scuainí de dhabhacha le feiscint gach áit. Cuireadh an bia sna dabhacha seo nuair a bhí sé réidh agus ar aghaidh ansin chuig na scoltacha. 10d. an costas a bhí ar dinnéar scoile sna mall-1950í - is mór idir inniu is inné.

Foireann chloigeann déag a bhí fostaithe sa chistin i Linenhall Square : Ms. Isabella Cameron mar bhainisteoir; triúir mar chócairí; seisear mar chuiditheoirí cistine; agus giolla cistine amháin. Bhí a lán táithí ag Ms. Cameron insan jab seo mar d'oibir sí tráth i gceaintín an R.U.C. in Inis Ceithleann agus roimhe sin aríst d'ullmhaigh sí bia do gheibheannaigh i rith an chogaidh. Uirthi a bhí an dualgas corradh is míle béile a chur ar fáil in aghaidh an lae mar bhí scoil déag in Iúr Chinn Trá i dtuilleamaí na cistine, mar a bhí : Newry Model; St. Joseph's Primary; Abbey C.B.S. Primary; Our Lady's Primary; Windsor Hill; Rockvale; Loughorne; Crowhill; Crowreagh; Ballyholland agus St. Clare's.

Ba é biachlár tipiciúil ag an am ná :
DE LUAIN : slisín, pónairí, brúitín; rís agus prúnaí.
DE MAIRT : feoil mhionaithe le meachan dearg agus oinniún ann, brúitín; spúinse úill agus custard.
DE CEADAOIN : stobhach gaelach; biabhóg agus seimilín.
DEARDAOIN : mairteoil rósta, súlach feola, píseanna, brúitín; toirtín suibhe agus custard.
DE hAOINE : iasc frioctha, meachan biatais, brúitín; maróg bhacáilte agus gránphlúr.

Ar éigean a tharla athrú ar an biachlár seo ó sheachtain go seachtain. D'úsáid na cócairí 7 cwt. prátaí in aghaidh na seachtaine agus cuireadh im agus uachtar iontu sa dóigh is go mbeidís sobhlasta (gidh go raibh na prátaí céanna cnapógach go leor más buan mo chuimhne, agus an bia go ginearálta stolptha stalcánta). Tugtar faoi deara nach raibh iomrá ar bith ar sceallóga ag an uair úd. Ba thearc na cócairí scoile sna 1970í - 1980í a raibh sé de dhanaíochta orthu seachtain a ligint thart gan sceallóga a chur ar an biachlár, cé go bhfuil claonadh ann in athuair gan a bheith ag bacaint le sceallóga ar chúiseanna a bhaineann le sláinte an duine.

HALCYON DAYS

Na laethanta grianmhara a bhí .... Mrs. Ferguson, Mary Sweeney, Mrs. Spencer, Josie McInerney, Lizzie Lundy, Mrs. Brady, Roseann O'Reilly, Mrs. O'Hare, Mrs. Crawley. pic. le caoinchead ó P. O hEochaidh

The houses of old Pool Lane, Newry.

Photograph courtesy of the Manager, BRITANNIC ASSURANCE, Margaret Street.

Déanann Coiste

Fheis an Dúin

comhghairdeas le

CONRADH NA GAEILGE

Tá áthas orainn a bheith ceangailte le saothar an Chonartha ar shon na Gaeilge

Feis an Dúin, 1950 - Eamonn de Valera, Frank Aiken, Frs. O'Neill & Murray, agus J. Kearney i láthair (pictiúr a fuaireamar ó Frank Lennon).

THE GAELIC LEAGUE IN LISSUMMON

by Oliver Murtagh

Is staraí áitiúil é Oliver a bhfuil leabhar amháin foilsithe aige "The History of Lissummon".
Is ball é de chuid Chumann Lúthchleas Gael.

In 1907 Lissummon followed the pattern established throughout Ireland, took an interest in the Irish language and formed a branch of the Gaelic League. On the 30th December, 1907, the locals held a céilí in the old school to get the new Branch of Conradh na Gaeilge off the ground. This enjoyable affair was compered by an tAth. O Cleirigh (Fr. Clarke). During the proceedings songs were rendered in Irish by the children of the school, and also singing were Miss O'Hagan, Miss Kerry, Misses P. O'Hare, P. Carty, Sheridan, Carroll, O'Hare and Burke. There were also dancers from Newry (where the Gaelic League had already been active for ten years) in attendance.

The main movers behind the founding of the Gaelic League Branch appear to have been Miss P. McDonnell, local teacher, and Mr. T. A. Hughes, Craigmore. Mr. Hughes worked in the locality. Both of them were fluent Irish speakers. Another lady who felt the call to support this Irish movement was Kate Doran (she lived at the east end of the 'fourth lane'). She was strongly critical of, and wrote in protest against, those Irish people who refused to buy Irish goods. She was a firm advocate of supporting native industries. Kate Doran was so energetic about what she called 'Lissummon's Awakening' that she was inspired to write the following simple, sincere, patriotic poem :

Lissummon is at last awake
And proud I am to know
Of so many gaels assembling
And their love of country show.

May God protect our native land
And guard it as He may
And grant to it a Nationhood
And snatch it from decay.

As Ireland has been long oppressed
And tramped by her foe
Oh God lead on our countrymen
And save them from such woe.

(Kate Doran died on 26th June, 1911, aged only 26)

Thomas A. Hughes, the main inspiration behind the new Branch, was also moved to put pen to paper and revealed his own patriotic fervour by publishing the following song :

LISSUMMON ABU

Up from the slumbers Lissummon awakens,
Determined to fight as their fathers of old;
When to the breeze on each mountain and valley
They flung Erin's green flag emblazoned with gold.

Chorus
On for our Irish games,
On for our Irish names,
When on our side stand the good and the true;
And from each sea to sea
Let our watchword be
Tír agus Teanga, Lissummon abú !

Tongue of St. Patrick, St. Brigid and St. Columbkille.
Tongue of brave Brian and Owen Roe O'Neill,
Has found its place in the homes of Lissummon
Where the hearts of the people have proved true as steel.

Chorus

Hear ye that sound, 'tis the swish of the camán
Ringing once more o'er meadow and dale;
Telling the tyrant, the shoneen and traitor
Lissummon has joined in the march of the Gael.

We find that Thomas Hughes involved himself very energetically in community affairs in general. He was master of ceremonies at many a céilí, often singing or reciting himself. Thomas sat on several local committees but of course his main thrust was for the Gaelic League.

In April 1910 the Chief Gaelic League Organiser, Mr. Domhnaill Ua Baoighill, called at the Lissummon Branch. He stated that he was not only hopeful but certain that the people of the area would make great endeavours for the language.

Irish classes continued for a number of years and a substantial number of people became confident in speaking the language. At a céilí celebration in January 1912, we note that an Irish choir was in existence. Singing in the native tongue were Miss M. Shevlin, Miss S. O'Hagan, Miss L. O'Hagan and Miss L. O'Brien. At the same function Messrs. Savage and McParland (Belleek) played the violins.

After 1912 national events seemed to overtake the local branch and we believe it temporarily went out of existence. However, Patricia McDonnell continued to teach Irish to her pupils over the years. One hitch occurred in 1918 when the British Government proscribed the Gaelic League. Consequently, Canon Quin banned the teaching of Irish in the schools of Lower Killeavy. This caused quite a stir in the parish, particularly as the Canon had previously been such a firm supporter of the Gaelic revival.

It's not until November 1943 that we detect a re-emergence of the Gaelic League in Lissummon. A committee was formed with Mr. Thomas McGailey as Chairman, while Mr. Hugh Meehan had the job of Treasurer. The language classes were held in the A.O.H. Hall, Cullentragh, ably taught by members of the Savage family, Enagh, Nellie, Annie, Tomás, (Canon Tomás) and Ciarán.

In 1947 it is noted from the records that cultural activities were still buoyant in Lissummon. We find that the community interest in native culture seems to have developed to an intellectual plain. The local branch invited Mr. F. O'Hanlon B.A., Newry, to speak on "Art in Early Ireland". Ciarán Savage presided at this lecture and complimented the committee on their initiative in having Mr. O'Hanlon along. The lecture covered a wide range of topics including Irish art, manuscripts, Celtic crosses and sacred vessels. The meetings at this time all took place in the I.N.F. Hall.

Research material on the Lissummon Branch of the Gaelic League appears to dry up after this period, leaving us to assume that the Branch gradually became redundant and confirming that Lissummon had lost another of its once thriving community-based organisations.

Patricia Mc Donnell

MORE INTERESTING WORDS FROM COUNTY LOUTH

I "Cuisle na nGael" Uimhir 7, foilsíodh liosta focal a bhí, nó atá, in úsáid sa Bhéarla i gceanntar Chuailgne ach a tháinig ón Gaeilge i gcéadóir. Annseo thíos tá liosta a bhaineann le deisceart Cho. Lú agus a bhí in úsáid ag tús an chéid seo. Níor dhein mé athrú ar bith ach amháin na focail a chur in ord aibitire. Cuid de na focail níor mhothaigh mé féin ariamh cheana iad agus cuid eile ní thuigim go baileach a mbrí. Ach gan dabht ar bith tá rian agus blás na Gaeilge orthu agus tharla gur ón taobh seo den Bhóinn a thagann an liosta shíl mé go mbeadh siad ionspéiseach do mhuinntir Oirghialla.

backan-bara : fungus
backy : lame
boran : a dank weed
'boxty' bread : potato cake
bradagh : rambling (of a cow)
brusna : firewood
bualheen : part of a plant
bultan : ragweed
cár : grin
cawdy : a boy
ceerog : a beetle
citha : left-handed
cleever : backetman
colcannon : champ beastings
coppog : dockweed
crág : a handful
crig : crack on hand
cushíní : baby's feet
dalk : a thorn
dallóg ; a blind on a cow
dollan : a blind sieve
donny : sickly
fasces : grass on back of fence
freeog : billberry
gareah : hare
garageon : like a tadpole
gasson : a boy
gerseagh : a girl
gidger : an old man
giranconagh : a fairy
gothan : a harvest-man
guggen-gaw : a rush hat
greesha : ashes
keb : an old spade
miggilin : part of a plant
montha : toothless
philibin : a plover
puss : grimace
pisterog : same as piseog
prakeen : poltog
ranie : a dying person
shamshog : sorrel
skibbitch : to scatter coins, apples etc.
slig : a seashell
sragh : a shaking bog
sthtuck : sullen
stocka : a boy
streelya : a girl
tharp : clod
wangel ; a 'bottle' of straw

Críochnaíonn an liosta mar seo : words used in calling or speaking to animals, fowl etc. -
tarlish to a cow to quieten her
bia bia to turkeys
leek leek to chicks
muc muc to pigs

An Bráthair Diarmuid Mac Diarmada
Scoil Phádraig
Ard Mhacha
Lá 'le Bríde 1993

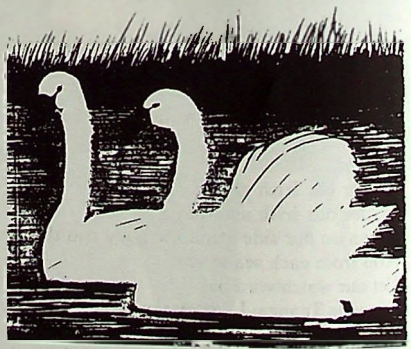
SACRED HEART GRAMMAR SCHOOL PRODUCES NEW IRISH PUBLICATION "Scoilscéalta"

In Earrach na bliana seo a tháinig amach an chéad chóip de "Scoilscéalta", duilleog eolais atá á chur le chéile ag daltaí atá ag foghlaim na Gaeilge sa Sacred Heart. Fuair mé féin cóip in aisce den duilleog i Siopa Mhic a' tSaoir, Sráid an Droichid (gidh go mbeinn sásta íoc asti). Tchím go bhfuil Pádraigín Ní Chathmhaoil, Siún Nic an Mhairnéalaigh agus Sinéad Ní Dhomhnaill mar chomheagarthóirí ar "Scoilscéalta". Tá cuntas insan chéad eagrán ar chuairt a thug beirt chailín ar Bhunscoil an Iúir agus píosa ar Choláiste Bhlinne, Camloch. Lena chois, tá comórtais ann do na cailíní agus grianghraif ann de dhaltaí a bhain comórtais eile.

Tá Seán Mac Labhraí ag teagasc na Gaeilge anois i Scoil an Chroí Ró-Naofa agus tá áthas ar Gaeil an Iúir go bhfuil an múinteoir céanna ar ais inár measc go buan. Chan amháin go bhfuil scoth na Gaeilge ag Seán ach tá 'fhios aige cé chomh riachtánach is atá sé teacht i bhfeidhm ar na meáin ar leas na Gaeilge agus tuigeann sé fosta an tábhacht a bhaineann le scoláirí a cheangail isteach leis an phobal taobh amuigh de gheaftaí na scoile. Táimid ag dúil le scothscéalta feasta ar "Scoilscéalta".

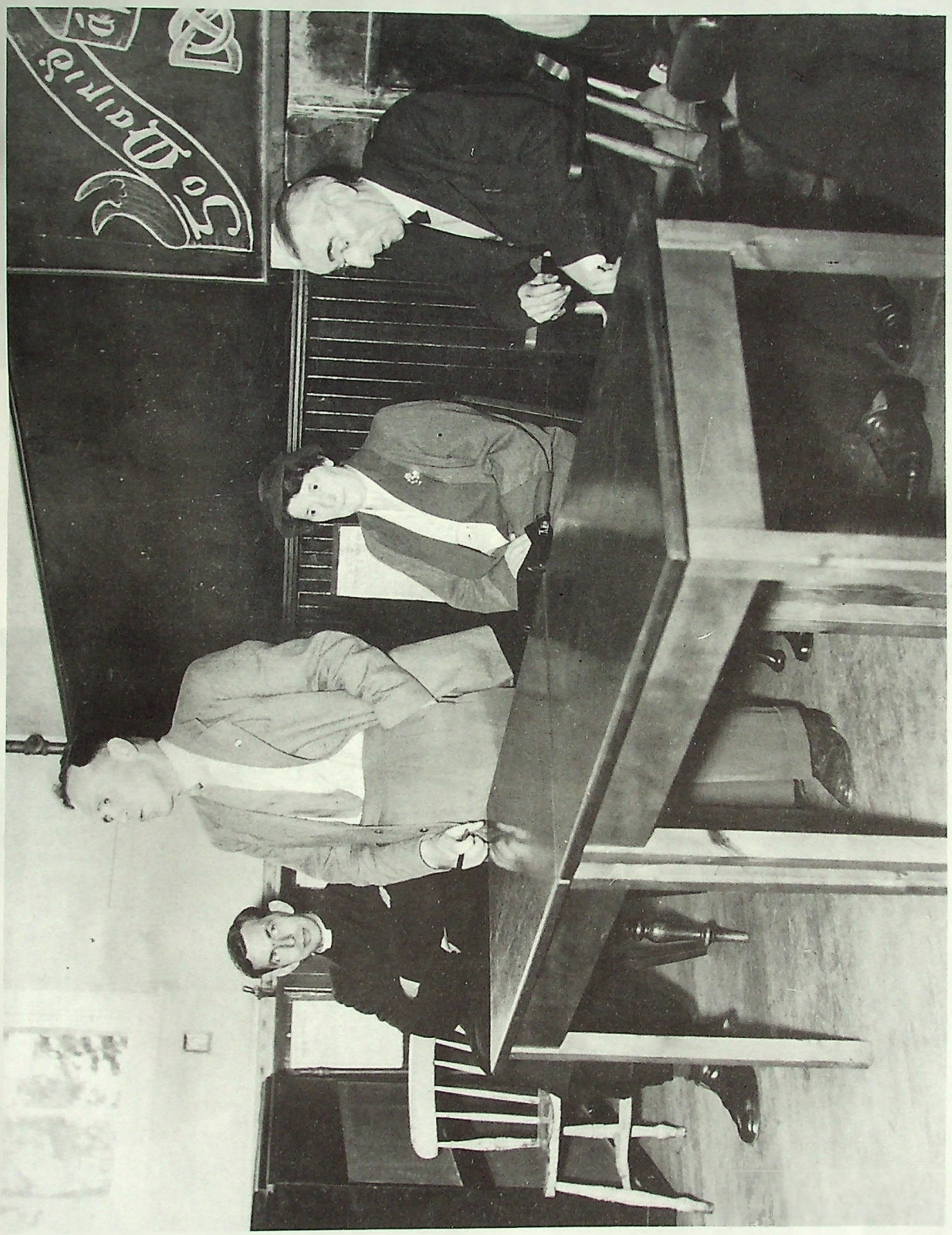
RÍOCHT NA hABHANN

Séamas Céitinn



Tá Séamus Céitinn, ball de Chomhaltas Uladh, i ndiaidh leabhar beag soléite a fhoilsiú, "Ríocht na hAbhann" (Cló Iar-Chonnachta, 1992, £2.50). Más i m'Baile an Inbhir' atá an scéal suite atá áit inteacht 'ar chósta thoir na hEireann', tá barúil agam nach fada uainne ar an Iúr atá an 'Baile an Inbhir' féin. Leanann muid an lánúin Lorc agus Caoimhe, is ealaí iad, tríd lúbra an tsaoil - truailliú na timpeallachta, ionsaí a rinne ógánach le crosbhogha, cuairt an tsionnaigh, contúirt na sreangacha leictreachais 7rl. Tagann an dís slán fríd tranglam an tsaoil. Má tá aon neart ar leith acu is é sin go bhfanann siad dóchasach cuma fá na constaicí atá rompu. Is fiú gach rud a chumann Séamus Céitinn a léamh agus seo scoid eile uaidh. *Gobnait Uí Dhaibhéid*

Obair an Chomhaltais in Ard Mhacha sna 1950í



Pic. le caoinchead ón Br. Diarmuid Mac Diarmada, Scoil Phádraig, Ard Mhacha.

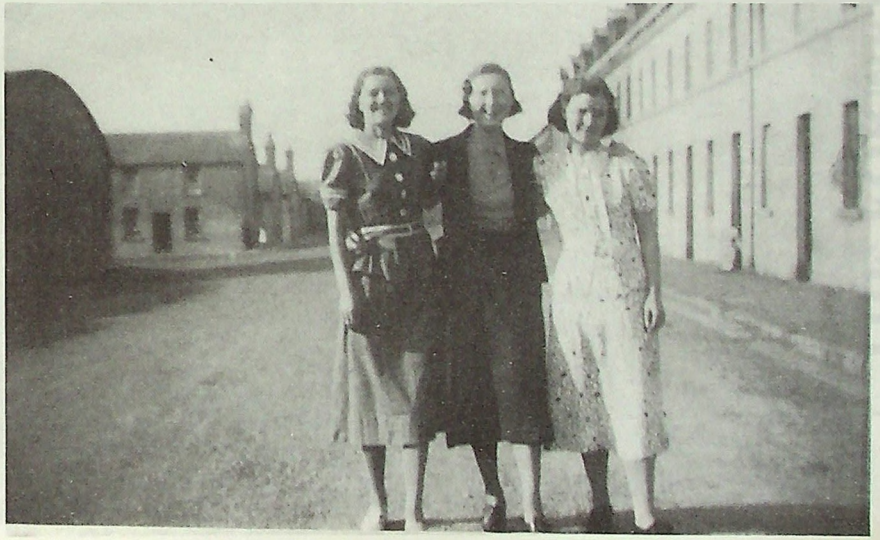
Ar ais linn chuig Sráid Dominic

Tá muid buíoch do Mr. Peter Jackson, Rooney's Meadow, a thug an pictiúr ar chlé dúinn. Glacadh an pictiúr seo nuair a bhí simléir Lupton's Mill á leagaint. Chuala mé gurbh é W. Goss a fuair an conradh leis an simléir a leagaint ach ní thig liom a bheith cinnte fá dtaobh de sin. Ar dheis, ar ndóigh, tá Joe Poucher agus cara leis. Tá Joe ar shlí na fírinne ach tá inion leis ina cónaí i Sráid Dhoiminic go fóill. Ba mhaith le "Cuisle na nGael" pictiúir eile ón cheantair seo a aimsiú, go speisialta pictiúir de na sráideanna mar a bhíodh siad sular leagadh na seantithe i Thomas Street, Rooney's Terrace, Pool Lane, Dominic Street agus Quinn's Place.

CECIL STREET

Tá brú orainn le cúpla bliain anuas teacht ar phictiúir a bhaineann le Cecil Street (the Valley). Tá muid buíoch do Raymond Mc Guigan (thíos) a fuair na pictiúir seo dúinn.

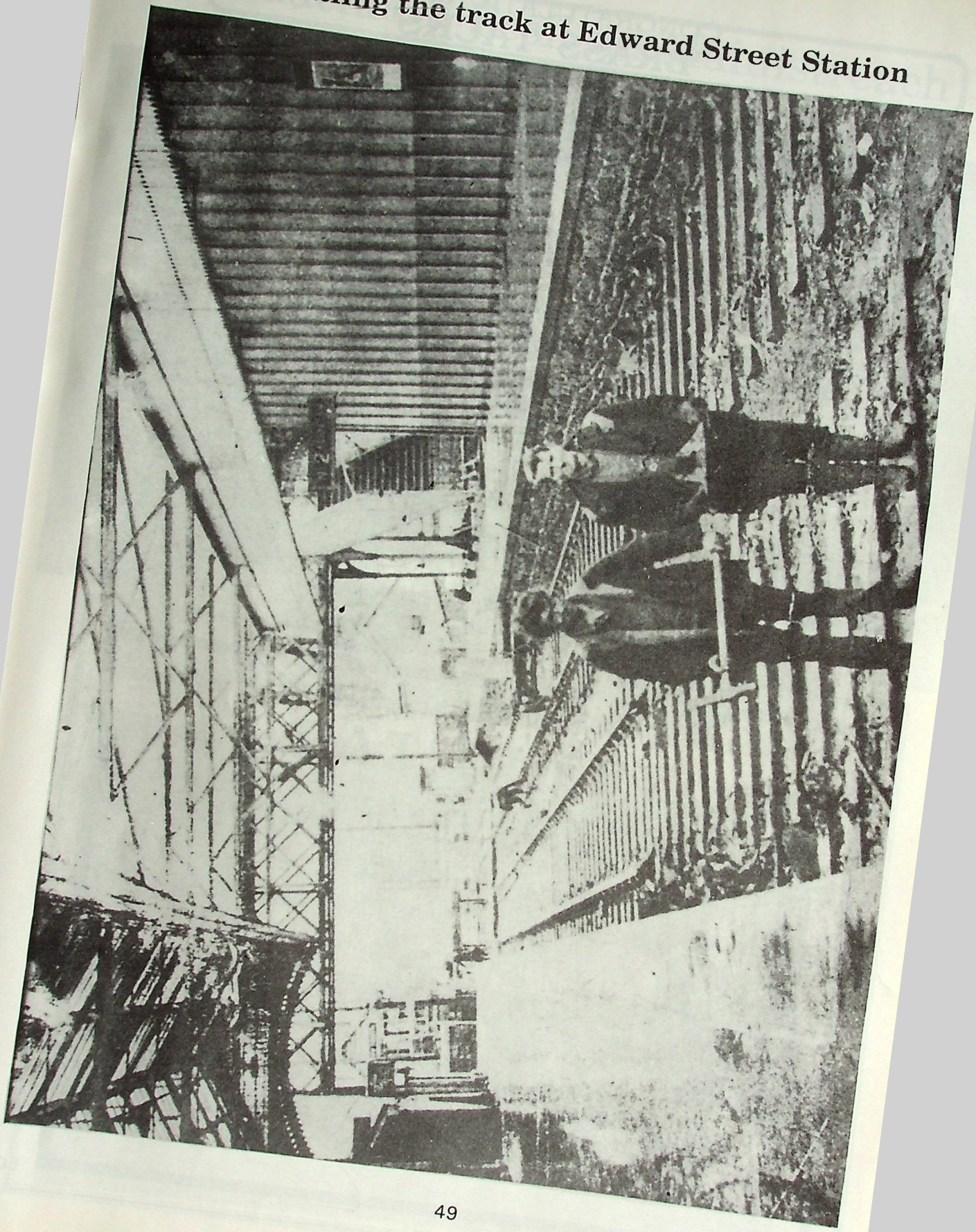
Above : Valley Rangers playing some years ago (no swimming pool or pre-fab. houses then).
Below : Looking up Cecil Street towards the now demolished Wilson's Row (Wilson was owner of the mill at Cecil Street corner).



THE FORMER RAILWAY STATION AT WARRENPOINT

Photographs courtesy of **ARMAGH MUSEUM**

Dismantling the track at Edward Street Station



CONGRATULATIONS TO
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Ba mhaith linn comhghairdeas a dhéanamh le "Brass Tacks", iris logánta atá deich mbliana anois ar an bhfód. Foilsíonn an Confederation of Community Groups "Brass Tacks" agus gidh nach bhfuair an fhoireann eagarthóireachta riamh go leor airgid le forbairt a dhéanamh ar an iris, tá éacht déanta ag an eagarthóir, Liam Blair, as iris mhíosúil speisiúil a chur amach agus as an deis a thug sé d'iriseoirí óga dul i mbun pinn. Ní ionadh é go bhfuil Ian Heaney, mar shampla, atá anois ag obair go lánaimseartha leis an "NEWRY REPORTER" ar dhuine de na daoine a d'fhoghlaim a chuid scileanna le "BRASS TACKS." Agus níos tábhachtaí arís, sheas "Brass Tacks" riamh anall leis an lucht siúil i nIúr Chinn Trá. Agus tá polasaí dearfach ag "Brass Tacks" maidir leis an Ghaeilge fosta. Ní mór iris a bheith ar fáil againn atá sásta tacaíocht a thabhairt do mhionlaigh an Iúir.

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Buachaillí ón Iúr ag Scoil na mBráithre.

BACK ROW : (All standing) Jim Carroll; Pat Taylor; Teddy Fearon; Aidan Traynor; Ciarán Conlon; Thomas Grant; Seán Brady; Paul Navin; Richard Fitzpatrick; Denis Haughey; Jim McGurk; Francis Loughran; Richard Whitfield. FRONT ROW : Eddie McElroy; Francis McSorley; Hugh Golding; Pat Stokes; Rev. Bro. Doherty; Tony McKevitt; Peter Durkin; Tony Carroll; Seán Mallon.

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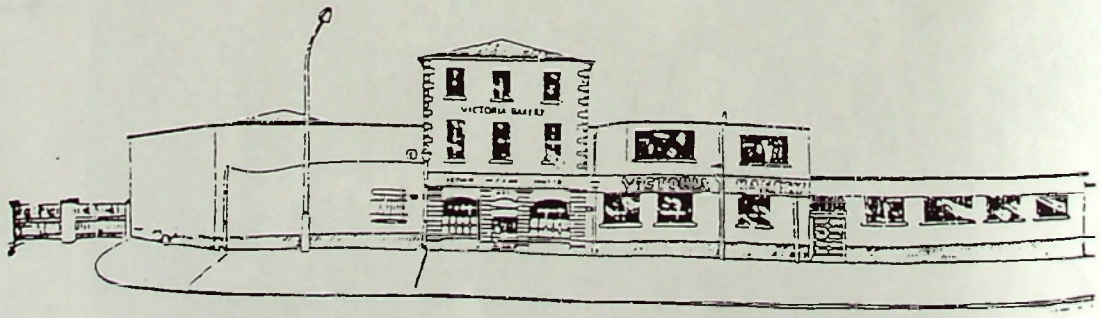


Back row : B. Cranney, S. O'Hanlon, M. Turley, W. Blair, P. Mallon, J. Farrell, H. McInerney, J. McParland, M. McCann, ? Middle row : D. Ferrier, C. O'Rourke, E. McAteer, G. Stapleton, E. Donnelly, S. Mallon, H. O'Neill, T. Rafferty, I. McCann. Front row : ?, ?, E. Murphy, ?, F. Hall, P. Rodgers, J. Campbell. Glacadh an grianghraf seo c. 1930. Ba é an Br. Ryan nó an Br. Kelly a bhí mar mhúinteoir ag an rang. Tá muid buíoch do T. Rafferty as na hainmneacha a sholáthar dúinn.

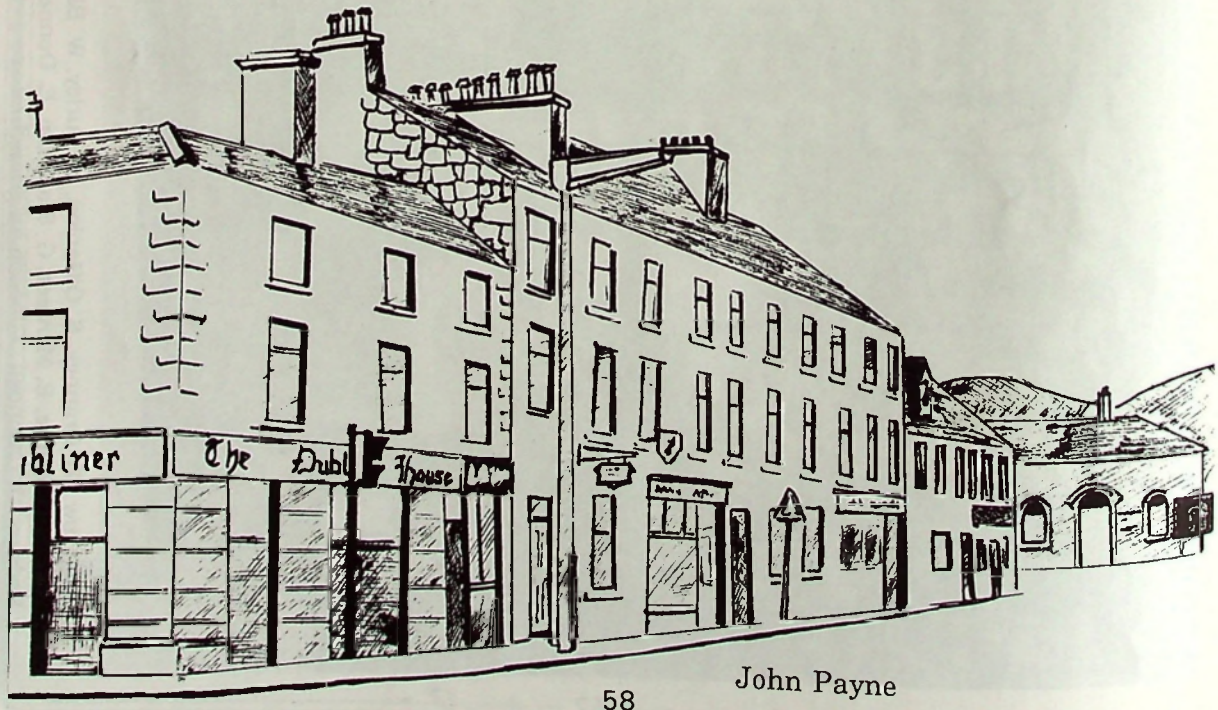
ON NEWRY'S DOCKS

Based on an interview with James McKevitt

Local history comes naturally to James "Darkie" McKevitt, but the history of the Newry Docks is in his blood. Darkie has over 50 years association with Irish trade unionism and still frequents the Dockers' Club in Pilot Street in Belfast. He is a committee member and former Chairperson of the Newry Independent Club and has stood twice, unsuccessfully, as an independent candidate in local government elections. "Cuisle na nGael" interviewers consulted James on what it was like working on the docks, and on other aspects of working class history in Newry, and we are pleased to share our findings with readers of this, the Gaelic League's centenary magazine.

What used to be called 'docklands' in Newry stretched from Queen Street to Castle Street, and included Thomas Street, Pool Lane, Rooney's Terrace, Bridge Street, Mary Street, George's Lane, Boat Street, Chapel Street, Quay Street, William Street and Abbey Yard. Scores of Newry families earned an often meagre existence from working the docks. In the 1930's in particular, trade at Newry Port was depressed and dockers were forced onto Outdoor Relief. They had to show five days Relief work in a fortnight or they got no dole. Many of them worked at the retarding dam being built in Rooney's Meadow to help prevent the flooding of Newry at times of heavy rainfall. The Relieving Officer in Newry at the time was Mr. Digney and those in receipt of Outdoor Relief were said to be 'on Digney'. A Mr. John Dowd was the Relieving Officer for South Armagh. While Outdoor Relief was based at the old Workhouse at Daisy Hill, there was also a Relief office where the Health Centre is today.

There were two types of employment for dockers



John Payne

in Newry. One was casual labour - when the boat was discharged, the docker was laid off. Fishers though had their own permanent men and they worked in three gangs. Paddy McShane was a stevedore with Fishers, while Frank and Michael Maguire from North Street were the foremen for Moore and Dunwoody's. The harsh economic reality was that too many dockers in Newry were chasing too few jobs. Casual dockers were normally paid by tonnage while those who worked the slate boats were paid by the day. The slate boats, carrying Bangor Blues, came from North Wales. Schooners from Bridgewater arrived at Newry with chimney pots and bricks. When unloading timber, coal or grain, Newry dockers were paid by the tonnage. During the Second World War there was extensive shipping of pit-props from Newry (locally grown wood) to the coal mines in England and Wales. Working the colliers was especially difficult. Coal arrived at Newry bound for many of the gasworks hereabouts. There was no such thing as the odd bag of coal home as a bonus for the dockers who unloaded the coal. Trimming the coal (i.e. going into the hold and removing all the remaining coal from the edges) was a tough job and on average took about three hours for each boat. A man called Blake Small had the rights to dredge the canal for spilled coal, which he subsequently sold to the public. He made his living this way but was sometimes called upon to retrieve dead bodies (mostly suicides) from the canal.

There were a number of lighters which plied from the Albert Basin to further up the Newry Canal. Sands' had their own grain barges and Alfie McGurgan and his brother Tommy worked them. Paddy McGurgan also had his own lighter and did carting as well. He had a yard in Catherine Street and at one time employed Pat Keenan from New Street. Other barges were owned by Fishers and the Provincial Coal Company (Fishers eventually bought the Provincial Coal Company). Dan Skelton, from Coalisland, lived on a lighter which normally berthed opposite to where Buttercrane Centre is now. A Mr. O'Rourke also lived on one of the local barges. The canal bridges were operated by employees of the Newry Port and Harbour Trust and these included Tommy Courtenay, Pat Tennyson and Paddy Loy.

Life wasn't all doom and gloom for Newry's dockers. Those dockers who didn't bring a piece or go home for their lunch frequented Casey's bar, Owen Hollywood's bar or Peter McGeough's (now McLogan's). There was also the Dockers'

Photograph of men in Newry Docks (early 20th century) courtesy of Mr. Seán Hillen, Ballinlare Gardens.

Club itself which provided entertainment in the evenings. Barney McEvoy, Owen Foy, Frank McEvoy, Dan Price and Paddy McKevitt were among those who were involved in the Dockers' Club in its early days. It was a recreation club where members went upstairs to play cards or billiards (the Secretary's office was downstairs). One of the exceptional billiard players produced by the club was Andy Smith. During the Second World War, dancing was introduced and among the many musicians to play there over the years were Henry Curran, Vincie Lowe, Jackie Hearst and Jimmy Baillie.

The premises in which the Dockers' Club was situated were rented from John Reid. The buiding was eventually burned down. The greatest day in the history of the Dockers' Club was undoubtedly the visit of Ernest Bevin (known as the "dockers' K.C."), General Secretary of the A.T.&G.W.U., on 1st December 1925. Michael Mc Kevitt, President of the local union branch, chaired the proceeedings, ably assisted by R. Kelly, Sec. of the Newry Branch. Mr. Bevin was presented with a gold medal and was later treated to potatoes, turnip and steak, followed by cornflour and jelly, at Dan Price's house in Abbey Yard.

One of the full-time union officials based at the Newry Dockers' Club was Dan McAllister who moved to Newry from the low docks in Belfast. Dan stayed in Morgan's digs in New Street. He came to Newry in 1932 and remained here until 1937. He had spent some time in Soviet Russia where he had learned a lot about labour organisation. McAllister's main achievement was that he helped to cut back on the power of the local stevedores. By temporarily closing union membership, and after deaths and natural wastage, the union was in a much stronger position to negotiate terms with the employers and was able to reduce at least some of the influence of the stevedores.

