



Summer/Autumn 1998

Number 11

# NEWSLETTER

## A SIGN OF EXCELLENCE

BALLINGARRY, Parish Hall, Thursday, July 9th, 1998

Coinciding with the sixth annual Slieveardgh Summer School 1998 (under the theme "Young Ireland and the 1848 Rebellion in Ballingarry, County Tipperary") members of the Society were delighted to welcome Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú to Ballingarry to launch the largest ever Tipperary Historical Journal, which, this year, was a special Young Ireland Commemorative issue.

"It is certainly a great honour to launch such an industrious Journal and, particularly, may I say to launch it in an area like this - I have great admiration for this particular area for a number of reasons, but one because it's very much part of my folk memory putting me on a particular road related to things Irish.

In 1955, when I was attending an Irish college in Newcastle, near Clonmel, our teacher at that particular time had the job of organising the musicians each night for the céilí and, for some strange reason, he tended to come back this distance to collect them. I can always remember some of the people - Jim Noonan, the accordion player, and Pat Lyons and of course, Larry Wall and Michael Fitzpatrick. I can remember, particularly, the sessions we had after the céilí and Larry Wall, in particular, was a master of two instruments - the fiddle and the Clark tin whistle - and I am delighted, for that reason, that he is being remembered here in the Commons on an annual basis.

So it doesn't surprise me that the activities which we have tonight, the launch of the Journal and also the commemorative programme relating to the Young Ireland movement, would also happen because I believe it all emanates from a sense of pride of place and pride of people and I think there is no stronger influence on people than pride of county and you will notice that even in the banter which goes on between people from time to time, whether it's about hurling, greyhounds or racehorses or whatever related to the county.

For that reason the Historical Journal is also, if you like, a sign of excellence, a sign of survival, a sign of challenge - maybe a sign of confrontation but I don't think it particularly matters one's political integrity in the publication itself and down through the years it's the one thing I noticed about the Historical Journal, it's historical integrity and, indeed, a sense of courage. There were times in Ireland when we tended to sanitise much of what we published - I'm not saying in a revisionist sense now at all, because I think that's for another day, that's a bigger issue altogether - but for some strange reason we tended only to publish things that were elegant or perhaps in some way "respectable" or "acceptable" and we lost a lot of



Above: Eagarthóir Gaeilge, Liam Ó Duibhir, Bill Dwyer and Michael Hall at the launch in Ballingarry

history simply because it was controversial or simply because many of these people were still living who were connected with some of the main players and so on. But, as a result of that, we lost a lot of material that would have been handed down from generation to generation but not written down, in fact, and when eventually we try to salvage it we often found that people's memories had become quite weak and diluted, if you like, and there were often great debates as to how correct the information was and I've always noticed in the Historical Journal that, you know, they told it warts and all, and I'm talking not only of the history of a hundred years ago but, indeed, the history of fifty, sixty or seventy years ago and I think, for that reason, they have made an important contribution because the Historical Journal is not like an Agatha Christie novel that you read at bedtime and then maybe give it to somebody else to read afterwards - it's going to be there for all time, hopefully, and I would just ask you tonight to be sure that it was placed in the various libraries, which I believe it is, throughout the country where it will be available, in fact, for research. So the articles that have been put down from the actual participants or relations of participants or compatriots of participants of any particular historical period will be particularly fresh. Now it doesn't mean that the people giving a particular story to the writer isn't in some way embellishing that to suit a particular cause but, having said that, I've always found as well that the Tipperary Historical Journal always endeavoured to

be exceptionally balanced in that manner and, not being a member of that committee, not being a fly off the wall when articles were being discussed, I don't know how they were decided - whether it was Marcus who decided on the content or whether the committee decided, but I often tried to imagine if the committee had an input into the Historical Journal and they were seated around a table and decided what the main theme was going to be and decided who the contributors were going to be, I was often wondering would there be any confrontation in the actual meeting itself to decide whether or not a certain person would provide a balanced aspect or whether there were two writers who could provide that particular balance as well."

Senator Ó Murchú went on to stress the important role the Journal should play in education "what I would love to see happening in the context of the schools in Tipperary is that they (Journals) would also be used in the schools - it's one thing putting them into the library in schools and putting them on a shelf and saying they're there but I think young people are deserving of the opportunity of being introduced to some very illustrious writers, for whom we need only look at the present edition and you come across a name like Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich for instance and we are all well aware of how historically correct he was; we're well aware of his scholarship..... I think we do a terrible disservice to young people not to give them the opportunity and the insight which a document like the Tipperary Historical Journal would do."

