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History Armagh

The story of Armagh's cinemas

Local men who dug Navan Fort

Womens' fight against Home Rule

❖ An Armagh History Group publication ❖

The Hugh Carberry Boer War memorial in the Catholic cemetery, see p25

T.G.F. Paterson in Armagh prison where the Museum was based during the 1950s renovations. See p22

History Group website is an important local history resource

Armagh & District History Group's website is just over a year old but already has attracted more than 5,000 visits and over 31,000 page views.

Past issues of History Armagh magazine are almost inpossilble to find for sale so when designing the site it was decided to digitise the articles from all our magazines going back to No.1 in 2004. There are now over 60 articles on-line and all are down-loadable for free. The search feature means that any keyword in any article can now be found with the click of a mouse.

Another valuable resource on the site is a digitised and fully searchable version of William Lodge's census of Armagh city from 1770. This is a fascinating insight to life in Armagh 240 years ago.

The news section keeps members up to date with events and lectures and is proving a quick and easy way to keep in touch with our programme throughout the year.
So if you are interested in what we have done in the past or our current activities why not visit www.armaghhistoryg roup.com

History Armagh

Vol. 2 No.4 June 2012

Contents

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FRONT COVER: Upper English Street, from a slide taken by DRM Weatherup in the 1960s. Note the Rainbow cafe, Beresford Arms Hotel and John M. Wilson's two shops.

Scotch Street Residents

by Marjorie Halligan

Recovering from the "late wars"

After the turbulent events of the seventeenth century the residents of Scotch Street like James Ogle, dyer, began to repair the effects of the "late wars" on their property [Ashe]. Even in the comparative political calm of the new century repair was to be a slow process due to the outbreaks of cattle disease, harvest failure, severe weather, summer fever and famine which dogged Ulster down to 1741 (Bardon175-176). An indication of their impact on the economy of Armagh can be seen by the issuing of silver tokens by Alexander Morton, a well known watchmaker, of Scotch Street. Issued between 1717 and 1736, they could be redeemed for three pence coin of the realm. According to James Stuart's Memoirs they were current in Armagh for some time (508). Such resilience may give a truer picture of Armagh and Scotch Street in particular than the oft quoted phrase of "nest of mud cabins", by which Arthur Young (1741-1820) described Armagh in July, 1776 (Clarkson 565). His description does not sit well with the findings of the Lodge census of 1770 in relation to Scotch Street. A short précis of those entries in the census taken from our web site follows. There were four residents involved in the building trade; specifically a glazier, a slater, a "pump borer" and a carpenter. The eight labourers recorded were also most probably involved in this trade. It is true that Archbishop Robinson's tenure at the See of Armagh, beginning in 1765, did stimulate the building trade but the desire for recovery was already there. It was evident in the growing linen industry which was represented in the census by two weavers, a flax dresser and a linen merchant. All aspects of the clothing trade were represented from britches makers to milliners. The liquor trade was represented not only by publicans (5) and inn keepers (1); there were also associated trades such as malsters (3) and coopers(1). The location of three malsters in Scotch Street was no accident as the water from the Scotch Street River was essential to their trade. Butchers, bakers and gingerbread makers lived amongst the carriers, wheelwrights and whitesmiths. Widow Blakeney was the Keeper of the Charitable Infirmary which was at the bottom of the street. Only two residents were classed as being poor. This community was in a state of recovery by 1770.

Entrepreneurs

Some residents were ambitious businessmen. The ambition of the Ogles to restore their property has already been noted. Thomas Ogle exemplified this trait even more than his father, James. From 1751, onwards he cleared part of his father's property to create space for the creation of Thomas and Ogle Streets. They were opened in 1759. (Stuart 443-444). This put Scotch Street at the hub of new developments. Leonard Dobbin (1762-1844) and Thomas Stringer were also men of ambition. The history of the Dobbin family's contribution to the development of Scotch Street is detailed in Sean Barden's article in Vol. 1 No.3, 2006 in *History Armagh* (22-26). Stringer, whose inn was on the site of Decorbrite (2012) was also a linen bleacher, a distiller and a merchant. The fame of Stringer's inn spread beyond Armagh as was seen in his mother's epitaph in *Faulkiner's Dublin Journal* of February 17, 1746. It had been provided by Members of the Bar and Circuit who frequented the inn during the assizes but was more ribald than they originally intended:

"Here lies Peggy Stringer who lov'd in her soul
A toast – and a lawyer – a bout – and a bowl;
And because in a grave there's no drink to be had,
For a belly-ful living, had drunk herself dead."

(Paterson Armachiana Vol 3)

A more sober but prosperous note was struck by the advertisement of June 18,1770, in the *Belfast Newsletter* for the letting of a house in Scotch Street with "a most pleasing prospect of the Town and of the Primate's improvements".

Beneath the surface

The growth of prosperity was evident, however, political disharmony still simmered in Armagh. On March 17, 1718 a riot between Presbyterians and Anglicans came to a head in Scotch Street. The slogan attributed to the Presbyterian rioters says it all,

"Scour the Tories and Papists for they are much alike and d--- the Church of England people for most of them are Jacobites" (Connolly 101).

This incident was not as subversive as the Provincial meetings of the United Irishmen which took place in Mrs McCall's house between 1791 and 1797. Details of their proceedings are to be found in the Report to Lord Castlereagh of August 1798. Here was outlined the journey of the United Irishmen from reform group to republican society in league with Revolutionary France and intent on rebellion. The report shows the weakness of the society in Armagh. Armagh delegates were unable to raise adequate funds and to promise to engage the county militia in the planned rebellion. Mrs. McCall is not listed for Scotch Street in Lodge's census; she is the only resident mentioned in the reports to Castlereagh.

The Heyday

The United Irishmen's weakness in Armagh meant that the 1798 rebellion left Armagh and Scotch Street unscathed and ripe for development. Between 1811 and 1820 Dobbin built a fine house and refurbished surrounding properties. We know his former home as St. Patrick's Fold (2012). His building programme was completed with the creation of Dobbin Street in 1811 and the building of the Linen market, therein in 1820. Ogle and Dobbin between them had created an area of contiguous development of which Scotch Street was the hub. The early Directories of Armagh, namely *Bradshaw* (1819), *Pigot* (1824) and *Slater* (1846) confirm this. It was

the place to live. Residents such as Dobbin, Mrs Prentice and the Rev. Robert Hogg are listed amongst the Nobility, Gentry and Clergy. Hogg was a Presbyterian minister as well as being Assistant astronomer of some note at the Observatory.[1] The professions were well represented: John Colvan (jun) George Cherry, Philip Lavery and John Leslie were surgeons; James Bell and Lee McKinstry were attorneys; William Lillyman and Matthew Small[2] were veterinary surgeons. Mrs Abigail Bolton was postmistress[3] and William Barnes was clerk to the Petty Sessions, as well as being a tanner. As befitting such expansion, Thomas Dobbin was agent for the Bank of Ireland. The Northern (1835) and Hibernian Banks followed. In 1840, the Scottish Union Insurance Agency located to the street. In 1846, coaches could be boarded at either Bullison's or McParland's for Dungannon, Monaghan, Newry or Portadown. The linen traders, tanning and spirit merchants who had been the backbone of industry in the eighteenth century were still represented. In spite of the building expansion there were fewer related tradesmen among the residents. Interestingly Alexander McDonnell was listed as a drover in 1819, giving a small indication of the growth in the livestock export trade. Mary McGorelake was listed as the owner of a billiard room in 1819, though public houses still dominated the social scene.

Records

The advent of *The Ulster Gazette* which began life in 1844, in Russell Street gave a new outlet for recording local information. In *Griffith's Valuation* of 1864, its then owner, Jacob Heatley, is rated for £28 for numbers 12 and 13 Scotch Street. The highest rateable property was for the Bank of Ireland at £87, whilst the lowest in the street was for £5 10s. In contrast the lowest rateable value in Upper English Street was £10 and the highest was £100 for Jane Wiltshire's hotel (Bank of Ireland, 2012). Interestingly her landlord was Leonard Dobbin. He topped the list of property owners in Scotch Street with twelve properties. With eight properties in the street, John McKinstry ran him a close second. In May 1900, the photographic business of W. Hunter of Scotch Street was bought by the Allison brothers of Belfast. Herbert Thackwray Allison, junior (1880-1957), came to Armagh to run this branch of the family business in 1903. For almost fifty years he had the monopoly of recording Armagh lives on film.[4]

Neighbours

Allison became an important part of the Scotch Street community. He married a neighbour, Maud Irwin, whose father James Irwin ran the well-known City Bakery (Fitzgerald and Weatherup iv). In the 1901 she is listed amongst the fourteen occupants of 19 Scotch Street. There were five family members, seven boarders (grocer's assistants or apprentices) and two servants. Alexander Wallace, W.R. Todd and John O'Hanlon, other residents, with large households exhibited the same pattern of apprentices and servants living with the family. Smaller households were similar. Of the sixty returns examined twenty-three had at least one servant; only one head of householder signed by making a mark. The Berry family were unique as a family in having Irish though Elizabeth Newbanks aged eleven also had Irish. A flavour of the mixture of religion within the street is evident in the return for the South Ward. There were forty-four residents of whom thirteen were Roman Catholics, fifteen were Church of Ireland and fifteen were Presbyterians. In the same area seven houses were deemed as first class houses.