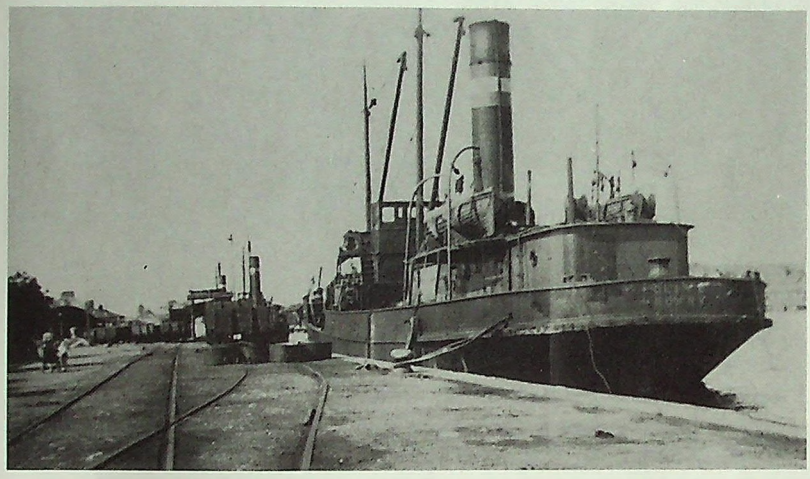
There were actually very few labour disputes on Newry docks and of those that did occur none matched the Newry dockers' response to the State execution of 19 years old Belfast Republican, Tom Williams, in early September 1942. Newry dockers went on immediate strike and marched in protest from the docks to the Newry Cathedral where Fr. Mc Comiskey said the Rosary for the repose of the soul of young Williams. Fr. Mc Comiskey prevailed upon the dockers to return to work.

James McKevitt's own working career as a docker was full and varied. He even worked the scrap metal boat at Rostrevor. The scrapyards in Newry at the time included Maggie Hagan's in Monaghan Street and Jack McCullough's on the Quay. Newry dockers had such difficulty loading the scrap metal in Rostrevor that they had to bring in members of the Travelling Community , who had experience in transporting scrap, to help them with the job. Fisher's too had coal boats unloading at Rostrevor at that time and dockers employed by Fisher's were fortunate in that they always had more work than other dockers in Newry.

James McKevitt, after some years, became a stevedore himself. By that stage the stevedore's main function was simply to act in a supervisory capacity and to ensure that boats were properly loaded when leaving dock. Among the many men who worked with Darkie at the cattle boats were Doot Craven, Jimmy McDonald, Gerry Coyle, Paddy Burns, Dan Smith, Owen Foy and Paddy O'Hanlon. Livestock bound for Birkenhead was loaded on to the "Dundalk" which was owned by the British and Irish Steam Packet Company. The Steam Packet Company handled mainly general cargo and in addition to cattle, shipped grass seed, potatoes and monumental stone sculptures from Madden's and McEwen's. Wenchmen working on the docks in Darkie's time included Johnny O'Hanlon, Tommy McShane, Joe Poucher, Hughie Markey, Danny McLaughlin and Hughie McKeown.

There was always a strong McKevitt connection working at the docks in Newry. Darkie's grandfather, James 'the bear' McKevitt, from Pool Lane, was a noted figure about the Basin, as were Paddy, Willie, Michael and James (Darkie's father) McKevitt. Other families with a long-standing tradition of working as dockers included the Bannons, McShanes, McKeowns,

Photograph of men in Newry Docks (early 20th century) courtesy of Mr. Seán Hillen, Ballinlare Gardens.



Markeys, and McAteers from Chapel Street. There were characters too in dockers' cirles, men like Willie McAllister and Eddie O'Neill, and there were sad times. James Hughes was drowned unloading the "S.S. Oak" and Hughie Carroll from Mary Street was killed when a lump of coal fell on him when working at Lockington's.

James McKevitt finished his days as a full-time docker in Warrenpoint where he worked loading and unloading containers at the new docks. Darkie was saddened that the Newry docks finally closed but he accepted the inevitable. When the lock-gates were blown up in the current political troubles, insurance premiums rocketed for shipping companies using the Newry Port. In any case, the days of small boats had come to an end.

NEXT YEAR'S 'CUISLE'

We are pleased to announce that we will be publishing a substantial article in our next edition on the history of shipping companies in Newry. The illustrated article is being prepared by local teacher Seán Patterson.

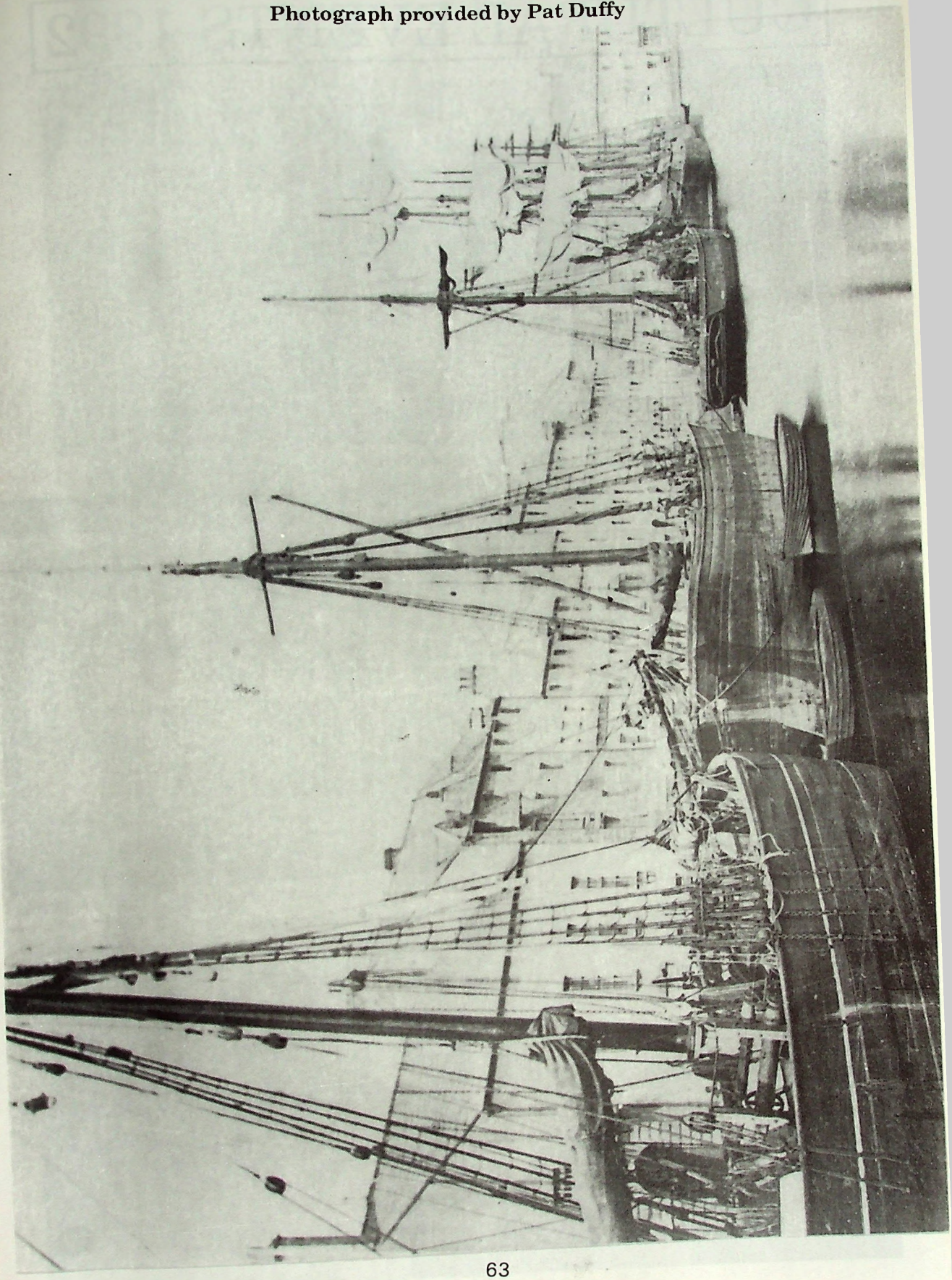
Order your copy **NOW**

NEWRY DOCKERS' BILLIARDS TEAM

and (below) Paddy Mc Keown from Dromalane.

Busier times on Newry's Merchants' Quay

Photograph provided by Pat Duffy



CULTURAL EVENTS 1992

"Cuisle na nGael" publishers were invited to meet An Taoiseach C.J. Haughey

First Communion of Bunscoil pupils at the Abbey ; students who attended Coláiste Cheithleann; St. Brigid's Day Irish Mass in Rostrevor.

Féile Scoildrámaíochta an Iúir

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CRAOBH AN IÚIR
GAELIC LEAGUE

congratulates its
sub-branch
Craobh Uí Fhiaich
on the publication
of "Cuisle na nGael".

We also wish to
thank all those
Gaelic League tutors
who have worked
on our behalf in
recent years.

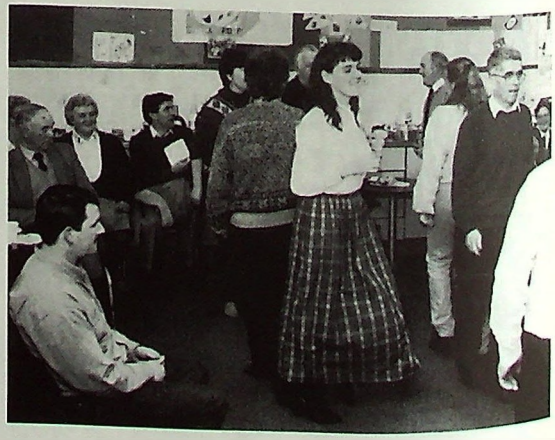
We take this
opportunity to
thank our
fellow citizens
in Newry for
their contributions
to the Annual
Language Collection
on
Lá Fhéile Pádraig.

The Gaelic League is a voluntary, non-sectarian, non-political organisation.

Obair Chomhaltas Uladh ar an Iúr

The Gaelic Athletic Association, Newry Council and the Gaelic League all contributed to making 1992 a successful year for the Irish Revival.

Níl seó ann
gan Beau' ann



The Caulfields : A notable Newry family.

Article by Margaret Comer.

Is staraí logánta í Margaret Comer a bhfuil leabhrán "St. Mary's and its People" foilsithe aici (1990). Is ball í de chuid Chraobh an Iúir de Chomhaltas Uladh.

When Denis Caulfield died on 30th December, 1819, Newry lost one of its principal citizens and a man who had greatly influenced the commercial development of the town. By the mid eighteenth century, the Caulfields were already established merchants and the opening of the Newry Canal in 1767 provided them with an opportunity for greater expansion and enterprise. Their efforts helped to confirm Newry as the premier port in Ulster.

Denis Caulfield joined the family business and it was not long before he was accepted as a man of outstanding ability and judgement. He set up a very successful import/export business between Ireland, England and France. Conflict between England and France meant that Newry Port was kept busy exporting ironware, glass, linen, cereal, whiskey and provisions. The Catholic Relief Act of 1793 encouraged Catholic businessmen to become more involved in commercial life and to invest in their businesses. Denis Caulfield built two distilleries in Newry, one in Monaghan Street and the other at the top of Bridge Street (the ivy-clad wall of which can still be seen). Denis lived with his wife, Rose, in the adjoining house, BROOKSIDE, which is the large house still standing behind the Crown Buildings. He acquired great wealth and owned vast areas of land in the district of Dorans Hill, Newry, and throughout counties Down, Armagh, Louth and Monaghan. In Marmion's "Maritime Ports of Ireland", Denis Caulfield was described as "among those who took a most prominent lead in commercial enterprise and was most distinguished for his knowledge of mercantile affairs...."

Denis Caulfield had two sisters, Rose and Mary. The youngest, Rose, married Thomas Brady, son of another affluent local merchant, and Mary married Constantine Maguire from Enniskillen. Both sisters had sons, Denis Caulfield Brady and Denis Maguire. These men were destined to have a profound effect on the town of Newry. Their interest, however, was not in mercantile affairs, but on the political scene. In their professional capacities as magistrates, Denis Caulfield Brady and Denis Maguire could identify many injustices and it was the desire to bring about some sort of reform that drew them into the political arena.

After the failed Rebellion of 1798, political agitation was sporadic and ineffective until 1824 when there was an abortive attempt to form some sort of local government. Success came four years later when the Town Commisioners were appointed and Denis Maguire was elected first chairman. The Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 removed further barriers and advancement for some Catholics became possible.

Margaret Comer agus í ag freastal ar Choláiste an Chomhaltais i Ros Goill, 1992.

In 1831 Denis Maguire stood as a candidate in the local election but was defeated by John Henry Knox (son-in-law of Lord Kilmorey). Maguire suffered a second defeat the following year when Lord Marcus Hill won the seat. A petition was lodged complaining of bribery and corruption, but this was overruled and Lord Hill was declared duly elected. Although he never stood for election again, Denis Maguire continued to press for electoral reform and for improvements to Newry. He resumed his position as a magistrate and even as an old man of 74 years he was recorded in BRADSHAW'S DIRECTORY as having met with Isaac Corry to discuss the Towns Improvement Act. He also took an interest in the running of the former distillery, now operating as a corn mill. By this time he had gone to live at his uncle's house at the mill.

Such was Maguire's desire to influence political affairs that he persuaded his cousin, Denis Caulfield Brady, to stand for the 1835 parliamentary election. Denis Caulfield Brady stood as a Radical Reformer in what is

known as the BRADY ELECTION. His main ambition was to have the grossly unfair Tithes Act repealed. Brady's opponent in the contest was Sir Thomas Staples, an English lawyer.

In his manifesto Denis Caulfield Brady wrote:

"My principles and opinions are very well known to all. Regarding the question of tithes - tithes the bane, the curse of our devoted country, the cause of so much discontent and bloodshed - should you return me to Parliament, I pledge myself to work for the total abolition of that hateful, odious impost. Never will there be contentment in any land, until conscience is completely free and every clergyman is paid by the voluntary contributions of the persons to whom he ministers."

A vigorous contest was expected and the NEWRY EXAMINER carried this report :

"A strong force has been ordered in, and the infantry in garrison has been considerably strengthened, whilst two pieces of cannon have been ordered up from Charlemont and a few troops of horses are hourly expected."

Many illegal practices occurred and there is no doubt that corruption and fraud took place on both sides. The NEWRY EXAMINER further carried a report of a man named Loughran from Boat Street who had been taken off in the direction of Dundalk where he was secreted until voting began. Waverers were plied with drink in return for the promise of a vote.

Bishop Michael Blake encouraged Catholics to vote according to their consciences. Some did, and were evicted as a result. Another report in the NEWRY EXAMINER (19.12.1835) reads :

"A very great number of electors who occupy tenements in the rural district of the borough have been served with notice of ejectment."

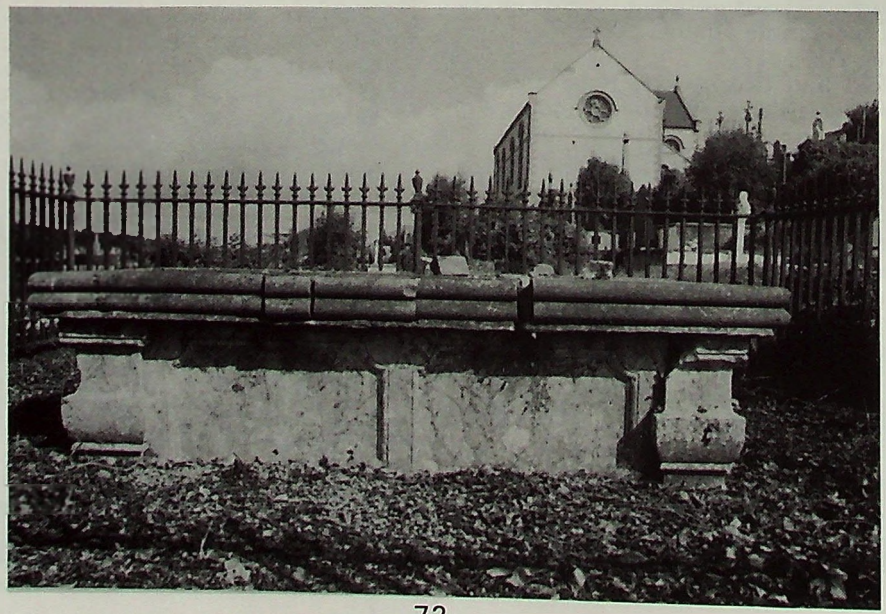
These notices were served by the trustees of the Kilmorey Estate in their efforts to intimidate local people from voting against the landlord's candidate. The result of the election was close, but Denis Caulfield Brady emerged as winner, having polled 402 votes to Staples' 374. The victory was greeted with much rejoicing in Newry and the NEWRY EXAMINER approved of the voters' choice :

"The poor refused to support Sir Thomas Staples, the nominee of the Haddington administration. They did vote for Denis Caulfield Brady, a man not only sprung from the people, but one identified in feeling and in principle, in political profession and religious faith with the great majority of his fellow countrymen."

The NEWRY COMMERCIAL TELEGRAPH printed many tributes to the victor which had been made at a celebration dinner. Six hundred people were wined and dined in the BARN at the rear of the family's distillery.

Denis Caulfield Brady worked tirelessly to bring better conditions for the townspeople. He corresponded with Daniel O'Connell on the ongoing battle for the repeal of the Tithe Act. As the election of 1837 approached some of the usual fraudulent practices were set in motion. Brady lost the seat to John Ellis. So vociferous was the outcry that the actual names of those Catholics who voted for Ellis were published, with the following comment :

"Let every Irishman hold them in scorn, let their names be handed down to posterity. Let the wives, sons and daughters of these thirty nine stags be hooted at, and let it be remembered that these thirty nine Hannoverian Orange Catholics sold the free



representation of the Borough of Newry in the election of 1837."

It was to be another thirty three years before voting by secret ballot became law.

Having been defeated, Denis Caulfield Brady resumed his profession as a magistrate. He worked particularly to improve conditions for the poor people of Newry and was a driving force in the setting up of the workhouse in Newry in 1841. Although conditions were not very favourable for those unfortunates who were forced to live there, it was the first humanitarian gesture to alleviate the problems of the homeless and destitute of Newry.

Denis Caulfield Brady was progressive in his outlook and involved himself in any movement which could have brought benefit to the town of Newry. He became Chairman of the Newry Navigation Company and held office on the board of the Fever Hospital. Through his work with the Harbour Commissioners, a loan was secured to finance a scheme for the deepening and widening of the Carlingford Bar, thus affording better anchorage. When he died on 30th November 1886 the NEWRY EXAMINER carried a lengthy account of his achievements in his native town :

"For more than half a century, the deceased was a principal man in Newry. To all movements of an educational and benevolent kind, the deceased gentleman was a friend and a supporter, irrespective of sect or party, for he was the unbending foe of everything that was narrow or bigoted. It may be truthfully said of him that he was a scrupulous, honourable, straightforward man, true and firm to his convictions of what he thought to be right on public questions and a frank and steady, reliable friend."

Although the Caulfield family has died out, it is fitting that their memory is perpetuated in Newry in the naming of Caulfield Place and Caulfield Terrace.

PHOTOS OF CAULFIELD FAMILY GRAVE, CAULFIELD TERRACE AND CAULFIELD PLACE courtesy of Paddy Traynor, Newry Camera Club.

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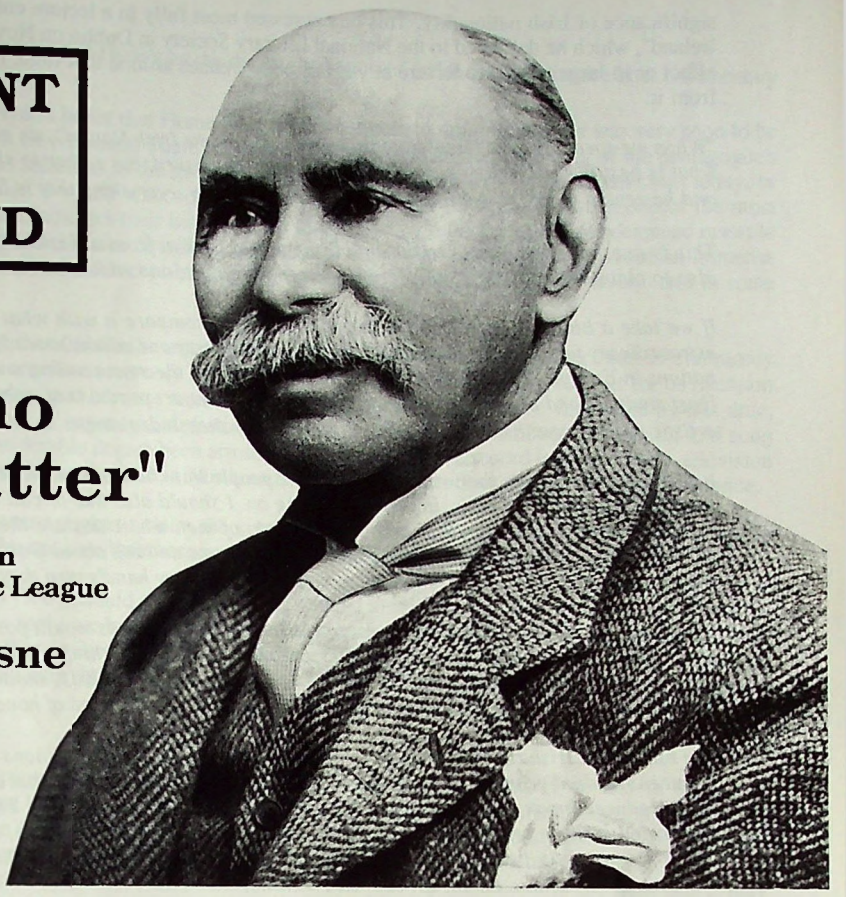


"This is no political matter"

A centenary lecture on Douglas Hyde and the Gaelic League

Risteard Ó Glaisne

Douglas Hyde was a son of a Church of Ireland rector in County Roscommon, born in 1860. The family was not well-off, but was socially well connected and moved in circles occupied by a relatively leisured, educated, privileged class. Lord de Freyne, on whose lands they lived at Frenchpark, was a relation. On the other hand, the family was destined to spend a major part of its time in country areas, in daily contact with the traditional way of life of the Roman Catholic majority, and it had obviously taken from it what seemed to it most humanly attractive.

Douglas Hyde spent most of his youth in the Roscommon countryside. Very shortly after having been sent to a boarding school near Dublin he fell ill and was brought home. He subsequently, staying at home, became efficient in "the three 'R's" - reading, 'riting and 'rithmetic - and picked up Latin and Greek from his father and French and a little German from an aunt whom he got on very well with. He worked and played both amongst his social equals and amongst people who had become all to subservient to that class, yet still retained a useful measure of mental and spiritual independence. He enjoyed hunting, shooting and fishing, cricket, tennis and cardplaying, dances and outings.

In Trinity College, Dublin, Hyde won many honours and prizes, and had a doctorate conferred on him in 1888. Work of his began to be published. He did well as a visiting Professor of Modern Languages at the State University of New Brunswick in Canada during the academic year of 1890-1891.

A very lively interest in the Irish language, still spoken natively by some of his Roman Catholic neighbours in County Roscommon, had made Douglas Hyde unusual. He first learned the language from local people and from books he managed to buy in Dublin. He was captivated by its antiquity, by its raciness, by its structure, by its intimacy, by its literature, oral and written, and by its relevance to the Irish mind as he had come to know that. Versed in many other languages, from Hebrew to Italian, he came to respect the Irish language most profoundly, and to become its impressively articulate champion at a time when the language was now generally regarded with contempt. He noted its decline with sorrow, and in 1893 he was one of the founders of the Gaelic League which, proposing that Irish be preserved and its use extended, was soon to make quite an impact on the country. He was its first President, holding that position by popular acclaim from 1893 to 1915.

Dr Hyde awakened tremendous interest in Irish oral literature particularly in the love songs of native speakers - when he published quite an amount of that literature with English translations and with his own commentary. People like W. B. Yeats, Augusta Lady Gregory and John Millington Synge were electrified by the beauty and tone of the translations.

For some time before the foundation of the Gaelic League, Hyde had been expressing some of his thinking on the

significance of Irish nationality. This he expressed most fully in a lecture entitled "The Necessity for De-Anglicising Ireland", which he delivered to the National Literary Society in Dublin on November 25th, 1892. He gave (what was in effect or in large part) that lecture at various other venues around that time. I should like to quote substantial extracts from it:

"When we speak of "The Necessity for De-Anglicising the Irish Nation", we mean it, not as a protest against imitating what is best in the English people, for that would be absurd, but rather to show the folly of neglecting what is Irish, and hastening to adopt, pell-mell, and indiscriminatingly, everything that is English, simply because it is English.

This is question which most Irishmen will naturally look at from a National point of view, but it is one which ought also to claim the sympathies of every intelligent Unionist, and which, as I know, does claim the sympathy of many.

If we take a bird's eye view of our island today, and compare it with what it used to be, we must be struck by the extraordinary fact that the nation which was once, as every one admits, one of the most classically learned and cultured nations in Europe, is now one of the least so; how one of the most reading and literary peoples has become one of the least studious and most un-literary, and how the present art products of one of the quickest, most sensitive, and most artistic races on earth are now only distinguished for their hideousness.....

I shall attempt to show that with the bulk of the people this change took place quite recently, much more recently than most people imagine, and is, in fact, still going on. I should also like to call attention to the illogical position of men who drop their own languages to speak English, of men who translate their euphonious Irish names into English monosyllables, of men who read English books and know nothing about Gaelic literature, nevertheless protesting as a matter of sentiment that they hate the country which at every hand's turn they rush to imitate....

Westwood .....declares that, were it not for Irishmen, these islands would possess no primitive works of art worth the mentioning.... The dim consciousness of this is one of those things which are at the back of Irish nationalist sentiment, and our business, whether we be Unionists or Nationalists, should be to make this dim consciousness an active and potent feeling, and thus increase our sense of self-resect and of honour.....

The bulk of the Irish race really lived in the closest contact with the traditions of the past and the national life of nearly eighteen hundred years, until the beginning of this century. Not only so, but during the whole of the dark Penal times they produced amongst themselves a most vigorous literary development. Their schoolmasters and wealthy farmers, unwearied scribes, produced innumerable manuscripts in beautiful writing, each letter separated from another as in Greek, transcripts both of the ancient literature of their sires and of the more modern literature produced by themselves.....

I have no hesitation at all in saying that every Irish-feeling Irishman, who hates the reproach of West-Britonism, should set himself to encourage the efforts which are being made to keep alive our once great national tongue. The losing of it is our greatest blow, and the sorest stroke that the rapid Anglicisation of Ireland has inflicted upon us. In order to de-Anglicise ourselves we must at once arrest the decay of the language. We must bring pressure upon our politicians not to snuff it out by their tacit discouragement merely because they do not happen themselves to understand it.....

I hope and trust that where it may be done without any great inconvenience a native Irish Government will be induced to provide for the restoration of our place-names on something like a rational basis.....

Something should be done to keep the native pipes and the native airs amongst us still.....A few years ago all our travelling fiddlers and pipers could play the old airs which were then constantly called for, the Cuis d'a pleidh. Drinaun Dunn. Roseen Dubh. Gamhan Geal Ban. Eileen-aroon Shawn O'Dwyer in Glanna. and the rest, whether gay or plaintive, which have for so many centuries entranced the Gael. But now English music-hall ballads and Scotch songs have gained an enormous place in the repertoire of the wandering minstrel, and the minstrels themselves are becoming fewer and fewer, and I fear worse and worse.....

We must create a strong feeling against West-Britonism, for it, if we give it the least chance, or show it the smallest quarter - will overwhelm us like a flood, and we shall find ourselves toiling painfully behind the English at each step following the same fashions, only six months after the English ones; reading the same books, only months behind them; taking up the same fads, after they have become stale there. following them in our dress, literature, music, games, and ideas, only a long time after them, and a vast way behind.....I knew fifteen Irish workmen who were working in a haggard in England give up talking Irish amongst themselves because the English farmer laughed at them.....We must teach ourselves to be less sensitive, we must teach ourselves not to be ashamed of ourselves, because the Gaelic people can never produce its best before the world as long as it remains tied to the apron-strings of another race and another island, waiting for it to move before it will venture to take any step itself ....."[1]

It was from that lecture that the title of this essay of mine was taken. "In conclusion," he had said, "I would earnestly appeal to every one, whether Unionist or Nationalist, who wishes to see the Irish nation produce its best - and surely whatever our politics are we all wish that - to set his face against this constant running to England for our books, literature, music, games, fashions, and ideas. I appeal to everyone whatever his politics - for this is no political matter - to do his best to help the Irish race to develop in future upon Irish lines...."

Now, there were things in that peroration of Hyde's on the de-Anglicisation of Ireland which require both commentary and criticism.

It was prepared in the context of Hyde's belief that Home Rule somewhat akin to dominion status was very soon to be established in Ireland by the British Government. There is in the lecture, I would argue, something of the demagogue's overemphasis at certain points. His solutions to the growing disappearance of Irish would not be sufficient today, or probably a hundred years ago either. I would want to qualify his assertion that the Irish had been one of the most reading of peoples: surely he himself indicates their limitations in that regard by referring to their widespread resort to manuscript - relatively, very few printed books circulated in Irish at a time when printing had provided an immense intellectual stimulus in other countries. I do accept his suggestion that the populace had a very lively, and in some cases very striking, oral literature.

He was, I believe, right in saying that the Gaelic entail had a vibrant effect on Irish life later than is commonly thought - even where the language was now used only by meagre numbers. His call for urgent support for its retention or resuscitation is relevant even today, and because we are in a society where change can be very rapid by this time, that call has now a very special kind of urgency. Interestingly, the deterioration in traditional Irish music and song which he identified has to no inconsiderable degree been arrested by agencies like the record industry, radio, television and Comhaltas Ceoltoiri Eireann - and, happily here in Northern Ireland by some on both sides of the religious divide.

In that lecture Hyde said that his cause ought to claim the sympathies of any intelligent Unionist, and that it had in fact done so with many. "Many"? I'm not sure that there is evidence to legitimise the use of that word.

In the course of his lecture he asked "Why should we wish to make Ireland more Celtic than it is --- why should we de-Anglicise it at all?" One part of his reply we know - he believed that Irish endeavour was being sapped by the Irish failure to recognise an inner conflict in Irish behaviour. The second part of his reply might be regarded as a copperfastening of that rather than an entirely new point - "I believe", he said, "it is our Gaelic past which..... is really at the bottom of the Irish heart."

Some today may find that suggestion fanciful in the extreme, and certainly much that Hyde had to say about Anglicising tendencies in Ireland can by this time be seen as prophetic. The swing towards Anglicisation has in some ways gone very far in Ireland since he spoke. There has also been another factor. Somebody has said that we may become victims of Los Angeles-ation even more than from Anglicisation, and the influence of America on our way of life has been large indeed. Nonetheless, Hyde's belief that the Gaelic past was "at the bottom of the Irish heart" may not only have been true a hundred years ago but may also have force today.

It is but natural to ask what people like us, alive within shouting distance of the 21st century, or the third millenium, since the time of the incarnation of Christ, derive, or could derive, from a knowledge of Irish. We can get what I have suggested attracted young Douglas Hyde to the language - a quite wonderful historical perspective (echoes in the language from at least 2000 years back); a vigour which we find bracing, syntactical forms which aid precision, and idioms which refresh and challenge the imagination; possibilities it offers of a deeper, more immediate, relationship with people who use it as a matter of preference; accessibility to certain unique things in literature; and special insights into a particular community's mind.

I would add a further factor. I believe that a national community, like an individual, benefits from having agreed forms of privacy and protection. The Irish language maintains those for our national culture without denying us the freedom to hold converse with other national communities in another language or other languages.

You will understand from this why I could never contemplate with equanimity the death of the Irish language amongst us, and why that is the language to which I give priority in my life and also, usually, in my writing.

Historically, we owe a great debt of gratitude to those who founded and have maintained the Gaelic League. I have never been a member of the Gaelic League, or indeed of any of the general Irish language organisations. I recognise the need for institutions, and I have no hesitation about making some contribution to their life if at a particular moment that might seem helpful, but I am not by nature a person who wants to belong to organisations. However, as on this occasion, I am glad to salute, gratefully, the Gaelic League on its forthcoming centenary.

I imagine that most people who have been members of the Gaelic League or of somewhat similar bodies will have experienced moments of annoyance at being criticised either as rainbow-chasers or as undeclared subversives where they believe themselves, with justice, to be concerned only with a perfectly sane and practical attempt to promote publicly and plainly a living language whose significance has been attested to by many, both Irish people and foreigners, whose opinion we would have good reason to respect.

I want to conclude by examining with some care Hyde's contention that "This is no political matter." That statement will surely seem absurd to many familiar with the shibboleths long current with regard to the Irish language or to many who are familiar with the way in which the Gaelic League has on various occasions become a centre of political controversy. And yet I believe that Douglas Hyde was saying something true, and something very important, just then.

The statement <u>can</u> be seen as no more than so much juggling with words, or as an attempt to confuse the innocent with a distinction between different meanings more apparent than real. That is because here two complementary truths

dance like dervishes before our eyes in a single situation. Douglas Hyde had in fact hit upon a paradox - something, as the dictionary will have it, "apparently absurd but really true." On the one hand he was asserting, quite truly, that "this is no political matter," while on the other he necessarily worked within a situation in which political factors weighed heavily. At times this confronted him with major problems.

Whether Hyde himself always respected the paradoxical nature of what he proposed I rather doubt. It is, I think, often not realised that when, in 1915, he withdrew from the presidency of the Gaelic League he was a person of 55 years of age, and not only of advancing years by that time but also pretty weary and pretty disillusioned by incessant misunderstanding, suspicion and betrayal, while well supported, and indeed highly adulated, by many. Some of his own public utterances by that time we may see today as unacceptably gnomic. It is not easy to cope with a paradox when tensions are running high.

People who believe in democracy do not ignore politics or make little of politics, because politics is concerned with the art or science of government or the management of country or party. It is accepted - has to be accepted - that, taking the human factor into account, politics which will serve a pluralist society will involve debate and degrees of compromise. It is at that point that people become wary. How much compromise will be involved? - and what will be the nature of the compromise? Politics demands persuasion, but is not pressure also involved? When does pressure become violence? Can there be implicit violence as well as explicit violence? These are basics in any consideration of politics.

It is inconceivable that people identifying with the general community to any significant degree would remain unaware of the political movements of their time. I personally don't think that Hyde was capable of a comprehensive, detailed and penetrating understanding of politics - or that he was greatly interested. However, he was a man who at university had acquitted himself well in a number of important academic disciplines, from theology to folklore and from languages to law. His conclusions were often dictated by common humanity - and his own humanity is still remembered and talked about with both admiration and amusement. He was capable of a large general vision.

He had a sort of rustic shrewdness which by the age of thirty had caused him to suspect that politics was not his metier. I think. As a youth in County Roscommon he had composed some very anti-English verse, and for a while would, I think, have forwarded armed violence as a means of ejecting foreign involvement from Ireland. When Irish electors were split by the news of Parnell's liaison with the wife of Captain O'Shea, Hyde remained an admirer of Parnell as a political leader and actively disliked those who had led the pack against him. He began to hope that Home Rule under British sovereignty was the peaceful answer to the Irish problem - which caused nationalists who regarded that as hopelessly inadequate to mistrust him.

If Hyde already knew before the foundation of the Gaelic League that the political process was of great importance, he also knew that it could be gravely divisive - like religious denominationalism, with which politics was often directly linked. So, as President, he clung pretty doggedly to two declarations in the Constitution of the Gaelic League, that it was non-sectarian and non-political, while occasionally relating to the political scene where that seemed to him unavoidable - a very clear example of that would have been his major influence through a speech delivered directly to the Irish Parliamentary Party on the subject of Irish being treated as an essential qualification for matriculation to the new National University in 1909.

At first the Gaelic League's resolve to keep away from politics and religion was much appreciated amongst people weary of bitter enmities engendered by the Home Rule and anti-Home Rule campaigns and by the Parnell debacle. The Gaelic League had much to do with making history imaginatively significant, with creating a greater affability and sometimes warm friendship between Roman Catholics and Protestants, with offering new social outlets, with developing the arts (from literature and the theatre to drawing and painting, glasswork, music, weaving and book production), with encouraging Irish industry, with launching an agricultural co-operative movement and with initiating in people's minds a serious reassessment of social and economic assumptions which hastened the rise of trade-unionism. But it also, directly or indirectly, caused people to think about freedom, cultural, religious, economic or political, and as this could affect the old balance of power, new problems arose as well as new opportunities.

It was there that Dr Hyde suffered his keenest embarrassment and pain. He stayed with constitutional developments, but extra-constitutional movements grew quickly from the secret work of the Irish Republican Brotherhood and a rallyng in the North of Ireland of Protestant Unionism and Protestant labour interests by Carson, Craig and others. The Gaelic League was by 1915 effectively hijacked by the Irish Republican Brotherhood and was henceforth seen by Unionists as having betrayed its undertakings: it marked Hyde's resignation from the Presidency, and it linked the Irish language very definitely with one kind of political position - one with which Ulster Unionists felt they could not possibly identify.