The Senator concluded by saying "of all the journals I've seen throughout the country I think the one produced in Tipperary has to be among the finest and it is a great privilege for me this evening and I am absolutely delighted to be asked to launch it because I feel that I am in exceptionally illustrious company and I as an ordinary Irish person feel particularly indebted, indeed, as an ordinary Tipperary person, feel particularly indebted to the Editor, the committee and contributors who, down through the years, gave of their time so selflessly and in such a committed manner as to make a Journal of this kind."

## A WORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

As we conclude 1998, the County Tipperary Historical Society is in a healthy state. Our Journal was launched in the parish hall, Ballingarry to coincide with the local Slieveardagh Summer School and to commemorate the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the attempted Rebellion in 1848. Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú performed the launch and delivered a very thoughtful lecture on the legacy of the Young Irelanders. The Society appreciates the generosity and support of Senator Ó Murchú in taking the time from a busy schedule to be with us on our important day.

Our Journal was again very well received and continues as a credit to our energetic editor, Marcus Bourke. It is also relevant to mention here that the Society called upon the Government to acquire the house in Farrenrory Upper known as the Warehouse, which was the site of one of the few military actions of 1848. Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú raised the issue during question time in Seanad Éireann. It is a pleasure to note that the state is acquiring the house, its associated buildings and some five acres of land. Hopes are now high that the house will be preserved for future generations and that a permanent exhibition linking 1848 to Ireland, Australia, America and Britain will be established. The Society acknowledges the role of the public representatives, especially Mr. Michael Smith, Minister for Defence, in the negotiations which have ensued the proper status of the Warehouse. Many of the people involved locally are members of the Society such as Dr. Tom McGrath, Ms. Peg McGarry and Mr. Sean Watts. Thanks are also due to Slieveardagh Rural Development Company who campaigned over the years for this historic site and

also for hosting our launch in Ballingarry. I should record here the debt of everyone involved in the 1848 commemoration to our member Micheal Fitzgerald who, in the days when few bothered about the house and its future, kept it faithfully before the public. Indeed Nicholas Maneragh, father of Government advisor Martin, wrote in *Tipperary History and Society* in 1985 how an article by Micheal in the *Sunday Press* (14th August, 1983) had prompted him to visit the house.



Senator Ó Murchú with Chairman, Willie Nolan, and Secretary Des Marnane at the launch of the 1998 Journal

Members of the Society were busy in a variety of ways in 1998 particularly in providing the raw material of history-books. Congratulations are due to the following members for successful publications: Willie Hayes on the *1798 Rebellion in Tipperary*; Martin Power on *Monsea, Dromineer*; Seamus King for the *Clash of the Ash in Foreign Fields*; Michael Cody for *All Souls*; Denise Meagher on her study of medieval graveslabs in the county; Miriam Lambe for her study of the Castle Otway estate. In the near future the late Fr. Colmcille Conway's books on the Cistercians and on Tipperary's Cistercian foundations, respectively, will be published. It is also a pleasure to record that one of the founding members of the Tipperary Historical Society, Dr. Tom McGrath will have two books published in November. Both relate to the extraordinary able and energetic James Doyle, Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin, 1786-1834. One volume is concerned with JKL's pastoral ministry whereas the second book deals with his public ministry. Such a publication list demonstrates in its range and depth that the writing of historical studies in the country is flourishing.

This year we lost one of our most valued and diligent committee members, Mr. Seán Guilfoyle, Newport, R.I.P. During my time as Chairman, Seán was the most regular attender at committee meetings and a true friend to the Society. I wish to offer my condolences to his bereaved family *{There will be a full appreciation in the 1999 Journal}*.

The Society will in 1999 have to consider ways of marking the millennium, the end of one and the beginning of another. Historians generally regard the recent past as too close for judgement, but we need to do something to preserve even orally the memories of the 20th Century. It may be an opportune time for the Society to celebrate the county in a series of tours which would embrace all the baronies. Perhaps some of the Newsletter readers would have some idea on what should be done?