Reminiscences

This community in the early years of the twentieth century is a rich source for individual study.[5] In order to give a sense of it, I am going to use the reminiscences of some people who either lived or worked in the Street from the 1930s onwards. Robert Stinson who was ninety-two when interviewed began working in the Ulster Gazette shop in January 1932, and in a period of heavy unemployment and was glad to be employed. The business was run by Miss Susie and Miss Jane Greer who became part owners when the proprietor W.J. Greer died in a holiday accident in the 1920s. In 1932 the paper cost one penny. He recalled the effects of the Second World War on the business and on the street. Paper was scarce; profit margins for their printing contracts were slim; in 1942, there were four pages in the Gazette. Blackout restrictions were strict and there was an air-raid shelter at the bottom of the street. Whilst on the wartime fire-service with Dick Meehan he learned that his pawn shop, at 62 Scotch Street, was still busy in those uncertain times.

He remembered the sense of shock amongst the residents in June 1942, when the news broke that Gordon Allison a radio officer in the Merchant Navy and only son of Herbert Allison was lost at sea. Just a month later Walter Chapman, also a radio operator in the merchant navy suffered the same fate. His father's shop was at 70 Scotch Street. One of the earliest childhood memories of Gladys Starrett, nee Allen of 43 Scotch Street, was of the silence pervading the Street in that summer month. Stinson remembered that despite wartime restrictions he was able to negotiate better terms for their contract with the Stationery Office. After the war business improved, so that at one time twenty people were employed. Later, Stinson became managing director of the business.

The final reminiscences are from Donald Gordon (1934-2012) and his brother Noel who recalled the career of their father, Frederick Gordon (1900-1966). He established his Electrical Engineering business at 15 Scotch Street in 1934.[6] This site is now occupied by Boots (2012). Donald remembered the family legend that his father was able to buy the property cheaply due to local rumour that it was haunted.[7] The firm worked for private individuals who could afford to have generators installed to provide electricity for their homes and businesses. This was in the days before there was a province wide grid. He remembered that his father had a lathe and facilities for welding from the beginning. His father's skill was such that that their contracts for work extended from Dundalk to Omagh and from Enniskillen to Dunmurry. At the height of their business they employed thirty people. One of

their larger local contracts was installing electricity in Caledon House. Part of the challenge of this contract was coping with the very thick floor boards and installing the lead cables with the minimum damage to the old building. His father developed a special machine for slotting the cables under the floor boards. The outbreak of the Second World War put the completion of this contract on hold. Donald's wartime memories of the street include the requisition of the market area by the US army for the storage of dried food. This market was accessed by an entry beside what is now Johnston's Bakery. Noel took up the story by using family records to show how invaluable his father's skills were in wartime. When equipment and parts were scarce, he made complicated industrial switch units and other machinery from bits and pieces and repaired countless pieces of valuable equipment for industrialists and local farmers.

Both brothers remember that in the post war period business was brisk. The electrification of Caledon House was completed. Other notable local contracts included Tynan Abbey and the quarrying firms of Crozier and McComb. Three local churches St. Mark's, First Armagh and Third Armagh joined the grid courtesy of Gordon's. When wiring Portora Royal School, their father made the dome for the small observatory the school was installing. This is but a short transcript of the family memories of a talented father.

And so to the floating Morris

The picture that accompanies this article bears witness to the floods that hit Armagh and particularly lower Scotch Street on the weekend beginning Friday, 3rd October, 1958. The continuous rain which fell from Friday until 5pm on Saturday brought floods which were worse than those of 1925, as told to the *Ulster Gazette* reporter by Joe McNally, publican, of lower Scotch Street. *The Ulster Gazette* report continued with the report of the District Surveyor. Mr. Corrick stated that the heavy surcharge of water was too much for the 36 inch pipe which channelled the "Dirty River" under Scotch Street.[8] There were reports of damage from the most affected shopkeepers. They were Jimmy Guy, bicycle shop; Mrs Malone, shop; T. Flanagan, butcher; W. Johnston, bakery; C. Johnston, greengrocery; J.Webster, JP, shop and decorating business. The story of the Morris which belonged to Robert Milligan was related by Webster. He described how the flood water burst Millington's garage door and the car "came out of the garage as if it had been driven at top speed" It crossed the street to his front door where it provided an excellent photo opportunity.

Layers of History

The floods of 1958 were a reminder that the Scotch Street (Dirty) River which had brought tanners and malsters to work and live near it in the eighteenth century was still a presence in the street's history. The records and reminiscences give a brief insight into the community that Scotch Street had become by the first half of the twentieth century.

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Endnotes

1 Hogg determined Armagh's location in relation to the meridian about 1797 (*Salmon's Gazetteer*)

2 Small was the first owner of the *Ulster Gazette*.

3 Post Office moved from its site, present day *Lila's* to Russell Street 1862. Pillar box in Scotch Street with four collections per day (1870 Directory).

4 Allison sold the business to Ernest Scott in 1952.

5 For Scotch Street politics in 1921 see "*Michael Collins in Armagh*" by Des Fitzgerald in *History Armagh*, Autumn 2005, 7-11.

6 Later he bought 17 and 19 Scotch Street.

7 According to the *Armagh Almanac* of 1915, Robert Walsh, Wine merchant occupied No. 15.

8 See "*The Dirty River*" by Sean Barden in *History Armagh* Autumn 2005, pp12-15.

The junction of Scotch and Barrack streets flooded in October 1958 showing Millington's car mentioned above

Digging up Navan memories

by Chris Lynn

When I was at school in Armagh in the early 1960s, like the other residents of the City, I was aware that some American students were staying in the area: we heard that they were members of a team from Pennsylvania who had come half way across the world to dig in our famous Navan Fort: this was seen as a satisfactory acknowledgment of the international significance of the site and area. Six years later in 1969 I was a student archaeologist, now living in Belfast, and needed to add to my experience of excavation. In the Archaeology Department of QUB one occasionally saw the tall figure of D.M. Waterman of the Archaeological Survey, who had become sole director of the Navan excavation after the US team withdrew at the end of the 1963 season, coming and going from his first floor office. Not much was known generally about the progress of the Navan excavation except that remains of unusual and complicated structures of the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age were being uncovered. Where better to get experience than on a famous and interesting site near one's home town and being directed by an archaeologist who had been a protégé of Mortimer Wheeler? Waterman had a reputation for his high standards of excavation and recording, but the problem was that students were not routinely employed on the Navan dig. He had only one full-time professional assistant on the site, the director of the joint Ulster Museum/QUB Conservation Laboratory, Stephen Rees-Jones: all the digging was done by a team of around eight local workers who were recruited every summer, April-September, for the excavation and who found temporary employment elsewhere during the rest of the year. Roger Weatherup of Armagh Museum kindly provided a crucial reference and I worked as a 'temporary labourer' on the Navan dig for one month in 1969 and again in 1970. The team's ready acceptance of me and their support helped secure my place on the dig and must have played a role in the establishment of my career in archaeology.

Life on a dig was much the same then as now: there were many hours on hands and knees trowelling, scraping off the dark earth and carefully brushing away loose soil that hadn't seen the light of day since it was deposited two thousand years ago. We were conscious, however, of the unique context and ancient significance of Emain Macha, even if we didn't understand what it was, and the ancient drumlin-top site was generally peaceful, disturbed only by the rumblings at the nearby quarry. The site was run in a very orderly way: time keeping was strict, breaks were short and people were rarely absent, partly because all enjoyed the work and didn't want to miss anything. The site could feel cloistered: the public were excluded with fences and warning signs and although on a prominent hill-top with extensive views, the dig site was surrounded by thick hedges and spoil heaps so there was no view of the landscape. All the facilities such as tool sheds and limited storage space were contained in a few wooden huts beyond the hedge that surrounded the mound or rather that surrounded the space where the mound had been.

Over the previous six seasons, 1963-1968, the digging team had removed the mound, which was by now spread around its former site as a huge curving dump of soil and stones, built up from steep barrow-runs. In 1969 when I arrived, the team was excavating the remains of complex Bronze Age and Iron Age wooden structures that had stood on the level surface of the hill-top before the mound was built. To me the surface we were working on was just a layer of mixed dark soil with patches of ash, charcoal and small stones and occasional fragments of burnt bone. At first I couldn't see the edges of the filled-in pits and gullies I was supposed to be emptying so to avoid doing harm I didn't work very fast. But the help and encouragement extended to me by the permanent team soon gave me some confidence, apart that is from the time when they persuaded me to ask the director for 'danger money' for them to put up a tower of scaffolding for photography.

ARMAGH COUNTY MUSEUM - REPRODUCED WITH PERMISSION OF THE TRUSTEES NMNI

Unknown diggers removing base of sod stack on the east slope of the Iron Age mound, Cecil Gillespie standing by dumper truck.