Individuals and bodies (including language bodies) can - temporarily at least - be captured by particular political interests, but not, I believe a language itself. The rights of all to that cannot be violated, and both the language's strength and the community are, I suggest, merely being vitiated if - even for a period - substantial and important groups within the culture decide not to use it.

In Ireland Protestants have all too often treated the Irish language with indifference, with contempt, or with open hostility. I quite see how that could happen, given the religious and political circumstances, but it is still, it seems to me, something to be deplored. I have adverted to at least some of the language's virtues. In various ways a knowledge

of it facilitates understanding and dialogue between people hitherto estranged - often estranged at fearful cost, even in human lives.

Protestants, however, have had a greater immersion in the use of Irish than is realised by many. In its early days the Gaelic League attracted or impressed a significant number (if still a relatively small minority) of Protestants. Many of those were, or became, to a recognisable degree nationalist in their thinking, but not all. Not, I would guess, Charles Percy Bushe or J. H. Lloyd who were amongst the earliest members of the League. Not the Rev. Richard R. Kane, the eminent Orangeman and Unionist, whose interest in the League was referred to with evident pleasure again and again. Not, I suspect, some of the Irish aristocrats who elected to become members of the League. It is certain that many of the landlords, scholars, literary men, antiquarians, clergymen and so on who before the advent of the League used Irish with ease and accomplishment were not all politically nationalist. Padraig O Snodaigh's interesting little book, Hidden Ulster, first issued in 1973 and later reprinted on a number of occasions, repays study in this connection. Many of the Protestants up to the end of the nineteenth century who were not politically nationalist - as well as some who were - come in for mention in my own recently published study, Gaeilge i gColaiste na Trionoide 1592 - 1992 ("Irish in Trinity College 1592 - 1992" - the reference is to Trinity College, Dublin, of course). Similarly many Protestant speakers of (or enthusiasts for) Scottish Gaelic, Gaidhlig - a very close relation to our Irish Gaelic - in this our own day or for hundreds of years would not be found to be separatist nationalists.

Those are simply objective facts. They illustrate or buttress Hyde's assertion that regard for the Irish language "is not a political matter" inherently, of necessity. Irish belongs to all of us. Let us use it, say I - not ignorantly consign it to the dustbin.

If we do use Irish, let us do so with an adult sense of the implications. The people of the Irish-speaking districts (the "Gaeltacht"), and the people committed to the revival of Irish outside those districts, are more varied than they are often credited with being. But if we use Irish - as I do, for instance, as a writer and as a broadcaster, as well as a private individual we become part of an on-going dialogue, and we have no right to demand that all of the Irish speakers who work within organisations should have arrived at no political or religious conclusions. In any such thoroughly unlikely event the Irish language would have become dangerously impoverished in life and content. The most that we can reasonably ask for is that people who use Irish or associate themselves in any way with such organisations will not be cold-shouldered for having contrary opinions.

We have been seeing a little of the manipulation of the Gaelic League by particular political interests. I would believe with Hyde that the Gaelic League was a great educational and social vehicle originally capable of relating to a very wide spectrum, and that it should abstain from taking particular positions on political or sectarian issues except in so far as they impinged directly on the League's aim of promoting a re-use of Irish where it was no longer spoken natively and a consolidation of it where it still was. There could, of course, be no objection to other Irish-speaking bodies with specific religious or political aims functioning simultaneously.

Hyde's passion for Irish was not primarily that of a scholar but of a living, feeling Irishman. And his attitude to Irish was not just sentimental. He believed - and, as I have observed, his belief was proved to have meaning - that an enjoyment of what is best in the Irish language produced many material results. A southern Unionist who has seldom received the praise he deserved for his practical patriotism, Sir Horace Plunkett - a son of Lord Dunsany, educated at Eton and Oxford - was the progenitor of the Irish Agricultural Organisation Co-operative Society. I don't think he was ever a member of the Gaelic League, but he came to see the signal contribution it was making to Irish life. In his book Ireland in the New Century, published in 1904, he wrote (pp. 150-152): "It had a nucleus of workers with new ideas for the regeneration of Ireland. In face of much apathy they succeeded in making their ideas understood. So much is evident from the rapidly-increasing number of affiliated branches of the League, which in March, 1903, amounted to 600, almost treble the number registered two years before ..... Dr. Douglas Hyde, in his evidence before the University Commission pointed out that.....people....will respond with eagerness to something they can call their own." The policy of eliminating from national education the literature, history, arts and traditions of the people dulled their intelligence, he said, "impaired their interest in their own surroundings, stimulated emigration by teaching them to look on other countries as more agreeable places to live in, and made Ireland almost a social desert."

You may think - and I would think - it should be very natural for nationalists to recognise the importance of the Irish language. What surprises me sometimes is that people who regard themselves as super-nationalists are content to make token gestures to it and metaphorically shed a tear about it but still allow it to continue to die before our eyes without making its serious implementation a matter of priority while there is still time.

Nationalists may not see why Unionists should be interested in Irish, but - though I am myself not a Unionist - I think I do. I accept without reservation that nationalists have often suffered for their position, but I would also have to say that they have all too often been satisfied to blame the history of the English in Ireland - or, here in the North, the behaviour of Unionists - to excuse many of their own failures without sufficient justification. Evidence of that can be found in the history of the twenty-six county state, I think. To suggest that, because a person is a Unionist, she or he has no interest in Ireland is a sheer travesty. For deep, sad, religious and political reasons Unionists have frequently felt constrained to adopt defensive positions and refuse to open their hearts to positive cultural activities which spring from a land with a long national history. But that Unionists are capable of love of Ireland and an appreciation of its traditional culture has been shown many times. I am glad that Dr. Douglas Hyde was able to take that in, in the early days of the Gaelic League, and I can only deprecate some remarks of his later on which seem to me to suggest that his years of giving himself had narrowed his vision.

[1] vide Language, Lore and Lyrics: Essays and Lectures, Douglas Hyde, ed. Breandán O Conaire (Irish Academic Press, 1986), pp. 153, 156, 157, 160, 167, 169-170.

When Risteard O Glaisne, Methodist Lay Preacher, writer and retired teacher, came to Bessbrook Town Hall, he could hardly have expected the large number of individuals who came to hear him lecture on Douglas Hyde, co-founder of the Gaelic League. Several women from the Dromalane Mothers' and Toddlers' Group, as part of their Cultural Studies course, attended, as did many Catholic and Protestant residents of Bessbrook. About one quarter of the audience was made up of Newry Gaelic League members and all of them were interested in hearing what other people thought of the man who helped establish their organisation. Aodán Mac Póilin, Director of the Ulster Trust, and Dr. Chris McGimpsey, an Ulster Trust member, but also, more intriguingly, Secretary of the Official Unionist Party, were invited to respond to the lecture. Danny Kennedy, Official Unionist Councillor on Newry & Mourne Council, chaired the proceedings. The organisers' novel approach of not including a spokesperson from the Gaelic League itself on the discussion panel was interesting in that it allowed others a free rein to give their perceptions of the League. The only danger of such an approach, especially before an audience who may have little or no knowledge of the Gaelic League, is that some might be inclined to view the League as a relic of the past only, a movement of historical significance surely, but now moribund.

The panellists' and chairperson's responses to Risteard O Glaisne's lecture were all revealing. Danny Kennedy announced that his greatgrandfather had been an Irish speaker; condemned the element of compulsory Irish, as he saw it, in the education system in the Republic of Ireland; expressed ongoing support for Newry and Mourne District Council's initiatives in promoting the Irish language; and argued that the Irish language should not be "politically and religiously the preserve of one section of the community." The local Councillor concluded that "the Irish language in its proper place should be encouraged" (can there such a thing as 'a proper place' for any language ?).

Dr. Chris McGimpsey stated that his own interest in Irish came about having discovered P.W. Joyce's books "Irish Names of Places." There was some irony in Dr. McGimpsey's own situation when he rejected what he called "political interference in the language revival." He maintained that Irish should not be a language neglected by Unionists and declared that he had made a personal commitment to the language, though such a commitment was unlikely to advance his political career. Dr. McGimpsey argued that Unionists themselves could not reasonably be expected to join the Gaelic League, given one of that organisation's aims, as expressed in its Constitution, of achieving an independent Ireland. Dr. McGimpsey quoted from the National Constitution of the Gaelic League but failed to mention that a separate Ulster Constitution has been in place for almost 70 years now and that this Ulster version was deliberately framed so as to avoid explicit mention of the League's political aspirations. This is the very type of gesture required by some northern Unionists and one already made by the Gaelic League in Ulster. Dr. McGimpsey then proposed that the N.I.O. should employ peripatetic teachers of Irish and send them into loyalist areas to teach Irish to any Protestants who were willing to learn. This runs against the whole Community Relations Council's policy of using what are described as "neutral" venues for the hosting of cultural events. Dr. McGimpsey dealt in some detail with the Gaelic League Ard Fheis of 1915 and succinctly analysed Douglas Hyde's own position at that time, "politically, Hyde was not at the game." Hyde certainly wasn't, though the I.R.B. people most definitely were principal players. It is unfair to weigh down the Gaelic League of today with its historical baggage. The Gaelic League has advanced from those hectic days of revolutionary fervour in 1915, just as constitutional Unionists have moved on from the gun-running days at Larne in April 1914.

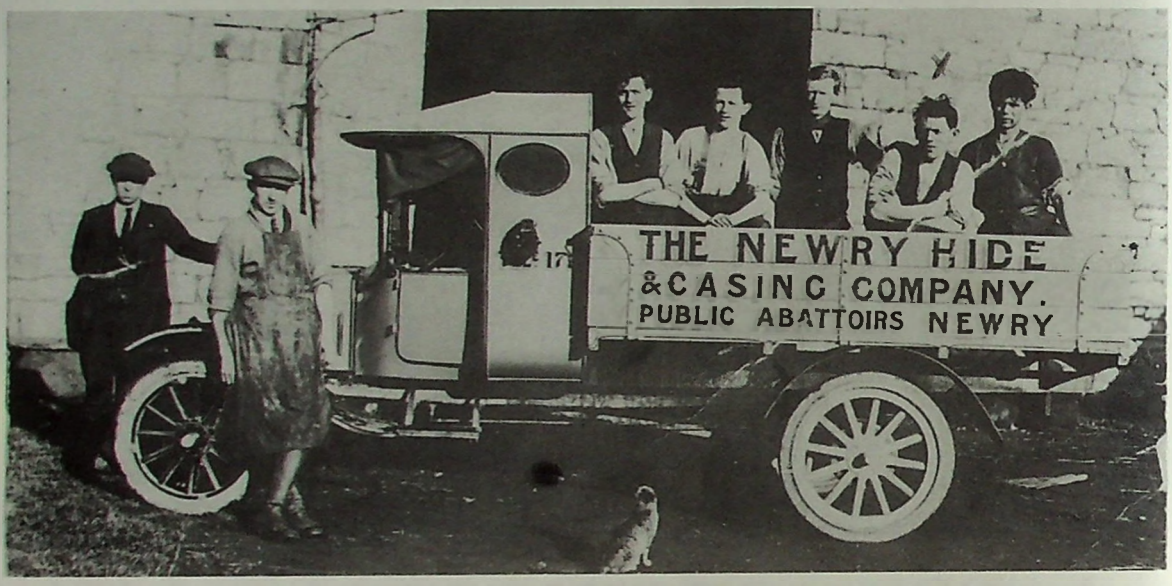
Aodán Mac Póilin concentrated on the influence of the Catholic Church on the Gaelic League and cited several very amusing pieces of evidence to show that at least some Catholic clergymen saw the Gaelic League as enshrining and protecting the 'true faith'. This was not a congenial atmosphere for Protestants who were interested in the Irish language, said Mr. MacPóilin. Mr. MacPóilin's examples of the Catholic Church trying to shape the Gaelic League in its own image were intended to be extreme, though he could just as easily have mentioned the Newry example where Fr. Hugh O'Reilly and Rev. S.C. Pinkerton (Unitarian Minister) collaborated in forming a Branch of the Gaelic League in 1897.

The recent upsurge of interest in the Irish language has unfortunately led to the creation of new media-inspired myths about the history of the Irish Revival. One of these is that Protestants have only been comfortable with the Irish language since the birth of the Ultach Trust. Aodán Mac Póilin's own research, along with that of Pádraig O Snodaigh, Maolcholaim Scot and many others, clearly reveals that the Protestant interest in Irish stretches back over the centuries. The second, even more absurd myth, is that the Irish Revival only took off after the Irish Hunger Strike of 1981. It is therefore all the more important that more lectures and discussions like this one in Bessbrook take place so that people can more fully explore their cultural heritage and discern the myth (or propaganda) from the reality. It is vital too that Irish speakers are not only allowed, but encouraged, to express their sincerely held views on all topics, whether we agree with them or not. As Risteard O Glaisne expressed it in the post-lecture discussion : "we have no right to demand that all those promoting Irish should not have come to political or religious conclusions." It is also the responsibility of Catholics in particular, as indicated by Councillor Frank Feeley at the Bessbrook lecture, to "show Protestants that there is a place for them in the Irish language revival."

A SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS OF NEWRY WORKERS

Above : Woolworth's staff (pic. le Charles McDonald).
Below : Newry Gasworks employees (pic. le Fabian Boyle).

OIBRITHE AN IÚIR



NEWRY WORKERS

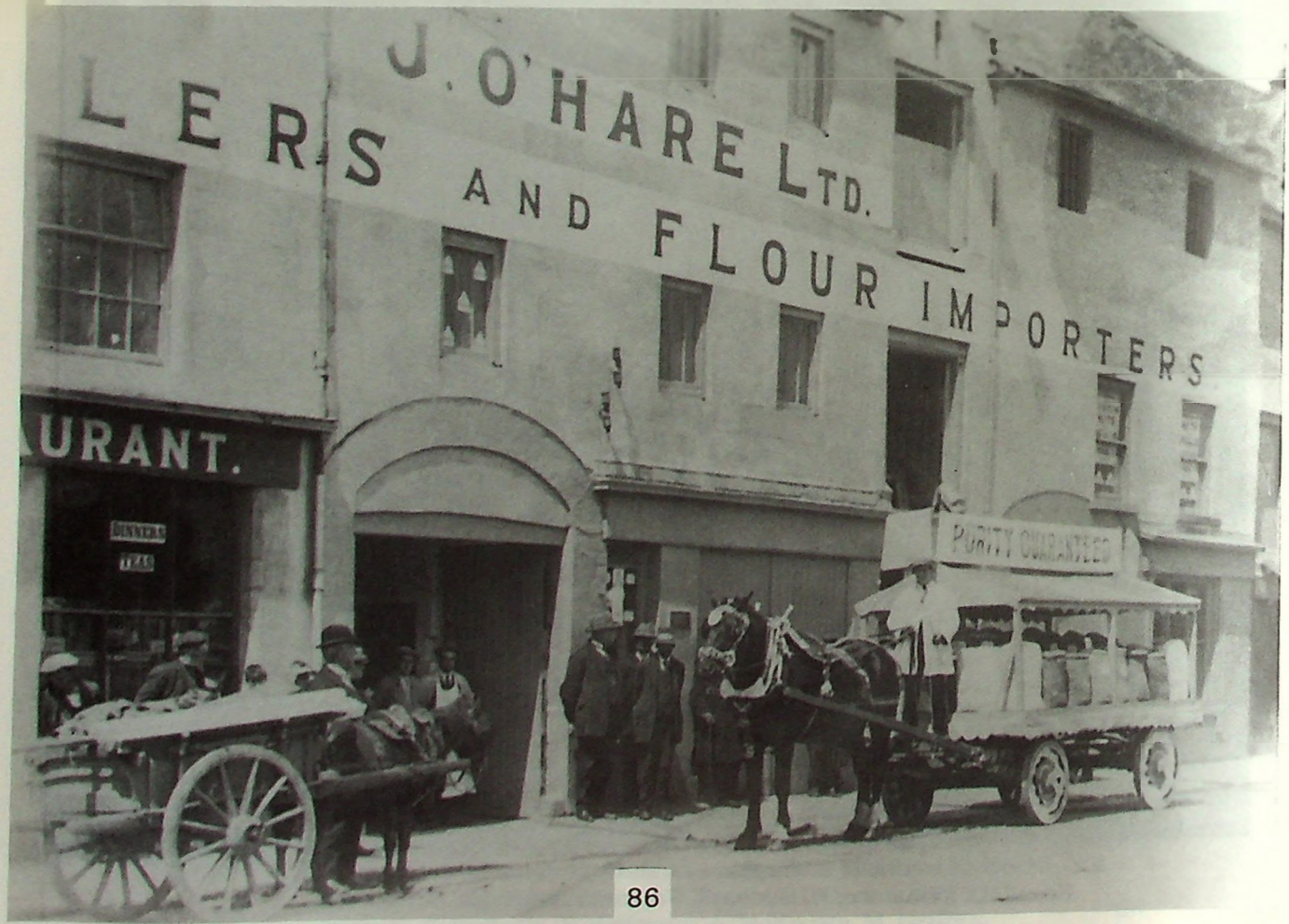
SEAMLAS AN IÚIR

Billy Lundy, Paddy Larkin, Joe Lundy, Mick McAteer, Jimmy McElroy, Fred Schultz. (pic. P. Ó hEochaidh)

NEWRY GASWORKS EMPLOYEES (photo donated by Mr. John McAleavey). Back : Not known, Mc Geough, J. Campbell, F. Bradley, J. Canavan.
Front : Mearns, P. Rafferty, T. McKeown, A. McKeown, M. Griffen.

Back : T. Fergusan, J. Duffy, T. Quinn.
Front : D. McKeown, W. Hanna, T. Fearon, T. Murtagh, Not known.

ABOVE : Workers at Craigmore Mill (photograph donated by Lily McCreesh)
BELOW : Outside J. O'Hare's Mill (photograph courtesy of O'Hare Family)



J. O'HARE

EMPLOYEE OF
WILLIS' BAKERY, NEWRY

The above photo was taken in Newry in 1954 and includes :

Paddy Burke (Ticket Collector); Joe McCrudden (Guard); Bob McKee (Engine Driver); Jack McBrian (Guard from Belfast); Mr. Browne (Station Master).

(PHOTO DONATED BY MC CRUDDEN FAMILY)

Photograph courtesy of the Bannon Family, Hawthorn Villas, Iúr Chinn Trá

Photograph courtesy of the Bannon Family, Hawthorn Villas, Iúr Chinn Trá

McAteer's

Bridge Street,
Newry, Co.Down.

Newsagents

Tá áthas orainn a bheith ag
cuidiú le Conradh na Gaeilge
ar an Iúr lenár dteanga náisiúnta
a chur chun tosaigh, go háirithe
i mbliana - BLIAIN NA GAEILGE.
Déanann muid comhghairdeas le
Craobh Uí Fhiaich as
"CUISLE na nGAEL"
a fhoilsiú bliain i ndiaidh bliana.

Tá fáilte i gcónaí roimh
Gaeilgeoirí i siopa
Mhic a' tSaoir.

G.A.A. President addresses Coiste na Gaeilge A.G.M.

Addressing the A.G.M. of Newry & Mourne District Council's Irish Language Committee, Peadar O Coinn, Uachtarán Chumann Lúthchleas Gael, said that the development of any community can only be based on a sense of identity, and that it was in this area the Irish language was particularly important. He argued that if a society was to progress socially and economically, then that community needed a strong sense of purpose and shared identity.

An tUas. O Coinn's own commitment to the Irish language is well known and he is a regular guest speaker at important Irish language functions. He told delegates at the Coiste na Gaeilge A.G.M. that the progress of the Irish language and the increase in national self-confidence were inextricably combined. Echoing Thomas Davis, the G.A.A. President said : "The language provides, as it always has done, the most irrefutably authentic badge of Irishness."

O tháinig an tUas. O Coinn chuig Comhairle an Iúir, tá seirbhís úr chomhuaineach aistriúcháin curtha ar fáil ag Coiste na Gaeilge agus ardmholadh tuillte acu as a bheith chun tosaigh ar na Comhairlí uilig in Eirinn. Sa Bhreatain Bheag a rinneadh an trealamh nua seo agus tá mar bhuntáiste aige go bhfuil an corás ar fad go hiomlán iniompraithe. Deirtear gur caitheamh c.£7,000 ar an trealamh agus más fíor tá sladmhargadh faighte ag Comhairle an Iúir. Ní fios fós má bheas an trealamh tugtha amach ar iasacht chuig grúpaí eile.

Fr. Walsh, O.P., moves on, having done tremendous work for the young people of Ballybot

Nuair a tháinig Fr. Walsh chuig Sráid Dhoiminic don chéad uair bhí sé óg, fuinniúil, idéalaíoch. An tráth a d'fhág sé Iúr Chinn Trá anuraidh bhí sé píosa níos sine ach diomaite de sin ní raibh sé pioc athraithe. Idir an dá ama, dár ndó, rinne sé éacht ar shon mhuintir óg Bhaile Bocht. Ní luaithe lonnaithe é i mBaile Bocht nuair a bhunaigh sé dioscó do dhéagóirí. Chuir sé club ar bun do pháistí an cheantair. Thug sé cuireadh do thuismitheoirí cuidiú leis chun an club a choinneáilt tarraingteach do dhaoine óga - d'éirigh leo.

Bhí Fr. Walsh i gcónaí cúramach cothromach agus é ag déileáil le páistí. Thuig sé gurb as cúlraí éagsúla a tháinig siad - go raibh buntáistí ag cuid acu nach raibh ag cuid eile. Réitigh sé go maith le bunadh an Iúir ar fad agus le pobal Bhaile Bocht go speisialta agus tá muid cinnte de nach mbeidh fadhb ar bith aige socrú síos ina phost úr.

Travelling musicians and others
by Mícheal Ó Baoill

Is cuimhneach liom go soiléir agus mé i mo ghlas-stócach in Oméith, an lucht déirce, idir fhir agus mhná, ag taisteal thart ag iarraidh airgid, práta, ubh nó greim bia eile, nó gráinnín siúcre fiú fá choinne cupán tae. Bhí an Ghaeilge ag a bhunús. Ar éigean an doras oscailte agat ach an bheannacht 'go mbeannaigh Dia thú' cloiste agat ón té a bhí ag iarraidh na déirce os do chomhair amach. Tugadh cead dóibh, in amannaí, fanacht thar oíche cois tine nó sa scioból, go háirithe má bhí doineann ann (ar acht amháin, nach mbéidís ag caitheamh tobac).

Bhí bean amháin agus "says you" an leasainm a baisteadh uirthi, ní raibh a hainm ceart ar eolas agam riamh. Thaitin sé léi a bheith ag cur fuithi i dTeach na mBocht in Dún Dealgan, go speisialta ag aimsir na Nollag. Agus, ar ndóigh, bhí Biddy Ardee againn, 'choke the child' mar a cuireadh uirthi, bean láidir, toirtiúil, fionn, dóisceanta, bairéad á chaitheamh ar chúl a cloiginn aici agus mála de shíor ina glac. Ba mhinic le feiceáil í ar Shráid Hill, Iúr Chinn Trá. Bhí cuid mhaith páistí fáitíosach roimpi.

Bhí seanbhean clúiteach eile ann chomh maith, Mary Tarley ab ainm di. Fíodh a hainm isteach i rann a bhí coitianta ag an am :

Some say the divil's dead,
Some say he's harly (hardly),
Some say he rose again
And married Mary Tarley.
(Traolach an t-ainm a bhí ar a hathair más cruinn mo chuimhne)

Agus bhí neart neart eile den lucht siúil ann, leithéidí Windy Murphy, Tom the Diddler, Whang the Miller, gan ach baicle acu a lua. Insan Iúr féin bhí Tarry the Rock, seanfhear a shiúil thart ar mhaide croise; Forty Coats; Mickey, Barney agus Lizzie; fear ón Phacastáin, turban á chaitheamh aige, a mba nós leis dhul thart ag díol scaifeanna, bioráin agus snáth fuála; fear ard eile a chuaigh timpeall na háite agus é i mbun ceoil an chéad rud ar maidin, taobh amuigh de na tithe i nDoire Beag, ag dúil lena bhricfeasta mar chúiteamh. Chónaigh roinnt eile acu sa Workhouse ar Chnoc na Nóiníní, agus bhí teach tábhairne Uí Mhealláin ar Shráid Mhuineacháin mar 'local' acu.

Bhí fear ar leith ann, ach éalaíonn a ainm uaim í láthair na huaire. Chan sé, agus rinne tionlacan ar an fhidil, "Ur Chnoc Chéin Mhic Cáinte', dán a cheap Peadar O Doirnín. Seal aoibhinn dár saol a bheith ag éisteacht leis.

Tá muid buíoch do C. Tempest McCrea as Ravensdale a thug na grianghraif de na ceoltóirí fánacha dúinn atá foilsithe leis an cuntas seo. B'as Co. Lú iad na ceoltóirí.

ABP
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WISHING CONRADH NA GAEILGE
EVERY SUCCESS IN
1993 BLIAIN NA GAEILGE 1993

Warrenpoint Road,
Newry, Co. Down.

An account of a railway accident at **GORAGHWOOD** on 13th May 1871

Compiled by Des Fitzgerald

It was rather unusual in 19th Century railway accidents for a railway employee to be brought to trial for manslaughter. When the unfortunate man in question was held to be only secondarily to blame by the Board of Trade Inspector, who went out of his way to criticise severely the Dublin and Belfast Junction Railway Company for the way they had worked their employee, it may be felt that the man was very hard done by.

All of this arose from a collision near Goraghwood on 13 May 1871, in which one passenger was killed and eight people were injured. In fact, the passenger who died had scrambled to safety before the collision but broke a leg in jumping from the railway fence into an adjoining field. The leg was amputated but the unfortunate man died three days later. The recovery rate from mid-19th Century amputations seems to have been rather low.

The train in question was the up mail to Dublin, which left Portadown at 1.50 a.m., fifteen minutes late. This lateness was put down to the number of parcels to be transferred by the head porter (an Ulster Railway employee) at Portadown but the Board of Trade Inspecting Officer, Col. Rich, thought it was mainly caused by "dilatoriness at Portadown Station and the want of attention of the guard of the up mail train. This guard had been on duty for three nights and two days previously and was so sleepy and tired that he did not get out of his van to start the train." The mail consisted of three loaded wagons, an empty carriage truck, a Post Office van with a brake compartment and a guard, a composite carriage and a wagon loaded with whiskey. In the Post Office van travelled a Post Office guard, a Post Office letter sorter and, separated from them by a partition, the train guard.

The train stopped at Tandragee and at Scarva, passing at the latter station the goods train later involved in the collision, which had left Portadown about 12.30 a.m. The mail stalled about a mile up the bank, having lost time steadily. The driver could offer no explanation other than stating the rails were slippery and that the engine had stopped on a short incline before reaching the bank. The Inspecting Officer felt that "the engine appears to have stopped from the engine driver's neglect in not keeping up steam. There was no steam gauge on the engine but the man had been an engine driver about fifteen years and should have known from experience the state of his engine, even though he was not provided with a steam gauge, which he should have been."

A contributory reason for the stoppage may have been that the fireman had only been occasionally employed as fireman. He was usually employed in the workshops. At all events, the three railway employees on board seem to have done nothing once the train stopped. The guard, of course, was still sound asleep but the driver, although he must have been aware of the goods train close behind, did nothing. The driver may have been leaving the protection of his rear to the guard, although Col. Rich pointed out that the driver was aware that the guard had not left his van at Tandragee or Scarva. The only person who showed any presence of mind was the Post Office guard, Thomas Hillyard. He looked out of his window and saw the goods train coming in the distance, more than a mile away. It should be said that one of the witnesses described the light at the time as "like what they call in Scotland 'the gloaming'; a kind of grey darkness". Hillyard told the sorter to get out. However, as the sorter put it, "I had a bundle of letters in my hand. I waited to put them in to box, after which I got my hat, jumped out and ran up the embankment". Neither Hillyard nor the sorter, Thomas Reynolds, could waken the guard but Hillyard managed to rouse some of the passengers. However, his main concern was to stop the goods train. He lifted the red tail lamp and ran down the line about 180 yards, waving the lamp. He stated that he could have gone further but he thought the goods train driver had ample room to stop. The goods train had twelve loaded and eight empty wagons on and was travelling at about 18 - 25 m.p.h. The driver would have had a clear view of the disabled mail ahead for about 500 yards when he emerged from a cutting but he ran past the Post Office guard and appears not to have braked at all before the collision. Meanwhile, Reynolds, the Post Office sorter, had run up to the driver of the mail and urged him to try to move. The driver felt that he had just got the train under way before the collision. The engine of the goods train was derailed and the driver and fireman were both injured. The wagon carrying whiskey at the rear of the mail was thrown on to the bank at the near side of the line so that the main force of the impact was taken by the composite carriage, where both the first class and second class compartments were damaged. Ironically, the passenger who later died, William Ball, reacted quickly and had actually left the carriage before the accident. A fellow-passenger testified that if Mr. Ball had

remained where he had been he would have been crushed to death. Three other passengers were slightly injured.

Hillyard, the Post Office guard, said that he could not see either the driver or the fireman on the footplate of the goods train and that he did not believe they were standing up on their engine. He also thought that the fireman was under the influence of drink. The guard of the mail was found still sound asleep, believe it or not, in the bottom of his brake compartment after the accident.

Mr. Ball appears to have jumped on to the top of a bank beside the line and then, as he told his father before he died, "feeling uncomfortable, took a step forward and fell down the side". There was a drop of eleven feet and he sustained a compound fracture of his left tibia. Mr. Ball was placed on a door and carried up to the mail train which had reversed back down the bank, after moving away just after the collision. He was taken to the main line Station where Dr. John Savage gave him brandy and reduced the fracture. From there he was taken to the Victoria Hotel, Newry. There his condition deteriorated and Dr. Whadton from the Meath Hospital, Dublin and Dr. Robinson from Armagh were sent for. Amputation was decided on and "The Newry Commercial Telegraph" reported that "during the amputation the deceased, at his own request, was allowed to sit up in the bed and without even wincing, he looked on calmly and resignedly at the whole occurrence". Unfortunately, Mr. Ball died some six hours later. The inquest was opened in the Victoria Hotel by Dr. Farrell that evening, and after identification of the body as that of his son, by Rev. John Ball, Rector of Killybegs, the inquest was adjourned.

Thomas M. Hillyard was the first witness when the adjourned inquest met and he testified to his efforts to stop the goods train, having shouted to the passengers to get out as he ran past the carriage. He then ran back up to the scene of the crash and helped to carry Mr. Ball on a door to the main line Station. Hillyard mentioned that the brake van had been on the rear of the train from Omagh to Portadown but was positioned in the middle of the train from Portadown to Dublin. Hillyard steadfastly resisted efforts by the coroner and jurors to get him to ascribe blame. He said that he "believed at the time and believed still that the fireman of the goods train (Michael Maguire) was slightly under the influence of drink but he did not believe he was incapable of doing his duty and believed the driver (Edward Maginnis) was perfectly sober." On the other hand, he had to admit "I knew the guard Clarke was asleep when the train was leaving Scarva. When I could not get him to awake at the time of the collision, I went up myself to try to prevent it."

Capt. Durnford of the Royal Engineers, gave evidence that he was asleep in a first-class compartment when the collision occurred. When he got out he heard Mr. Ball's cries for help and organized help for him. He said : "Among the officials that were there I saw only one man that was worth his salt. That was the Post Office guard. He was perfectly cool and collected and did his duty properly. I do not mean to say that any of the officials had a sign of drink upon them but when I see men running about doing nothing, I think they are worth very little on occasions of the kind."

Thomas Cowan, Traffic Superintendent of the D.B.J.R. described as "an error of judgement" the action of the mail train driver in not sending back his fireman or his guard to warn the goods train, but he refused to accept it was "gross negligence". He mentioned the rails being covered with frost (research in Armagh Observatory on weather conditions is inconclusive, so frost remains a possibility even though rather unlikely in view of the minimum temperatures on May 12), and explained that it was not company policy to have stationmasters or milesmen on duty all night, contrary to what some jurors felt was necessary. He said that if there had been a clerk on duty at Scarva it would have been his duty to remove the guard of the mail train if he was unable to perform his duty and put another man in his place.

The coroner said he would refuse to accept the evidence of either the drivers, the fireman of the goods train or the guard of the mail, all of whom had been suspended by the Company. The jury's verdict was that "the collision was caused by the negligence of the engine-driver, Michael Byrne, the stoker John Clarke and the guard James Clarke of said train which collision led to the death of the said Mr. Ball. We also find Edward Maginnis, engine driver and Michael Maguire,

stoker, of the goods train of the said company, not free from blame. We consider the mail guard, T. M. Hillyard, deserving of the greatest praise for his exertions in attempting to prevent said collision and beg to recommend him to the Company and the Humane Society". The three men named, Byrne, Maguire and Clarke were immediately arrested but released on bail to appear at the Down Summer Assizes.

In the meantime, Col. F. H. Rich held his Inquiry. He felt that "the accident was caused by the gross neglect of all the company's servants in charge of the up mail train and by the gross neglect of both the engine driver and the fireman of the goods train. The head porter in charge at Portadown Station appears also to blame, for having unnecessarily detained the up mail train, and for having sent it away in charge of a guard whom he saw to be incapable of properly performing his duty. The Dublin and Belfast Junction Railway Company are also much to blame for working a guard to such an extent as would make any human being incapable of performing his duty properly."

Col. Rich was "sorry to observe a disposition on the part of the locomotive engineer of the D.B.J.R. to excuse the men belonging to his department." He went on to say "I also consider that inflammatory goods, like whiskey, should not be sent with passenger trains; and I am surprised that the Post Office authorities allow such goods to be forwarded by the mail train". He concluded his report : "I do not consider that a man in the position of head porter is a fit man to leave in charge of a station like Portadown". The report was sent to the D.B.J.R. on 20 June and on 28 June, Mr. G. W. Greene, secretary of the D.B.J.R. replied that :

"with few exceptions, my directors accept the remarks which are contained (in the report), being persuaded that under the arrangements which they had made for the safety and protection of the trains in question nothing but the grossest negligence on the part of the Company's servants could have occasioned such an accident and the Board, in consequence, dismissed all the parties concerned in the transaction.

My directors, however, perceived that Col. Rich has included in his censure the conduct of the Board 'for working a guard to such an extent as would make any human being incapable of performing his duty properly'. And I am desired to submit the following statement of the work performed by the guard in question, and the hours of his attendance on the trains as arranged by the superintendent of traffic, which in the opinion of the Board, in nowise warrant the strong observations of Col. Rich.

The ordinary hours of duty for this man were from 8 p.m. until 4.15 a.m. the following morning.

He came on duty at 8 p.m., started with the mail from Drogheda at 8.45 p.m., which was due at Portadown at 11.10 p.m. where he could rest for two hours, the up mail being due to start at 1.35 a.m. and arrive at Drogheda at 4.10 a.m.

From the time he came on duty until he was done was about eight and a quarter hours, out of which he could rest for two hours.

He had not done any extra duty for four months prior to the Ardee races. And for the two days, the 11th and 12th May, he was directed to be on duty at Drogheda at 9.30 a.m. to assist on the platform and with the train to Dunleer (The Ardee branch did not open until 1896), a distance of ten miles. He was not wanted from 12.30 until about 6.30 p.m. and could have rested during that time if so disposed.

He came on duty again about 6.30 p.m. and took charge of a special train back to Drogheda at 7.30 p.m.; but he made no complaint of being tired or unfit for duty on either of the two days."

Col. Rich, however, was in no mood to let the D.B.J.R. away with that and on 1st July he sent the following memorandum :

"The guard who was reported by me as having been required by the company, at the time of the accident, to do such an extent of work as would make any human being incapable of performing his duty properly, was ordinarily employed on night duty. That ordinary duty was sufficient.

For the two days preceding the accident he was employed, in addition to his night duty, to start at 9.30 a.m. with a train for Dunleer races, and to return with the race train in the evening, when the races were over.

It is true that he might have rested while the race train was at Dunleer but a man does not rest at a small country station, away from home, where he has no place to rest in.

Moreover, the Company gave the guard leave to attend the races.

I submit, therefore, that I am justified in reporting that the guard was employed continuously for three nights and two days, and I have no hesitation in asserting that with such continuous employment he was unable to attend to his duties on the night of the accident, which completed the third night of continuous day and night duty.

I submit that this memorandum be published with the Company's remonstrance against the opinion expressed in my Report."