Willie Nolan

# WAR HOUSE MONUMENT

Following our coverage in the last Newsletter (Newsletter #10 - Winter/Spring 1998) of the Society's hope to get national monument status for the Widow McCormack's Cottage in Ballingarry, the Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern, on a visit to the area in July, confirmed that the State had purchased the famous site.

The Warehouse, also known as Widow McCormack's Cottage will, according to Mr. Ahern, be refurbished and made the site of a permanent exhibition commemorating Young Ireland and the events of the Rebellion.

Hundreds turned out to greet Mr. Ahern on his arrival by helicopter from Galway. On his arrival at The Commons village, Mr. Ahern was officially welcomed to the area by The Minister for Defence, Mr. Michael Smith and Minister for State at the Department of Agriculture, Mr. Noel Davern. Also present to extend a welcome to the Taoiseach and his entourage were Chairman of South Tipperary County Council, Mr. Brendan Griffin; Chairman of North Tipperary County Council, Mr. Michael Hough; County Managers, Mr. Ned O'Connor, South Tipperary and Mr. John McGinley, North Tipperary; Mr. Martin Maher, Chairman of 1848 Commemoration Festival Committee and committee members.

The Taoiseach, during his address, said that the 1848 rebellion was as rich in symbolism as it was deficient in military organisation and prowess. 1848 was the year he said that the Tricolour, approved for the first time, symbolising peace between the traditions of the Orange and Green, was brought home from Paris and flown in the Commons. After the United Irishmen, Young Ireland was an important and noble attempt to unite the two traditions in support of national independence. Mr. Ahern said the revolt was an attempt by the leaders of Young Ireland to assert national dignity and rights. "The 1840's was the decade when the Union was finally discredited in most of Ireland and when all the promises made at the time of The Act of Union about Ireland being treated equally within the United Kingdom were shown to be hollow and empty. It was a period of huge social crisis and human tragedy and upheaval."

The Taoiseach said that the Widow McCormack's Cottage is an important historic monument and is part of our

national heritage. The Cottage and its outbuildings remain and the Taoiseach indicated that the State would purchase the building and a small amount of the surrounding land. "It would be our wish that the Cottage would be refurbished and made the site of a permanent exhibition commemorating Young Ireland and the events of the Rebellion," Mr. Ahern said.

The Taoiseach added that he was very impressed by the work of local historian Dr. Tom McGrath and many others in reconstructing step by step what happened in the commons in 1848. He also congratulated Slieveardagh Development Association, particularly their chairman, Seamus Troy and secretary, Peg McGarry, for their work. Mr. Ahern unveiled a plaque at the Warehouse commemorating the 1848 event and also a similar plaque outside Quigley's premises in the centre of Ballingarry village. Later, the Taoiseach officiated at a tree planting ceremony at Assumption Terrace in the village and visited the local hall for an arts and crafts exhibition.

Chairman of Slieveardagh Rural Development, Mr Seamus Troy, speaking at the ceremony in The Commons, said that it was a very proud day for the parish that Mr. Ahern had given an undertaking to make the Warehouse a national monument. "It is a special day for Slieveardagh and the whole of Ireland" he said.

# VIEW FROM D'OLIER STREET

IRISH TIMES, Tuesday, June 30 1998

This year's Tipperary Historical Journal was featured in "An Irishman's Diary", by Brendan Ó Cathaoir, in June - here's a short

extract for our readers who didn't manage to catch it: "This year's Tipperary Historical Journal - a Young Ireland commemorative issue - continues to publish important articles on the Famine. In part three of his investigation

of the Famine in South Tipperary, Dr. Denis G. Marnane shows that first and third-world conditions coexisted. While crowds flocked to Tipperary races on the newly-built railway, bodies were left on the floor of the local workhouse for up to a week. Under the editorship of Marcus Bourke, the current issue transcends county interest for at least two reasons. It contains the text of Cardinal Tomas Ó Fiaich's Young Ireland lecture in Ballingarry shortly before his untimely death eight years ago, and Patrick O'Donohue's narrative of the 1848 rising. Cardinal Ó Fiaich's article is the best survey of the Young Irelanders available, with particular reference to his beloved North. In it he celebrates the cultural, educational and spiritual legacy of the Nation, without which "the corpus of Irish patriotic songs would be very poor."