There were usually between eight and ten workers on the site with a core of about 6 who returned every year and two or three each year who only came for one season. The foreman was Malachy Ward and the team was Cecil Gillespie from the Folly, Pat Mallon from Drumcoote Road, Francie Donnelly from Lisanally, Charlie Molloy from Moy Road and Pat Collins from Milford. Malachy had the extra responsibility of watchman on the site on weekends where many of his friends used to visit: I gathered that the odd game of twenty-five was had in the site hut on the Navan hill-top after some of the bullet matches that took place on Sunday afternoons on Navan Fort Road. The team welcomed the fact that their experience and familiarity with different soils and the practice of tidy earthmoving was appreciated in archaeology as opposed to the heavier and less exacting demands of other labouring jobs. A couple of the men still wore suit, waistcoat and hat to work, the only deference to hot weather being to loosen the tie.

The routine on the site was the same every day. Everyone arrived on foot, bicycle or car at the site for 08.30 hrs: the huts were opened, tools and wheelbarrows were extracted and by 08.45 everyone was working at his allocated task, usually continuing what was being done the previous day. Generally everyone kept their heads down and worked diligently, the only noise being the ringing scrape of the trowels: there were no radios and no headphones. There were rare practical jokes: nothing dangerous and nothing that would be visible to management. If you found the fingers of your gloves (regarded as effete accessories) stuffed with something unusual you gave no sign that anything was other than normal and discarded the gloves surreptitiously at the next break. The only conversation was with Waterman and Rees-Jones who might from time to time comment on what each person was doing, issue instructions or enquire as to the nature of the soil being removed. Sometimes the team was more formally 'put in the picture' by Waterman in a team talk, but this was usually over our heads. The courtesy was appreciated, however, and being 'put in the picture' became a euphemism among the team for a member being briefed well beyond his comprehension.

Days on the site could feel long, but the regimented working methods were designed to ensure the correct dissection and removal of the archaeological layers and features, not to burden the staff with routine. The trowels used for scraping the hard dark occupation soils demonstrated the ongoing demands of the steady work: they started off each season with 5inch long triangular steel blades and by the end of the season had almost completely worn away. The areas to be trowelled were marked off with strings along 3ft wide grid lines. Everyone started off together in a line at the edge of the area to be scraped: by lunchtime everyone had moved a different distance so that the morning's work could be viewed as a very slow race. The distance travelled was shortened by the relative complexity and depth of the features being excavated in the different areas. The men inspected one another's working areas when standing up to empty buckets of spoil into the barrow (the last person who finally filled the barrow had to empty it). Comment focussed not so much on the possible significance of what was being exposed than on its neatness, volume and relative cost to the public purse.

Interesting finds of artifacts on the site were rare compared with the volume of soil excavated. In an attempt to please the director the men would put any small oddly-shaped stone or coloured pebble in the finds tray for their area. These would be collected every day for the packaging and recording of the few real finds, but the stones would be quietly tossed into the long grass at the back of hut, until one day Waterman demanded that that no more 'd…ed' stones were to put in the trays as he pitched their worthless contents onto the soil dump.

The Navan excavation team had great regard and affection for Waterman. They were in awe of his stature, his hard work and single-minded dedication to the job in hand. His example was enough to convince them of the significance of the work, even if their concepts of the Bronze Age and Iron Age were fairly hazy (as it happens even archaeologists knew a lot less then than they thought they did). Waterman used to work for hours at a stretch leaning over his drawing board, secured on a

Excavating Iron Age occupation surface under the mound are: l to r, unknown, Cecil Gillespie, possibly Malachy Ward, Charlie Molloy and Frank Donnelly

wooden tripod, a towel around his neck in the warm weather, meticulously recording for posterity every detail of the features being uncovered. One day one of the men picked up a coin that had fallen out of his pocket into the trench beside him only to find that it was red hot. Waterman had absentmindedly put his lit pipe into his pocket while concentrating on his drawing. Visitors to the site were few and those who penetrated were generally expected and were on official business. The work team began to recognise some of them, but not by name. A team of three distinguished palaeoecologists from the university became known as 'the mould tasters' from their habit of tasting bits of soil, presumably in a rough assessment of its clay or humus content.

There was some social stratification on the site: Waterman and his assistant(s) had their sandwiches in one hut while the men had theirs in the other: I tended to float between the two. Lunch lasted exactly half an hour, enough for the men to have their tea and sandwiches and a quick game of twenty-five during which the conversation usually turned to money or rather the lack of it, the performances of certain soccer teams and race horses or the agrarian techniques of the various farmers whose lands lay in and round Navan (for whom some of the men had no doubt worked in the past). Sometimes small niggles were wryly introduced to see what reaction could be provoked. One of the crew would ask if anyone had seen the Gay Byrne show knowing that he was the only one with the equipment to receive it, another would say that he was going to keep the few shillings won at cards for the 'wee nephews in Dublin' as a sign that there would be no opportunity to win it back. Another favourite was to imply relative wealth by saying that the week's paycheque would join the others behind the mantle clock, there being no need to cash it immediately.

There was a high degree of comradeship among the team, they respected one another well, and all one had to do to gain acceptance was to pull one's weight. They talked about the occasional colourful characters who joined the team in earlier seasons but who hadn't stayed, for example the US team of student archaeologists from Pennsylvania University who had worked on the site in the first season in 1963. One of the team was very flattered - summarising the pride they all felt in participating in a unique excavation - when signing on for work after the dig finished one September: at the head of a long queue he was being offered work on a road scheme when the supervisor suddenly said in a loud voice 'Oh Mr M…., I'm so sorry, that wouldn't suit you, I forgot you are an archaeologist!'

The excavation area was protected in later seasons with a large temporary steel framed shelter, covered with plastic and tarpaulins designed and built by George Robinson and his team at the Monuments Depot in Moira. There were gutters to collect rainwater and the 60 by 40 ft structure was designed to be assembled and removed quickly. Its point was to protect the delicate sandy features exposed in the excavation from the destructive lash of heavy July rains which one year had washed out features before they could be fully recorded. This also meant that there was no need to cease digging because of bad weather and I recall some apprehension one afternoon when an intense thunderstorm burst over the site and there was a lightning strike at a nearby transformer: one of the men said, possibly in jest, that he saw sparks jumping up and down the steel uprights of the shelter. If Waterman noticed the storm he showed no sign that he did. He did, however, notice late one Friday afternoon, when we were suddenly thrown to the ground by what seemed to be a huge earthquake, to be enlightened a second later by the sound of a mighty blast from the nearby quarry. From our recumbent pose we could see huge rocks high in the air turning in slow motion like movie asteroids. Fortunately none came down near us.

After the excavation concluded in 1971 the team spent a year replacing all the stones and the earth of the mound back to the original profile which from time to time was laid out and carefully monitored by Waterman. The team were then absorbed into the Historic Monument's Branch full-time conservation team and were based at a depot in Markethill. From here they travelled out to maintain monuments in the southern region, mainly County Armagh, but I had the privilege of working with them again when they were seconded to work on rescue excavations of sites in Scotch Street and Market Street in Armagh City - and the Friary and at the King's Stables in Tray townland, not far from Navan Fort. Their expertise in identifying and correctly excavating archaeological features gleaned over many years at Navan Fort continued to be of great value and helped in training a future generation of archaeologists in correct digging techniques.

Armagh women and the Great War

by Colin Cousins

On the eve of the Great War 'upper-class Amazons' in Great Britain had 'gasped in admiration of the women Volunteers of Ulster preparing to defend the integrity of British Ireland'.[1] Soon the various women's organisations would be called upon to concentrate their efforts on a greater conflict.

There were, however, some dissenting voices who refused to become involved in the voluntary civilian aid effort. In early September 1914, Lord Gosford's land agent, W.H. Edwards, wrote to his employer in London informing him of a lack of support for the war effort from some Protestant women in the village of Markethill. Like their male counterparts, some women in the village were unwilling to assist Britain in its war against Protestant Germany. The women were apparently unmoved by the Queen's appeal, the predicament of the Belgian and French civilians, or for the plight of local soldiers shivering on cold autumn nights in France and Belgium. Edwards was clearly irritated at the 'so called Protestants who when asked to do some work – knitting and sowing [sic] declined because the British had no business in going to war with a good Protestant nation in support of the "papishes".[2]

A more positive response to the growing number of appeals for assistance came from the women of Portadown, where one of the first women's charitable groups, the Portadown Women's Emergency Corps was formed. Appeals were made in the press for a variety of articles. The lists included appeals for 'bed jackets, cholera belts, day shirts and bandages, as well as jerseys, mitts and thick socks for the fleet'.[3] Most of the groups were organised and led by the wives of serving army officers from the county. The voluntary aid contribution was not confined to the unionist communities in the county. The Sisters of the Sacred Heart Convent in Armagh sent seventy shirts and woollen helmets. Inside each shirt, the nuns had placed a sheet of notepaper and a postcard.[4] The Lurgan branch of the AWUA provided a total of four beds for the UVF hospital in Belfast.[5] A further thirty-eight pounds had been collected in aid of ambulances for the Ulster Division. In July 1915, an ambulance, which had been provided by the fundraising of Lady Gosford, passed through the village of Markethill.