Meanwhile, the unfortunate guard, Clarke, had other things on his mind, because when the case

reached the Summer Assizes at Downpatrick on 24 July before Judge O'Brien, the Crown had dropped the charges against the driver and fireman, leaving the guard to face the music. The evidence given was much the same as at the inquest but Clarke's counsel was able to make a good point when he asked Reynolds, the Post Officer sorter :
"He (Hillyard) was unable to prevent the accident?"
"He was."
"So that if there had been ten guards instead of one, and all awake, they could not have prevented the accident from the position the trains were in to each other?"
"I don't think they could."

At the close of the Crown case, Mr. Monroe, representing Clarke, submitted that there was no case to go to the jury. Hillyard did everything that could be done and if Clarke had been ten times over awake, he could not have prevented the accident.

Prosecuting counsel, Mr. McDonnell, contended there was gross negligence on the part of the prisoner.

The Judge held that there was a clear distinction between the negligence of the guard and that negligence being the cause of death. He concluded that there was no case to go before the jury to connect Clarke's negligence with the collision, injuries to, and subsequent death of Mr. Ball. Therefore he ordered the discharge of the prisoner.

PHOTOGRAPHS (ABOVE) OF GORAGHWOOD
PUBLISHED WITH THE KIND PERMISSION OF
ARMAGH COUNTY MUSEUM

PHOTOGRAPH (ABOVE) OF GORAGHWOOD COURTESY OF

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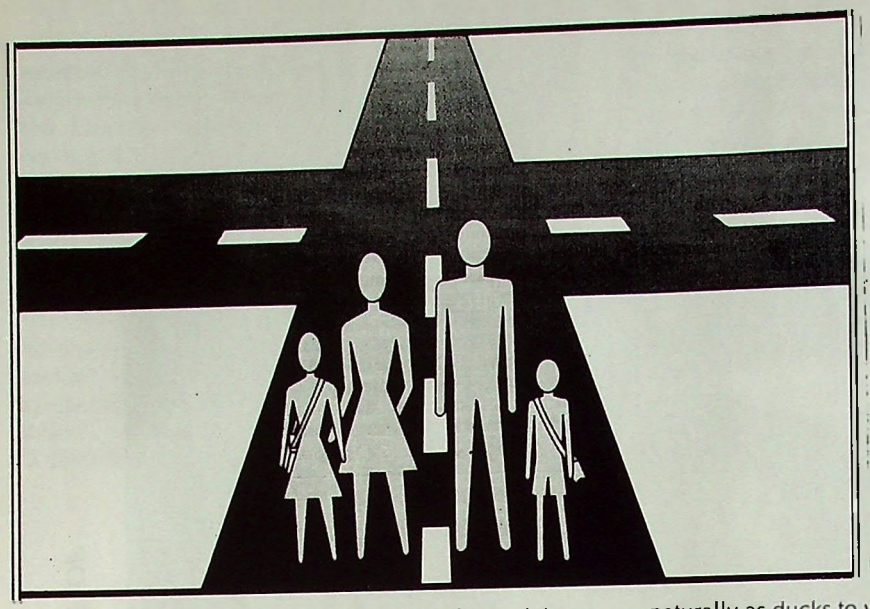


MAKE A CHOICE FOR PRIMARY EDUCATION IN IRISH FOR YOUR CHILDREN

Children learn language in a different way from adults. Some adults can learn faster, but it is clear that in a suitable environment children between the ages of three and eight can pick up two languages as easily as one. Being bilingual means having two languages.

Being bilingual from an early age:

- helps the learning process, it:
- develops skills in certain type of abstract thinking
- helps the child to learn other languages to a higher level and more quickly
- learning through a second language as in the bunscoil, children reach levels of fluency which cannot be approached by years of learning the language as a secondary school subject

These advantages have been established by scientists in Europe, Canada, the USA and elsewhere.

There is no better preparation for a multi-lingual world than having two languages in your own life and community.

Tús Maith

Children spend at least a year in the naíonra or pre-school section before going to the Bunscoil.

As in other pre-school groups the child in the naíonra:

- plays happily
- mixes with other children
- develops skills of hand and eye

In the naíonra the child also:

- begins to learn ideas such as number and shape
- learns to understand and speak Irish
- does this in the most enjoyable and natural way without being aware that it is happening

An Bhunscoil

After a year in the naíonra children have all the skills mentioned above, and are ready for the bunscoil. They take to the bunscoil, and to education through Irish, as naturally as ducks to water. As they explore and enjoy the world through Irish, it is clear that here Irish is very much a living and growing language.

The Bunscoil also brings them a high standard of education. It is important to understand that education here is very much like an ordinary primary school. This is made clear by Joe Martin, Principal of Steelstown Primary School:

"It functions along the lines of English medium education, children receive every subject of the curriculum through the Irish language. They emerge from the school after seven years well-rounded young people ready to transfer into secondary education with all of the benefits of English medium education. It is feasible, and it is possible and as a matter of fact it is growing as more and more parents become interested".

A Christian Ethos

The ethos of Bunscoil an Iúir is Christian, but not limited to one denomination. Through this Christian ethos the school and the benefits of Irish medium education are open to all families in the area, both Catholic and Protestant.

Foirm Form

Please complete and return to the address below

Teideal Title Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms

Ainm
First Name

Seoladh
Home Address

Information

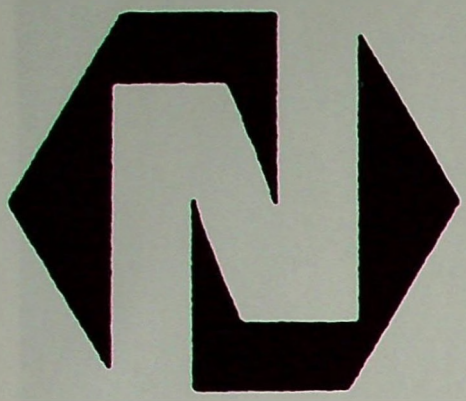
☐ I would like to find out more about the bunscoil (primary school) and naíonra (pre-school section).

☐ I would like to put my child's name down for the bunscoil / naíonra.

BUNSCOIL AN IÚIR
72 Kilmorey Street
Newry BT34 2DH

MICKEY McCAUL WITH THE FAMOUS TOMMY PRICE AT NEWRY SHOWGROUNDS

Above : MEMBERS OF THE CAMPBELL FAMILY, CASTLE STREET, NEWRY.
Below : NEWRY CATHOLICS AT PRAYER.



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Congratulates the GAELIC LEAGUE on its 100 years' work in encouraging and providing ADULT EDUCATION

FRIENDS' MEETING HOUSE, BESSBROOK - WELL WORTH VISITING THIS SUMMER

Tá taithí againn uilig mar thuismitheoirí ar laethanta 'leadránacha' an tSamhraidh, na páistí díomhaoin agus iad ag clamhsán i gcónaí nach bhfuil a dhath le déanamh acu. Ritheann muidinne as idéanna le cabhrú leo an t-am a chur isteach. Bíonn siad dubh dóite le turasanna chuig an Phoinnte agus pé scéal é bíonn na tuismitheoirí as póca i ndiaidh dóibh a bheith ag íoc as cluichí bólaí ag an Olympia ar Bhóthair Dhroichéad na Banna. Ní gá dúinn a bheith buartha i mbliana ámh mar thig linn an clann ar fad a thabhairt linn chuig an Sruthán (thar áit ar bith eile ar chlár an domhain!) agus ar a laghad ar bith beidh lá as an chiotiantacht againn. Bíonn Lá Oscailte ag baill Chuallacht na gCairde (Quakers) ag a dteach ar Bhóthair Derrymore gach Sathairn óna 2.00 i.n. go dtí 5.00 i.n. i rith Iúil/Lúnasa. Ar an drochuair, beidh dris chosáin roimh chuairteoirí mar caithfidh sibh dhul fríd ionad seiceála de chuid Arm na Breataine ar bhur mbealach ach sin thart níl ach giota fágtha le taisteal agaibh chuig Teach Chuallacht na gCairde (an Teampall Gallda).

Tá punt an duine ar an doras ach gheobhaidh sibh, táim ag tuar, luach bhur gcuid airgid. Cuidíonn an táille sin leis an scéim chun Teach na gCairde a dheisiú. Faigheann na cuairteoirí cupán tae agus brioscaí mar aisíoc. Tugtar thart sibh fán áras agus más Caitlicigh sibh ach go háirithe beidh iontas an domhain oraibh fáil amach cé chomh simplí neamhornáideach is atá Teach na gCairde. Tá seomraí cearnógacha ann, tábla i lár, agus troscán déanta as giúis thart timpeall. Ar an bhealach isteach tá clog, a rinneadh ag an comhlacht H. Marshall ón Iúr san aois seo chuaigh thart, le feiscint ar an bhalla.

Ní dhéanann ach thart fá scór duine, idir baill 'convinced' agus cuairteoirí, freastal ar chruinnithe na Quakers a bhíonn ann gach Domhnach. Bhí an tráth ann, agus Muintir Richardson i mbarr a réime, nuair a bhí plód ag tarraingt ar an Meeting House maidin Dé Domhnaigh. Níor mhaith liom a bheith dímheasúil le Quakers an lae inniu, ach tá sé glactha anois gurb é ceann de na fathanna go raibh an oiread sin Cairde ar an Sruthán san am atá caite ná gur thug na Richardsons féin jabanna insna muillte do dhaoine a bhí ar aon chreideamh leo. Nuair a thit an tóin as an tionscal línéidaigh agus tháinig deireadh le ré na Richardsons, tharla titim shuntasach i líon na gCairde ar an Sruthán.

Fuair "Cuisle na nGael" cuntas spéisiúil i mí Eanáir '93 ó dhuine ón Sruthán a raibh a chuid gaolta insna Quakers uair den tsaoil. Ba shuimiúil an dóigh a thiontaigh siad ón chreideamh a bhíodh acu (ba Pheispitéirigh iad) le bheith ina mbaill de Chuallacht na gCairde. O Stanley Irwin a tháinig an scéal

chugainn. Bhí duine de shinsir Stanley Irwin, Moses Mc Kinley ab ainm dó, páirteach i gCo. Aontroma in Eirí Amach 1798. Cé go raibh Moses i lár troda in éadán na Sasanach agus gur cailleadh neart dá chuid comrádaithe, agus gabhadh cuid mhaith eile, d'éirigh le Moses éalú ón cheantar ar fad. Bhí eagla a chraicinn air filleadh ar Cho. Aontroma agus ní gan chúis. Rinne sé suas a intinn socrú síos i Loughgilly, Co. Ard Mhacha. Lena chúlra a cheilt ó na hUdaráis chuaigh sé chuig na Quakers agus glacadh isteach é i gCuallacht na gCairde. Lean clann McKinley ag obair leo i Loughgilly go dtí 1846 agus ba sa bhliain sin a chuala iad go raibh jabanna ar fáil ar an Sruthán. Fuair na Richardsons amach go raibh Quakers ó Loughgilly ag iarraidh postanna i muillean s'acusan agus tugadh jabanna do chlann McKinley ar an toirt. An ghné is spéisiúla ar fad den scéal ná nach bhfuil iomrá ar bith ar na Mc Kinleys i dtuairiscí scríofa i Loughgilly nó ar an Sruthán féin. Fiú nuair a fuair duine acu bás níor scríobhadh síos sonraí ar bith futhu in áit ar bith. De réir chuma, bhí muintir Mc Kinley i gcónaí cúramach faichilleach. Bhí 'fhios acu go raibh clann Mc Kinley luaite ag na hUdaráis mar dhaoine a bhí sáite in Eirí Amach '98 agus rinne siad gach iarracht a gcúlra raidiceach a choinneáilt faoi rún. Bhí a rún slán sábháilte le baill Chuallacht na gCairde.

Is mór an díol trua é nach bhfuil mórán taighde déanta ar na Quakers a shocraigh síos ar an Sruthán is a thug fostaíocht do na **mílte** duine ón Iúr. Chuala mé go raibh sliocht maidir leofa insan leabhar "The Life of William Hobson - a Quaker Warrior" a foilsíodh ag Headley Bros., London, ach theip orm teacht ar an leabhar. Dúradh liom freisin gur baineadh úsáid as an cíos a bailíodh ó na tionóntaí i Derrymore Terrace le híoc as costais reatha an Meeting House. Diomaite de sin, is oth liom a rá go bhfuil mé aineolach go leor ar Chuallacht na gCairde inár gceantar.

Molaim go mór, mar sin, 'turas' chuig Teach na gCairde. Fágfar faoi bhrón sibh nuair a fheicfidh sibh an sean Woodhouse (le hais an Meeting House) a bhí maorga galánta ag tús an chéid ach atá scriosta folamh in anchaoi anois. Agus beidh le mothú agaibh leis go bhfuil atmaisféar cráifeach suaimhneach ag baint le Teach Chuallacht na gCairde.

COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES SUPPORT THIS MAGAZINE

The "Cuisle na nGael" Committee wishes to thank the Newry & Mourne District Council Arts Committee which made one of its Annual Arts Grants available to us to help us meet our publishing costs. **Ba mhaith linn go speisialta ár mbuíochas a ghabháil le baill Choiste na Gaeilge a bhí fial linn i mbliana is a chuir ar ár gcumas táille na hirise seo a choinneáil réasúnta.**

PHOTOGRAPHS OF ST. JOSEPH'S FORMER BOARDING SCHOOL, CONVENT OF MERCY, BESSBROOK. BUILDING DEMOLISHED JUNE '91.
Photos by Mr. Patsy McKeown.

ABBEY HURLERS

Ré eile i stair na Mainistreach

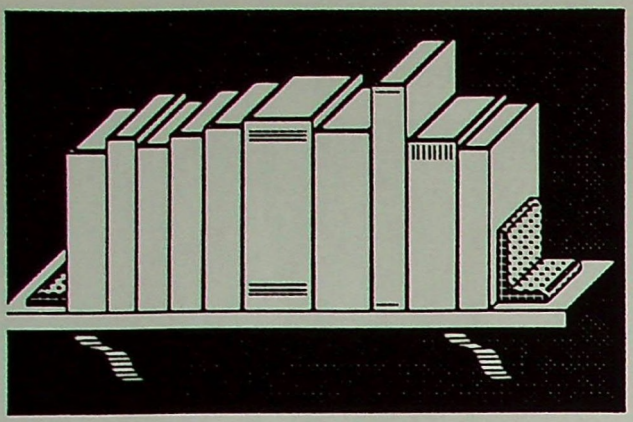
Grianghraf le caoinchead ó T.A. Keenan, Seaview, Warrenpoint

SAINT MALACHY'S, BESSBROOK
HURLING TEAM. (photo : Tom Mc Cabe)

NEWRY CUMANN NA mBAN
CAMOGIE CLUB

SOCCER TEAMS FROM 1937. Above NEWRY TOWN. Back row - W.J. Redfern, A. Collins, H. McCaw, J. Gunther, R. Johnston, J. Twomey, N. McIvor, G. Black, H. Holborn, P. Duffy. Front row - F. McGreevey, D. Thompson, D. McCart, J.W. Syddall, W. Whitehouse, E. Rigby, W. Weir. Below NEWRY CELTIC. Back row - J. Walls, B. Lambe, P. Jennings, P. Meighan, D. Cunningham, P. Gribben, M. McAteer. Middle row - J. Fox, J. Marshall, H. Reilly, T. Feenan, E. Clarke, P. Duffy, E. McDonald. Front row - J. Patterson, J. Hughes (photos courtesy of C. McDonald and P. Fox).

NEWRY'S BEST KNOWN CYCLIST, BRIAN MONAGHAN, FINISHING SECOND. PHOTO TAKEN ON THE WARRENPOINT ROAD.



Léirmheasanna

The Last *of* Deeds
AND LOVE IN HISTORY

EOIN McNAMEE

Níl 'fhios agam an chúis atá leis ach tá claonadh ag muintir an lúir neamhaird a dhéanamh ar ár scríobhnóirí óga. Is cuimhin liom nuair a foilsíodh "Jane Alley" (1987) le Peter Hollywood (a rugadh is a tógadh i Sráid an Droichid) nach raibh iomrá ar bith ar an leabhar, gan a bheith ag caint faoi léirmheas, ar na nuachtáin áitiúla. Cén seans atá ag scríobhnóirí más mar seo atá rudaí ? Tá leabhar úr eisithe ag Paddy O'Hanlon fosta ar na mallaibh ach cá bhfuil na léirmheasanna ?

Leabhar nach féidir linn neamhaird a ní air ná 'The Last of Deeds and Love in History" le Eoin McNamee, fear a rugadh i gCill Chaoil ach atá ag obair leis go lánaimseartha mar chritic 's mar scríobhnóir i mBaile Atha Cliath. Má léann tú go hiondúil d'fhonn éalú ó shaol ár linne, lenár bhfadhbanna i dtuaisceart Eireann a sheachaint cuir i gcás, ní cóir duit "The Last of Deeds" a cheannach. Ach más suim leat fáil amach cad é an dóigh a théann seicteachas agus foréigean i bhfeidhm ar dhaoine óga, seo leabhar fá do choinne. Agus tá foréigean ann. Neart de. Tá cúrsaí collaí á phlé go foscailte fosta. Déagóirí gan dóchas gan todhchaí a chónaíonn insan scéal seo. Is Caitlicigh iad na carachtair Deeds (a leasainm) agus Jammy agus tá reiligiún tábhachtach san áit ina bhfuil cónaí orthu. Téann siad i bhfostú i saol chasta an tuaiscirt nuair a phiocann siad suas Sharon mar chara. Is Protastúnach í Sharon ar ndóigh, agus ní mó ná go bhfuil a hathair sásta léi nuair a fhaigheann sé amach go bhfuil a inion ag bacaint le Taigs. Ná bíodh aon dul amú ort, ní scéal é seo atá ar aon dul le scéalta neamhurchóideacha Joan Lingard ! Tá réalachas ag baint le "The Last of Deeds" agus éinne a bhfuil eolas aici ar cheantar an lúir feicfidh sí go bhfuil an scéal bunaithe cuid mhaith i nlúr Chinn Trá agus i gCill Chaoil féin. Tá tagairtí ann do 'Cupids' mar shampla, agus uair nó dhó shíl mé gur thug srúth an scéil mé chuig gCarn na gCat. Chuir mé spéis freisin i gcuid eile de na carachtair, go speisialta an fear cáidheach a raibh Scout mar leasainm air, "one hand in his pocket, the other paralysed in a black leather glove and tapping his trouser leg."

Tá na scéalta "Last of Deeds" agus "Love in History" (atá suite i Cranfield i 1944) gonta agus díreach. Ní cheileann siad rud ar bith. Mhothaigh mé nuair a bhí siad críochnaithe agam cosúil le duine a raibh video-nasty feicthe aici don chéad uair. Ní scéalta iad seo don té atá lagchroíoch.

Gobnait Uí Dhaibhéid

"The Last of Deeds and Love in History"
PENGUIN ORIGINALS. £5.99. Available from The Newry Bookshop.

LOCAL WRITERS

Life in a County Down village in the eighteenth century is mostly beyond the ken until one enjoys a delightful, descriptive and moving tale as recounted by Kathleen O'Farrell in her recent romantic/historical novel 'Kilbroney'. In a well researched and flowing novel, Ms. O'Farrell uncovers a tale of eighteenth century Ireland which unfolds in short and easily read chapters. The story deals primarily with the doomed love affair of Grace O'Lochlainn, an attractive girl from the "Poorlands", and Henry Valentine, the Lord of Kilbroney House. The story also touches often upon the symbol of 'The Bell', a tale which Ms. O'Farrell has told elsewhere and around which she weaves a web of relationships and passions which ultimately lead to tragedy. Thinly concealed issues such as the roles of women, the laws of primogeniture, social class and religion rise up throughout the story. The strength of the novel rests in the author's undoubted ability to paint, in striking phrases, little cameos of engaging characters. Her description of Makepeace and Donal, of Bella Morgan, of Minnie The Fox and her son and of The Sparrow Magee who "burned the arse out of the kettle" are all images which stay with the reader.

Equally, the novel's charm lies in the descriptions of the countryside. Set near the Cooley Mountains, it contains images of the weather as "the Celtic storm god on its way to do battle with the Christian interloper". The barren land is depicted in terms such as: "more bare rock than fertile soil", and one character remarks that "the only place that grass grows here is over the graves." Ms. O'Farrell used this background beneath "the muted hues of the Mournes" to contrast the lives of those who slept "in pristine sheets" with "kerchiefs doused with lavender water" against the lives of those who, although owning nothing, possessed, like Hardy's rustics, "chiselled timeless beauty." The novel observes the interaction of and conflict between the two lifestyles and does so without passing judgement. However, the reader wonders, is the novel in any manner a mirror? Does it reflect, although fictional, the ills of our day? Are not the superstitions, the informers, the planters, the interlopers, the downtrodden no more alive today than then? If you pick up this novel for an enjoyable read, then you will have it. But, you will derive more than pleasure from this novel. It speaks of times that have changed only in the dress and the pace of life. It is, to anyone's mind, a worthy read. And, Ms. O'Farrell, will there be a sequel?

Léirmheas le G.T.

Published by Brandon, 1992. 351 pages.
Price £5.99
Available from THE NEWRY BOOKSHOP

Cuisle na nGael

"A Chuisle na hÉigse, éirigh suas!"

Ní gá a rá leis an "Chuisle" áirithe seo (*) gur cheart dó éirí suas. Bím ag tnúth 'ach a'n bhljain le foilsiú an irisleabhair bhreá bhríomhair seo de chuid Chraobh Uí Fhiaich de Chomhaltas Uladh, Iúr Cinn Trá. Cuirigí bhur lámh go domhain in bhur bpócaí agus tarraingigí amach trí phunt bheaga, shuaracha le caitheamh ar an tseoid bhliantúil seo. Tá breis agús 168 leathanach san eagrán reatha seo, agus is fiú a thri oiread é : bheadh sé ina phronntanas ag deich bpunt.

I measc na n-alt ar chuir mé féin spéis ar leith iontu tá "Cainteoirí Dúchais Oirghialla" (Ciarán Ó Duibhin), "Gearrchuntas ar stair Chraobh Ard Mhacha de Chonradh na Gaeilge", "Faoi iomlán gaile" – alt ar an tsean-GNR a bhfuil dea-chuimhni ag cuid mhaith againn air; "Bus Services in Newry"; agus tuilleadh mór ar liosta le lua iad.

Tá an t-ardchaighdeán iondúil sna grianghrafanna trid síos : ag Dia fein atá a fhios cá bhfaigheann an t-eagarthóir iad uilig.

Is gnách le coiste an "Chuisle" an iris a thabhairt amach i mí na Samhna gach bliain, ach tiocfaidh an chéad eagrán eile amach in carrach na bliana 1993 : eagrán speisialta a bheas ann ar bhunú Chonradh na Gaeilge sa bhliain 1893. Beidh fáilte againn roimhe.

Gura fada buan i mbun saothair Séamas Mac Dáibhéid agus a choiste díograiseach foilsitheoireachta! Mar a dúirt mé anuraidh : is iad a thugann dúshlán na mbailte eile i gCúige Uladh.

Anraí Mac Giolla Chomhaill

Léirmheasanna

Cuisle na nGael

By MAIRE UI CHONBOIRNE

BHÍ faill agam ar na mallaibh suí síos le spléachadh a thabhairt ar iris nua a fhoilsíonn Craobh Uí Fhiaich ar an Iúr. Ní spléachadh a ba dhual dom ar ndóigh a thabhairt ar an fhoilseachán ach tamall fada taitneamhach léitheoireachta a ghlacadh agam féin ar mo shuaimhneas le sult ceart a bhaint as ábhar na hirise.

Iris dhátheangach atá ann mar Chuisle na nGael agus go háirid má tá baint nó dáimh agat le hOirghialla bainfidh tú a lán taitnimh agus spóirt as. Tá réimse iontach maith altanna ann, idir Bhéarla agus Ghaeilge. Tá alt speisialta ag Ciarán Ó Duibhín ar chuir mé féin suim ar leith ann - Cainteoirí Dúchais Oirghialla. Mar is gnách tá scoththaighde déanta ag Ciarán agus tá a shliocht sin ar an tsaothar. Tugann sé le fios dúinn go raibh cainteoir dúchais amháin i dTuaisceart na Mí beo i 1938 ar an taobh thiar-thuaidh de Cheanannas. Cuimhnigh go raibh an fear seo beo nuair a thosaigh muintir Chonamara a chur fúthu i Rath Cairn i 1935. Bhí cainteoirí dúchais beo in Oirthear an Chabháin go dtí na tríochaidí den chéad seo. In 1931 bhí triúr seanfhear beo thart ar Achadh an Iubhair (Virginia) a raibh Gaeilge acu. I gCo. Mhuineachain ag tús an chéid bhí an Ghaeilge láidir go leor (i bhFearmhuigh i ndeisceart an chondae go háirithe). Ach cibé fáth atá leis níor cuireadh mórán suime i stáid na Gaeilge san áit ó 1915 ar aghaidh.

I ndeisceart Ard Mhacha a ba mhó a chuir mé féin suim. De réir Chiaráin, bhí cainteoirí dúchais le fáil go fairsing sa cheantar seo ag tús an chéid in áiteacha mar Chill Shléibhe, Lios Liath, Mullach Bán, Droim an Tí, Foircheall agus Crois Mhig Fhloinn. Cuireann sé síos fosta ar bheirt chlúiteach as Droim an Tí a rinne cnuasach ar Ghaeilge Dheisceart Ard Mhacha - Michael J. Murphy (rugadh 1913), agus Pádraig Mac Con Midhe (1896-1975). Dá réir seo bhí seachtar fágtha sa chondae - ba ghaol de mo chuid féin fear acu creidim - Terence Toner (Tarlach an Chroidhe Mhóir), Coilleach Eanach. Is féidir triúr eile as Drom an Tí a chur leo seo agus de réir Michael J. Murphy agus é 85 bliain d'aois: "As far as the writer can ascertain, (he) and his surviving sister Mrs. Essie Toal of the same parish were the last Irish speakers in the entire area."

Bhí an Ghaeilge in Oméith láidir ag tús an chéid ach deir Ciarán nach raibh ach cúigear cainteoir déag fágtha aimsir an áirimh a rinneadh i 1942/43.

Tá rionnt mhaith grianghrafanna ar dóigh ag dul leis an alt seo fosta. Molaim go mór é.

Ach cé go bhfuil an t-alt sin acadúil go maith tá altanna san iris seo ar ábhar i bhfad níos éadroime. Le fírinne tá rud san iris seo do achan aois agus do achan aicme daoine. Tá altanna ann ar Scoil Gheimridh Shliabh gCuilinn, ar Sheirbhísi Bus in Iúr Chinn Trá ó aimsir na char-a-bancs go dtí an lá ata innui ann, ar 'the RUC in Newry' (griangrafanna galánta ata i gceist anseo), ar Ardeaglais an Iúir agus ar go leor leor eile. Tá cuid mhór altanna ar chúrsaí stairiúla ach tá cuid mhór fosta a bhaineann go hiomlán le saol an lae inniu agus le pobal an Iúir - leis an naíscoil agus an bhunscoil, leis na mná i nDroimainn Leathan, altanna fá Chomhaltas Ceoltoirí Éireann agus fán Ghaeilge sna scoltacha sna Sé Condaetha, fán Easpag nua Gerard Clifford agus fá go leor leor eile. Tá colún litreacha ann, obituaries agus 'Ocáidí ar leith.' Má tá bunús na n-altanna ar dóigh is fearr arís na grianghrafanna atá ar fheabhas ar fad. Fiú an páipéar san iris - is beag áit a bhfuighfeá a leithéid! Tá a chaighdéan iontach ard agus fiúntach. Rud eile atá iontach tábhachtach faoin iris seo - tá go leor ann don dá phobal sna Se Condaetha.

Mar a deir Peadar Ó Ruairc san Irish News "....a veritable feast of articles and photographs which will be of special interest to Newry and district Gaels...The aim of the Newry branch has been to broaden the appeal of the language to all sections of the community and it has succeeded in doing this with 'Cuisle.'"

Tá mé ag dúill go mór leis an chéad eagrán eile.

ENGLISH SUMMARY: Cuisle na nGael is a bilingual magazine published by the Newry branch of the Gaelic League. It contains a wide range of articles including one by Ciarán Ó Duibhín on the last Irish speakers in Oriel. Other articles deal with Slieve Gullion winter School, Newry bus services down the years, Bishop Gerard Clifford, and much, much more. Cuisle na NGael costs £3.

An tIúr

Níl margadh níos fearr ann don té ar mhaith leis nó léi léargas a fháil ar chultúr agus mheanma pobail ná *Cuisle na nGael*, a fhoilsítear gach bliain san Iúr – seo an clúdach ar dheis. Suas le céad is seachtó leathanach sa bhliainiris bhreá seo agus iad breac le heolas agus grianghraif – agus le roinntín spochaidh as daoine aitheantúla áirithe fosta!

Idir shúil siar agus shúil ar aghaidh inti. Maidir leis an tsúil siar, san eagrán reatha tá sraith grianghraf ó thús an chéid seo de chainteoirí dúchais as Contaetha Ard Mhacha, an Chabháin, na Mí agus Mhuineacháin. (Mhair beirt de chainteoirí dúchais cheantar Ó Méith go dtí na seascaidí.) Maidir leis an tsúil ar aghaidh, tá neart anseo faoi shaol agus imeachtaí na bliana 1991.

Séamus Mac Dáibhéid an tEagarthóir agus is iad na daoine agus na dreamanna eile is mó a choinníonn *Cuisle* ag preabadh Comhaltas Uladh de Chonradh na Gaeilge, Comhairle Thuaisceart Éireann um Ghníomhaíocht Dheonach, Comhairle Ceantair an Iúir agus Mhorn, Tomás Mac Ardghail agus Gearóid Mac Thréinfhir

Bíonn an Ghaeilge agus an Béarla nasctha go réidh san fhoilseachán inmholta seo. £3 atá air, cé gur fiú £30 é!

Colm Ó Torna
"SAOL"

Ban-aisteoirí binnbhéalacha an Iúir

1992 - a memorable year for the Arts in Newry. **All-Ireland triumph for NEWPOINT PLAYERS , and John Bell, supporter of the Arts, honoured by Newry Council. COMHGHAIRDEAS LIBH !**

Thuas : Charlie Smyth, fear a bhfuil a shaol caite aige ag saothrú ar shon mhuintir an Iúir.
Thíos : A victorious S.D.L.P. team which secured the return of Séamus Mallon as M.P. for Newry & Armagh.

Jackie an bhosca - ní raibh éinne incurtha leis
(pic. le Andy Tohill)

ARTHUR BURNS, R.I.P.

Newry's most accomplished Irish dancing tutor

Newry & Camloch Republicans call for an end to censorship and demand "inclusive dialogue" about future of the Six Counties.

"EVIL OF SECTARIANISM" ALSO DENOUNCED

Fear amháin, nach raibh armtha, ach a raibh balaclava á chaitheamh aige, a léigh amach ráiteas Ghluaiseacht na Poblachta ar Dhomhnach na Cásca ar an Iúr anuraidh. Ba shuntasach nach raibh an bhéim ar chúrsaí míleata insan ráiteas a chuala an lucht éisteachta. Mhaígh urlabhraí Ghluaiseacht na Poblachta go raibh níos mó réalachais le mothú sa díospóireacht fá thodhchaí na Sé Chontae agus go raibh sé soiléir do dhaoine anois nach mbeadh aon réiteach ann ar "fhadhb an tuaiscirt" gan Sinn Féin a bheith rannpháirteach sna comhchainteanna. Dúirt sé go raibh ceannairí Ghluaiseacht na Poblachta dóchasach go mbeadh cuireadh faighte acu ar ball ó Rialtas na Breataine chun páirt a ghlacadh sa díospóireacht. Idir an dá ama, lean sé, tá polasaí ag Sinn Féin, insan Iúr ach go háirithe, cur lena n-iarrachtaí chun freastal ar riachtanais Phrotastúnaigh an Iúir. D'éirigh le baill Shinn Féin, dúirt sé, nuair a chlis ar an C.R.U. a dhath a dhéanamh, rud a ní do Phrotastúnaigh a raibh eagla an domhain orthu roimh ógchiontóirí agus amhais a bhí de shíor ag cur isteach orthu. Dúirt sé fosta go raibh an t-Iúr saor ó na hionsaithe barbartha seicteacha a bhí coiteanta in áiteacha eile san Sé Chontae agus go raibh áthas ar phoblachtaigh an scéal a bheith amhlaidh abhus - "ní cuid dár straitéis sceon a chur ar shibhiltaigh ar bith agus ní cóir faitíos a bheith ar Phrotastúnaigh romhainn."

Tuairisc le S. Ó Fearáin

THE GAELIC LEAGUE SHARES ITS CENTENARY WITH NEWRY TOWN HALL
(photo donated by Brian Rice)

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THE MEN WHO BUILT DAISY HILL GARDENS photo courtesy of Joseph A. Morgan

..... AND THE PEOPLE WHO LATER LIVED THERE photo courtesy of Pat Duffy

DR. MYLES GILLIGAN - LOCAL HISTORIAN

The death took place almost a year ago (March 1992) of Dr. Myles Gilligan, local historian and photographer. Dr. Gilligan had been on the staff of Daisy Hill Hospital in the 1940's and during his career he had also worked in Belfast City Hospital and in hospitals in Dundalk and Ballymena.

It was only shortly before his death that Myles Gilligan's significance as a local historian became apparent. In 1950 he had printed and bound a single copy of his book "Newry - A Short Account of its Growth and Buildings." Queen's University, Belfast, later offered to have the book published on his behalf but Dr. Gilligan declined the invitation. This avoidance of a public profile was entirely typical of the man.

Dr. Gilligan was a very private individual who worked diligently at his profession and who pursued his hobbies with a passion. His chief interests were : gardening, literature, art, architecture, music, travel and drama. He was an accomplished amateur photographer and on St. Patrick's Day 1991 he visited Newry's Arts Centre to see a collection of his historical photographs on display. That exhibition was organised by the Cardinal O Fiaich Branch of the Gaelic League. Many of the photographs have since been transferred to slides and they continue to give pleasure to Senior Citizens' Clubs and Local Studies groups throughout the South Down/South Armagh area.

While based in Daisy Hill Hospital, Dr. Gilligan was often on 24 hour call, a predicament which severely hampered his research project into the history of Newry's buildings. He did manage though, in the early mornings especially, to take photographs of buildings of architectural interest, many of which, regrettably, are no more. Dr. Gilligan used a basic Kodak camera and he collaborated with the late George Paterson, Curator of Armagh County Museum, on the Newry history project. The two became close friends and cycled together throughout Ireland, taking photographs as they went. They visited Rathlin Island, the Burren Country and, on one occassion, went to the island of Iona on a photographic expedition. Almost two hundred of Dr. Gilligan's negatives have been developed and catalogued by the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, and his historical diaries (apart from the Belfast diary) are with the Local History Librarian of the Southern Education and Library Board.

Dr. Gilligan had always been willing to share his knowledge with others and was very much an advocate of Local Studies. While in Newry, he gleaned much of his information about the history of the town from the late James Heather. Dr. Gilligan's own presence in Newry was an inconspicuous one. Erudite and unassuming, he worked quietly at his profession and almost secretly at his history project.