Chairman William Nolan presents a copy of the new Journal to Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú at the launch of the 1998 Tipperary Historical Journal in Ballingarry: (left to right) William Corbett, Kitty Barry, Jess Codd, Peg McGarry, Michael Hall, Liam Ó Duibhir, Patrick Mitchell, Senator Labhrás Ó Murchú, William Nolan, Denis Marnane, Mary Guinan-Darmody and Tom McGrath

## JULIA KAVANAGH

Eileen Fauset is writing a book on the writer *Julia Kavanagh* and would like to hear from anyone who may have any letters or documents in connection with her. She was the daughter of Brigid (nee Fitzpatrick) (1802-1888) and Morgan Peter Kavanagh (1800-1874). Born in Thurles, she later moved to London with her parents and then to Paris and Rouen, settling finally with her invalid mother in Nice where she died in 1877. A portrait of her by Henri Chanut was presented by her mother to the National Gallery of Ireland in 1884. By the age of twenty-six she was an established writer who met with commercial success in both Europe and America producing around twenty novels, most of which went through more than one edition, as well as short stories and stories for children. Her non-fiction includes numerous articles and reviews for English journals, a full-length study on women and Christianity, a two-volume account of travel in Sicily and three major studies of women.

The author is trying to discover who knew her, why did the family leave Ireland, with whom did she correspond and, when not writing, how did she spend her time? Julia Kavanagh never married and so died a spinster but there may be relatives/descendants from either of her parents who may have material in their possession. Should anyone have any information which might assist this research please contact Martin Maher, County Librarian, County Library, Thurles.

Eileen Fauset has written a previous article on Julia Kavanagh: *The Politics Of Writing: Julia Kavanagh (1824-1877)* Irish Journal of Feminist Studies; Volume 1; Issue 2 (Winter 1996), pp58-68

## THE BOOK COLUMN

A listing of titles of Tipperary interest recently added to stock in the Local Studies Department of the County Library. If you'd like to try and purchase any of these titles, John Butler at Bookworm may be able to help you - write [enclose SAE], fax or ring John first for availability and pricing details at Bookworm, 5 Liberty Square, Thurles; (0504) 22257 [fax number as well]. Every title noted in the Book Column since Newsletter #5, Summer 1995, is listed on the Books page on our Web site.

- ◆ Ballycahill Senior Class Group, Ballycahill N.S.; Ballycahill - Our Heritage: The Artifacts, Ruins, Buildings and People of our Area/Ballycahill N.S., 80pp, £2.50
- ◆ Bates, Betty F.; Family History Meaghers - Mahers of Killane, Tipperary County, Ireland and their Descendants in Australia 1806 - 1998/Victoria, p/b, \$20.00
- ◆ Bracken, Patrick (Ed.); St. Kevin's Schoolboys A.F.C. 1988-1998/St. Kevin's Schoolboys F.C., 48pp, p/b
- ◆ Census 1996 - Townland Data: Co. Tipperary
- ◆ Clar Fleadh Cheoil Co. Thoirbraid Arann 1998. Bansha, Bealtaine 15,16,17/Co. Tipperary Fleadh

Cheoil Committee, 109pp, £1.00

◆ Corbett, William; Drombane Co-operative Agriculture and Dairy Society Ltd. Drombane, Turraheen - Pallas 1897-1997: Celebrating a Century of Success 22/6/1997. Souvenir Booklet/Drombane Co-operative Agriculture and Dairy Society Ltd, 48pp

◆ Finn, A.; Royal and Sainly Cashel/ Catholic Truth Society (Reprint), 28pp, p/b, £1.50

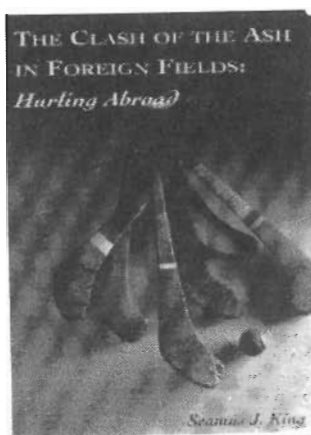
◆ Hayes, W.J.; Tipperary in the Year of Rebellion 1798/Lisheen Publications, 110pp, h/b£15.00 & p/b, £6.99

◆ King, S.J.; The Clash of the Ash in Foreign Fields - Hurling Abroad/196pp, p/b, £10.00

◆ Lambe, Miriam; A Tipperary Landed Estate: Castle Otway 1750-1853/Irish Academic Press, p/b, £5.95