The Red Cross in Armagh

On 26 November 1914, a meeting of the St. John Ambulance Association was held in the Young Women's Christian Association Hall at Lurgan.[6] After listening

Anne Crawford Acheson CBE

to the aims and objectives of the Association, the Lurgan UVF nurses like their colleagues throughout the county agreed to join the Association. Even without the assistance of the UVF nurses, the British Red Cross Society (BRCS) and the St. John Ambulance Association (SJAA) who had agreed to co-operate for the duration of the war, managed to establish twelve works depots in Armagh in August 1914.[7] The county's original combination of fifteen large and small detachments was reorganised into twelve, more evenly sized Voluntary Aid Detachments (VADs). A year later, a total of eight work departments managed by the SJAA were operating in the county at Tynan, Newtownhamilton, Poytnzpass, Markethill, Tandragee, Richhill, Kilmore and Lurgan. These depots had dispatched 24,034 articles to Belfast; the Richhill depot based at Hockley Lodge led the county's contribution supplying 15,790 articles.[8] These included comforts such as clothing, as well as medical dressings and reading materials.

Ulster provided a total of twenty-four field ambulances for use at the front, two of these were supplied solely by the contributions of the people of Lurgan, Portadown and Armagh.[9] Little is known about the women involved in the civilian aid effort throughout the county, however, the president of the Armagh SJAA, Mrs Talbot, praised the anonymous women who, 'walked miles to the depot after a weary day, and also to go out and collect the money to buy materials with the shillings or sixpences or less'.[10] In Lurgan, house-to-house collections were held during October 1916, and a sale of flowers, fruit and vegetables was arranged for 7 October, to raise funds for the BRCS.[11] A central egg depot was also established in Belfast for the distribution of eggs to hospitals throughout Ulster.[12] From May until June 1916, children and adults from Newtownhamilon collected 3,309 eggs in aid of the BRCS, the UVF hospital in Belfast and Joy Street hospital in Dublin.[13] An element of inter-town rivalry developed.

Cotton wool was one of the first medical commodities to become scarce and expensive on the outbreak of hostilities.[14] Sphagnum moss, found in abundance in Ireland was deemed to be a satisfactory substitute and was collected throughout the county and sent to receiving depots at Armagh and Portadown. It is estimated that some 5,000 of these dressings per month were exported from Ulster.[15] A canteen was established at the railway station in Portadown, staffed by local BRCS volunteers, while Armagh city

Mr Tim Geary

Molly Best visits the pyramids

provided a hall for soldiers to use as a venue for various entertainments.[16]

By 1917, Armagh had sent forty-two nurses on active service in hospitals in Great Britain and France and a few others carried out work in Armagh Military hospital.[17] Molly Best, a district nurse from Jerretspass county Armagh was working in Omagh when war was declared.[18] The sight of soldiers of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers accompanied by their regimental band parading through the streets inspired her to enlist for war service. 'These martial sights and sounds were too much for me. I applied at once to join the QA's'.[19] Molly Best went on to serve in Egypt, France and on hospital ships

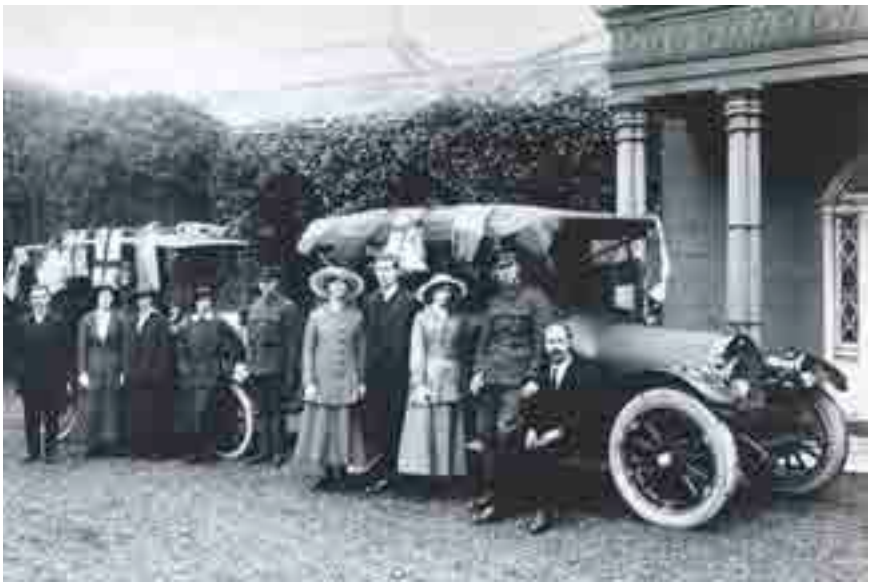
The scale of casualties during the war led to a shortage of surgical equipment for the treatment of injuries. To assist in meeting the demand the Surgical Requisites Association (SRA) was formed in 1915 as part of Queen Mary's Needlework Guild.[20] One county Armagh woman was to make a significant contribution to the work of the SRA. Anne Crawford Acheson was born in Portadown in 1882, where her father John Acheson, owned a linen business. A talented artist, she developed a career as a sculptress and her work was widely exhibited from 1910.[21] She joined the SRA during the war and assisted in the development of new, lightweight, papier-mâché surgical casts and supports, often visiting the wards personally.[22] Anne Acheson was awarded a CBE for her services, and after the war she returned to sculpture until her death in 1962.[23]

Women and Drink

Irish women who had chosen to marry soldiers meant that they had in some way abdicated their Irishness. As a consequence of this, soldiers' wives in receipt of Separation Allowance became a target for hostile criticism. In October 1915, a priest claimed that Irish women who drank the British 'blood money' were guilty of depravity and would have to account for their actions on judgement day.[24] In February 1915, the Portadown News reported on 'One of the minor difficulties of the war', when two soldiers' wives appeared before Lurgan Petty Sessions Court.[25] Mary O'Toole was charged with two counts of indecent behaviour. Margaret Hamilton appeared at the same court charged with stealing bacon from a butcher's shop in Church Place in Lurgan. The court heard that she received twenty-four shillings per week in Separation Allowance. The magistrates released Hamilton under the First Offenders Act, in case a conviction would interfere with her allowance.

There were occasions when drunkenness among women became more serious than simply creating a public nuisance or upsetting the moral sensitivities of the abstinence movement. In February 1916, Armagh County Court heard appeals on behalf of two soldiers' wives.[26] The first case involved Caroline Thompson, The court heard that she had been found drunk in the street, 'clad only in her chemise, shouting, screaming and using filthy expressions'. A police sergeant told the court that she had 'been addicted to drink for a long time'; otherwise she had been a good mother to her daughter. The judge adjourned the case for one month, stating that he believed that 'sometimes a sentence hanging over a person's head was more efficacious than the one served'.

The second appellant was not so fortunate. Elizabeth Neill was appealing against a six-month sentence for cruelty to her children.[27] The prosecuting solicitor informed the judge that this case was similar to all cases involving soldiers' wives; 'the drawing of Separation Allowance, followed by drunkenness'. The court heard that Mrs Neill's drunken behaviour had persisted in spite of the fact that the Head-Constable in Lurgan had her Separation Allowance stopped for one month. The police had the allowance reinstated for the sake of her children. Later, the police found her children at home crying, 'One three or four months old, and the other over a year, lay crying on the floor from cold and hunger'. Mrs Neill appeared at the house at pub closing time carrying a jug. She told the police that she had left the house to get some milk, however the jug was 'found to contain porter'. Mrs Neill received twenty-three shillings per week in Separation Allowance and the court was told that she had handed in a 'pledge' to stop drinking



Women in recruiting party at the Pavilion, Armagh, 1916

when she appeared before the Petty Sessions Court. Constable McPartland told the court that she had been drinking for the past year, while Head-Constable Callaghan informed the judge that she was always under the influence of drink and that her husband recently been 'sentenced to four months imprisonment for being an absentee'. Imposing the six-month sentence, the judge stated that the prison term would be 'more effective than the pledge'.

The war also provided Ireland's scandalised morality mongers with an opportunity to debate the nation's sexual mores and the threat posed by sexually transmitted diseases. Concerns in the British press regarding drunkenness among soldiers' wives and the perceived moral laxity brought about by the war led to the formation of the Women's League of Honour.[28] The League called for 'prayer, purity and temperance'. In Ireland, similar anxieties were expressed that soldiers' wives had been misspending their Separation Allowances on alcohol as well as the potential promiscuity resulting from wartime conditions throughout the country. In November 1914, Archbishop Crozier addressed a public meeting in Dublin the purpose of the meeting was to establish an Irishwomen's League of Honour.[29] Crozier informed the meeting that the League existed to 'band together women and girls with the object of upholding the standard of women's duty and honour during the time of war'. He urged women to raise public opinion among women in order to, 'combat some of the social and moral dangers emphasised by the war'.