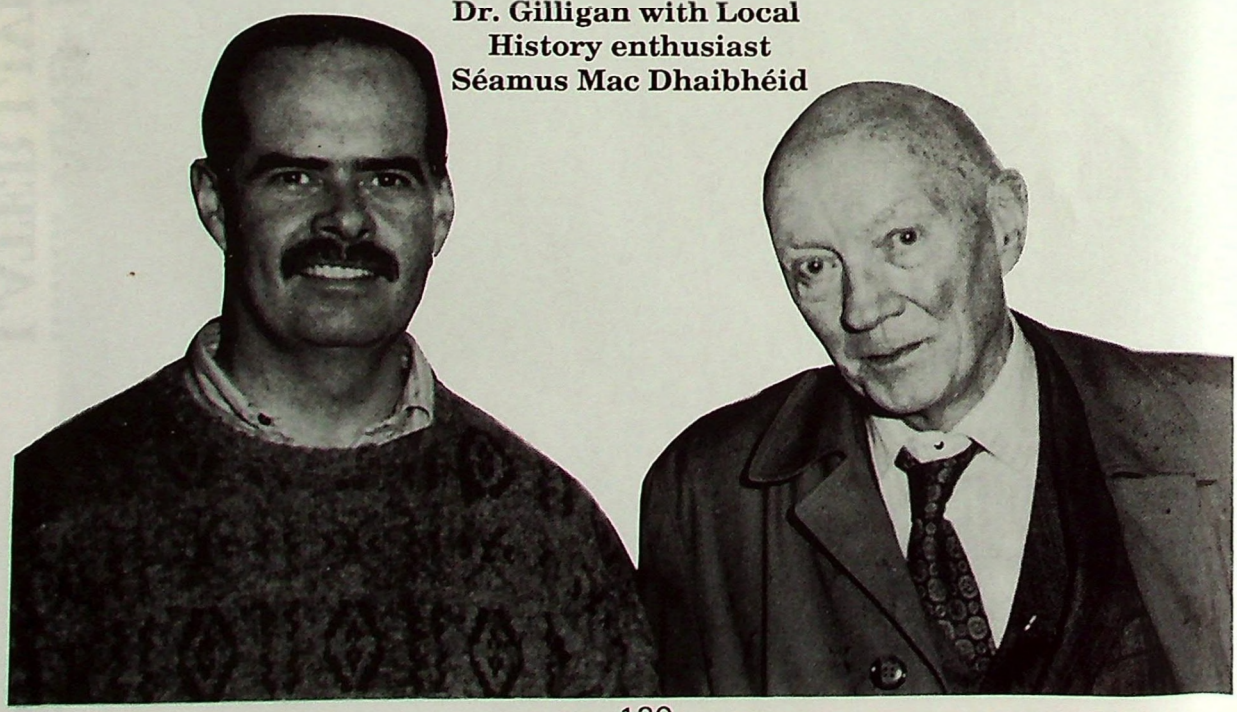
At the largely attended removal of his remains to St. Fursey's Church, Haggardstown, Dundalk, Canon Desmond Campbell, a former schoolfellow of Myles' and a life-long friend, said :

"Society has lost an exceptionally clever man and I have lost a great personal friend. Above all else, Myles Gilligan was a gentleman, the essence of refinement and culture."

Newry too has lost a fine historian and a photographer in the tradition of Patrick Erly (amateur 19th century photographer who is known to have taken photographs of Parnell in the town), W.A. Green R.I.P., Séamus Mallon R.I.P., and Fabian Boyle.

Dr. Gilligan is survived by his wife Mary and five daughters, Barbara, Claire, Dorothy, Eithne and Ruth.

Dr. Gilligan with Local History enthusiast Séamus Mac Dhaibhéid



WILLIAM STREET 1940's

This photograph was taken by Myles Gilligan and shows an eighteenth century house now demolished.

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CATHOLICS AND CLASS CONFLICT IN NORTHERN IRELAND IN THE 1930's AND 1940's

We are pleased to publish the following article (which is an abridged version of a longer dissertation) written by Mary Theresa McVeigh, Local History Librarian with the S.E.L.B. We have retained the format of the original dissertation and have concentrated on the role of Catholics in the Labour movement and their conflicts with their main political rivals, Irish Nationalists. The article focuses on the Newry and Armagh areas and will be of interest to our readers in both towns.

BACKGROUND

Both Newry and Armagh are long established provincial towns but the means by which they gained their places in history differed considerably. While Newry owes its recognition to commerce, Armagh's claim on the past is through the Christian Church. From the opening of its canal in the eighteenth century, Newry developed as an important commercial and industrial centre and a busy port. Indeed its key position in Northern economic life was the reason given by the Irish Boundary Commission in 1925 for retaining it within Northern Ireland. Even though three quarters of the population of the Newry Urban District were Catholic and its Council submitted a claim for its inclusion in the Free State, Newry's economic value was too great for Britain to let it go. Armagh, however, at the time of the sitting of the Boundary Commission was little more than a sleepy backwater. Although it had a long association with the Christian Church right from the time of Patrick it could be said that it reached its prime at the end of the eighteenth century when, besides being a flourishing market town, it was a fashionable social attraction for the Protestant Ascendency of the North East. No doubt Armagh's favoured position was largely due to the fact that for the first time the Primate of the Established Church resided there. Archbishop Richard Robinson, besides gracing the town with his presence, provided it with a number of public buildings of recognised architectural merit which are still one of its most outstanding features. In the nineteenth century the town went into a slow decline so it is not surprising that no economic arguments were advanced to the Boundary Commission for Armagh's retention within the Northern state.

A further contrast between the two towns was in the levels of working class political activity. Newry's prime position in relation to trade and industry was reflected in the high degree of organisation and consciousness of its workers. In the early nineteenth century, printers on one of its local papers were jailed for a month for belonging to the Irish Typographical Union and colleagues on the town's rival paper showed their solidarity by going on strike. Newry was one of the first towns in Ireland to have a Trades Council. It came into being with a membership of 280 and seven affiliated unions in 1890, just five years after its Dublin counterpart was formed.(1) The year 1889 was the "great year" of the "New Unionism", when semi-skilled workers and labourers were organised in big general unions and it was just a year later that branches of the National Union of Dock Labourers and the National Amalgamated Union of Labourers were set up in Newry.(2) Dock Labourers in the town joined their Belfast comrades in the 1907 strike which was organised by Jim Larkin. Leading the Newry workers was a local man, James Fearon, who Larkin described as "one in understanding and purpose" with himself.(3) A pertinent point made by John Gray on the Newry strike was "It was one thing to support a strike in a town which hit at the heart of the 'Black North' it was quite another to support a strike in a town where Catholic business men were going to be out of pocket". (4) According to Bill McCamley "behind the back of Fearon and the Union" the Catholic Bishop Dr. O'Neill and others got together a draft agreement and presented it to the dockers. In spite of Fearon's objections that the agreement upheld the absolute right of the employers to hire whoever they wished and obliged the men to discharge all boats unconditionally, it was accepted by them. (5) This outcome certainly supports the premise that in the conflict of interest between classes the Catholic Church took the side of the employers and thus its influence was perhaps one of the most formidable obstacles to the Labour Movement.

In 1927, demonstrations against the Trades Disputes Act (N.I.) were held in four Northern towns, Belfast, Derry, Newry and Armagh, according to John Harbinson. (6) While Newry's involvement was not unexpected, that of Armagh was a different matter. This town, with little industry and therefore without a sizeable section of organised labour, had no oral tradition of labour "consciousness" before the 1930's, and certainly there are no written records which would suggest otherwise. However, cursory examination of a local newspaper's 1927 editions as a follow-up to Harbinson, unearthed somewhat surprising results. In that year a Trades Council was formed in Armagh and it was under its auspices that a public protest meeting against the Trades Dispute Act was held. The main speakers were two Labour M.P.s from Belfast, Sam Kyle and Willlam McMullen. (7) This was not the first time in 1927 that Sam Kyle addressed workers in Armagh. Earlier, along with Labour Senator Robert Dorman, he attended a meeting to "re-organise" the local branch of the Workers Union which served the linen trade, the main source of employment in the Armagh area. Although most of the report was taken over with accounts of the poor conditions of mill workers, particularly, those who were not unionised, one significant point relevant to this study was made. The local secretary of the Workers Union, George McKee said, 'there were a lot of people in Armagh whose reason for not joining was sectarian in the North of Ireland, particularly in Armagh, the people were divided religiously, there was no question about it, but the Workers Union was not sectarian'. (8) It could be assumed from this and other reports that, whatever about its leadership in Belfast, the composition of the Workers Union in Armagh was predominantly Catholic.

A reference made by Sam Kyle in his speech to the working class majority on the Urban Council in Armagh raised another interesting issue. Who and what did this 'working class majority' represent? A report of an urban council meeting in July, referred to 'the convention which nominated eight Labour councillors to serve on the council to represent Labour'. Other reports suggest from names and places of residence, that these labour councillors, who made up the biggest bloc on the council, were of the one religious persuasion! Indeed it is likely that Catholics chose their councillors at a pre-election convention rather than at the ballot box. Certainly in 1929, prior to the local government elections, a 'Nationalist Convention was held at which official candidates were selected'. (9) Four people were listed as having been nominated by Labour although only one of them seemed to have attained the final seal of approval. Thus, on the eve of the 1930s, Armagh had some sort of Labour representation and while its members may well have been 'Nationalist first and Labour second', they did, nevertheless, have to compete, even if not in an open election, with co-religionists who had different class interests.

The situation in Newry at the time was somewhat different. According to an editorial in the "Newry Reporter" before the municipal elections:
"The fight in many towns is between Nationalist and Unionist but here it has developed into Labourites versus Nationalists". (10)
The end results were six Unionists, six Labour, five Nationalists and one Trade Union Labour who was essentially a Nationalist by another name. (11) Interestingly, when it came to the election of the chairman and vice-chairman for the new assembly, it was not a case of Unionists versus the rest who were united on religion and opposition to Partition. Instead, it was business interests, both Unionist and Nationalist, combining to oppose Labour.

At the outset of the 1930's then there was some form of labour organisation among the Catholic working class in the two towns, but with Newry having the stronger base and this situation was to continue throughout the 1930's and 1940's.

BACKGROUND
(1) Boyle, p.339
(2) Boyle, p.107 Newry Telegraph, 1890
(3) McCamley, p.4
(4) Quoted in McCamley, p.5
(5) McCanmley, p.5
(6) Harbinson, p.49
(7) Armagh Guardian, 4 Nov. 1927
(8) ibid. 18 Febrauary, 1927
(9) ibid. 4 January, 1929
(10) Newry Reporter 28 April 1929
(11) ibid. 5 May, 1929

LOCAL ORGANISTIONS AND THE PARTY MACHINERY.

Newry Labour's participation in the 1930's in the wider issues and activities of the Northern Ireland Labour Party as a whole must remain a mystery in the absence of documentary evidence. There are no known relevant surviving records of either the local party or parent body which could throw light on the matter. One can only make an educated guess that the Newry organisation did very much as it pleased with little outside interference or assistance. It might be said that there was no great onus on it to have much dealings with the parent body. It is unlikely that it saw a need for advice or assistance from the central administration of the N.I.L.P. It had an available forum for voicing views, airing grievances and seeking solutions as it had representation on the Council from 1926. It also had its own members on the Board of Guardians and so was able to directly participate in the relief of poverty and some related problems. Newry Council had made more advances in social reform than any other local authority in Northern Ireland and the Labour party could claim some responsibility for this. It recognised too that it was able to call on the services of a more than usually enlightened and humanitarian public administration. The majority of people in Newry had not wanted to belong to the Northern Ireland state so it is not unreasonable to assume that there might have been a certain reluctance on the part of most organisations, Labour included, to look to a Belfast source for leadership and direction.

At the purely local level it would seem that there was not a great deal of party discipline. Labour representatives did not always support each other in the council chamber; attendance at meetings varied and at least one councillor lost his seat due to frequent absences. It could also be concluded that party meetings where policy was discussed were seldom held and attended only by a faithful few activists. This assumption is made on the basis that it is difficult to associate left-wing statements issued in 1938 with most of the party's representatives on public boards. The assessment made in 'The Irishman' in 1930, would seem to generally fit the Newry party throughout most of the decade: 'Fairly strong on the local council. Very lax in uniting their supporters. A meeting of 2,000 people waiting for them at any time... and haven't the energy to go and do it. A strategic position of Northern Labour being weakened through sheer laziness'. (1)

After 1943 however, when the Labour party was 'born again' in Newry, the situation altered. There were more reports of visiting speakers, mainly from the anti-partitionist wing of the N.I.L.P. It could well have been that Charles O'Donnell, one of those responsible for the re-birth, used his contacts in Belfast to forge links. It was in this period that Newry joined with Warrenpoint to become the South Down Labour Party. It will be recalled that in both areas, but particularly in Warrenpoint, Labour performed well in the local government elections of 1946, and that Warrenpoint was chosen as the venue for the Annual Conference in 1948. These factors could be taken as indication that the local Labour organisation was in a strong position and was held in good standing by the N.I.L.P. leadership, or at least a section of it in the latter part of the 1940's. Essentially then, it could be argued that what little evidence there is would seem to suggest that Newry Labour in the 1930's devoted little concern to the party as a whole but this situation changed in the next decade although involvement was largely with the anti-partitionist element with which it identified.

When it came into existence in 1933, the Armagh Labour party had few resources, so it needed practical help and guidance from outside. The N.I.L.P. central administration was in a position to provide the necessary support. Party Chairman, Harry Midgley, was its mentor and leading light, while John Campbell, the Secretary, supplied relevant information. No doubt Midgley encouraged the fledgling organisation to become involved in the wider N.I.L.P. activites and there is certainly evidence that it sent delegates and submitted motions to Annual Conferences. Indeed, less than a year after its formation, it fully participated at Conference level. Its delegate, James Hagan, proposed two resolutions, seconded one and spoke on several others. One of the Armagh motions actually sought more involvement from the N.I.L.P. with local parties by calling for assistance from the executive for local parties in fighting municipal elections and for setting up of a special fund for this purpose. (2) From this first attendance to when it split at the end of 1945, the Armagh party continued to play an active role at party conferences even causing conflict and controversy in 1937 (discussed elsewhere). The Armagh Federation of Labour which was set up in 1937, was an Armagh party initiative. For the period of Paddy Agnew's sojourn at Stormont there was a Labour presence in most of the small towns and villages of Mid and South Armagh.

The Armagh party would have been conversant with internal N.I.L.P. politics from 1938 to 1945 when Paddy Agnew was a member of the Parliamentary Labour Party and thus at the centre of decision-making within the N.I.L.P.. Agnew and his followers were obviously not happy about going it alone after 1945, so affiliation with the Independent Labour Party in Scotland was sought. No records exist here however, which could give any indication whether or not the Armagh group ever made a contribution to the new parent body's decision-making or policy planning. It seems unlikely since the association was of such a short duration, two years at most.

As long as the Armagh party was affiliated to the N.I.L.P. it maintained a constant, though not necessarily always harmonious relationship with the central administration and contributed to its policy-making process and decision-making.

LOCAL ORGANISATIONS AND THE PARTY MACHINERY
(1) The Irishman, 27 September 1930
(2) Armagh Guardian, 30 August 1934

INDIVIDUALS OF INFLUENCE

Harry Midgley was very much the father figure when Armagh Labour Party was in its infancy. Right from the outset he was constantly sought after for advice, guidance and as a guest speaker. When the party was being set up in 1933 the year after he became chairman of the N.I.L.P., he was contacted by Paddy Agnew and the relationship remained close for the first three years of the Armagh party's existence. At one of the first committee meetings it was agreed to obtain his opinion on having Connolly's 'Labour in Irish History' (1) serialised in the local press. A month later he was asked for information on the system used in Belfast to provide free school meals and books and his advice to request the local council to take responsibility for these services was subsequently taken. (2) As a member of Parliament he raised questions about the Armagh Board of Guardians, including one asking the Minister of Home Affairs if he was aware that the Clerk of the Board when interviewing three men for relief work enquired if they were members of Armagh Labour Party and if so, he would refuse to help them. A public enquiry was sought by Midgley who claimed that the incident has caused 'deep indignation among the workers in Armagh'. (3) At the 1934 Annual Conference of the N.I.L.P. he moved a resolution protesting against the abolition of Armagh Urban Council and called on the Minister concerned to arrange an immediate election to restore the right of self-government to the citizens of Armagh.(4) He was the main speaker at Armagh Labour Party's first public meeting in October 1933 when he gave a long and impassioned speech. According to the 'Armagh Guardian':
"The Minor Hall was crowded and there was applause when the speaker said that the Labour Party had nothing to do with Communism. He had been told that nothing would flourish in Armagh because of sectarianism but the Labour Party sought to unite all creeds all over the world, and he appealed to the workers not to allow themselves to be submerged under the wave of sectarianism which was passing over Northern Ireland".(5)

This plea for unity of Catholic and Protestant workers was reiterated when Midgley addressed a May Day rally in the town in 1936. The primary purpose of this event was to raise support for the local party's first electoral venture (to be discussed later). He castigated Protestants in Armagh for not having 'the guts to come out and fight the Tory Party' and appealed to both religions to forget their animosities, quarrels and feuds and to 'unite and strike a blow for the new order'. (6) By the end of the campaign it was apparent that this was a contest in which conflict between opposing religious groups played no part. Instead he had to answer charges that Labour was anti-catholic. In his speech, which was skilfully geared to his wholly Catholic audience, he quoted the first Nationalist leader at Stormont, Joseph Devlin, who said that he took his religion from Rome and his politics from himself and he pointed out that the Catholic Archbishop of Liverpool had publicly stated that there was nothing in the Labour movement repugnant to the teachings of the Catholic Church.(7)

This was likely Midgley's last public speech on behalf of Labour in Armagh. His pro-Republican stance in the Spanish Civil War undoubtedly caused consternation and the Armagh Labour Party throughout the war remained significantly silent in the face of considerable clerical outcry. Although it would seem that the Spanish Civil War created a rift between Midgley and the Armagh party there was some acknowledgement from individual members that he had made a major contribution to Labour in the town. One man who had been involved with the I.R.A. recalled that he had no time for 'physical force Republicanism' after he heard Harry Midgley make the case for Socialism, and he claimed that even though they were public opponents, Paddy Agnew on many occasions sought Midgley's assistance when he was in the government.(8)

Agnew, who had once been his disciple, was instrumental in Midgley's departure from the N.I.L.P.. Agnew was party to choosing Jack Beattie instead of Midgley as leader of the Parliamentary Labour Party. This was the final straw, so to speak, in a conflict between Midgley, frustrated by not being able to participate in a war-time government and the party's reluctance to wholeheartedly accept Partition, and his opponents, both anti-partitionist and those opposed to any kind of coalition with Unionists.

Midgley's involvement with Labour in Armagh was short, but Paddy Agnew's relationship lasted for a quarter of a century. Although he was only in parliament for seven years, it is probably true to say that he was a professional politician for most of his adult life. His involvement in Armagh began with the Armagh Employed and Unemployed Association set up in 1932 in an attempt to alleviate the high level of poverty and distress in the area. He was the driving force and key spokesperson for the organisation and one might say that he cut his political teeth in lobbying public representatives, leading deputations and writing to the newspapers on its behalf. (9) He continued to maintain this high profile with the Labour Party.

Perhaps his most notable achievement was in defeating both Nationalists and Unionists and in doing so gaining support from workers across the sectarian divide. In 1939 he won the town seat on Armagh County Council from a formidable Nationalist opponent and in 1946 he managed to retain it against strong Unionist opposition. (10) When Armagh was given back its council after 12 years rule by a Commissioner, Agnew gained a seat which he managed to keep until 1958 when Labour was ousted by a new Independent Nationalist Party. He got into the Northern Ireland House of Commons in 1938 without a fight and although the strongly nationalist "Frontier Sentinel" may have declared that he did not represent South Armagh opinion and that he was a 'usurper', there is plenty of evidence to suggest that he gave good service both at constituency and parliamentary level. It is to his credit however, that throughout his period in Parliament, when he addressed meetings all over the constituency, his message according to reports in both the Nationalist and Unionist press, was always restrained. He put forward a clear Labour line albeit a far from revolutionary one and at no time was there any hint of indulging in emotive rhetoric in order to capitalise on anti-partitionist sentiments. He may have lost his seat in 1945, but did nevertheless get 4,143 votes which was the highest number polled for the seat by an unsuccessful candidate from 1929 to 1965 when Eddie Richardson got 189 more votes from an electorate which had increased by an extra 1,325 people. (11) He was responsible, as organiser, for the expansion of the Armagh Federation of Labour which resulted in a Labour presence, even if it was only for a few years, in most of the villages and small towns of South and Mid Armagh. He was a supporter of trade unionism and was recognised as being responsible for organising hospital staff in what was then known as the Armagh Lunatic Asylum. In addition, he was instrumental in getting union recognition for workers at the Belleek Pottery in County Fermanagh. (12)

Paddy Agnew embarked on his political career as an unemployed person, organising others in similar straits. He had no job when he went to Stormont and it is unlikely that he had full-time permanent employment ever after. He was additionally disadvantaged by

poor health for most of his life so it is probably fair to say that he was a person who had to rely considerably on limited resources for survival. He was no academic and his socialist vision was perhaps narrow and parochial. He believed in the amelioration of working class life through piece-meal social reform. He started out with this view and it would appear that he changed it little over the years. Housing, unemployment, local industry, poverty relief and care of the elderly were concerns which he consistently aired. Much of his time was taken up with holding 'surgeries' where he gave advice, information and acted as advocate, all of which was considered to be a major function of a Labour organisation. Indeed, the Armagh Federation of Labour at one time offered this advice service to families for one penny per week. The idea was to spread the word of Labour while providing a necessary facility.

Paddy Agnew was a committed practising Catholic and throughout his surviving personal diaries there are references to religious practices and observances. This did not however spare him from being denounced from the pulpit as "an agent of Moscow" (13) and he attributed clerical interference as the cause of Labour's electoral defeat on a number of occasions. When he lost his council seat in 1958, after twelve years, he blamed the Independent Nationalists for carrying out 'a silent canvas accusing Labour members of not voting for things or persons Catholic'. (14) Whatever his party affiliations to N.I.L.P., Independent L.P. or Irish L.P., Agnew consistently adhered to the view that religion and politics should be separate and that Labour represented and united all workers regardless of creed.

Newry Labour in this period was never dominated to the same extent by any individual. There was a time in 1938 when the party took a leftward turn and was prepared to publicly proclaim support for Republican Spain. It could be adduced that the person primarily responsible was Robert McGrath, know locally as 'Red Robbie' and actively involved with the local N.I.L.P. around this time. Like Paddy Agnew, he also was the subject of clerical censure. However, unlike Agnew he did not seek public office and he espoused Marxism. Over the years he gave a Marxist perspective on events in letters to the local press. From 1936 he steadfastly supported the Republican Cause in Spain and when Paddy Agnew left the N.I.L.P. in 1945 the pair carried out a somewhat acrimonious dialogue on the subject through the correspondence columns of the 'Frontier Sentinel'. It is probably true to say that he was less a party person than a socialist agitator and commentator.(15)

Paddy Devlin, when speaking about Newry at a seminar on 'Labour in the forgotten towns', drew attention to one man who played a prominent part in the development of Labour organisation. He was Charles O'Donnell who came to Newry as manager of a grocery store from Belfast where he had been part of a leftist group. O'Donnell was one of the people responsible for reviving Newry Labour in 1943 and its subsequent transfer to Irish Labour in 1949.(16) Unfortunately, the impact of those who organise rather than seek public office is difficult to gauge. However, one might suggest that the obvious alignment with the leaders of the anti-partitionist element in the N.I.L.P. after 1943 was to some extent due to O'Donnell's influence and his contacts in Belfast.

The only public representative of Newry Labour party who withstood clerical pressure in 1936, at the time of the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, was Myles Connell and as a result his colleagues issued a press statement disassociating themselves from his viewpoint. (17) Significantly there are no indications that he sought public office again. When he spoke at Armagh in support of Labour candidates (18) he paid tribute to Newry's Town Clerk Mr. W. M. Cronin, whom he described as a 'very strong social reformer'. He said that with Mr. Cronin's advice and help, since the Labour party had entered the council ten years previously, in 1926, 'wonderful progress had been made'. Two years earlier, Cronin was praised at a public meeting held by the Labour party in Newry Town Hall. A resolution proposed by the Chairman and passed with acclamation declared: "That this large and representative public meeting of the workers of Newry do hereby place on record our sincere and earnest thanks to Mr. W. M. Cronin, Town Clerk of Newry for his untiring efforts in the interests of free school meals and necessitous school children, and we will continue to support him in his noble efforts in this most laudable act of humanity".(19)

As well as being Newry Town Clerk, Cronin represented the town on Down County Council which was a unique position for a local government official. However, he was not afraid of controversy and took an active part in proceedings at County level. In 1933 he highlighted the fact that only £123 had been used over a four year period out of £3,000 paid to Down Regional Committee to 'feed necessitous children'. (20) Although this man was not a member of the Labour party and probably would never have called himself a socialist, it is evident that he was a useful ally in a key position to the Labour movement in Newry, in its pursuits of measures to relieve poverty and distress. He was exceptional too as a member of the Catholic middle class who was prepared to co-operate with Labour.

INDIVIDUALS OF INFLUENCE

(1) Minutes of Armagh Labour Party, Agnew Papers
(2) ibid
(3) Armagh Guardian , 8 June 1934
(4) ibid, 20 August 1934
(5) ibid, 27 October 1933
(6) ibid, 8 May 1936
(7) ibid, 22 May 1936
(8) Joe Duggan in taped interview with Paddy Grimes
(9) Armagh Guardian, 1932 and information from Agnew's son.
(10) Election dealt with in more detail later
(11) Elliot, p.63
(12) Information from both Paddy Grimes and Tony Agnew (son of Paddy Agnew)
(13) ibid
(14) This information was obtained from a single hand-written sheet, probably a draft press release in 'Agnew Papers'
(15) Brass Tacks, March 1985.
Frontier Sentinel, December 1945.
(16) I.L.H.S. Conference, 14 September 1985.
(17) Frontier Sentinel, 12 September 1936.
(18) Newry Reporter, 23 May, 1936.
(19) Frontier Sentinel, 1934.
(20) ibid. 18 February 1933.

PRAGMATIC RATHER THAN THEORETICAL

A 'factory of grievances' which contained 'the most divided and most disadvantaged people in the United Kingdom' was how Patrick Buckland summed up the Northern Ireland State in the latter war period. (1) According to him:
"Devolution condemned Northern Ireland to economic as well as political stagnation .... Before partition, the six counties, like the rest of Ireland, had lacked much compared with the rest of the United Kingdom. Living standards were lower as were the quality and range of services provided by the state and local authorities, but the prospect of radical change offered in the early 1920s never materialised. There was little consistent, let alone adventurous, imaginative or vigorous economic and social planning on a regional basis, and in many spheres standards deteriorated. What few improvements or successes there were emanated as much from Britain as within Northern Ireland".(2)

For the working class this meant inadequate housing, health care and education. Fewer houses were built in Northern Ireland than in Britain and whereas extensive slum clearance was carried out in Britain, none was undertaken in Northern Ireland. Even the Minister of Home Affairs had to admit in 1937 that most of the poorer classes resided in houses more or less unfit for human habitation. On medical provision Buckland has pointed out that it was in the maternity service that 'neglect was particularly conspicuous'. In 1938 a woman in Northern Ireland ran a greater risk of dying from childbirth than fifteen years before. "Moreover, the failure to devise plans to reduce deaths from the biggest killer disease, tuberculosis, (in 1938 the cause of 46 per cent of all deaths between 15 and 25 years and 38 per cent of those between 25 and 35), afforded a striking example of incoherence in public administration".(3)

Even the increasing amount spent on education "was not necessarily used to best effect .... educational provision remained patchy and sectarian". Buckland has explained: "By 1938 more than half of all elementary schools with almost half the total number of pupils were voluntary. Whatever the effects on society at large, the consequence of continued sectarianism for education was lower standards, particularly in the provision of buildings and equipment. Added to this fundamental failure of the original scheme were other weaknesses. The volume of new buildings fell short of requirements. None of the education committees provided nursery schools, school services were inadequate and scholarship awards niggardly; books and stationery were bought for only one child in ten; and little was done to help feed or clothe needy children, who often in rural areas ate nothing but dry bread throughout the day... Indeed Northern Ireland was still a generation or more behind most of England and Wales". (4)

In addition to these depressingly low standards of services there was the major problem of unemployment and the unsympathetic response of the authorities towards the growing numbers who had to suffer it. The decline in the textile trade and resultant closure of mills, adversely affected both Armagh and Newry and their surrounding areas. To compound Newry's problems, its canal, once a major source of employment, had started to go into decline when faced with competition from road and rail. The 'Hungry Thirties' was certainly not an exaggeration for the unemployed in Northern Ireland. Entitlement to benefit was confined to those who had been in work for the previous two years with all contributions fully paid up, who were able to pass a stringent means test and who could demonstrate that they were 'genuinely seeking work'. Because of Northern Ireland's chronic unemployment problem there were obviously many who could not comply with the requirements and so had to resort to seeking outdoor relief which was granted at the discretion of Boards of Guardians who, more often than not, were inclined to see unemployment as a personal failing rather than as a result of outside economic circumstances. The only other options were starvation, the 'emigrant ship' or the workhouse where 'families were still split up and the inmates forced to wear workhouse clothes and obey prison like rules'. (5) It was in response to this bleak background that Labour came into being in both Armagh and Newry. Those who were the organisers wanted to alleviate the poverty and deprivation they experienced themselves or saw in their midst. Indeed for the most part they could have been described as 'men of no property, of poor economic and social standing and little formal education'. The way to go about it, they believed, was to band together to get their own representatives elected onto public bodies where their grievances could be aired and remedies sought. It could well be argued that their politics was a "gut reaction" to pressing social problems rather than any intellectually arrived at socialism which explained the necessity for altering the economic structure in accordance with a theoretical framework. The primary purpose then for the existence of Labour both in Armagh and Newry was to obtain cures for social ills thus improving the quality of life for workers and their families.

The Armagh party grew out of the Armagh Employed and Unemployed Association which was formed in 1932 with Paddy Agnew as its chairman and main speaker. Most of its energies were devoted to lobbying for public works relief schemes to help the unemployed. (6) When the N.I.L.P. organised in the town a year later it expanded its sphere of interest to include health, welfare and education issues as well as unemployment. At one of its first committee meetings held in October, 1933, a list of issues to be pursued was agreed. They included slum clearance; improved housing with lower rents; the implementation of the Public Health Act; and the provision of Outdoor Relief 'on broad principles not individual cases'. In the local press, six months later, the party stated that it wanted to end the 'appalling conditions and excessive rents in Armagh City'. There was little hope of improvement in the labour market, so the party was looking for 'better treatment under the Unemployed Insurance Acts, with free books and free meals for needy school children, while the administration of the Maternity and Child Welfare Scheme required overhaul to get the best results from it'. All this could be achieved by co-operation between the party and trade unions, the statement ended.(7)

The Secretary of Newry Labour Party in 1938, J. Byrne, referred to the 'squalid sunless lives countless people were compelled to live: poverty in the midst of plenty'. He went on to say that Labour had the ability to build a political machine which could carry its 'message of hope into every section of the population'. On a more mundane level the meeting at which Mr. Byrne delivered his speech decided to enquire about the possibility of having electric light installed in municipal housing. (8) These are just a few of the multitude of examples which illustrate that the over-riding priority of the Labour bodies in Armagh and Newry was to obtain measures which would aid the working class. In their election campaigns and public events they highlighted the problems; as Poor Law Guardians they sought to relieve poverty and distress; and at local authority level they endeavoured to improve housing, have local labour employed on council schemes, and pressed for the implementation of Fair Wages clauses in council contracts.

A vital aspect of their work, they considered, was acting as the 'poor man's advocate', in other words, making representation on behalf of individuals to the various agencies such as the Public Assistance Board. While this type of activity might legitimately be termed more social work than socialism, it was, nevertheless, essential in view of the discretionary nature of what little state benefit there was available. In a letter to the local press in 1945, Sandy McPherson who was chosen as a candidate but did not stand for the Mid-Armagh constituency, claimed that since 1934 the party had 'defended' no less than a million and a half at the Armagh Labour Exchange. (9) Although this was patently an exaggeration there is no doubt that a considerable amount of the time and effort of Labour activists was taken up with looking after individual cases of hardship.

One of the concerns of this study has been to critically examine the view shared by John Harbinson and Graham Walker that there was a section of the N.I.L.P., as embodied by Paddy Agnew and the Armagh party, which was more Nationalist than Socialist. The conclusion arrived at however, was that the primary concern was Welfarism and all other issues, including the border, were of secondary significance. It is certainly accepted that the socialism of both the Armagh and Newry parties was largely of a mild form, of the gas and water variety, which opted for legislative reform and involvement in municipal matters rather than revolution based on Marxist economic analysis. They generally endeavoured to distance themselves from the slightest taint of Communism. Indeed two members of the Warrenpoint section of the South Down party resigned from the N.I.L.P. in 1948 after the Red Flag was sung at the Annual Conference. (10) Lip-service was a paid to James Connolly. The Newry party wanted a new council housing development named after him and the Armagh party considered having his "Labour in Irish History" serialised in the local press - nevertheless, they took their lead in their aims and objectives and the pursuit of these from the British Labour Party. In 1936, Paddy Agnew told an Armagh audience that 'the advantages which the workers of the North of Ireland to a certain degree enjoyed, had been won for them by the efforts of the Labour Party of Great Britain'.(11) In the 1940's there were calls here too for the implementation of the Beveridge Report. When addressing a meeting in 1943, Paddy Agnew said that the Beveridge scheme must be adopted although the "Old Tory Gang" would try to stop it. (12) The following year he renewed his call, saying that there was an urgent need for adopting Beveridge so that 'never again would poverty, want, and unemployment exist in South Armagh'. Significantly, he went on to ask could Sir Basil Brooke 'give any guarantee to the workers and to the returning service men and women of Northern Ireland, as Mr. Ernest Bevin had done in Great Britain?' (13) In January 1945, Agnew was still talking about Beveridge. At Newtownhamilton he said that Labour claimed full honours for the Beveridge Plan because it had been 'instituted by Arthur Greenwood of the Labour Party and Labour demanded its complete fulfilment to protect old and young'.(14)

Labour's success in the 1945 General Election was welcomed by all. Indeed such was the Newry party's euphoria that it attributed the Stormont Government's plans for restricting the local government franchise in 1946 to 'an act of desperation to thwart the Labour landslide in the forthcoming municipal elections' which the sweeping socialist victory in Great Britain heralded.(15) Nearly a decade later Paddy Agnew pointed out what a 'blessing' the Welfare State had proved to be to workers. (16)

These local parties were not adverse to receiving practical help in the form of guest speakers from the British party who were obviously regarded as crowd pullers and vote catchers. Mr. V. L. McEntee, M.P. and Ex-Mayor of Walthamston spoke in support of James Byrne in Newry in 1938 but he must have been a poor substitute for those billed to address the campaign meeting. An impressive array of Labour celebrities from both Britain and the South including Clement Attlee, Stafford Cripps, Hugh Dalton, Herbert Morrison, William Norton and William O'Brien were to have given their backing to the Newry candidate.(17) In 1943, when the Newry party was re-organising, John Parker, M.P. from Romford came over to lend his support(18) and in 1946, Leah Manning, M.P. for Epping visited Armagh to campaign for N.I.L.P. candidates in the local government elections.(19) It should be noted however, that the Labour organisations were not alone in availing of the services of British Labour personnel. Anti-Partitionists looked to the Westminster Friends of Ireland Group in their campaign to have the border removed. Indeed one of these M.P.s, Hugh Delargy, sent a telegram of support to Joseph Connellan, the anti-partitionist candidate in South Down in the Northern Ireland General Election in 1949.(20)

Although the Labour organisations in both towns were not adverse to emulating British Labour in the pursuit of reforms, there is little doubt that most of their membership was opposed to partition as a permanent feature and held aspirations of a united, independent Ireland some time in the future. At the same time however, Armagh Labour objected to the border being used as a tactic to divide workers. Paddy Agnew, in his last year at Stormont, told a public meeting in his constituency that Labour 'stood four square for social justice and the brotherhood of man; it was open to all creeds and classes' and urged his audience not be be 'led astray by the old bogey like the Border question'. At the forthcoming election it was certain that Sir Basil Brooke would bring out 'the old red herring' but Labour with 'an honest and beneficial policy feared nothing'. (21) Even after he left the N.I.L.P. and set up the Independent Labour Party in Armagh, Agnew still adhered to this line. He said that 'unity of the people must be solved before the problems of Ireland could be solved', and this time referred to 'reactionary politicians who cried 'Remove the Border'.(22)

It must be stressed that Labour politicians of the Agnew ilk were prepared to work within the Northern Ireland State system, whatever misgiving they might have had about it. Their aim was to seek relief for pressing social needs which they saw as also bringing workers together. The unification of the working class within Northern Ireland came before the unification of the country. This view essentially contradicts, in relation to Armagh, the assertion made by John Harbinson, that 'an important section of the party was inclined towards nationalism first and socialism second'. (23) Harbinson based his claim of 'Nationalists first' on a debate at the N.I.L.P. Annual Conference in 1937, sparked off by an amendment from the Armagh party. However, when account is taken of the background and other pertinent factors a different interpretation may be made. The amendment which was put to a resolution calling for closer co-operation with the Labour movement throughout the British Commonwealth read: 'That the Labour Party of Northern Ireland, recognising that Ireland is one nation, pledges itself to co-operate with the workers of the Irish Free State to achieve the unity of Ireland. We condemn the sectarian policy of the present Northern Government and guarantee full civil and religious liberty to all citizens on a basis of equality'. It first made its appearance three months earlier in the form of a resolution, but was ruled out of order at a special conference on electoral reform. It should be noted though, that it was just one of a number of resolutions from Armagh on a wide range of issues. (24) Also, Paddy Agnew contended that it was useless considering 'international' questions when 'national' questions could not be discussed. It may well have been that he was referring here to Harry Midgley's public support for the Republican side in Spain. Agnew's line of non-interference in the affairs of other states was undoubtedly one of expediency. As an aspiring public representative he appreciated only too well that the Spanish Republican cause was a highly unpopular one and Midgley, recognised as one time mentor of the Armagh party, could serve to embarrass and detract support by his utterances, especially those which criticised the Catholic Church. It could have been that the motivation behind this resolution/amendment was as much an attack on Midgley as a desire for Irish unity. Indeed, when it was defeated in the amendment form, and the resolution which it sought to change was carried by an overwhelming majority, this did not cause a major outcry or mass resignations from the Armagh party. It could be argued that both the Armagh and Newry parties were certainly not acting as 'Nationalists first' when they chose to ignore a call to boycott the Northern Ireland General Election in 1938. Although the Newry party's candidate, James Byrne, fared badly, polling only 263 votes, it was in the face of a strong campaign waged by the Nationalist side. It must be said however, Paddy Agnew was not the first choice for South Armagh. The original candidate P. McCann did actually heed the boycott plea. Undoubtedly he was one person who could safely be described as 'Nationalist first'. Chairing the first General Meeting of the Armagh Federation of Labour in 1937 he addressed delegates in both Irish and English. On the question of Irish Unity he said, that there was 'no material difference between the Federation and any of the people who represent sections of Nationalist opinion in the North' and then proceeded to praise the 'illustrious beacons', the abstentionist M.P.s for Tyrone/Fermanagh. The function of Labour, as he saw it, was mainly to give advice and make representations for individuals in need to the various Boards.(25) Whilst he could well have fitted into the category of 'strongly Nationalist' and 'mildly Socialist' as described by Graham Walker, it is debatable that 'Paddy Agnew and

most of the membership of the Armagh Labour branch' were just as easily accommodated within this description as Walker seemed to think :
'Only firmer commitment to social change and a slightly less obsessive and narrow concern with the minority community set this group apart from those in the Nationalist party' he said.(26) There would not appear to be any substantial evidence from newspaper accounts of meetings etc. and from House of Commons reports that Agnew was overly concerned with the minority community in particular. Criticism of the 'B' Specials and the Ministry of Public Security, opposition to interniment without trial and conscription could hardly be construed as such. It is true that he had no enthusiasm for the war effort but this approach would not seem to have been based on anti-British sentiments but rather on opposition to war generally. In one of his first speeches at Stormont he expressed his opposition to war and conscription: 'As a representative of the working class movement, I am directly opposed to anything that would commit the workers to what we call war. Our movement is directly opposed to war. We stand for liberty and peace. Is it a fact that in the near future we are going to have conscription imposed upon our youth? ....I will go out into the highways and byways and oppose conscription on every possible occasion. Why conscript our youth? Why not conscript our wealth today to help our stricken people? If that can be done in war time it could equally be done in peace-time..... On every possible occasion I will be opposed to anything that would conscript us, as working class people, in Northern Ireland, to war'.