◆ Larkin, M. (Ed.); Carraigmochar 1798: Rising on Slievenamon/Carraigmochar Commemoration Committee, 72pp, p/b, £4.00

◆ Maher, Albert; Signalman's Memories: Railway Life in Rural Ireland/ Thurles Rail 150 Committee, 170pp, p/b, £6.99



◆ Moran, Gerard; Radical Irish Priests 1660-1970/ Four Courts Press, 226pp, h/b, £30.00

◆ Murray, Oliver; Mikey/Parkmore Press, 125pp, £8.95

◆ Nolan, W./Simms, A. (Eds.); Irish Towns: A Guide to Sources/Geography Pubs., h/b, 249pp, £20.00

◆ O'Dwyer, M. (Ed.); The Famine in the Kilkenny-Tipperary Region: a History of the Callan Workhouse and Poor Law Union, 1845 - 1852/ Callan Heritage Society, 102pp, £6.50

◆ O'Shea, W.S.; A Short History of Tipperary Military Barracks (Infantry) 1874-1922/118pp, pb, £5.00

◆ Power, Martin; Dear Land - Native Place: Monsea and Dromineer: History/Nenagh Guardian, 390pp, h/b, £15.00

◆ Riordan, Gerard; Glenbane National School: Souvenir Booklet of the School Reunion on 8th August 1997/ Glenbane Reunion Committee, 60pp, p/b

◆ Ryan, Patrick R.; Ballad and Balance, containing The Ballad of Gravy Joe's and all the Shorter Poems/Halcyon Press, 55pp, p/b

◆ Slatery, P.J.; The Life and Times of a Railwayman - Limerick Junction 150 years on/ 257pp, p/b, £10.00

◆ Smith, Raymond; The Centenary Co-operative Creamery Society: A Century of Co-operative Endeavour 1898-1998/Mount Cross Publishers, 176pp, p/b, £5.00

◆ Tales from Mount Bruis N.S. 1997-98/56pp, p/b, £4.00

## CALENDAR

### Ardmayle Heritage Society

■ Winter Season of lectures commences in November

Contact: Tom Ryan, Ballinree, Cashel (0504) 41222

### Boherlahan - Dualla

■ Sat Nov. 14<sup>th</sup> at Boherlahan Parish Hall: Launch of Journal - many articles of local and varied interest. Launched by Philip Ryan. All are welcome!

Contact: Margaret Leahy (0504) 41115

### Cahir Social and Historical Society

■ Butler Charteris Hall, Church Street, Cahir Proposed events will be published in local paper Contact: Joe Walsh (052) 42896 Fax: (052) 42899

### Clonmel & District Historical & Archaeological Society

■ Thur Nov. 26<sup>th</sup>: *The Young Ireland Rising in Ballingarry* by Dr Tom McGrath

■ Mon. Dec 7<sup>th</sup>: *Progress and development in the restoration of the Main Guard* by Margaret Quinlan

■ January 1999: Lecture to be arranged: All events at Hearn's Hotel, 8.15 p.m.

Contact: Liam O Duibhir, (052) 22917

### Fethard Historical Society

■ Sun. Feb. 14<sup>th</sup>, 1999: *TIPPERARIANA Annual Book Fair* at Fethard Ballroom 2-6 p.m.

Details: Terry Cunningham (052) 23402/Dóirín Saurus (052) 31936

### Tipperary Town & District Historical Society

■ Tues. Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>: *A Celebration of Charles J. Kickham on the centenary of the unveiling of his statue in Tipperary town*

■ Tuesday, Dec. 8: Speaker to be confirmed Details: Denis Hartnett, 23 Marian Terrace, Tipperary: (062) 52551

## THE LOCAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS of the PUBLIC LIBRARIES of IRELAND

### FREE PUBLIC LECTURE

**Tower Hotel, Waterford City  
Thursday, November 19<sup>th</sup> 1998**

#### SPEAKERS

- Liam Ronayne, County Librarian, Donegal
- Fionnuala Hanrahan, County Librarian, Wexford
- Dr. William Nolan, UCD

Admission is FREE, all are welcome and refreshments will be provided.

Lecture begins at 8.30 p.m.

This Newsletter is published twice a year, Winter/Spring & Summer/Autumn issues

All correspondence should be addressed to the Society at: County Library, Castle Avenue, Thurles, Co. Tipperary, Ireland.

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