Loss and Sacrifice

Death was an omnipresent feature on the Western Front. While the loss of a comrade undoubtedly affected soldiers, the sense of loss and grief felt by the wives, mothers and lovers of the Armagh men must have been shattering. During the first three months of the war, casualty rates in some of the regular Irish regiments of the British Expeditionary Force were appalling. While each regiment had its own recruitment area, men from across the length and breadth of Ireland could be found within the various battalions of Irish regiments. Between 5 August and 31 October 1914, the 2nd battalion, Royal Irish Rifles lost 267 men, 2nd battalion, Royal Irish Regiment, 259 men, 2nd battalion, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, 139 and the 2nd battalion, Connaught Rangers lost 119 men.[30]

Up until the offensive on the Somme in July 1916, Lurgan had sustained a total of 434 casualties.[31] These included 127 killed, 243 wounded, sixty-five invalided, thirteen missing in action, eleven gassed and the remainder died from disease or accident. In the first week of the Somme offensive, forty-four men from Lurgan were killed, thirty of whom were serving with the 9th Royal Irish Fusiliers.[32] Three weeks after the commencement of the battle, the Portadown News informed its readers that the town's casualties totalled 113, thirty men had been killed or died of wounds, eighty wounded and six were reported as missing.[33] The scale of the losses and the immediacy of the war resonated in the editorial of the Armagh Guardian. Delmege Trimble observed, 'Truly is the war is being brought home to us'.[34] He informed his readers, 'every loyal district of the county is bereaved'.

Some families had the misfortune to suffer multiple deaths. John Hutchinson and his wife Margaret from Richhill had the sad distinction of being the parents of the first member of the 9th Royal Irish Fusilier to be killed. Their son James was killed on 25 April 1916. Two months later, their other son John, serving with the same battalion was killed two days before the battle of the Somme on 28 June 1916.[35] Mrs Hobbs from Union Street in Lurgan lost three of her sons on the Somme. In June 1916, Mrs Mary Halligan from Loughgall, received news that her husband had been injured in a gas attack. A few weeks later, the Portadown Times reported that, 'Private Robert Halligan, of Loughgall, has been killed in action'.[36] Robert Halligan was alive, however he was unwell. Following a period of leave he returned to his battalion, and in December 1916 he succumbed to the effects of pneumonia. Robert's brother, Thomas served in the same battalion. Having survived the Somme, Messines and the third battle of Ypres, he was killed in action on the 25 October 1918, just seventeen days before the Armistice.

Notes

1 Arthur Marwick, *The Deluge*, p. 88. Marwick contends that images of UVF nurses were influential in the establishment of the Women's Volunteer Reserve in Great Britain in 1915.
2 W.H. Edwards to Lord Gosford, 9 Sept. 1914 (PRONI, Gosford papers, D/606/5/13).
3 *Portadown News*, 19 Sept. 1914.
4 *Armagh Guardian*, 2 Oct. 1914.
5 *Report of the Joint War Committee and the Joint War Finance Committee of the British Red Cross (*1921), p. 730.
6 *Lurgan Mail*, 12 Dec. 1914.
7 *Report of the Joint War Committee,* p. 729.
8 *Armagh Guardian*, 21 July 1916.
9 *Report of the Joint War Committee*, p. 730.
10 *Armagh Guardian,* 20 July 1917.
11 *Lurgan Mail*, 8 July 1916. This was an advertisement for the collection of articles for a charity sale to be held in October 1916.
12 *Report of the Joint War Committee*, p. 730.
13 *Armagh Guardian*, 23 Sept. 1916.
14 Margaret Downes, '*The civilian voluntary aid effort*' in Fitzpatrick (ed.) Ireland and the First World War, pp. 27–37; p. 35.
15 *Minutes of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council,* Jan. 1916 (PRONI, Ulster Women's Unionist Council papers, D/1327/6); Bowser, The Story of British V.A.D. Work, p. 149, According to Bowser, some 250,000 dressings were sent from Ireland during the war; FNL Poynter (ed.), Medicine and surgery in the Great War 1914-1918 (London, 1968); also see for example the pamphlet, The Surgical Requisites Association, Oct. 1916, p. 1.
16 Report of the Joint War Committee, p. 730.
17 *Armagh Guardian*, 21 July 1917.
18 Molly Best was born at Cloughenny, Jerretspass, County Armagh in 1886. At the age of twenty-three, she entered the Royal Victoria Hospital Belfast where she trained as a nurse. After three years, she moved to Dublin to complete her training. She was then transferred to Omagh which was also the regimental headquarters of the Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers. I am grateful to Mr Timothy Geary, Molly Best's grandson for all information and sources relating to Molly Best.
19 Molly Best, '*Moving on*', Royal Victoria Hospital League of Nurses Journal no. 1, 1950, pp 1-3. QA's refers to the Queen Alexandra's Imperial Military Nursing Service.
20 *The Times Educational Supplement*, 8 Nov. 1917.
21 I am grateful to Alexia Bleathman, Archivist, Archive of Art and Design at the Victoria and Albert Museum, London for this information.
22. *Ladies Pictorial*, 16 Dec. 1916; Daily Sketch, 24 Jan. 1917.
23 I am grateful to Anne Crawford Acheson's nephew, Professor Faris and his wife, Mrs Faris for providing me with family details and all sources regarding Anne Crawford Acheson.
24 Hibernian, 30 Oct. 1915.
25 *Portadown News*, 20 Feb. 1915.
26 *Armagh Guardian*, 4 Feb. 1916.
27 *Armagh Guardian*, 21 July 1916.
28 The Times, 3 Oct. 1914; 14 Dec. 1914; Robb, British culture and the First World War, p. 50; Degroot, Blighty, p. 237.
29 Church of Ireland Gazette, 27 Nov. 1914.
30 Soldiers Died in the Great War (CD-ROM, Naval and Military Press, 1998).
31 Lurgan Mail, 10 June 1916.
32 Soldiers Died in the Great War
33 Portadown News, 22 July 1916.
34 Armagh Guardian, 22 July 1916.
35 Ibid.
36 Henderson papers. I am grateful to Robert Halligan's grandson, Mr John Henderson, Loughgall, for access to his letters and for providing other information.

Heading to the Flicks

Armagh's cinema's The Cosy, The City Cinema, and The Ritz

by Kevin Quinn

"The Cosy" Armagh's first cinema: 1911-1961

The Cosy, as it was to become affectionately known, was opened under the title of "The Electric Picture Theatre" on Monday 14th August 1911 in the former General Post Office in Russell Street, just about where the Armagh Credit Union is today. The advertisement which took up a complete page in one local paper described it as;

> *"A picture theatre second to none at your own door….The most up to date films Absolutely! Flickerless shown!…Pictures by the most perfect machinery…Twice Nightly at 7&9…Saturday's Children's matinee at 3 and performances at 5, 7 & 9..Prices of Admission ..3d, 6d &1s…Seats can be reserved".*

The notice continued, revealing how it probably came to be known as The Cosy; "The Cosiest Picture Theatre in the Three Kingdoms"
Finally ending with;

> *"M. Casey, Resident Manager. Proprietors- Irish Provincial Electric Theatres, Ltd. L.E Forester, General Manager".*

The First Billings

Within days of the grand opening the Electric Picture Theatre's press release stated;

> *"Enormous success, everyone delighted!! The excellence of the pictures has charmed all who have seen them".*

It is uncertain to as what film opened the new picture theatre on the14th August, but the main feature for the rest of the first week was; "*The Magnificence story of The Fall of Troy*". The supporting films were; "*A Ride to Death, Surf Riding, A Soldier's Gratitude, Who Owns the Mat? Accidents will Happen*"
The most eye-catching of the entire supportive bill was; "*Wiffle's loses his Monocle*"
The main and supportive features were changed every three days to a completely new bill, and on the 21st August the main feature was; *King Philip* supported by "A stirring Wild West drama and *A Woman's Love*"

The Picture House

It is uncertain when the name of the Electric Picture Theatre was changed to The Picture House. However to the locals it did not really matter what the cinema's official title was, "The Cosy" was what they had definitively christened it, and so it remained until the day it closed. The Cosy had a seating capacity of 350, with the stalls (or The Pit) seating up to 250, and a further 100 seated in the balcony. The Cosy not only showed movies but also showcased variety acts by local and national artists. The Cosy's 50 years spanned the era of the silent film and early talkies, to the golden era of the Hollywood stars of the 30s, 40s and 50s. However, by late January 1961, due to falling attendances the company that owned the Cosy at that time Irish Empire Palaces Ltd, who had cinemas on both sides of the border, finally closed its doors.

The local papers mourn the loss of "The Cosy"

In January 1961 the local papers covered the closure of the City's first cinema, and in doing so provided an insight into the affection that was held for the Cosy at the time and also the people who had

The Cosy cinema, Russell Street, c.1912

worked there. An Armachian who was interviewed at the time by a reporter said;

This is a sorry day for me. Some will have longer recollections of the Cosy than I. I first went to it as a school boy during the First World War to see the 'Battle of Ancre'. I went with a party from the Royal School and it was the only time the head master Mr Henry Hirch gave his consent to such a visit.

The interviewee continued;

On a later occasion, another junior and I ventured in to see the John Ferguson the Man They Could Not Hang and were caught coming out and received six of the best from a prefect for our audacity.

Other Armachians were asked about their favourites;

Well Pearl White, in her extraordinary serialised adventures were hard to beat…if one wanted excitement well Charlie Chaplin of course, was the laughter-maker supreme…Tom Mix was the king of the cowboys

And there was one last reflection from a fan of the silent era of film;

"The transition of the talkies was a remarkable scientific step but many a time I have wished I could have walked in again to the Cosy and see the films which were silent save for the magnificent musical accompaniment by Barney and Bella O Neill".