Possibly his own early experiences in the services contributed to his pacifism. Ironically, a Labour veteran thought that the presence of one of his daughters in A.T.S. uniform on his election platform likely helped to lose him his South Armagh seat in 1945.

As mentioned earlier, Paddy Agnew constantly affirmed that Labour stood for all creeds and if he was obsessive about anything it was the need for welfare reform. Demands for reforms were detailed with what one might suggest was monotonous regularity throughout his political career.

It was not on the issue of partition that Agnew resigned from the N.I.L.P. and it was not to any organisation in Ireland, north or south, that he subsequently sought to give allegiance. At the first public meeting of his new Independent Labour Party he told the audience that if workers in Armagh wanted changes they need not look to the old parties. He had discovered as a member of the County Council that 'on the question of the working class there was unity of Nationalist and Unionist. The two parties had presented a united front when the workers had asked for a ten per cent increase in 1940'. Through trade unionism, they got the increase, not through the 'old party hacks'.

The Armagh party affiliated to what was left of the Independent Labour Party in Scotland and its General Secretary, Jock McNair, spoke at a May Day Rally in the town. (30) He was just one of several visiting speakers from Scotland. Why Agnew and his followers joined what was described as a 'a party with a great and noble past' but which 'had no prospects at all for the future' (31) is a bit of a mystery. It could have been that he was associated with the I.L.P. when, in his youth he worked on the railway in Glasgow and was a member of the National Union of Railwaymen. Significantly the first Scottish speaker to come to Armagh was J. M. Balentine, a member of the N.U.R. Executive.(32)

When the Irish Labour Party organised in the North in 1949 the Independent Labour Party became submerged in it thus unreservedly declaring itself anti-partitionist. This involvement was short-lived because by the early 1950s, Armagh was once again effectively an independent organisation. Indeed, it might be concluded that Paddy Agnew's flirtation with anti-partitionism during which he sent a telegram of support to his former adversary, Malachi Conlon, and he and his supporters joined with Irish Labour, was based not so much on conviction as reaction to his treatment in 1945 both from the N.I.L.P. and a section of the electorate of South Armagh. Bearing in mind that over a third of those eligible did not vote, he may well have been disappointed and felt let down by the response at the polls from those who were not avowedly anti-partitionist. Also, he may not have expected a reprimand from the N.I.L.P. leadership for his opposition to party policy. Four years before his death in 1959 however, there was no doubt about Paddy Agnew's views. Commenting on the General election results in his diary of 1955, he said 'that Labour lost in Britain through apathy and in the North of Ireland workers voted for Unionist or Sinn Féin, which pays no dividends'. The answer was to build a strong Labour party in Northern Ireland and now was the time to start.(33)

It should be pointed out that when Agnew split with the N.I.L.P. some members still remained with it. One of them, James Hagan, who was a founder member of the Armagh party, actually won a Council seat in 1946. It would appear however, that Official Labour as it was termed, also joined with the Irish Labour Party in 1949 and when the Armagh organisation was on its own again in the 1950's it included people from both camps. James Hagan was Chairman and Paddy Agnew, Secretary. (34)

As far as the Newry party was concerned there was a period in 1938 after the boycott call had been ignored and James Byrne stood for a Stormont seat, when it looked like a more left-ward turn was being taken. Harry Midgley was lauded as 'the workers' champion in Spain' and it was agreed to co-operate with other Labour bodies in sending medical aid and food supplies to the 'innocent mothers and babies of Spain' who 'lost all at the hands of the modern Nero who claims to be fighting for Christianity'. (35) This interest in international matters did not last long however, and could well have been confined to a minority within the party. Representatives on public bodies certainly seemed to have been largely interested in the purely parochial.

It could be argued that when the party was 'born again' in 1943 it clearly identified with the anti-partitionist element within the N.I.L.P. At its first public meeting the guest speakers were Jack Beattie, M.P. and Councillor Frank Hanna from Belfast, both well-known anti-partitionists, plus the current Chairman of the N.I.L.P., William Leeman, who was introduced as 'the man who purged the Northern Ireland Labour Party'. (36) The speaker was obviously referring to the exit of Midgley and his pro-union supporters from the party the year before. Indeed in 1944, when Jack Macgougan, another noted anti-partitionist was sued for libel by Midgley citing an article which appeared in the 'New Statesman', Newry was one of the places where a fighting fund was established to help Macgougan with his legal fees.(37) Three years later at a rally in the town, Macgougan was one of the guest speakers as was O.J. Kane a native of Newry living in Belfast. Kane, billed as a potential Labour candidate for South Down, declared that 'Ireland divided was Ireland broken' and the unity of the country could only be achieved by the workers and small farmers coming together 'to smash the De Valera - Basil Brook axis'.(38)

Even before the Irish Labour Party organised in the North it looked like the South Down party had split with the N.I.L.P.. Just over a week before the meeting of 23 January 1949 which set up the provisional Committee to extend the Irish party's activities throughout the whole of Ireland, the 'Newry Reporter' gave an account of the 'first annual supper of the South Down Labour Party'. (39) It is likely that the break from the N.I.L.P. occurred not long after the Annual Conference in September 1948. (40) As this was held at Warrenpoint and hosted by the South Down party, more members than the usual number of delegates would have had the opportunity

to hear the debates at first hand or read about them in the local papers which provided extensive coverage. They would have observed the shift towards acceptance of partition and would have recognised that it was pointless for them, committed to an Ireland united by workers on both sides of the border, to continue giving allegiance. It should be noted however, that although both the Newry and Armagh Labour organisations changed their parent bodies, their pursuit of social reforms remained largely unchanged.

PRAGMATIC RATHER THAN THEORETIC

(1) Buckland. History of Northern Ireland, p.79
(2) ibid, p.72
(3) ibid. p.76
(4) ibid. p.78
(5) Farrell, p.122
(6) Armagh Guardian 1932
(7) Minutes of Armagh Labour Party, Agnes Papers
(8) Frontier Sentinel. 16 April 1938.
(9) Armagh Guardian 23 March 1945
(10) Newry Reporter, 23 September 1948
(11) Armagh Guardian 5 June 1936
(12) ibid, 24 December 1943
(13) ibid 18 August 1944
(14) ibid 5 January 1945
(15) Frontier Sentinel 12 January 1946
(16) Personal Diaries, Agnew Papers
(17) Frontier Sentinel 22 January 1938
(18) Newry Reporter 11 May 1943
(19) Armagh Guardian 20 September 1946
(20) Newry Reporter
(21) Armagh Guardian 5 January 1945
(22) ibid 21 June 1946
(23) Harbinson, p.86
(24) Armagh Guardian 6 August 1937
(25) Armagh Observer, 25th December 1937 in Hagan Scrapbook
(26) Walker p.115
(27) House of Commons Debates Vol XXI 1 March to 24 November 1937
(28) Interview with P. Grimes
(29) Armagh Guardian, 17 May 1946
(30) Information from P. Grimes
(31) Dowse, p.202
(32) Minutes of Armagh Independent Labour Party, Agnew Papers
(33) Agnes Papers
(34) Personal diaries, Agnew Papers and Hagan Scrapbook
(35) Frontier Sentinel 28 May 1938 and 4 June 1938
(36) Newry Reporter 24 April 1943
(37) Harbinson, p.158
(38) Newry Reporter 6 September 1947
(39) ibid 20 January 1949
(40) ibid 23 September 1948

CATHOLIC BUT LABOUR

The basic premise of this study is that there has never been equality among Northern Ireland Catholics and the tendency of some commentators to band together all as a single oppressed minority is both inaccurate and misleading. They may have shared common religious beliefs but not social and economic conditions. There have always been class differences within the Catholic community in the North of Ireland and one area which can provide reasonable evidence of this is elections. There are undoubtedly a number of examples in both Armagh and Newry where Nationalists were challenged at the polls by co-religionists fighting on a Labour ticket to represent the working class. It would have to be said however, that candidates of a Nationalist, anti-partitionist ilk were not always significantly higher in social and economic status than their Labour opponents, but there are sufficient grounds for contending that those who controlled their organisations, aided and supported by Catholic clerics, belonged to various sections of the middle-class and were often vehemently opposed to any form of socialism. Whilst they were concerned with changing the constitutional position of Northern Ireland Catholics, they gave scant indication that they sought any alterations in the social and economic systems to benefit the poor and less advantaged sections of the community. Although Labour representatives may not have had any well articulated and formulated philosophy on changing the structure of society, they concentrated their energies into opposing the conservative nature of the Unionist government and called for measures as advocated by the British Labour Party to improve conditions and opportunities for working people regardless of religious persuasion.

From 1934 to 1946, Armagh was governed by a commissioner, but this did not mean that there were no local politics during the period. Indeed Labour's first venture into the electoral arena was in 1936, just under three years after the N.I.L.P. organised in the town. They challenged two Nationalists who were the sitting Poor Law Guardians for the South Ward, an area with a predominantly Catholic working class population. They did not however, offer an alternative to the electorate in any of the other wards which did not go unnoticed by the opposition. Nonetheless, there is little doubt from the wide press coverage accorded to the event that the two Labour men, Paddy Agnew and James Hagan, fought the election for working class representation. At a pre-election meeting held in the Market Square, in the centre of the town, on a Saturday night, Paddy Agnew said that Labour stood for 'decent houses at a decent rent, for wiping out the slums, for free books for every child attending elementary school'. If the Labour representatives were returned they pledged to work 'to see that the Exceptional Distress Order which had been excluded from the city was put into force. There were families in Armagh which were not getting a fair deal and were living in destitution. The scale per head for maintaining an inmate in the workhouse was far too low - 4/6d a head a week and 6/- in the Infirmary'. He went on to call on those interested in the Labour movement to join up because it stood for the emancipation for the working class. 'Between slumdom, unemployment and cheap wages there was no Paradise for workers in Armagh', he concluded.(1)

A feature of this contest was the help received by the Armagh party from outside sources. Visiting speakers included Ald. Harry Midgley, N.I.L.P. Chairman and Councillor J. Campbell from Belfast. On one occasion a member of Newry Urban Council, Myles Connell, compared conditions in the two towns, 'The sanitary condition of your town is tragic', he told the meeting. Earlier he had gone to Primrose Hill '.....and if what I am told is true, I can assure you the smell of the place is anything but like a primrose'. The situation in Newry on the other hand, was so much better for the working class. He listed the improvements which had taken place there since Labour first entered the Council ten years previously in 1926:
"One hundred and fifteen workman's houses have been erected and another one hundred and nine are in the course of erection.....Practically all the old privies have been converted into water closets.... Last year 6,954 gallons of milk were distributed free to necessitous families where the children are young, and expectant mothers have the help and advice of a medical officer and a nurse as health visitor at the maternity centre. The infant mortality returns have been reduced from 19.2 per cent to 6.7 per cent... In addition the Council gives special treatment to persons suffering from defective sight....' (2)

While the Armagh Labour party appeared to have waged a vigorous campaign, mainly by holding outdoor meetings such as the one at which Councillor Connell spoke, the opposition, it would seem, preferred to do battle in a more indirect fashion. At an eve of the poll rally, Paddy Agnew commented on this:
" We have put our case publicly but our opponents have remained behind closed doors and let other do their work for them."(3)

He was referring to what was obviously a smear campaign against Labour on the grounds that it was anti-religion. The other candidate, James Hagan, was more forthright about the tactics used against them:
"I have often heard of dirty politics but I never knew until the last three weeks that such outright mis-representation and abuse could be used. We have been attacked unjustly."(4)

Harry Midgley, who was the main speaker at the meeting, tried to remedy the situation by emphasising that there was nothing in the Labour movement that was 'repugnant to the teachings of the Catholic Church, in spite of what people had been told'. (5)

The Nationalists' tactics would seem to have had the desired effect because the Labour candidates were defeated. Agnew polled 280 votes and his colleague 279 whereas the opponents netted 431 and 403 respectively.

Labour's next contest in Armagh, three years later (1939), was more successful. Paddy Agnew, who was by now a Stormont M.P., challenged the sitting Nationalist, Senator Thomas McLaughlin, for the town seat on the County Council and this time he won by 1277 votes to 850. At one of the first campaign meetings, a Labour spokesman highlighted the class differences between the candidates: '....one representing riches and wealth, the other representing poverty and want; it is a struggle between two extremities'.(6)

It is interesting to note that four years later in 1943, when both were serving on the County Armagh Infirmary Committee, Paddy Agnew sought a £12 per annum rise for domestic staff who were currently receiving £40 a year which he said was less than 'others were paid a week'. He received no support, yet a proposal to increase the salary of the doctor in charge from £400 to £500 was passed without dissent. Senator McLaughlin commented that even with the increase the salary was 'too low'. (7)

Again the local Labour Party fought the election on 'Welfarism' with a programme of demands which included better housing, poor law and unemployment reforms, improved health care and expansion in the field of education. Indeed it would have to be said that the social remedies sought by Labour did not change substantially from one election campaign to another. Again too the "red scare" tactic was brought into force. Senator McLaughlin warned the Armagh voters:
"I have heard that efforts are being made to introduce Communism into our midst. Any attempt in that direction will have my most strenuous opposition. I will fight Communism tooth and nail, with all the strength at my command. We all know what the Reds have done in Spain and let me tell these gentlemen - hands off Armagh. We will have none of your antics here". (8)

On this occasion Welfarism won, because, according to the 'Armagh Guardian', 'the electors, whether Unionist or Nationalist, prefer to vote for a candidate specialising in social betterment to one who deals more in party politics'.(9)

The 'red scare', it would appear was the favourite form of attack on Labour by the Nationalist organisation. Obviously it was difficult at election times to publicly oppose policies which sought to improve the lives of working people so instead the tactic was to link Labour with Communism and Godlessness. Emphasis was put on what was seen as the anti-religious aspect of socialism. Never was this more evident than in the 1945 Northern Ireland General Election, when Paddy Agnew fought to hold his South Armagh seat against an anti-partitionist candidate, Malachi Conlon. Described as a farmer, journalist and playwright, Conlon maintained a virulent onslaught against Communism throughout the campaign. In an emotionally charged manifesto he not only castigated Communism but displayed an anti-Semitic tone:

"We Irishmen of this generation are asked again to raise aloft this flaming cross and with the mighty strength of a United Nation to hold it higher than the clouds that Europe and the World may see that all is not lost... But ever to the East is the sneering bulk of Communist Russia, where the Jews have marshalled mighty force to carry on their age-old struggle - the destruction of Christianity".

According to the manifesto which was prominently displayed in the local press, Britain's association with the Soviet Union during the war brought the threat of Communism nearer:
'There can be no doubt that the Labour Party is a hot-bed of Communistic activity and that in the years which lie ahead of us the latent energy which has been nourished during the war by close contact with Russia will spring into mad fanatic life.'

The manifesto claimed also that the 'Stormont Government intended to take over control of Catholic schools, which would be greeted with glee 'by the Communist infested Labour Party'. Conlon called on the electorate to choose to be represented by '...a man who is pledged to defend your country against Communism and who is pledged to fight with every weapon for the Unity of that land, or by a man who is pledged to answer a whip in Moscow and who gives allegiance to a party which is satisfied that the Border shall remain....There are two flags in the sand - the Hammer and Sickle of the Communist Jew - and the flag of our own land. Which flag do you support?'(10)

There can be little doubt that the intention of this rhetoric was to inflame passions and it would seem that it did. Labour party activists have recalled it as one of the 'dirtiest' campaigns ever fought and in his post-election speech after the count, Paddy Agnew referred to the 'scurrilous' attack on him in the Conlon manifesto and claimed that Labour Party workers had been intimidated. He said that Conlon had asserted that the result would have a bearing on Ireland's status and independence but the 'methods used to gain that

result were not in keeping with the ideals of independence or democracy. The manifesto had mentioned the Fiery Cross, but the party's tactics were neither Christian nor in keeping with the faith they both professed'.(11)

It is of some significance that at a convention to choose an anti-partitionist candidate, the chairman said that Paddy Agnew was not recognised as the Nationalist candidate for South Armagh and even though it was pointed out that he was 'a good Catholic', as 'National minded as any man at the Convention, had done a lot for the working class of South Armagh' and 'fought their cases hard', it was decided to oppose him.(12) Paddy Agnew was a known anti-partionist and there is ample evidence that he worked consistently for his constituents at both local and parliamentary level so the view could legitimately be taken that he was opposed purely because of his Labour affiliations and beliefs, on class politics. Throughout the campaign, as before, he fought on Labour policies but was defeated by 6,720 votes to 4,143.(13)

The following year the County Down seat at Westminister became vacant and on this occasion a Labour candidate came second, amassing 28,846 votes in a four cornered contest. All three of his opponents were Unionists of various hues. The last time the seat was contested by a non-Unionist was in 1935 when a Republican, P. F. O'Hagan polled 20,236 votes. (14) One could argue that the reason for Labour's good showing on this occasion had little to do with its policy but rather in spite of it. Although the candidate, Flying Officer Desmond Donnelly, was brought in from England and was endorsed by the British Labour Party, he belonged to the Friends of Ireland Group, known for its anti-partitionist sympathies and this had probably more bearing on the electorate than all the speeches lauding the social progress made in the year since Labour came to power at Westminster.

Although the anti-partitionists had decided not to contest the election they did not call on their supporters to boycott it. Indeed, Peter Murney, the Anti-Partitionist M.P. for South Down in the Northern Ireland parliament, was actually a member of the platform party at some of Donnelly's campaign rallies. Essentially, then, because of the Anti-Partitionists' relationship with the Friends of Ireland Group, positive encouragement was given to the Labour candidate. This is borne out in an analysis of the election in the 'Frontier Sentinel', written by "Scrutator", possibly the pen-name of its editor, the well known Nationalist, Joseph Connellan. It said that the 28,000 odd votes cast for Donnelly should not be taken as evidence of support for the N.I.L.P.:
"Definitely no such thing. Those votes were registered against the continued mutilation of this country and as proof of the voters yearning for a democratic system of government. They wished to send to the British Labour government a message that could not be misunderstood, and to encourage as far as they could the Friends of Ireland Group in the work they had undertaken".

"Their objective", the writer stated, "must be to get the British government to abolish the Border as speedily and as swiftly as possible. A single Act of the British Parliament created Partition and a simple act can abolish it overnight". (15)

It would be unrealistic to accept that all who voted for Donnelly did so because of his links with the anti-partitionist line, obviously there were those who saw Labour policies for social issues as the priority. Nevertheless, it is probably true to say that his association with the Friends of Ireland was of more benefit in terms of electoral support than ratification by the N.I.L.P.

One has only to call to mind the South Down contest of the Northern Ireland parliamentary elections in 1938 to give additional weight to this argument. Then the Labour Candidate, James Byrne, who was admittedly young and inexperienced, polled a mere 263 votes. Out of an electorate of about 17,000, more than 12,500 abstained from voting as a result of an active boycott campaign waged throughout the constituency. Monster rallies in favour of abstention were reported to have been held for a fortnight before the election. Moreover, the Labour candidate's prospects were certainly not enhanced by a statement from William McMullan, a Connollyite socialist who was to have stood as a representative of the I.T.G.W.U. He decided to withdraw because of 'the completely unanimous decision of a fully representative conference to boycott the election'.(16)

The Labour Party in Newry was involved in a second election campaign in 1946 when it fought for seats on the local council. Mention was made earlier of opposition to Labour at the outset of the period under study from both Unionist and Nationalist interests on Newry U.D.C. and it would appear that the situation changed little over the years. Labour never had any part in the 'gentleman's agreement' whereby Nationalists did not contest the North Ward and Unionists did not put forward a candidate for the South and West Wards. Indeed, prior to the 1946 election both local newspapers referred to efforts to "gather together a team comprising of 'prominent local businessmen' from both Nationalist and Unionist backgrounds but who would 'leave religious and party differences' outside the council chambers".(17) This threat did not materialise however. Instead, Unionists contested the West as well as the North Ward, though Labour's main opposition did not come from this source but from an organisation which had been formed in the town in the previous year.

The Irish Citizens Association was a purely local organisation but strongly nationalistic and anti-partitionist in outlook. It was formed by a group of young men who, according to the 'Frontier Sentinel': "felt the urgent need for an Irish-Ireland Association which would interest itself in local affairs and generate a more vigorous national spirit in the various public bodies while faithfully discharging its duties to the people as a whole". (18)

It sought reforms in housing, employment, public health etc. but at the same time was opposed to state interference and it might well have been referring to the Labour party in its warning against 'high sounding institutions with very plausible pretentions whose propaganda was highly dangerous from the national and social viewpoint'. In its first year of existence it involved itself in matters such as the treatment of political prisoners, in the naming of Newry streets after Ireland's patriot dead; giving support to the Anti-Partition League and in the erection of a memorial to John Mitchel. It would seem that it also took credit for the revision of the electoral register, but this was hotly disputed by the Labour Party which stated that its members worked throughout the entire town in inclement weather and its only encounter with the I.C.A. was when one of its members gave Labour some useful information about the West Ward. Thus Labour's main challenge in these municipal elections was from an organisation more pre-occupied with ideas and ideals than with bread and butter issues and whose campaign cry was "Ireland and Democracy". The end result was little different however from the previous contests. Labour gained one seat and this time, thanks to the combined support of all the anti-Unionists, a Labour councillor was elected to the chair although it was with just its own votes and that of an Independent Labour member that Labour also gained the vice-chair's position.

The next contest for the council in Newry was particularly interesting because by this time the local Labour organisation was no longer part of the N.I.L.P. but was a branch of the Irish Labour Party and avowedly anti-partitionist. It fared disastrously at the polls and ended up with just one single representative. Significantly, about a month before the submission of nominations for the council elections, the Newry Labour body unanimously rejected the offer of what would seem to have been an electoral pact, 'in the interests of unity' with the Anti-Partitionist League. In a statement published in the 'Newry Reporter', it gave its reasons for doing so: "It would not enter into an agreement with another organisation which had shown itself to be anti-socialist in the past, it could not

accept that all electoral resources should be controlled by one body; it could not deny the right of free speech to any candidate; as a branch of the Irish Labour Party it had the right to advocate its own policies and criticise others; it had been excluded from meetings to nominate a parliamentary candidate for South Down; it withdrew from the parliamentary contest on its own initiative in the interests of Unity but on this occasion felt it would be more appropriate if all parties concerned confined their activities to the relief of social distress in their midst'. (19) At the May Day Rally in the town reference was again made to the proposed pact when one of the speakers said that they had been 'asked by the Anti-Partition Party to sink their identity on a common platform but they had a Labour policy to put before the people and they refused to do so'.(20)

The rally, whose main speakers included a Stormont M.P., Jack Beattie and James Connolly's son Roddie, a Southern T.D., provided a mix of anti-partitionist rhetoric and social reform issues like Newry's poor housing and lack of employment opportunities. Nonetheless, in spite of this show of support, plus the fielding of the maximum number of candidates in all three wards, Labour suffered its worst defeat in Newry since the setting up of the Northern State. Interestingly, among other defeated candidates was a group which had run on a Anti-Partitionist ticket but was not part of the I.C.A. It would appear that the people belonging to it had been former members of the Labour Party. Certainly, three had actually been Labour councillors but had been expelled the previous June for not adhering to party policy on council appointments.

Local elections in Armagh in the same year also saw Labour suffer defeat, but in this case, against the local Unionist Party. Paddy Agnew lost his County Council seat for the town to George Leyburn a Unionist business man. The significance of this contest however, was that in 1946, Agnew held the seat against Leyburn by 200 votes but in 1949 lost it by 261 votes. In 1946, Agnew went forward as an Independent Labour candidate and, according to the 'Armagh Guardian', which nailed its colours firmly to the mast in favour of the Unionist candidate: '....It is known that close upon 200 so-called Unionists voted for Mr. Agnew'. (21) It would surely seem that he lost his Protestant vote by his Irish Labour Party affiliation. His campaign was fought with the aid of such well-known anti-partitionists as Harry Diamond and Jack Beattie who was actually reported as saying that William of Orange had been 'hounded out of Armagh'. (22) Indeed a Labour veteran has recalled that he foresaw Agnew's defeat when he heard Harry Diamond addressing a outdoor rally audience as 'citizens of the Republic of Ireland'. In addition, capital was made in the press of the fact that Agnew had earlier advised the electorate in South Armagh to vote for Malachi Conlon, the anti-partitionist. (24) Ironically, by doing so, Agnew ultimately lost more than he gained.

The various examples of electoral contests cited here should give some weight to the supposition that there was an identifiable section of the Catholic community which saw its main priority as the seeking of measures to alleviate distress and to increase the material well-being of its own class. It was prepared to challenge, in the electoral arena, not just those who supported the Unionist government but also its own co-religionists who had the declared aim of achieving the re-unification of Ireland. Significantly, even when there was no doubt whatever about the anti-partitionist credentials of Labour candidates, particularly after 1949 when Irish Labour was organised in the North, they still did not get the active support of the mainly middle-class Nationalists except on that one occasion in 1946, the County Down by-election, when the Anti-Partitionist League was consortingwith the British Labour Friends of IrelandGroup.

CATHOLIC BUT LABOUR

(1) Armagh Guardian 8 May 1936
(2) Newry Reporter 23 May 1936
(3) Armagh Guardian 29 May 1936
(4) ibid
(5) ibid
(6) ibid 5 May 1936
(7) ibid 28 November 1943
(8) ibid 19 May 1939
(9) ibid 2 June 1939
(10) Frontier Sentinel 9 June 1945
(11) Armagh Guardian 13 June 1945
(12) ibid 8 June 1945
(13) Elliott
(14) Craig page 659
(15) Frontier Sentinel 13 August 1946
(16) ibid 5 February 1938
(17) Newry Reporter 29 August 1946
and Frontier Sentinel 31 August 1946
(18) Frontier Sentinel 25 August 1945
(19) Newry Reporter 14 April 1949
(20) ibid 5 May 1949
(21) Armagh Guardian 20 May 1949
(22) ibid 3 June 1949
(23) P. Grimes
(24) Armagh Guardian. 20 May 1949

RIVAL AND OPPOSING FORCES
NORTHERN NATIONALISM: A BRIEF BACKGROUND SKETCH

'A loose alliance of local notables' was how Richard Rose described the Nationalists in the North of Ireland. (1) This was because they did not, strictly speaking, constitute a political party. According to Rumpf and Hepburn: 'They were simply those M.P.'s representing districts with Catholic majorities (excluding Belfast, since 1945), acting more or less in concert when attending Stormont, and more or less opposing I.R.A. Republicans during their periods of parliamentary abstention. They had no central party headquarters and no full-time paid organisers. For much of the period they had no national constituency association'. (2) The National League of the North 'forced into life' to fight the 1929 election expired shortly afterwards and the Irish Union Association (also known as the National Council for Unity) which was formed in 1936 'proved even less effective'. Its structure was more a paper exercise than reality and it too was short-lived. The Anti-Partition League which emerged in the immediate post-war, although a 'more vigorous grassroots organisation' was essentially rural and made little headway in Belfast. (3) By the middle of the 1950's it had virtually disappeared.

The Nationalists were preoccupied with Partition and had no coherent social policy. Indeed according to D. G. Boyce they 'may have been united in their resentment of the border but they had little else in common'. Like the Unionists they were 'divided by the often conflicting interests of the eastern part of the province, particularly Belfast urban area, and the west of the River Bann where rural constituencies prevailed'. (4) This view is largely supported by Rumpf and Hepburn who made the point that the Nationalists 'lack of dynamism', during the depression years, made it difficult for them to find much common cause in the varied material greviences of the small farmers and the unemployed and unskilled of the Catholic slums. (5)

One feature which Nationalist politicians shared was class. Although the bulk of their electorate belonged to the poorer sections of the community, the parliamentary representatives were generally well provided for members of the middle class. In a breakdown of their occupations between 1921 and 1929 listed in Rumphf and Hepburn, there was no-one from the working class but there were six lawyers and five hoteliers.(6) As befitting their class background they were an essentially conservative group. While they might have been willing to co-operate with Labour at a parliamentary level there was no question of sharing the Catholic vote. When Joe Devlin advocated an alliance between the two, his intention was that the Nationalists would represent Catholics of all social classes and Labour would confine itself to gaining the support of Protestant workers. Challenges to the nationalist representation of the Catholic working class were met with strong and acrimonious opposition. Three organisations which attracted popular support and which the Nationalist middle class could mobilise and utilise as required have been selected for further comment.

Armagh and the Ancient Order of Hibernians

The Ancient Order of Hibernians was never in direct competition with Labour in Armagh, yet it was nevertheless an opponent of considerable significance because it was effectively controlled by and at the bidding of the town's Nationalist leadership. In 1930, at the first annual meeting of the Armagh branch of the short lived National League of the North, it would seem that the majority of office bearers and committee members were identified with the Ancient Order of Hibernians. (8) For example, the secretary, who was also chairman of the Urban Council, P. J. McGarvey, was a frequent speaker at Ancient Order of Hibernian rallies, and one of the Armagh representatives on the League's Central Council, Patrick McKenna, became an A O.H. County President. Senator Thomas McLaughlin, Armagh's main Nationalist spokesman in the 1930's, addressed demonstrations and represented the local A.O.H. organisation on many occasions. His successor in the 1940's, Senator J. G. Lennon had a particularly high profile in Hibernian circles, eventually becoming National President.

Jennifer Todd included Hibernianism among the roots of the 'communalist social organisation' of Northern Catholics in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and it would appear that as far as Armagh was concerned, it was a unifying force for a substantial section of the Catholic population until at least the 1950's. The A.O.H. provided social and recreational amenities in its premises and its twice yearly parades to mark church holidays, complete with banners, sashes, bands and rallies afterwards which combined hymn-singing and fiery rhetoric, served as demonstrations of 'communal solidarity'. They gave people a sense of kinship in what they were encouraged to see as a hostile state.(9)

Michael Farrell has contended that although the A.O.H. had similar rituals and trappings it never had the power over the Catholic population that the Orange Order had over Protestants since it had no patronage to distribute or privileged positions to defend.(10) This could be questioned however in relation to Armagh as its leading figures had considerable economic power. McLaughlin for instance, had extensive business interests and McKenna's family owned a building firm. They were in positions themselves, or were able to influence others, to hire and fire workers, so it is likely that the prospect either of obtaining or retaining work, regardless of terms and conditions, at a time of great hardship for a sizeable section of the working class, was a strong motive for belonging to the ranks of the A.O.H.

The relentless campaign waged against communism by the A.O.H. was undoubtedly detrimental to the cause of Labour since accusations that they were communist by another name or in another guise were invariably made against Labour candidates when they opposed Nationalists at election times. No opportunity was lost at demonstrations or reunions to denounce and warn against the evils of communism which was at various times described as 'satanic', 'the campaign of Anti-Christ' and 'a many headed cobra'. (11) Its influence was believed to have permeated everywhere, even into the government according to Senator Lennon in 1934.(12) Not surprisingly the Blueshirts were defended on an A.O.H. platform and General Franco was congratulated in 1939 on his victory over 'Anarchism and Atheism'.(13) It has to be said that it was not just Labour that was associated with communism in the minds of the A.O.H.. Physical force Republicans also came under fire. It was alleged that I.R.A. outrages were financed by communist Russia and that the doctrines published in 'An Phoblacht' were ' nothing less than communism unadulterated'. (14)

Undoubtedly it could be argued that the opposition which Labour faced from the Catholic middle class, in the form of a Nationalist leadership descended from the old Irish Party at Westminister and akin to the conservative Cumann na Gaedheal, and later Fine Gael in the Free State, was considerably strengthened by its ability to draw on the A.O.H. for support. 'This body which may once have been frowned upon by the Catholic Church establishment in Armagh, was however, by the beginning of the 1930's, eminently respectable and respected in clerical circles. Indeed it was Senator Lennon who represented the laity in an 'address of welcome' from the priests and people of Armagh to Dr. D'Alton, the new Archbishop, in July 1946.(15)

The Anti-Partition League in South Armagh

The Armagh Federation of Labour endeavoured to provide a service to the community as well as establishing a Labour presence in the small towns and villages throughout the county and certainly in the years that Paddy Agnew was in parliament it did manage to reach most of the areas covered by the Stormont constituencies of Mid and South Armagh. Its resources may have been limited - it was dependent upon donations primarily from the poor which it served and the labours of its activists, but it was nevertheless a considerable achievement in Labour terms. Its development and expansion was little though compared to that of the Anti-Partition League in South Armagh just a few years later. Both bodies could legitimately be termed as grass-roots organisations but they had little else in common. Although the Anti-Partition League for a time courted Labour in Britain through the Friends of Ireland Group of Westminster M.P.'s it was no friend of the home-produced variety of Labour. It could be said that the establishment of the League was motivated by the fact that a Labour government had just come into office in Britain and the founders were mindful of the Labour Party's traditional sympathies with the cause of Irish independence plus its dependence on a substantial Irish emigrant vote.

Indeed, announcements of the formation of both the Friends of Ireland, and the Anti-Partition League, were published side by side in the 'Frontier Sentinel' and it was reported that the inaugural meetings of both were held on the same day, Wednesday 14th November, 1945. (16) The message conveyed to the Nationalist readership was that a pact was made between sympathetic elements in British

Labour and Nationalist politicians to work together to end partition. Certainly there was a period, albeit of short duration, when there was some co-operation between the two groups and speakers from both shared a common platform.(17)

Although the Anti-Partition League professed to be a single-issue campaign, open to all political persuasions, there was no question that its leaders were anti-socialist. One of the prime movers in bringing it about was Malachi Conlon who, just months before engaged in a sustained, vitriolic attack on the left in his fight against Paddy Agnew for the South Armagh seat. At that time, far from seeking any association with the British Labour Party he saw signs of communist 'infestation' everywhere. For the five years he was an elected representative and Hon. Secretary of the Anti-Partition League he gave no indication that he was unduly concerned with social issues. He complained about the prominence given to 'social services' when Partition was being debated at Stormont in 1946. (18) He said they were not intended to make people rich or enable them to build up bank rolls. It would appear that his view that social services were no compensation for unification was the prevailing one in local Nationalist circles. The 'Frontier Sentinel', unashamedly partisan, commenting on the electoral successes of Conlon in South Armagh and Joseph Connellan in South Down in 1949 - said that during the campaign the Unionist propaganda machine had 'pounced upon' what was considered the weakest part of the Nationalists' armour, the social services position. However, when the electorate was canvassed by southern supporters: 'Forgotten were Britain's doles and pensions, her children's allowances, her free teeth and spectacles, and there only remained a burning national fervour'.(19)

Conlon's aspirations were of an Ireland akin to the De Valera model: Free, Gaelic and Catholic. In his election manifesto of 1945, besides castigating Communism, he warned against the moral decadence of Britain and at a campaign meeting he assured voters that he was prepared to act as their spokesman at Stormont if 'anything affecting their religion or country' deemed it necessary. (20) In many of his public utterances he referred to the nation's 'proud past', the 'independence' of the Celtic race and Gaelic culture. He wrote a play and poems glorifying rebels and patriots and he promoted the Irish language.

Bob Purdie found that the prominent people in the Anti-Partition League in South Armagh were also prominent in the economic life of the community: small businessmen and professionals who were the natural focus of communications and leadership. (21) Significantly most of them had been actively involved in Conlon's electoral contest with Paddy Agnew.

It could be argued that clerical support gave the League additional strength. Bob Purdie has said that while the clergy may not have been involved in the day-to-day activities they were undoubtedly important in encouraging its work and fixing things in the background. It would seem from reports in the 'Frontier Sentinel' however, that priests were not content to operate behind the scenes. They chaired meetings, made speeches and sat on platforms. Many were frank and forthright in their condemnation of partition and open in their support for the League. Like prominent members of the laity, some of them participated in the Agnew/Conlon contest. Father McFadden who chaired the Anti-Partition League's first public meeting in January 1946, held at Crossmaglen, also chaired Conlon's first campaign meeting.

The Anti-Partition League organised and mobilised Catholics throughout South Armagh. It got them on the electoral register and it got them to vote. It could equally be said that it raised expectations but did not deliver the goods in that Partition remained. It may well have caused some to opt for physical force Republicanism. Frustrated by lack of progress through political means and fired by the rhetoric of rallies and meetings, some Anti-Partition League supporters could have been easily recruited for the I.R.A. campaign of the 1950's. It should be noted that when Conlon, and Senator Lennon of Armagh A.O.H. fame, were in the U.SA. seeking support for the Anti-Partition League they endorsed the plea of Tom Barry, who accompanied them, for Irish-Americans to urge the Dáil to mobilise against the North in order to effect a British withdrawal.(22)

It could be concluded that while the Anti-Partition League in South Armagh in the latter half of the 1940's was a popular, grass-roots organisation it was not sympathetic to socialism in any form. Its conservative middle-class leadership had brought about a Labour defeat in 1945 and as long as their organisation was active there was no possibility that any Labour candidate could win back the South Armagh seat.

Newry's own brand of Nationalism. The Irish Citizens Association

Labour was virtually ousted from public life in Newry by an organisation which ostensibly set out to make the local population more 'Irish-minded' and to prepare it for participation in an all Ireland Republic. Although its first chairman, Joseph Connellan, stressed that it had not been formed for the purpose of contesting elections and dominating public life, just five years after it came into being it gained control of the Newry Urban Council and Labour was at its lowest ebb in the town since the setting up of the Northern state.

From the outset the I.CA was potentially dangerous to Labour, it seemed as if it was seeking the same objectives and others beside. Concern was shown for social issues such as poor housing, inadequate public transport, the need for cheaper electricity, improvement of the docks to aid employment and the future of the Warrenpoint ship-building industry. Indeed the efforts of its representatives to obtain wage increases for council employees were recognised by the I.T.G.W.U.(23) Nonetheless while the I.C.A. wanted social improvements it did not want any kind of socialism. Christian charity rather than state interference was desired. An example was the plea to landlords of defective property to adopt 'a truly Christian and humanitarian standpoint' and to carry out 'all repairs necessary and possible, judged by the law of God'.(24) The I.C.A. organised social and cultural events which no doubt were a significant factor in retaining members and support. The 'patriot dead' were commemorated in exhibitions, drama, music and song, and Ceilidhes were held frequently.

It had one considerable advantage over Labour in that it had its own propaganda machine. The chairman Joseph Connellan was the editor of the 'Frontier Sentinel' and secretary, Michael Keogh, was his main journalist. Their lengthy statements and speeches were published verbatim and prominently placed in the paper. Scarcely a week went by without a glowing account of an I.C.A. event. Objectivity was never a strong feature of these journalistic endeavours. For instance, in a review of the 1949 municipal election results it was predicted that Michael Keogh would become the next Council chairman and his suitability was expressed in highly flattering terms. (25) If the paper was used to further the ends of the I.C.A. it was also exploited to diminish its opponents. Before the local elections mentioned above, Labour complained about the poor coverage it received. However, it might be said that omission was preferable to some of the reports which appeared. One, for example, noted that a Labour candidate was a prominent member of the British Legion yet no mention was made of the interests and affiliations of others seeking office. (26) Thus it could be assumed that the motive was to make readers aware of the person's poor credibility on the National question. Although Connellan pointed out in 1946 and again in 1949 that he and his colleagues were reluctant to enter the electoral arena, and only 'made the sacrifice' because they were pressed to do so, they nevertheless showed little reticence in seeking votes. In 1946 he said that it was the desire of the I.C.A. to promote 'peace and harmony and avoid anything that might lead to bitterness'.(27) However, in 1949 he attacked Labour in

no uncertain terms. His references to political somersaults and 'wrigglings' of Labour candidates were undoubtedly related to the switch over from the N.I.L.P. to the Irish Labour Party. He claimed that Labour personnel had 'lost their heads over the election victories of their comrades' in the British Labour Party and had 'gone crazy' over social services for which people had 'to pay through the nose' (28)

I.C.A. members were active in the Newry branch of the Anti-Partition League and all its candidates in the urban elections in 1949 endorsed the League's 'formula' for keeping the 'cause of Irish unity' to the forefront in the campaign. Indeed it could be said that the two organisations gave each other support and encouragement and there is reason to believe that their cause was given added momentum by the actions of the Unionist government in 1949 such as banning of the Easter Commemoration Parade and forbidding the display of street names in Irish.

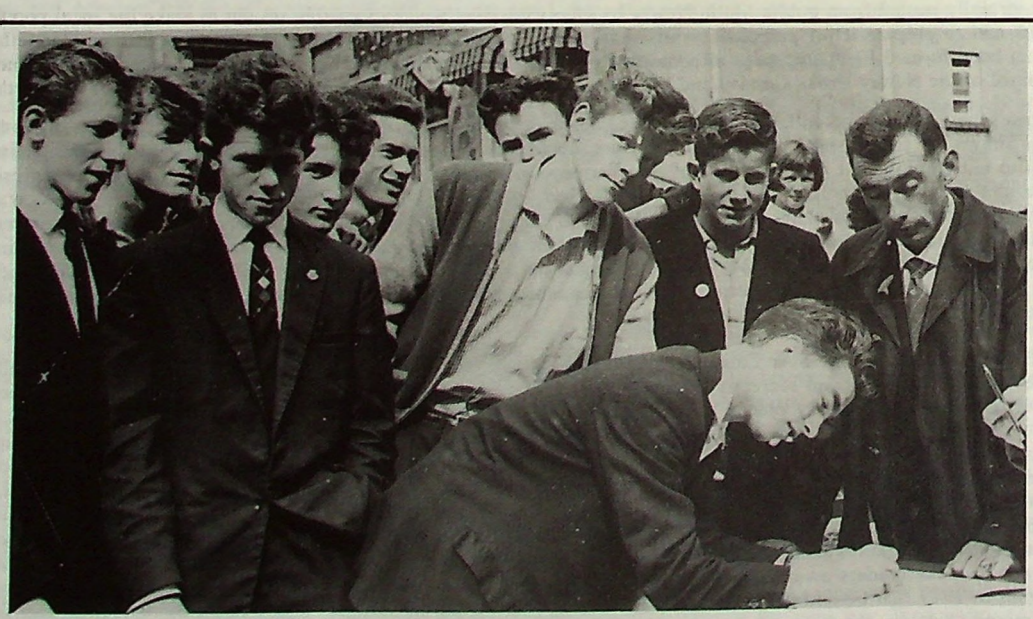
The I.C.A. with its combination of populist politics, romantic Nationalism evoked by cultural and social activities and an effective propaganda resource, remained a powerful adversary to local Labour in Newry until the late 1950's.

RIVAL AND OPPOSING FORCES
NORTHERN NATIONALISM: A BRIEF BACKGROUND SKETCH

(1) Rose, p.220
(2) Rumpf and Hepburn, p.185
(3) ibid
(4) Boyce p.365
(5) Rumpf and Hepburn p.188
(6) ibid p.189
(7) Farrell p.116
(8) Frontier Sentinel 1 February 1930
(9) Todd in Irish Political Studies. 1990 p.34
(10) Farrell p.370
(11) Armagh Guardian 21 August 1936
(12) ibid 17 August 1934
(13) ibid 18 August 1939
(14) ibid 18 August 1939 and 17 August 1934
(15) Frontier Sentinel 27 July 1946
(16) ibid 17 November 1945
(17) Purdie in Irish Political Studies p.82
(18) Frontier Sentinel 1946
(19) ibid 19 February 1949
(20) ibid June 1945
(21) Purdie in Irish Political Studies 1986
(22) Frontier Sentinel 10 December 1949
(23) ibid 26 October 1946
(24) ibid 10 August 1946
(25) ibid 28 May 1949
(26) ibid 14 May 1949
(27) ibid September 1946
(28) ibid 14 May 1949

Tommy Mc Grath (R.I.P.)
Local Historian and Labour activist.

LEVELS OF UNEMPLOYMENT REMAIN UNACCEPTABLY HIGH IN NEWRY -
THE TOWN NEEDS REAL JOBS. NOT GIMMICKY TRAINING SCHEMES.
This photo by Fabian Boyle : Newry males supporting Labour agitation to attract more jobs to the town in the 1960's)



CHARLES MC DONALD
THE BALLYBOT PHOTOGRAPHER

"Cuisle na nGael" is very pleased to be able to publish, for the first time, some of the photographs taken in the 1940's and 1950's by Charles Mc Donald. Charlie took an interest in photography when he joined the firm of Duffner Brothers' Photographers, Hill Street, Newry. Charlie was employed as a developer and remembers well how meticulous the Duffners were about the quality of their work. The well known photographer, Séamus Mallon R.I.P., worked with Charlie in Duffners. Duffners at that time, of course, handled most of the photographic business in the entire area. Films left with local Chemists were all sent to Duffners for developing. Duffners had an elaborate filing system but when storage space became scarce Charlie remembers being asked to dump hundreds of glass negatives and thousands of other negatives (what a loss to the local historian !).

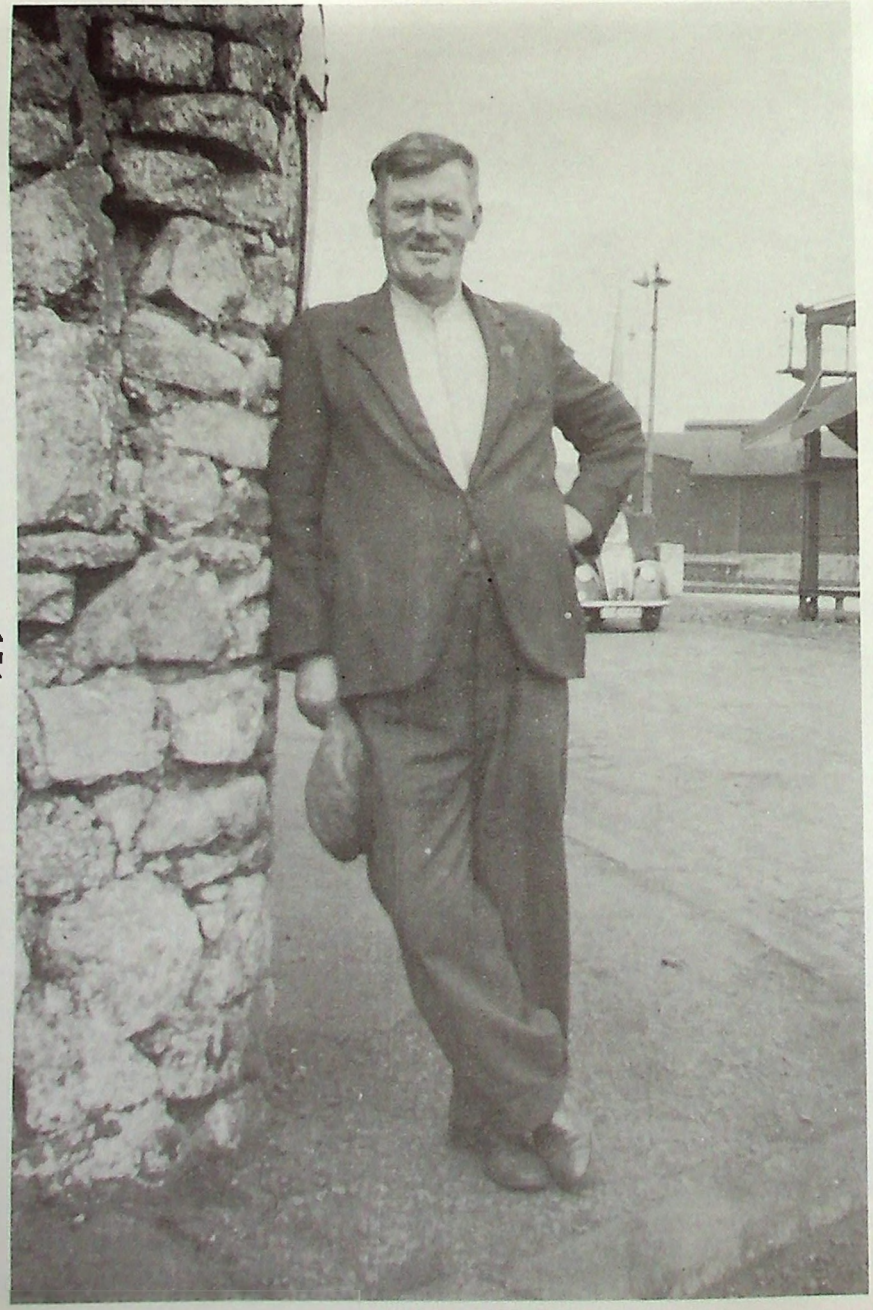
Charlie took up an amateur's interest in photography and while the pastime was short-lived, he did amass quite a few photographs of his friends, especially around Ballybot. Fortunately for us, Charlie retained most of his own negatives and was more than willing to let "Cuisle na nGael" borrow them and have them developed by the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

We are confident that our magazine will be a success this year. One of the reasons for our optimism is that the ordinary people of Newry, individuals like Charlie Mc Donald, Darkie Mc Kevitt, Hugh Golding and many others, have been prepared to share their historical resources and knowledge with the rest of the Newry community. As long as we continue to attract such support, "Cuisle na nGael" will remain Newry's most sought after publication.

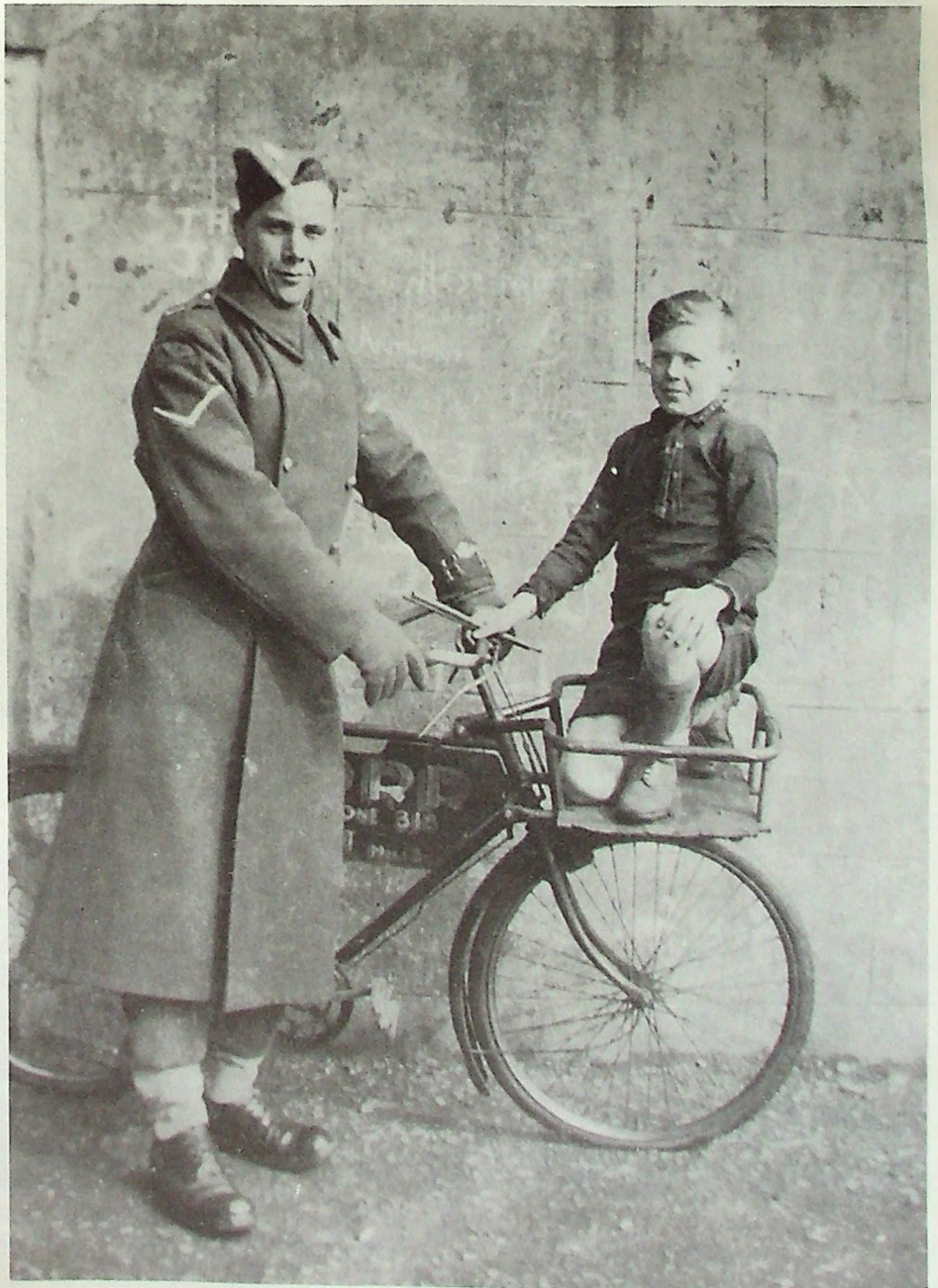
ON YOUR MARKS ! Hughie Doran, Paddy McKeown, Dan McDonald and Jackie Patterson in Cornmarket. Stewarts' house is in the background.

BACK : Robert Turley, Joe Smyth, Charlie McDonald, Jim McKee. FRONT : Larry Kearns, Jackie McManus, Dan McDonald. Glacadh an grianghraf seo i Sráid an Rí.

THE PILLARS : Back - Rocks, C. Sterritt, D. Rodgers, M. Cromwell, F. Craven, I. Berry, E. Mc Givern, P. Hillen. Front - B. Vogan, G. Fegan, A. Darcy, G. Thompson, W. Mc Laughlin (who was the mascot ?)



PADDY GORMAN



Dave Richards, a member of the Regimental Police, based in Newry.

Back - Thompson, Jim McKee, Pat O'Hare, Pat McDonald, Tommy Rushe. Middle - O'Hare, Andy Linton, Charlie McCann, Davey Moorehead, Eddie Murney, Chambers. Front - Josie and Dan McDonald.

NEWRY TOWN F.C. 1950-'51 : Back - F.Mc Guigan (linesman), T. Hagan, P. Curtis, H. Nicholson, P. Durkin, J. Richardson, H. Riley. Front - E. McMurray, J. Ruddy, B. Bryson (captain), J. Chambers, A. Reid, S. Thompson.

Lúthchleasaithe, peileadóirí,

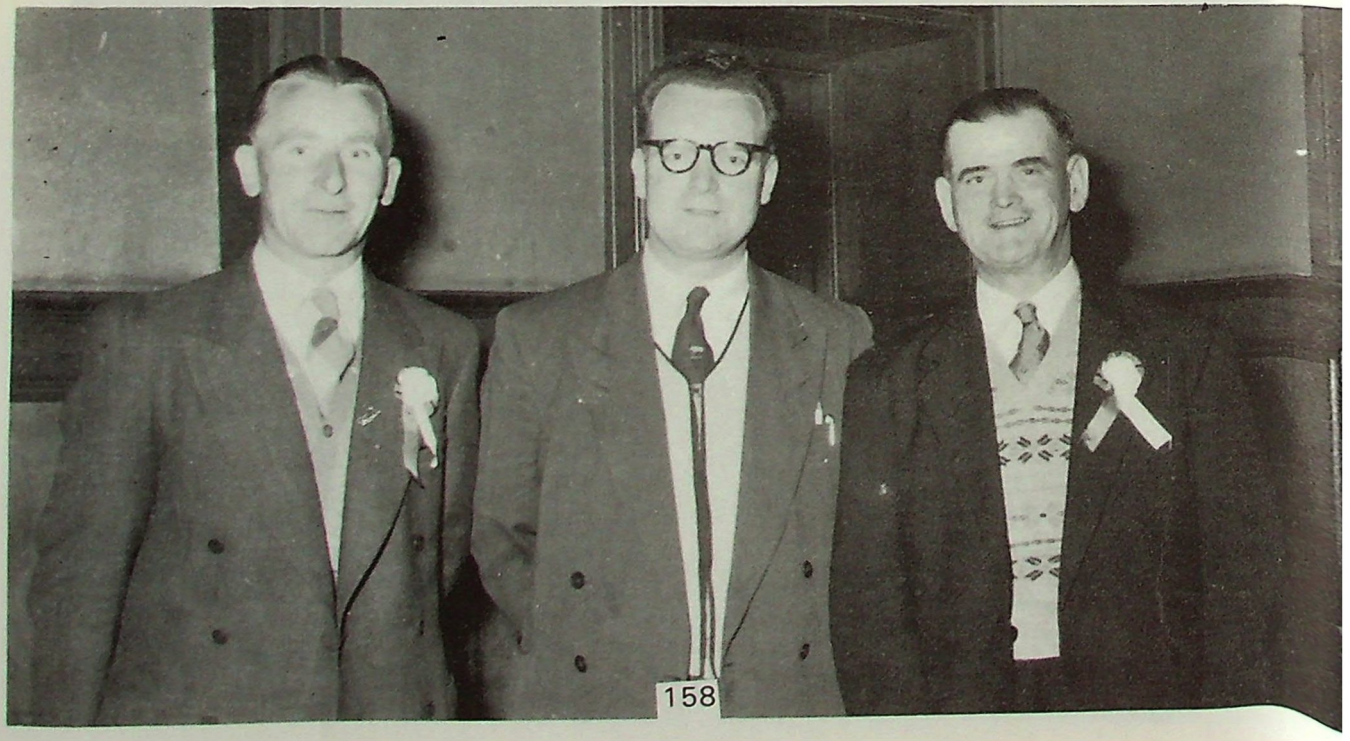
traenálaithe agus lucht leanúna.

Ól agus ceol !

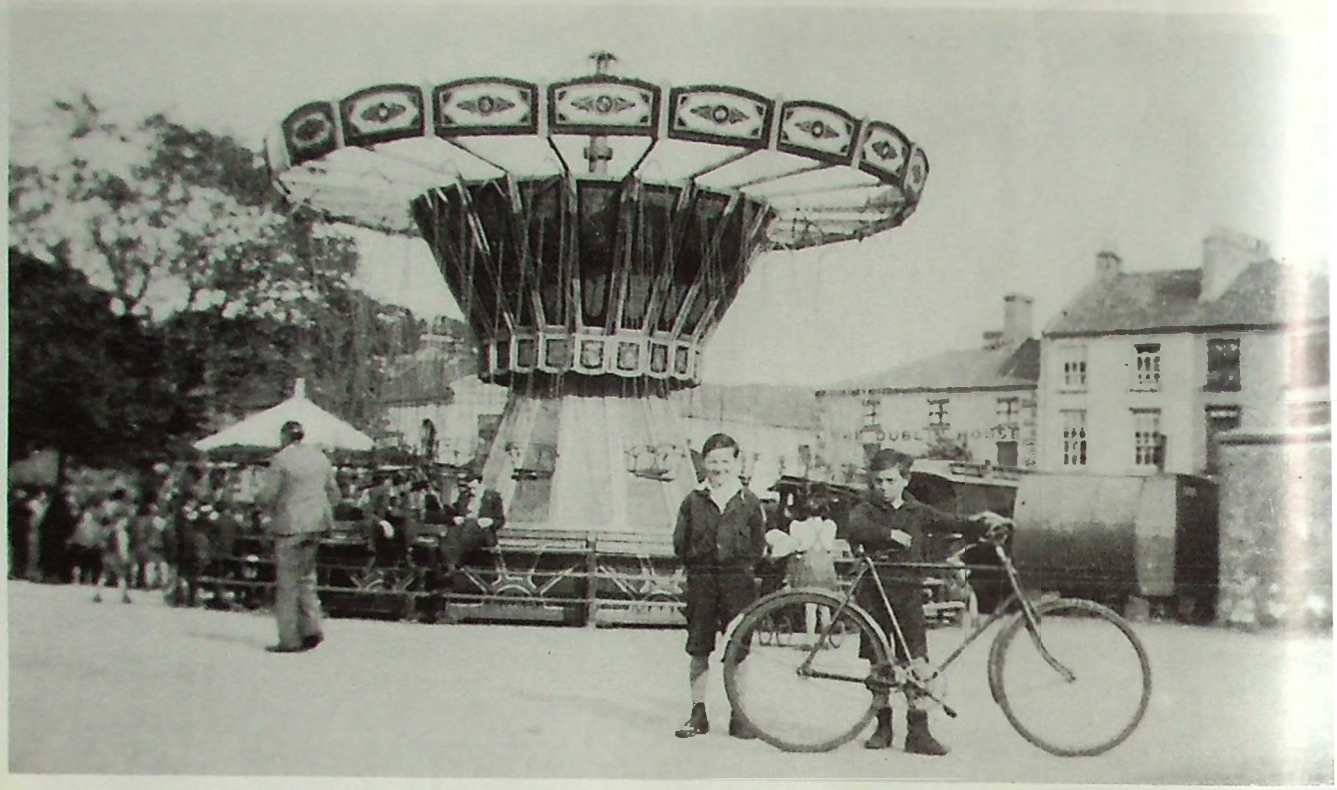
Siopa bearbóra Uí Raghallaigh

Grianghraf le caoinchead ó Charles Mc Donald

Prominent Newry Hibernians



Thíos : Hugh O'Hara agus N. Mc Donald.



Remember the Star Amusements ? It has been suggested to us that the man walking with his back to the camera was Newry's famous Tommy Markey. Can anyone confirm this ?

VICTORIA UNITED ~ PARTICIPATED IN THE SUMMER LEAGUE IN BESSBROOK : Back - Scottie Millar, J. Johnston, Mc Laughlin, 'Snowtop' Campbell, Joe Murphy, Rooney, Morgan, Mc Donald. Front - P. Lundy, Carroll, Jack Hayes, Luke Carr, James Turley.

Thuas : Dickie Kimmons, Pat Mc Caffrey, Paddy Mc Corry, Jimmy Savage, Kevin Mc Corry.

Pascal Havern and friend with Paddy Markey. Barney Toal's garage is in the background.

VISIT OUR EXHIBITION OF
CHARLES McDONALD'S PHOTOGRAPHS IN
NEWRY PUBLIC LIBRARY
Márta 1993 - Bliain na Gaeilge

Lá tubaisteach i stair na canála

Grianghraif agus cuntas le Johnny Lynch, Corrinshego

Ar an 4ú lá de Dheireadh Fómhair 1927 tharla cor i stair Chanáil an Iúir agus síleadh ar an dáta sin go raibh deireadh lena ré mar an chanáil is sine sa Bhreatain agus i dtuaisceart na hÉireann. Thángathas ar pholl millteanach mór sa chanáil achar beag ó dheas ón Albert Basin. Bhí an t-uisce ag éalú ón chanáil chomh scioptha sin go raibh baol ann go beadh na bádaí guail a bhí sa duga i bponc. D'oibir na dugairí go dícheallach díbhirceach leis na bádaí a fholmhú agus d'éirigh leo. Bhí dóthain uisce sa chanáil go fóill sa dóigh is go raibh sé ar chumas na mbádaí pilleadh ar an fharraige mhór. Idir an dá linn, bhí an t-uisce ag sileadh gan stad gan staonadh agus bhí muintir an Iúir ag éirí buartha, go mórmór iad siúd a bhí ag brath ar ghnó na canála le haghaidh arán a chur ar an tábla. Ach ní raibh imní ar achan duine. Bhí leithscéal ag daltaí scoile an lá a chaitheamh faoin tor - nior thit amach a mhacasamhail in Iúr Chinn Trá lena mbeo agus ní raibh siad fá choinne an spraoi a chailliúint.

Má bhí an Duga Albert ina chíor thuathail d'fhan oifigigh an Harbour Trust stuama agus dóchasach. Dúirt Edward A. Lambe, Rúnaí an Harbour Trust, go raibh an fhadhb ionleigheasta agus níorbh fhada go deimhin go raibh plocóid shealadach

curtha sa pholl ag John McClelland Innealtóir Phracticiúil de chuid Phort an Iúir. Múineann gá seift agus an rud a rinne an t-Uas. McClelland ná gur leag sé tochta móra troma ar an pholl. Stop an t-uisce ag éalú ach ní raibh i gceist i ndáiríribh ná sop in áit na scuaibe. Bhí 'fhios ag achan duine go raibh a thuilleadh trioblóide i ndán dóibh agus go raibh orthu comhairle gairmiúil a aimsiú gan mhoill.

I gceann cúpla lá chuaigh Edward Lambe chuig Learpholl áit inár bhuail sé le Thomas Newell, Príomhinnealtóir Port Mersey. Chomhairligh an t-Uas. Newell go mba chóir tumadóir a fhostú le fáil amach cén sort damáiste go beacht a bhí déanta. Glacadh leis an comhairle agus tháinig Edward Lambe ar ais agus tumadóir ina theannta. (M'athair féin atá le feiscint sna pictiúir leis seo agus é ag cuidiú leis an tumadóir an clogad a cheangal lena fheisteas tumtha). Fán am seo bhí scéal Chanáil an Iúir a phlé insna nuachtáin ar fad sa taobh seo tíre, agus níos faide anonn. Bhí páipéar amháin in Dún Dealgan mioscaiseach go leor ina chuntas :

" We regret to notice that Newry was very nearly shifted five miles inland the other day, and we cordially congratulate it on its escape....

.....(a seaport) has certain disadvantages. One of them was made manifest when the Newry Ship Canal sprung a leak, and the water which it usually contains - and which it is essential it should contain - began to run out through a hole in the bottom, for all the world as if you pulled the bung out of a full cask.

If that mischief had gone unchecked, Newry could have lost heavily in the way of trade, but it might conceivably have made its fortune out of a new tourist traffic. For had the water all run off there would have been left high and dry in the Basin two or three vessels usually engaged in the grimy but profitable business of importing coal. They would have lain in the dry bottom of what was once the Basin. Anything odd like that appeals irresistably to the tourists.....

And then a few well-designed advertisements and a few 'specials' in the English papers, describing this quaint perversion of a seaport, would have drawn the tourists in shoals. Greenore would open again for passenger service. The colliers might go, say, to Warrenpoint."

Nuair a bhí a chigireacht críochnaithe ag an tumadóir, agus a thuairisc tugtha, ba léir go raibh neart le déanamh go sea ag an Harbour Trust mar ní raibh an poll líonta go buan. Thug baill an Harbour Trust conradh do theilgeárta Baillie ar an Sruthán stopallán déanta as miotal a

dhearadh agus a chur in áit le poll na canála a dhúnadh - beart a rinneadh. Ach bhí saineolaithe den tuairim go fóill nach raibh an scéal thart nó baol air. Bhí an ceart acu mar an bhliain dár gcionn tharla an rud ceannann céanna in athuair ach an babtha seo fágadh na soithigh guail "Oak" agus "Portadaown" ar ghrinneall na canála - ach sin scéal fá choinne lá inteacht eile.

C.A.R.S. of NEWRY

Ford Ford

Part of Newry's Transport History -

Still contributing in 1993

BLIAIN NA GAEILGE

to the economic life of the town.

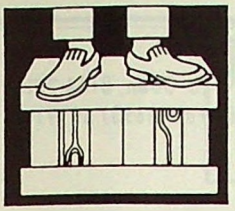
TUAIRIM - OPINION

Síle Ní Mhurchú

Ongoing concern is being expressed about the 'permanent' British Army vehicle checkpoint at Cloghogue outside Newry. The consensus of opinion in Newry is that, in the interests of peace, security and local democracy, the checkpoint must be withdrawn. It is arrant nonsense to suggest that this fixed post fulfils any military purpose. Rather than forestalling attacks, this heavily fortified, state-of-the-art installation simply offers a prestige target for the I.R.A. It is futile to argue, as some British Ministers do, that the Cloghogue barrier prevents I.R.A. attacks, especially those which reportedly emanate from within the 26 counties. The vast bulk of I.R.A. operations, anyhow, are conceived and executed within the Six Counties. Cloghogue V.C.P. is a sitting duck and the £7 million spent fortifying it has been a monumental waste of taxpayers' money for which no one will be held accountable.

The V.C.P. at Cloghogue is retained primarily because some myopic northern politicians, and their British overlords, value the semblance rather than the reality of security. Their ritual calls to 'seal the frontier' and to establish additional permanent border checkpoints are fatuous in the extreme. Already the people of South Armagh are surrounded by the most elaborate surveillance equipment currently in use in Europe. The whole apparatus is a high-tech show, an almost abstract canvas of watch-towers, laser-beams and concealed cameras. Nothing moves but it is photographed, screened or heat-scanned. The people of the area are subjected also to a near constant diet of the language of diplomatic militarism. We are told that the hill where the checkpoint is situated at Cloghogue was simply 'redesigned' and that the base 'protects everyone and makes the terrorists' job harder'. The whole thrust of the N.I.O. propaganda exercise which endeavours to justify Cloghogue V.C.P. has been to talk in generalities, to use language in such a way that the local truth is obscured. For too long in the north of Ireland we have been governed roughshod by Sir-General-Would-Be's, pretend politicians who are really only militarists in mufti. And, ironically, they refuse to listen to their own British Army strategists who openly acknowledge that random mobile and helicopter patrols are more likely to thwart I.R.A. operations than are these easily circumvented static checkpoints. For too long too, the R.U.C. has viewed Newry and district as part of the 'war zone', hostile territory where normal policing is sacrificed in the fight against terrorism (ask any member of the business community in Newry about the quality of policing in the town, especially as regards the high incidence of break-ins, and you'll get an honest answer). Where was the Community Relations Branch within the R.U.C. when the decision was made to develop Romeo 16 (as British Army jargon labels Cloghogue) at the expense of the local Catholic primary school ? Has no one in Corry Square Barracks any conception of what a Catholic school means to the local community it services? Did it not dawn on any one that Cloghogue school would have to close and that the parents of almost 400 children would be forced to send their children to school in a different parish?

The proximity to the Cloghogue military base of the Sacred Heart Church, Newry Golf Club and dozens of residential properties, all dictate that the V.C.P. should be removed. Church leaders, teachers, elected politicians and concerned local citizens have all campaigned for the removal of the checkpoint. To close the V.C.P. would undoubtedly obviate further destruction and loss of life and would be a concession only to common sense.



STREET POLITICS

Another Summer of discontent ?

Is Newry Equality Group to be proscribed ?