Jim Magee The Cosy Commissionaire

The longest serving member of staff was James (Jim) Magee of Banbrook Hill who was the commissionaire for 44 years. Jim joined the staff of The Cosy in 1916 at the age of 16 and was there when it closed in 1961 aged 60. During his time Jim worked under nine different managers.

According to the papers at the time,

Night after night he walked the isle, keeping order, and showing patrons to their seats. Even though the police station was only next door, he never had to seek their assistance to deal with any of the patrons. The man behind the torch was a popular figure, despite his apparent unhelpfulness when cinema goers inquired "What's it like". Apparently Jim in all his time who had seen all the stars of the silent era and early talkies never watched a movie right through to the end.

When asked what film most stuck in his memory Jim replied; *The Follies of 1929* as he remembered the manager remarking as the reels rolled,

That's a funny title for a picture to show in 1930.

The papers concluded with;

Much missed….with a special word for the long serving, genial Mr James Magee.

ARMAGH GUARDIAN NEWSPAPER

Jim Magee 'Cosy Commissionaire'

Memories of a Projectionist

Pat Corvan joined the staff of the cosy in September 1955 as a projectionist. Pat had been a frequent Cosy patron as a child. Pat recalls paying 3d admission and watching *The Dead End Kids*, a 25-30 minute feature about a New York east-side gang. In Pat's time he could recall full houses but the one film that really packed the house was *Song of Bernadette*. According to Pat the queues stretched up Russell Street and around John Wilson's corner and snaked across Russell Street and around the corner at the Central Bar. Alas it all came to end in late January 1961 when Pat mounted and rolled *Goliath and the Barbarians* staring Bruce Cabot the last movie to be screened at the Cosy. Ironically the Cosy had opened and closed with movies themed in classical/ancient history *The Fall of Troy* in 1911 and *Goliath* 1961.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

Pat Corvan loading the last reel of film in The Cosy

The People's Picture Palace

The People's Picture Palace opened on St Stephen's day 1912 and was located in the Irish National Forester's Club in Market Street, just above the present day Northern Bank. Early in the same year a packed meeting had taken place in the Forester's Club with the aim of forming a picture company. The demand for shares had exceeded the chairman's expectations and on the night £100 had been subscribed. The company intended to cater for the people of Armagh and the money raised was to be spent in Armagh. So by December The People's Picture Palace Ltd. had been established and a Dr Ormonde was appointed manager.

Electric Picture Palace opens

On Thursday the 26th December 1912 the People's Picture Palace opened its doors and according to its press release,

Entire change each night of the world's finest animated pictures…showing the brightest and the best…Come and judge for yourselves...See Fred Leslie the great descriptive and actor vocalist. Next week Shamus O'Brien and the Charge of the Light Brigade…Engagement of Miss Hilda Fordyce charming character vocalist & comedienne direct from the Empire Theatre Dublin".

By January 1913 the People's Picture Palace press release read;

"Enormous success!...Crowded nightly with the elite of Armagh,...World's finest pictures...Great pictures...The Path of Atonement...also Half a hero Don Juan"

Similar to The Cosy, it's uncertain when the name change occurred but by the late 1920's The People's Picture Palace was now known as The City Cinema.

The Sunday cinema ban & censorship controversy

I wonder if Johnny Weissmuller, the first screen Tarzan, and Maureen O'Sullivan, the first screen Jane, were ever aware that the city fathers of Armagh thought that the 1934 movie *Tarzan and his Mate* was an improper movie and attempted to have it banned.

In January 1935, according to the city council, the majority view held by the citizens of Armagh was that all the city cinemas should be closed on Saturdays and Sundays. So it would seem that based on this assumption, a ban would come into effect after the 31st March 1935. Furthermore the council would also put in place a censorship committee to censor all the films to be shown in Armagh cinemas.

The managements of the Armagh cinemas protested against the new proposed regulations and sent a deputation to the Ministry of Home Affairs. The same department promptly responded to the controversy by stating that Saturday matinees will not be interfered with, a plebiscite will be taken to find out if the ratepayers as a whole are in favour of Sunday closing of picture houses and finally the composition of the censorship committee will be extended to include two local cinema representatives.

The origin of the proposed ban could be traced to a deputation made up from representatives from all the local churches which had met the commissioner the previous December requesting Sunday closure, although they differed in the grounds they gave. At masses during the run up to the plebiscite Catholic voters were advised not to vote.

Out of a total of 2670 eligible voters 521 cast their votes with 302 in favour of Sunday closing and 219 against, a majority of 86 in favour of closure. On the Saturday after the Thursday ballot two children were reminded by two adult males picketing the Cosy not to go in for the afternoon matinee.

Before the commissioner had made his decision, the cinema's managements announced that they would close on Sundays. The reason for the delay in the final decision was probably due to the ambiguous outcome of the plebiscite. Only about a fifth of the electorate had voted 300 citizens out of a possible 2700, about a ninth of the citizens were opposed and even a smaller portion in favour. Furthermore, the small poll was partially caused by Roman Catholic voters being told not to vote and the ones that did allegedly did not even go the cinema. This was further compounded by the design of the ballot paper which had been confusing resulting in some voters voting the wrong way.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

The City Cinema in Market Street

Censors object to "Tarzan and his Mate"

Cinema managements informed the commissioner that they had been misrepresented in the case of 14 films that had been submitted for censorship prior to the plebiscite. At local masses it had been alleged that certain films had been screened without first being passed. Cinema managements stated that a synopsis of the films in question had been submitted on the 14th January and was subsequently passed for screening. However, according to the town clerk a verbal report was given to the cinema managements whether one particular film should been shown to the public and that it would be the wish of the committee that it would not be screened.

To show or not to show

With the censorship committee leaving a gaping Achilles Heel in their response, the cinema managements asked the most obvious and logical question; "Was it not the role of the committee to pass or reject films?"

According to the cinemas unless the committee rejects a certain movie they had to pay for its rental. Therefore they had no option but to show it. Furthermore in their opinion, the film in question was more or less for children and that they had made certain cuts to the film. According to the Commissioner the whole episode had been an unfortunate misunderstanding and that the cinemas would not have deliberately shown anything that would not have met with the approval of the citizens. Not surprisingly the Commissioner shortly afterwards abolished the censorship committee and appointed the town clerk as sole judge.

In September 1932 a Mr John Kelly a native of Newry became the City Cinema's managing director. It had a seating capacity for around 300 and was the only cinema in town with double seats for couples. Also it was the first cinema in Armagh to use cinemascope (widescreen) and the only cinema to show Gael Linn subtitled films.

City Cinema memories

John Kelly the managing director's son recalled his memories of the City Cinema. John remembers that *The Robe* released in 1953 staring Victor Mature was one movie that he could recollect from his childhood, as it was the first movie in Armagh to be shown in widescreen. John recalls that the cinema was packed to its

capacity with a queue stretching up Market Street and round into Castle Street. John also recounted the story when he was around 3 years old and was playing in the projectionist's box. There was a film playing at the time and John accidently got one of his hands trapped in the chain drive of the projector which resulted in the loss of the tops of three fingers. For years after the accident the running joke was that the film that was being screened at the time of the accident was the 1946 Peter Lorre horror movie *The Beast with Five Fingers*.

Closure

John Kelly Senior was interviewed by the local press in March 1963 a few days before the final show and had this to say;

> *"The closure was due to the inability to get sufficient first-class films, the influence of TV and the loss of patrons to bingo. The introduction of bingo into the city was a big blow to the cinema".*

So at midnight on Saturday March 23rd 1963, the doors of the City Cinema closed for the last time. The last movie to be screened was the war time comedy *Operation Petticoat* staring Cary Grant and Tony Curtis. The doors were finally closed at 12 midnight with the Kelly family and friends saying goodbye to the City Cinema with a farewell party.

The Ritz: 1937-1980

The Ritz was opened on Monday 6th December 1937 by Union Cinemas Ltd and was Armagh's first purpose built cinema. The first film to be shown was; *Bulldog Drummond at Bay* staring John Lodge & Dorothy Mackaill. In the first week it also screened *My Man Godfrey* starring William Powell and *Kathleen Mavoureen*, starring Tom Burke and Sally O Neill.

The admission was, "Matinees, Stalls 6d & Circle1shilling" rising in the evenings to "Stalls 1/3d & Circle1/6d". On Christmas Eve and Christmas Day 1937 the film *The Frog* was screened starring Gordon Parker.

Shortly after it opened it became part of the ABC group of cinemas and remained in their ownership until1974.

Memories of a Ritz Projectionist

Cathal McSherry joined the staff of the Ritz in 1956 as projectionist. In Cathal's time the film that he recalls that brought full houses for three consecutive nights was the 1958 John Wayne western *Rio Bravo* also starring Ricky Nelson and Dean Martin. According to Cathal the queue was four deep stretching down to Zwecker's corner and round into English Street. Cathal can also recall the City Council Censorship Committee sitting on a few mornings at 10.00am censoring the 1959 films *Room at the Top* staring Laurence Harvey and Simone Signoret and *Look back in Anger* starring Richard Burton and Claire Bloom.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

The Ritz cinema in Market Street 1952.