Alt le P.S. Mag Uidhir

The Newry Equality Group (N.E.G.) which emerged last Summer to protest against the disruption caused to traffic and normal life in Newry by the invasion of Orange marching bands on the town, is now thought to be perilously close to being proscribed by the Northern Ireland Office. N.E.G. has been described by unnamed but normally reliable security sources as 'conspiratorial' and 'well armed'. In its first public show of strength, N.E.G. members took to the streets of Newry in late June '92 and blatantly displayed some of their hardware. N.E.G. godfathers were distinguished by their heavy calibre gear. Some wore 'pointy-toed' shoes and openly carried hardened plastic key-fobs attached to their toughened leather Long Kesh belts. One fearsome N.E.G. leader, now thought to be on the run, was photographed wearing a heavy-metal 'T' shirt and brogues with potentially lethal steel heel-clips. Members of the Junior N.E.G. were conspicuous with their spiked hair-styles and some of them toted studded wrist bands. A few Juniors snarled menacingly at the RUC through their reinforced tooth-braces. Several of them wore dark glasses. Female N.E.G.ettes were equally dangerously equipped. The evening sun revealed the glint of the odd, secreted, miraculous medal chain. Stilettos were, of course, de rigeur, and flak-jackets were discarded in favour of improvised padded-cup bras secured with copper plated clasps. Front-line female N.E.G. activists were additionally resourced with the dreaded Fáinne pins.

Meanwhile, the RUC were caught off guard. The majority of them, when posted to Newry, thought that they were to participate in their usual May/June/July/August/September overtime activity of joining the Orange marchers in the town. Most turned up in their newly designed Summer uniforms. Shorts, a la Bermuda Constabulary, Hawaii 5 O shirts (with epaulettes) and Moses sandals were clearly deemed inappropriate when the RUC personnel viewed the opposition. Many officers therefore crouched sheepishly behind the inadequate protection offered by their Summer-issue convertible jeeps. One resourceful constable protected his head by making a Capt. Pugwash style hat out of the front page of his copy of the "Impartial Observer". His colleagues, in the meantime, ducked the dirty looks from the triumphal, flag-waving, banner-bearing, sabre-rattling, seditious, sit-down protesters in Monaghan Street.

ORANGEMEN MUST HAVE RIGHT TO MARCH IN NEWRY - argues Seán Ó hÍr

The street antics witnessed in Newry last Summer (1992) must not be repeated. Nationalists, protesting against the Orange band parades in Newry and the accompanying police cordoning off of most of the town, only succeeded in further exacerbating the traffic chaos and disruption to normal life. These band parades, even if, as many people believe, there are too many of them, are traditional parades and should be tolerated. What seems to cause most aggravation in Newry isn't the fact that Orangemen are on the march but that a ring of steel is thrown around the entire town throughout the duration of these parades. There is, thankfully, little evidence of sectarian street conflict in Newry and it is to be supposed that the Orange parades could be just as easily organised with the assistance of the traffic wardens. The heavy police presence which normally complements Orange demonstrations in Newry is unnecessary.

It is probable though that Summer 1993 will see more havoc on our streets unless action is taken now to forestall it. It was most unfortunate that the local constabulary saw fit to quarantine the nationalist protesters in Monaghan Street while giving what seemed like a free rein to the visiting (incidentally, well-behaved) Orange bands. Cardinal Daly has argued time and again for sensitive policing which should accord due regard to all traditions in the north of Ireland. The police should enter discussions without delay with the Orange Order and the Newry Equality Group to ensure that both groups have a right to march in different parts of the town if they so wish, and to assure Newry nationalists in particular that policing this year will not evoke unhappy memories of former confrontations between peaceful protesters and heavily armed police.

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WISHES
CONRADH NA GAEILGE
IN NEWRY EVERY SUCCESS IN
1993 - BLIAIN NA GAEILGE

Newry's last pawnshop

by John McAleavey

In order to fully appreciate the business of pawnbrokers it is important to realise that pawnbroking is said to have originated more than 3,000 years ago and is, at present, enjoying a 50% increase in business in the north of Ireland alone. The heyday of pawnshops in Newry was in the decades following the devastating Great Famine of 1845-'48. Twenty years later, in 1868, there were seven pawnbrokers operating in Newry, most of them congregated in the one area of the town. There were two in Castle Street, namely John Russell and W.F. Dougan. In the same part of the town we find Joseph Glenny with a broker's in Lower North Street; Richard Harcourt in High Street; Thomas Laing in Market Street (is this the same Laing family which was in early partnership with the famous Kinnear's shop ?); and Patrick Rice in Chapel Street. The only pawn broker dealing outside this, Newry's main shopping precinct at the time, was the famous W. Tweedie who was based in King Street (Francis Street today). There were, of course, others who dealt in clothes only, and again Lower North Street housed the premises of Mrs. Quinn, clothes broker. It is interesting to note that at this time only one pawnbroker, a Mr. William Johnston, was in the broking business in Warrenpoint.

I joined Patrick McManus' pawnbroker's, Hill Street, in 1943 and started on a weekly wage of 15 shillings. Other well-known pawnbrokers still in business in Newry at that time included Gamble's, at the corner of High Street and North Street, and Tweedie's which was situated by this stage in North Street. However, these businesses were adversely affected by the introduction of government reforms regarding Social Security payments in the 1960's and no pawn broker's exists in Newry today. Nevertheless, in cities like Derry and Belfast, pawn broking has received a major boost as a result of present economic hardship, and stiff interest rates have encouraged people from all walks of life to re-engage the pawnbroker on a daily or weekly basis.

Pawnbrokers' shops were known as the "poor man's bank" and the last of these to close its doors in Newry was that of Patrick McManus', located at No. 6 Hill Street. This business was owned in its later years, until its destruction in a car-bombing in 1978, by the late Joe Mc Conville (go ndéana Dia trócaire air). Pawnbroking was carried out on these premises from 1917 to 1968 and the majority of pledges offered during these years would have included ornaments, jewellry, clothing and oil-lamps, with loans varying from a few shillings to £50. A successful gents' outfitting shop, run by Tavey Bros., now operates from these premises, where, it is worth while pointing out, once stood a school run by Dr. Henderson whose more illustrious pupils included the patriots John Mitchel, John O'Hagan and Dr. Kells Ingram.

The pawn broker's shop was always easily identified by the presence of three golden balls hanging outside the premises. Many explanations have been given as to the origin of these balls but perhaps the most acceptable one is that they were adopted from the coat-of-arms of the Medici family of Florence who were leading financiers between the 15th century and the 18th century. Many others say that the three balls are to indicate that the odds were 2-1 against getting any money back.

Patrick McManus himself was a Cavan man, and a gentleman and a first-class employer at that. Others who worked with me in McManus' included John Shannon, who started with Mr. McManus in 1919; Joe McConville who started a year earlier; and in more recent times Arthur Markey, Pat Cosgrove, Brendan Hanley and Gerry McParland. That there was no great turnover of staff shows that we were reasonably happy with our positions. We worked a 49 hour week with Monday as our busiest day. On Mondays we started work at 8.00 a.m. and closed at 6.30 p.m. From the mid 1940's until 1960 we would have processed on average 350 pledges on Mondays; 100 on Tuesdays; 50 on Wednesdays; 50 on Thursdays and the same number on Fridays. Approximately 300 of these would be redeemed on Saturdays, 150 on Fridays (because some Newry workers got their wages on Fridays); and 50 on each of the other days of the week. I suppose that about 80% of pledges were redeemed. Unclaimed pledges made wholly of gold, silver, or other precious metals or any precious or semi-precious stones, had to be held for a period of 12 months and 7 days before being offered for sale. Any unredeemed clothes that we couldn't sell in McManus' were bought from us by Newry Variety Market traders.

The great majority of our customers were, naturally, the poorer people of Newry. Our business was steady and predictable. One could almost write out the tickets on Monday morning in anticipation of that day's customers. The ticket we used was called the 'Scotch' ticket and it was printed in red ink. The older 'Irish' ticket, printed in blue ink, was twice the size of the 'Scotch' ticket. We charged 4d. for issuing the ticket. Interest was easily worked out and we charged the same interest for a day as we did for a month. Our right to sell goods was determined by the Pawnbrokers Act (Northern Ireland) of 1954. It stipulated that :

The pledge may be sold by the Pawnbroker and shall thereby be forfeited, if it is not redeemed before or within the seven days of grace after final redemption date.

Every pledge pawned for less than £3 must be redeemed within 6 months and 7 days from date of pledging; £3 and over and less than £5, 9 months and 7 days; £5 and over, 12 months and seven days.

The 1954 legislation witnessed the first increase in pawnbrokers' interest charges since the late 19th century. If only banks could be so circumscribed ! Pawnbrokers were, of course, government controlled here in the Six Counties. We

operated under licence and the R.U.C. were among our most frequent visitors. If a bicycle was stolen, for example, the police checked the pawnbroker's as one of their first lines of enquiry. While McManus' was regulated under Northern Ireland laws, Patrick McManus himself always looked to his native 26 Counties. He was on one occasion President of the Pawnbrokers' Association of Ireland, and the McManus family runs to this day a very successful pawnbroking business in Dún Laoghaire.

Pawnbroking for me was a fascinating trade. There was no set period for serving your time but you knew you had made the grade when you were finally allowed to value goods without supervision from a more experienced member of staff. Valuing precious metals was relatively easy. It was always much more difficult to value clothes. And remember, not all our customers were from poor backgrounds. Some of Newry's well-heeled at times ended up in difficult circumstances and were only too glad of the pawnshop. That said though, the vast bulk of our pledges came from labourers' and dockers' families. Very often, if a boat had to be discharged unexpectedly on a certain day, the docker's wife would pawn an oil-lamp in the morning to get money to pay for her husband's 'piece' (lunch) and the lamp would be redeemed as soon as the docker was paid for the unloading. Some families were embarrassed about dealing with us and wouldn't even buy from our lines in gents' clothing lest they be seen entering the pawnshop. There was a social stigma about going to the pawn, so much so that what were called 'runners' did business with us on behalf of neighbours in their streets. Others had no hang-ups about coming into McManus' and I remember some of the poorest people in Newry giving McManus' employees apples and oranges at Hallowe'en and cigarettes at Christmas.

We rarely had unusual customers. Before I joined McManus', an American soldier based here during the Second World War tried to pawn a machine-gun ! Pavvies too learned how to work the system during Second World War clothes rationing at a time when 'make and mend' was official government policy on clothing. Some pavvies bought clothes coupons from hard-pressed Newry families (at 1s. 6d. to 2s. per coupon) and used these in exchange for suit-lengths and black-out materials at pawnbrokers and other drapers. The pavvies subsequently sold the black-out material in the 26 Counties where it was used for suit-linings.

Our part of Hill Street was always busy and many readers will surely remember White's Yard (between Tavey's and Connolly's shops as they are today). Here we had Hughie O'Hare's bookies and Hector Munroe's welding business. Hanna the cooper was also based there as was Paddy White the coffin-maker. The Rankin family lived down the Yard. Mr. Martin's, the blacksmith's, and Frank Sweeney's store, were also situated in White's Yard.

Even though there is an increased awareness of pawnbrokers in recent years, it must be said that the type of customer has changed dramatically since the days when items were pawned to save people from starvation or ill-health. People today are not afraid of borrowing large sums of money just to keep up appearances. Some pawnbrokers have even been offered cars and deeds of houses as pledges for loans at an attractive interest rate of 4% per month. If the present economic climate continues, it is safe to predict that pawnbroking is back, and back to stay.

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agus tá muid

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BHLIAIN NA GAEILGE

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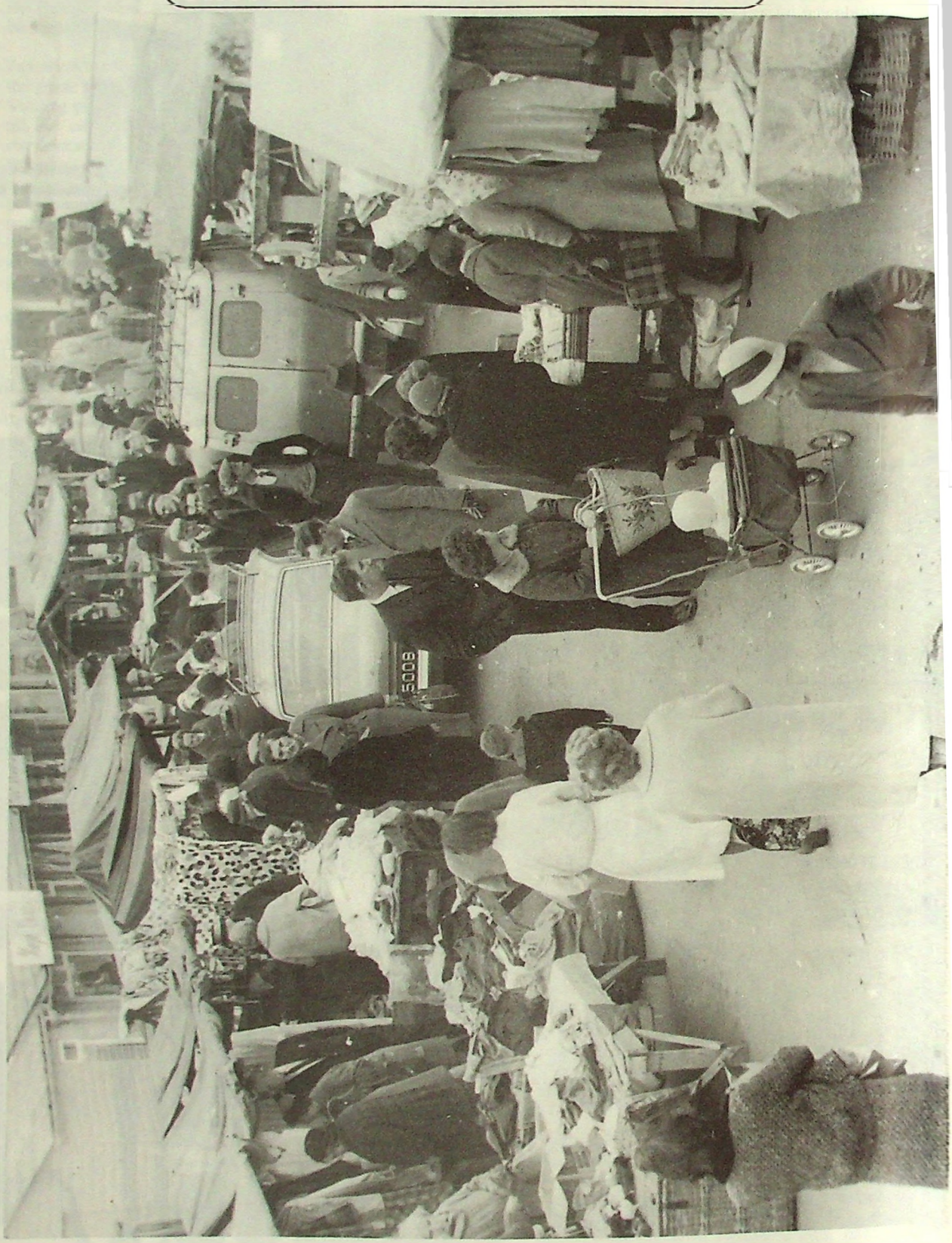
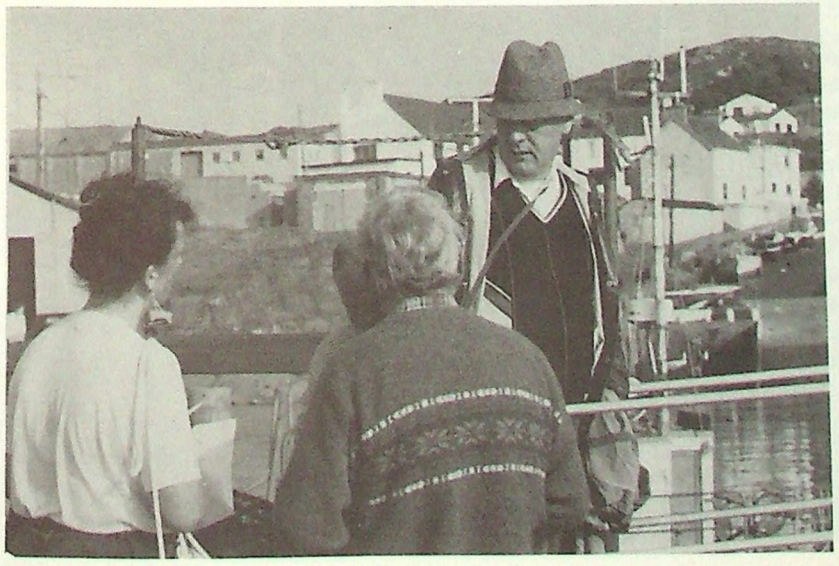
NEWRY VARIETY MARKET 1960's
PHOTO FROM THE CRONIN COLLECTION



GAELTACHT COURSES FOR ADULTS

IN COMHALTAS ULADH COLLEGE, ROSGOILL, CO. THIR CHONAILL.

Adults who are attending Irish classes, or who are keen to be introduced to the Irish language, would do well to consider one of the Summer Gaeltacht Courses offered by Comhaltas Uladh in Rosgoill, Co. Donegal. The Rosgoill Course is reasonably priced (Gaelic League teachers work in a voluntary capacity) and is quite informal. Those attending the Rosgoill College can combine their Irish lessons with a family holiday in Downings or in any other neighbouring resort. For further information contact any Committee member of Newry Gaelic League.



Famous local bands

We are grateful to Jackie McGeeney, Gabriel Curran, Tom McCabe and Joseph A. Morgan for supplying the photographs of bands which appear on these pages. Of the four bands featured, the most unusual one in a sense is the Bessbrook Hibernians Pipe Band. Bessbrook is rarely associated with the Hibernians yet there are eleven members still registered with A.O.H. Division 690, Bessbrook, and some of them attend demonstrations.

The St. Patrick's Band shown here was formed in 1952 by Micky Murphy and Barney Doyle. They met, of course, in the Hibs' Hall and raised money for the band by running functions. The Hibs' Hall was used right into the 1960's as a cinema. Michael Mathers, an old Hib. himself, initially ran the cinema for the City and Provincial Cinema Company before buying the cinema and becoming an independent operator. By 1954, when expensive uniforms and instruments had been purchased, interest in the band suddenly waned, though it was revived some time later. The Hibs' band and Camloch I.N.F. band marched on alternate years (as one might expect !) at different local Church parades. The Bessbrook Hibernians' Band finally collapsed in 1969

SAINT PATRICK'S BAND : Back row - Kenny McCartan, John O'Hare R.I.P., Eamonn Sheridan, Jimmy Kearney. Front row - Micky Morgan, Brendan McGeown, Felix Donnelly R.I.P., Gerald McAuley, Barney Doyle, Maxie McCreesh, Gene McGinnity, Freddie Mooney, Jackie McGeeney, Jim Andrews, Oliver McElherron, Henry McQuaid R.I.P., Mickey Murphy.

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congratulates the Gaelic League on its 100 years voluntary work for the restoration of the **Irish Language** and for its promotion of local enterprise.

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JAMES McKEVITT'S TRIBUTE TO FORMER NEWRY COUNCILLOR **W.F. CUNNINGHAM**

The internationally renowned historian George Rudé died this year (January 8th 1993). Prof. Rudé pioneered an approach to the writing of history which marked him out from other academics. He endeavoured to write what has been described as 'history from below', that is, history as told by, and lived through, by ordinary people. William Francis Cunningham was just the sort of ordinary man who, had he lived in Revolutionary France (Rudé's favourite period in history), would, no doubt, have attracted Rudé's interest. As it stands, W.F. Cunningham was born and reared in Newry, and to date no one has recorded or acknowledged his contribution to the welfare of Newry's working class.

When W.F. died in January 1942 he was described in the "Newry Reporter" as "a man whose entire life was devoted to the welfare of his fellow townsmen and workers." Cunningham had once worked as a compositor with the "Newry Reporter" (1912) and became local President of the Typographical Association. As early as January 1914, W.F. was elected as the first Trade Union Labour representative on Newry Council. (He had previously fought in the First World War and was retired, having been shot through the mouth). He was also elected to the Board of Guardians that year and subsequently became the first Labour vice-chairman of the Board of Guardians. W.F.'s political career, indeed, was a series of 'firsts'. He was the first Labour representative to become a member of the Newry Port and Harbour Trust. In 1938 he became Chairman of the Newry Urban Council. Two years later he was appointed as a Justice of the Peace for Co. Down. He also sat on the Technical School Committee and the Free Library Committee. All these were very grand honours, but they were not sought by W.F.. It was his work on behalf of the poor people of Newry which ensured that he topped the poll as an Independent Labour Candidate at each election in his Ward. He was available at all times to look after the interests of pensioners, widows, orphans and the unemployed. W.F. held the unique distinction of being once returned for both the North and South Wards.

There is no doubt that W.F. Cunningham was one of Newry's most conscientious local representatives. He spent hours filling in forms so that poor people could get assistance from the State. He bailed people out of the Bridewell; buried people whose families couldn't afford the burial costs; fought to retain Newry's windmill; agitated for the building of houses at O'Neill Avenue (where he later lived); and whilst anti-Partition in his outlook, still managed to attract electoral support from Catholics and Protestants. He worked especially hard on behalf of those who resided in the Workhouse, securing for them an odd mug of milk or a bottle of stout as a treat. He lobbied to improve the lot of the unmarried mothers in the Workhouse who had to do the washing for the hospital. In those days life was tough in the Workhouse. Infants lay in orange boxes on the stone floors. And there were people from country districts resident there too who were friendless but for W.F. Cunningham. All this work W.F. did without remuneration. Like another of Newry's foremost citizens, Charles Blaney, W.F. Cunningham walked everywhere. He only once participated in a Stormont Election, when he challenged John Henry Collins for the South Down seat. This was a particularly trying time for Mr. Cunningham. His opponents alleged that he was backed by the Orange Order and that his politics denied religion. At one point, as W.F. was being heckled while speaking at the Carstands, W.F. was visibly moved by the allegations against him and felt obliged to produce his rosary beads from his pocket to confirm his religious conviction. Socialism was demonised by the Catholic establishment at the time and Newry's Catholic clergy stood four square behind Mr. Collins.

A number of anecdotes survive about W.F. Cunningham. It is told that when he was invited to the official opening of the new Abbey C.B.S. School, he turned down the standard fare of wine and cheese and the Brothers had to send to Annie Dowdall's bar for a bottle of stout for their unorthodox guest Councillor. It was W.F. too who helped to organise the free trips to Cranfield for the poor children of Newry. W.F. collected food parcels supplied gratis by Newry's business community and prevailed upon Jack Bannon to make free transport available for the trips.

The night that W.F. Cunningham died, 8th January 1942, he was planning to go to a meeting of the Gas Committee, even though he had been in poor health for some time. It's a great pity that Newry Council has never seen fit to honour W.F. Cunningham's untiring work for the town, but then again, Cunningham was a realistic independent and knew only too well that party machines would always be ranged against him.

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CATHEDRAL ALTARBOYS - PHOTO TAKEN c.1948 in Newry Cathedral Park. Front Row, L - R : E. Loy; R. Jennings; T. Cunningham; B. Hughes; T. Price; S. O'Hare: Walsh ?; T.Mc Kay; J. Cunningham; P. Tumilty. Second Row, L - R : B. Cushnahan; S. Gibbons RIP; S. McGuigan; D. Jennings; E. McKevitt; P. Golding; A. McKay; J. Cushnahan; E. Burns; Mr. Alec McKinley. Third Row, L - R : Fr. Campbell RIP; T. Burke; S. McArdle; D. Loy; A. McShane RIP; T. McKeown; P. Evans; O. McGinn; B. Golding. Back Row, L - R : V. Evans; N. Morgan; Trainor; M. Burns; C. Cushnahan; P. Bentley RIP.

Photograph courtesy of the
"NEWRY REPORTER"

An Br. Ó Dónaill, sármhúinteoir agus duine lách, in éineacht le cairde agus le hiarscoláirí dá chuid taobh amuigh de Scoil Gramadaí na mBráithre.

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26 June-3 July	£80	31 July-7 August [Gleann Fhinne]	£80
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10-17 Iúil/*July*	£80	21-28 Lúnasa/*August*	£80

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Damhsaí Seite/*Set Dancing*	3-10 July				£50
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Seandálaíocht/*Archaeology*	7-14 August				£60

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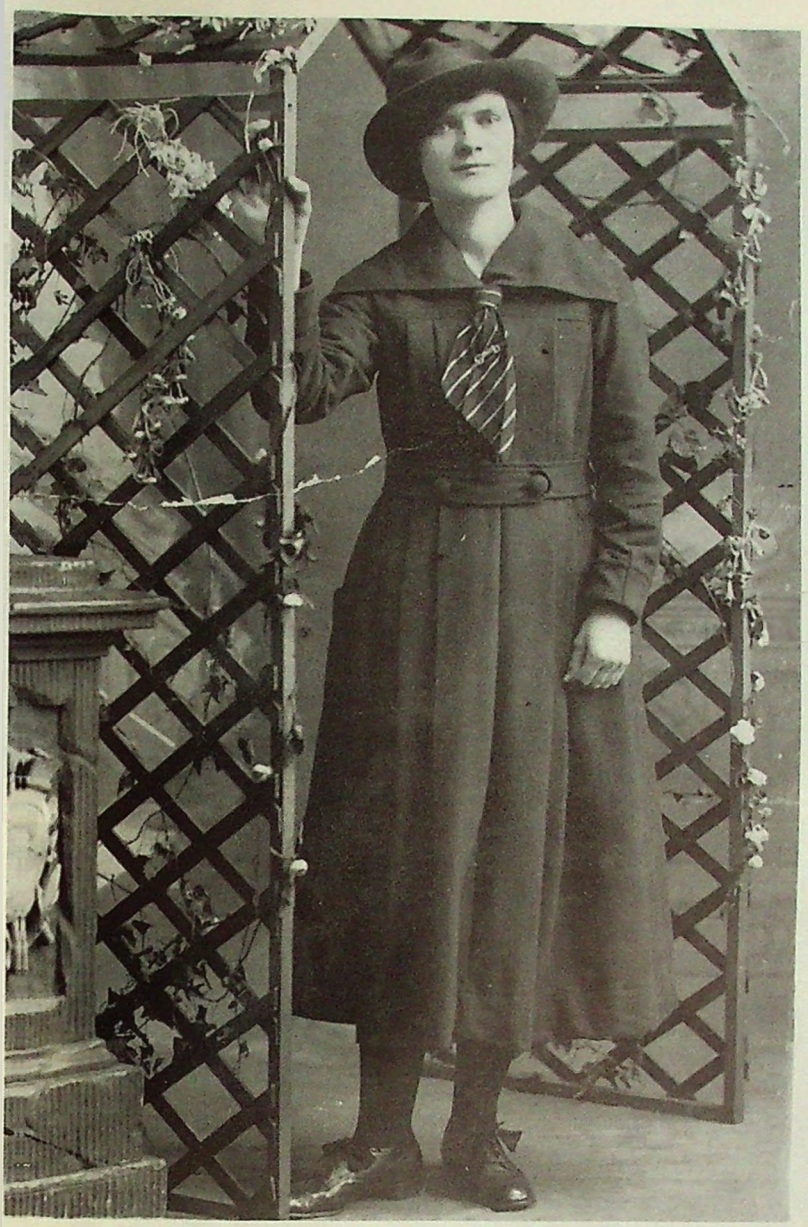
SUGAR ISLAND - A PHOTOGRAPH FROM THE CRONIN COLLECTION

Two Praesidia of the Newry Legion of Mary on a Day Trip in the 1950's.
Included in this photograph are : Art McGuinness, Tony Russell, Joe Hughes, P.J. McCartney, Johnny Gallagher, Noel Morgan, Art Mooney, Seán McAteer.
(photo by Frank Connolly R.I.P.)



IMPORTANT COLLECTION OF POLITICAL PHOTOGRAPHS ACQUIRED BY "CUISLE NA nGAEL" - TO BE PUBLISHED IN 1994 EDITION

"Cuisle na nGael" researchers have been busy hunting down photographs which pertain to the political, economic, social and cultural history of Newry. We are delighted to reveal to our readers that we have acquired, and intend to publish in our next edition, several photographs which relate to the Civil Rights Movement in Newry. These photographs, and many others of historical interest, stretching back to the 1940's, have been collected by "Irish News" journalist and Newry man, Fabian Boyle. We can only describe the collection as fascinating. The collection concentrates on Civil Rights leaders in Newry, Republican demonstrations, constitutional Nationalists, Labour politicians, and visiting Unionist leaders to the town. We are still keen to acquire more photographs, especially those which deal with I.C.A. politicians in the 1940's and 1950's, and anything at all which reflects Unionism in Newry. We have, in addition, put on slide, several other political photographs supplied by Mr. Joe Campbell, Mrs. John Fitzpatrick, Kevin McSherry, Seán Og Mac an tSaoir and John McCavitt.

Ba mhaith linn ár mbuiochas a chur in iúl do Eileen Mallon a thug an pictiúr ar chlé dúinn dá máthair, Maggie O'Hanlon (a phós Bob Savage níos déanaí), agus í gléasta mar bhall de Chumann na mBan; Bernard Larkin, Mrs. Fitzpatrick, Tom McKeown agus Kevin McSherry a thug na pictiúir stairiúla eile dúinn ar na leathanaigh seo a leanas.

Above : Maggie O'Hanlon, later Mrs. Savage, in her Cumann na mBan uniform.

Below : Leading British politician, Jim Callaghan, on a fact-finding tour in Newry.

CEREMONIES AND PARADES

PRINTERS

CANON BERNARD TREANOR (b. Feabhra 1993)
Go ndéana Dia trócaire air

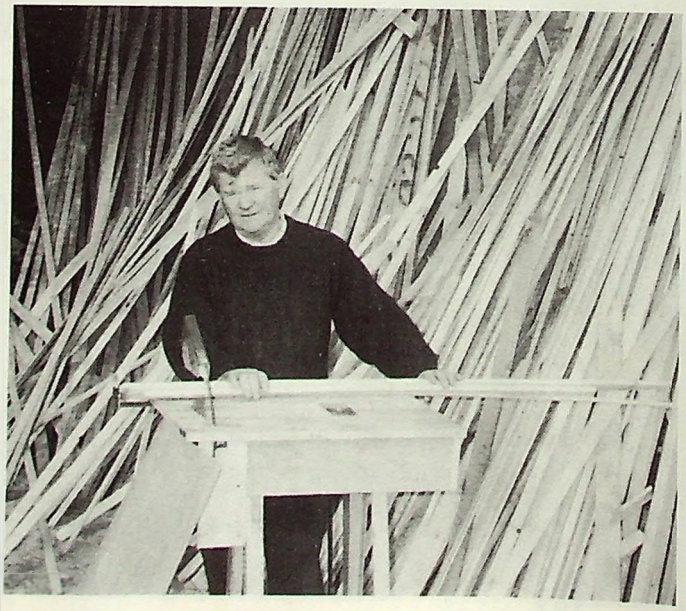
Tá brón orainn a thuairisciú go bhfuair Bernard Treanor, iar-S.P., Dromara, bás na mallaibh, i ndiaidh dó seal a chur isteach in Otharlann Chnoc na Nóiníní. sé breoite le scaitheamh anuas. Tá aithne fhorleathan ar Bernard agus ar a ch dearthaireacha eile, Canon John Treanor, S.P., Tullylish, agus Very Rev. Fran Treanor, S.P., Donaghmore, mar shagairt a bhí dílis 'riamh don Ghaeilge.

Bhain Bernard céim amach sa Léinn Ceilteach i Magh Nuad sa bhliain 1935 agu shin i leith rinne sé iarracht paróistí gaelacha a chothú pé áit ina raibh sé ag ob Bhí spéis ar leith aige i logainmneacha agus i stair logánta agus ba thacaí é Chumann Lúthchleas Gael i gContae an Dúin. Tá sagart umhal éirimiúil caillte pobal Dhroim Mór. Tá Gael caillte againn uilig.

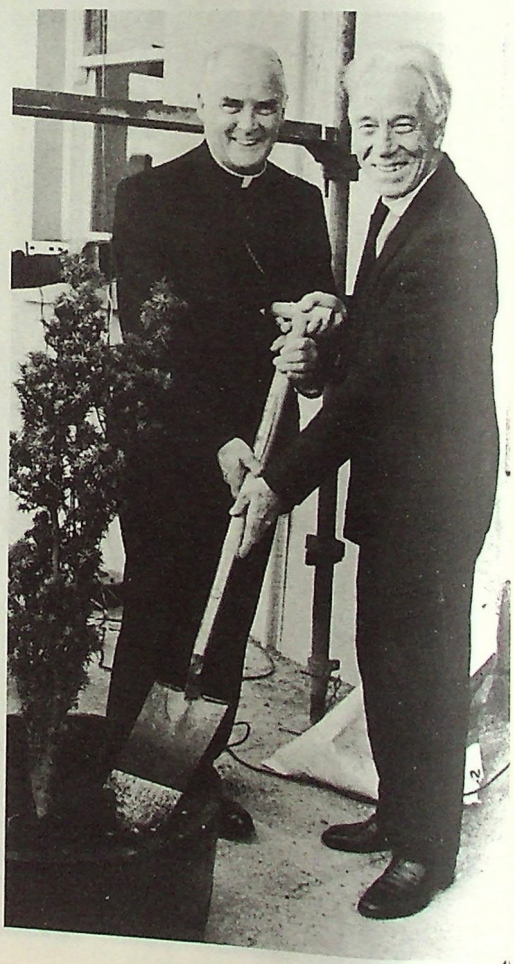
Craobh Uí Fhiaich to keep up the pressure for a radical change in N.I.O. treatment of Irish language.

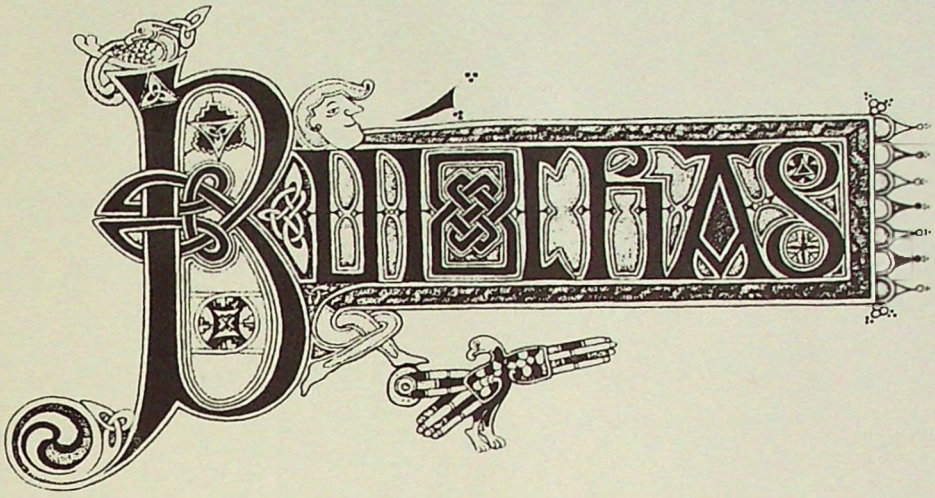
Members of Craobh Uí Fhiaich have spent this past twelve months building up links with community associations and with minority language groups at home and abroad. In our own, small way, we have been successful in consolidating our co-operation with friends in Catalonia and Bavaria, and with student groups in Wales. Our primary aim in networking with other voluntary groups in Europe has been to highlight the fact that the British Government has one policy in dealing with the Scots Gaelic and Welsh languages, and another, discriminatory policy, in dealing with the Irish language in the north of Ireland. In comparative terms, Irish language education, and Irish arts and media projects, are grossly underfunded. Craobh Uí Fhiaich, throughout BLIAIN NA GAEILGE, will continue to agitate for nothing less than equal rights with minority language communities in Scotland and Wales. We are confident that the British Government will soon change its attitude to the Irish language and can only hope that when it does so, it has the foresight to channel any additional funding through a Board or Committee which genuinely **represents** the voluntary sector.

(Thíos : Peter Mallon agus an tionscnamh is déanaí uaidh chun airgead a bhailiú don Bhunscoil. Díolann sé cipíní tine agus le tamalt anuas tá sé in ann £200 in aghaidh na míosa a bhronnadh ar Choiste na Bunscoile).



Best wishes to
Canon Wilson
on his retirement
after years of service
on behalf of
all the people of
Iúr Chinn Trá.





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Special Thanks - Charles Mc Donald

NEWRY CREDIT UNION LTD.

Comharchumann Chreidmheasa an Iúir Teo.

WE CARE - WE SHARE

Are you a member of your Credit Union ? Bí Linn !

REMEMBER

6% Dividend on savings
Dividends this year - £315,000
Maximum savings per member - £10,000
Life insurance on savings and loans **FREE** to members
Members' contributions to Somalia this year - £29,000

NEW ADDITIONAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT
CAN NOW BE OPENED
Cost of loans : 1% per month on outstanding balance

NO HIDDEN CHARGES

Tugann muid aire duit
Déanann muid ár gcuid a roinnt le bunadh an Iúir