A Horror Movie & First Aid

Mickey Kelly a long serving member of The Order of Malta can recall the unique events that occurred at the Ritz in 1974 with the screening of the infamous horror movie *The Exorcist*. The film had been released in USA the previous year and by the time it had arrived in Armagh there wasn't a set of rosary beads to be had in the town. With the stories of patrons becoming hysterical during the film, the management approached the local unit of the Order of Malta and asked them could they be on standby in the Ritz. So for a week during each screening two adult members were based in the balcony and in the stalls, handing out glasses of water, comforting those who had become distressed and bringing round those who had fainted.

The Final Curtain

By the mid 1970's the ABC group was no more and the Ritz closed in 1974 for a period before being taken over by an Enniskillen business man. It finally closed in doors in early November1980. The last film to be screened was the Walt Disney science fiction movie *The Black Hole* starring, Maximillian Schell and Anthony Perkins.

Shortly afterwards it was structurally altered to become a venue for a roller disco which opened on Friday 19th December 1980.The roller disco only lasted for a very short period before closing in early 1981. For the rest of the 1980s the main shell of the Ritz became part of a builder's provider's yard before finally being demolished in the late 1990s to make way for the new Marketplace Theatre.

Acknowledgements;

I would like to thank Pat Corvan, John Kelly, Cathal McSherry and Michael Kelly for sharing their memories with the readers of *History Armagh.*

I would like to thank the Irish Studies Library Armagh for the use of their newspaper archive.

News shames public perception of St Luke's

By Eric Villiers

In 1970 Dr W. A. G. McCallum, consultant psychiatrist, gave Armagh Guardian reporter Ivan Lambert permission to do an in-depth, no holds barred photo-feature of Lambert's experiences as a recovering alcoholic in St Luke's Hospital, Armagh. It was a bold initiative not only for Dr McCallum, but for Lambert too who would be writing as an insider. The story appeared on March 5, 1970 and the shock element felt in the community at the time was not down to Lambert uncovering any social injustices but to his bravery in confronting his problem in such a public manner.

By 1970s Ivan Lambert had drunk himself out of some of the best jobs in Northern Ireland journalism and was no longer welcome inside the portals of places like the *Belfast Telegraph*, the *Belfast Newsletter*, the *Irish News*, and several lesser bugles of the age.

Long before he got his final marching orders in Belfast he had been living on his reputation as the 'top man', a charmer who got the scoops by a combination of cunning, a sympathetic ear and his own brand of lateral thinking – if he found a bunch of reporters hanging about a crime scene waiting on an announcement, he looked for a way around the queue and failing that left a message with the others to get in touch with him at such-and-such a bar when something broke.

In the late 1950s, pandering no doubt to his addictive personality Lambert could invariably be found weight training in the Dunbar Gym in Belfast alongside Olympians like Mary Peters and Mike Bull, as he became 'Mr Junior Ulster' in body building. Blond and good-looking he was renowned for dating beauty queens – he was particularly fond of girlfriends with cars because he couldn't be bothered to learn to drive.

Examples of his imaginative thinking to beat the opposition abound. At one incident, blocked by police and a gathering press pack at the top of a street, he counted off the terraced row to the 'murder house', before slipping off down an alley to the back door where he assured the lady who answered that he would get rid of the reporters if she would answer a few questions. After filing his copy he returned to pass the story on to the rest of the press pack, who promptly disbursed.

Or again at a notorious murder trial while working for the *Telegraph* he got stuck in a packed press box well away from the courtroom door. As he waited on the verdict he realised there would be a stampede for the only telephone box in the vicinity of the courthouse and quietly wrote two stories 'Guilty' and 'Not Guilty'. He handed both, and £5 (today that would be £200) to a local 16-year-old junior reporter to stand by the door, who on hearing the verdict was instructed to throw away the 'wrong' story and phone the other copy through to the news desk – he made the deadline.

In those days journalism and alcohol went hand in hand and one Belfast public relations firm kicked off the week on a Monday with a noon drinking reception – think crates of Guinness rather than cocktails and canapés. Several hardy individuals, including Lambert and the legendary Tom Samways of the Irish News, could reputedly finish off a crate in an afternoon, file their PR copy and head off for an evening in a downtown bar.

By then Lambert was paving his path to St Luke's and eventually arrived there after being given yet another chance in Armagh by his latest boss, the award winning journalist Victor Gordon.

His arrival at St Luke's took him by surprise and he found the camaraderie and atmosphere refreshing as patients like him waited to recover buoyed up, as Lambert wrote by their dreams:

"Cigarettes and whiskey and good looking

From left to right, the late Ivan Lambert, Richard Burden, Stephen Richardson, Anita McVeigh (now a BBC senior presenter) and the late Winston McConville.

women were always in the thoughts of the younger men… fortunate enough to have found their way to St Luke's… there must be many who will never reap the benefits of such a fine, homely hospital."

It was early in 1970 when he checked himself into St Luke's and after being helped to get off drink, he returned to the hospital to beg to be allowed to write about his experiences.

Space does not allow us to re-produce his 4,000-word piece but his account of his 'rehab' – as it would be called today – is a rare piece of journalism. It took considerable guts to write about it in that era and in such a tightly knit community.

In his piece he rages against the stigma still attached to St Luke's, yet he too falls into the trap himself by unfairly becoming 'superior' about the 'dreaded Hollow' within the hospital, which, in his eyes seems to be something of a nasty 'naughty step' for those more heavily dependent that himself. However the level of his admiration for the staff as they rise above the pub jokes and easy put downs about the institution, overshadows his own little prejudice and indeed any he found around town:

"The most striking thing about the place is the dedication of the male nurses… Harry Campbell from Crossmaglen, Tony Gorman and Gerry Fegan, from Keady, Charge Nurse William Williamson from Armagh, or his deputy James Woods, Conn Toner and Mickey Keenan, also from Armagh, who never seem to lose their temper despite the long irregular hours."

Among the patients he recalled fondly was John, an erudite, self-taught 38-year-old from Portadown, who was a bit of a philosopher and whose favourite subject was identifying for Lambert "the many ways in which mental illnesses manifest themselves…" He once began a long dissertation to Lambert with this revelation about a condition most famously expounded by Sigmund Freud: "You know Ivan, most of the illnesses in here are psychodynamic" – from there he went on to name every tablet and its purpose and to which patients it should be administered.

For John getting out usually meant hitting the bottle, selling his mother's furniture and finally sleeping rough before relatives ran out of patience with him and he returned "to his second home, St Luke's."

For Lambert, John was an example of the highly intelligent people he met in St Luke's where he often came on patients deep in conversations at profound levels. As well as John and Transistor Tom (he carried a radio everywhere) there was:

"Nickey from Newry… with his polished blue suede shoes… who had drunk his way through the war and most of the better establishments in England… without regrets."

Darker still was his report of the distraught, inconsolable 13-year-old missing his parents even though they were so devoted that they travelled from outside Keady every night and stayed with him all day on Saturday and Sunday.

And of another of the younger people he met he had this:

"It was a disgrace to see a 19-year-old youth from Portadown coming in as a hardened heroin addict – with one of his wrists bandaged because he had attempted to kill himself."

Sadly, like other talented sportsmen who would follow him out of Belfast in the 1960s – men like George Best and 'Hurricane' Higgins – Ivan Lambert faced a last unbeatable opponent, drink. He struggled for years and, never quite able to hold down a permanent job, died prematurely just short of his 64th birthday.

NEW BOOK CELEBRATES MOY'S FORGOTTEN EXPLORER

Eric Villiers, a founder member of the Armagh and District History Group, has authored a new book, Ireland's Forgotten Explorer: Australia's First Hero, which celebrates Moy man John King, only survivor of the first crossing of Australia in 1861.

The exploration, which went down in history as the Burke and Wills Expedition, was the biggest in the country's history and claimed the lives of seven explorers, including the leader Robert O'Hara Burke from Galway and his deputy William Wills from Devon.

The book is to be launched on June 12 at Dungannon and South Tyrone Borough Council during an evening that will feature a unique combination of Irish-Australian music, song and food. Among those taking part in the launch, which is being hosted by the council's Mayor, supported by the book's publishers the Ulster Historical Foundation, Belfast, will be Lord Alderdice, a descendent of King's brother.

The evening will include a taste of the historic Australian broth skilligolee that saved King's life. Also known as 'skilly' it was an Aborigine version of the soup King first tasted as a child during Ireland's Great Famine of 1845-1852.

In 1861, after the expedition had been missing for months, King miraculously emerged from the Australian outback to report the discovery of vast tracts of rich, fertile land and dispel long held fears of a dead, sterile centre. In mining settlements gold nuggets were thrown into his coach, civic authorities threw lavish receptions, and he was locked into hotel rooms to protect him from women. Yet within weeks the prevailing Victorian social and racial imperatives had airbrushed the handsome 22-year-old from popular history.

Australia's powerbrokers determined that King, an "Irish working man" was unsuitable as the first hero of the new colony and the two dead leaders of the party, the Anglo-Irish gentleman, Robert O'Hara Burke and English scientist William Wills, would be history's heroes.

It truth King was a natural leader and better suited to the rigours of exploration than the unstable Burke or the painfully compliant Wills. Educated by Quakers, King lived through the Famine years, graduated from a tough Dublin military academy, fought in the Indian Mutiny and was a teacher, linguist, musician, army sharpshooter, horseman and camel handler. As the expedition foundered King's intelligence, religious principles, practical skills, "muscular frame" and appreciation of Aboriginal culture coalesced to save his life.

1912: Women fight against Home Rule

by Mary McVeigh

Home Rule was without doubt the big issue of the day a hundred years ago. There was the real possibility that Ireland was going to be given the power to govern itself some time soon. The minority Liberal government was in favour of it and indeed was dependent on the support of Irish nationalist MPs at Westminster. Even if the Conservatives and unionists who were in the majority in the House of Lords opposed it, thanks to the Parliament Act of 1911, they no longer had the power to exercise an outright veto. Instead they could only delay proceedings for two years.

Throughout Ulster there was considerable opposition in the press and elsewhere to it both before and after the passing of what became known as the Third Home Rule Bill in April. Armagh's two local papers, *Ulster Gazette* and *Armagh Guardian*, both avowedly and unashamedly unionist in outlook, made no secret of their commitment and support for the campaign. Scarcely a week went by without copious column inches devoted to the pronouncements of the various groups and individuals who were to the fore in the anti Home Rule camp.

One such group was the Mid-Armagh Women's Unionist Association which came into being on 29th June 1911 just six months after the setting up of the parent body, the Ulster Women's Unionist Council, to which it was affiliated. Its first annual meeting was held in January 1912 and, from the reports of it, there is ample evidence that it was an enthusiastic and vibrant branch. Although enrolment only commenced in the previous August its members already numbered 3,400 within the parliamentary constituency of Armagh: about 1,725 from the city, another 460 in Markethill and 325 in Keady. There were also members in Richhill, Middletown, Charlemont and Tandragee.[1]

The main aim of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council at that time was to seek support across the water by alerting English and Scottish voters to the dangers of Home Rule and seeking support for candidates who were opposed to it. This was done by sending over speakers capable of putting forward the message to both pro and anti gatherings and also by targeting voters in specific areas by post, sending them papers promoting the union. Although at this stage none of the Armagh members were ready to travel they managed to raise £28 to fund speakers from elsewhere 'in little less than fortnight'. They also had been 'actively engaged for some months in sending marked newspapers and leaflets' to some 356 voters in 'recent elections' in both England and Scotland. From the start of the new year they were going to focus on one particular constituency, the 'entire Bridgetown division of Glasgow which has a Liberal (thus pro Home Rule) majority of 800. About '120 ladies' were involved to date but more were expected to participate and relevant material for posting was being held in ten depots throughout Mid-Armagh.

A ladies organisation

This was very much a 'ladies' organisation run by those who were in the top echelons of society. Its membership might have been large but it still managed to primarily confine itself to the more affluent and socially secure: the landed gentry and those whose male relations were in the higher status professions or clergymen. If there were any from the lower orders in the ranks they certainly stayed there and never gained office. Titles would appear to have been significant assets. Lady Lonsdale was the Armagh President and Lady Stronge was a committee member. Interestingly, however, when both these women were approached to set up an Armagh organisation they were otherwise committed as was the Countess of Gosford who was in Cannes at the time.[2] It was however, one with similar social status who was the main driving force from the outset. She was Mrs Julia Elizabeth Mary Talbot, the only child of Sir Capel Molyneux, 7th Baronet of Little Castledillon and the wife of William John Talbot, the owner of some 4,000 acres of land in Roscommon and Galway and who was Deputy Lieutenant of Co. Roscommon and High Sheriff for County Armagh in 1903.[3] It would seem that the couple divided their time between Little Castledillon and Mount Talbot, Roscommon. Mrs Talbot may have been away for periods from Mid Armagh but there is no doubt about her commitment to the Women's Unionist Association. She started it in her own home, chaired it and was a Provincial Representative on the Executive Committee of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council. Among the issues she raised at executive level was the need to establish a London office which was favourably received and a proposal to form associated children's and girls' clubs which was ruled out of order.[4] Equally committed was the Hon. Secretary, Mrs Alice Beatrice Shaw-Hamilton who came to Armagh when her father, J.L.E. Dreyer, a distinguished Danish born astronomer, was appointed Director of Armagh Observatory. Her husband, Robert

James Shaw-Hamilton was Dean of Armagh and the couple lived at Darton, Killylea.[5] As well as her secretarial duties and addressing at local meetings she became one of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council speakers who travelled over to England and Scotland. Meetings were held, often in Orange halls, all over Mid-Armagh, particularly in the early months of 1912. For instance, at the end of March there were meetings in Cordrain, Tandragee and Milford and in the following week there were reports of others at Kilcluney, Markethill and Killylea.[6] All were given maximum coverage in the local press. They were not all solemn, sombre occasions. Indeed one held in the City Hall in May was billed as a 'drawing room concert' and was hosted by both the Women's Unionist Association and the Little Builders of Empire, which would seem to have been a youth organisation which was promoted and supported by Julia Talbot. The platform was 'very handsomely decorated' and 'a charming display of loyal emblems and plants lent quite an imposing appearance'. The Ulster Gazette declared that 'the proceedings throughout were most inspiring. As well as the usual speeches there were songs and recitations plus choruses: 'The Empire Flag' and 'My own country' ' performed by the Little Builders.[7]

There would appear to have been two recurring themes in the speeches made at all meetings. One was that Home Rule would be economically ruinous; prosperous Ulster would be cut off from its contacts and markets across the Irish Sea and the other was that Protestants would forfeit their religious freedom and become subjected to the rule of Rome. This was exemplified in speeches made at the annual meeting in January. The guest speaker, Miss Dopping Heppenstal said that 'to cut themselves off from England would be to cut themselves off from the money that flowed into the country'. Looking through Ireland they would see that from the Union conditions of life were greatly improved, houses, food and many other things were much better than they used to be, while financially the savings banks showed that they were better off than ever before. Further in her address she claimed that the 'semi-illiterate Nationalists where shown only one side of the question by their papers, filled with terrible exaggeration and misrepresentation'. Under Home Rule 'everything would be dearer and the old age pensions would probably stop.'

One of the local members, Miss Clara Irwin of Carnagh, in the course of her speech, stated that they were fighting for their 'beloved church'.

> *They had lived in peace with Roman Catholics…but they knew that if the Church of Rome got the upper hand this would be impossible.*[8]

Armagh Local Studies Library

Women's Anti-Home Rule demonstration in Ulster Hall, 30th September 1912

Fear of domination by the Catholic church was likely heightened by the 1908 papal decree, Ne Temere, governing marriages where one of the partners was not a Catholic. Its main provision, regarded as highly contentious by Protestants, was that the non Catholic partner should agree that children of the marriage should be brought up as Catholics.[9] In June, 1912 the MP for Mid-Armagh, Sir John Lonsdale, presented a 'monster petition' which, he said, had been signed by 'women of all ranks in Ireland' who were convinced that serious dangers to their social and domestic liberties would result from the establishment of a separate legislature and executive in Ireland. Some 104,261 people had signed it and he had been informed that all the signatures had been collected within a fortnight.[10] According to Mrs Shaw-Hamilton in her report to the annual meeting in January 1913 between 2,000 and 3,000 of these were women in Mid-Armagh.[11]

She also noted that 7,149 women in the constituency had signed the Women's Declaration on Ulster Day. This was on 28th September, the date chosen for the signing of the Ulster Covenant to show the world 'unionist solidarity, self-discipline and determination in its opposition to Home Rule'. Women were not permitted to sign the covenant but instead had their own declaration.[12] More women signed than men both in Armagh and throughout Ulster.

There is no doubt that the strength of women's determination to resist Home

Rule was as strong as that of their male compatriots nonetheless it would seem that they did not see themselves as being on an equal footing in the political field. It was stand by your man but never instead of him. Mrs Talbot, was by no means untypical of her ilk when she assured a gathering of local Orangemen assembled on her family estate:

> *"…we women have no desire to step down ourselves into the arena of political warfare. We do not wish to take on ourselves the men's work, but what we wish is that the men should feel that we are on their side, ready to help them in any way we can."*[13]

Ironically in the column adjacent to the report of this event was an article on a meeting in support of women's suffrage held in the City Hall and organised by Mrs Edith Mary Cope of Drummilly. Apparently there were those within the Ulster Women's unionist Council who were in favour of votes for women but they did not seem to be prominent in Mid-Armagh. Mrs Cope, also a member of the landed gentry, would seem to have largely confined her public pronouncements and activities to seeking the enfranchisement of women. In the report of the first general meeting of the Mid-Armagh Women's Unionist Association a Mrs Cope was named as one of the Vice-presidents but there is no further mention of her in reports. At the time it was usual practice to record the names of those considered to be of importance or prominence who attended events. For instance, a long list of delegates, not just from Mid-Armagh but from South Armagh and the Portadown area to a meeting in the Ulster Hall was published in the *Ulster Gazette*.[14] Mrs Cope was not among them. She did however, declare in a press interview that 'as a party the Irish Unionists are far more friendly to us than the Nationalists'. "Unionists have been really good to us, whereas the Nationalists break the pledges they made privately".[15]

By and large the women of the Mid-Armagh Unionist Association may not have been particularly progressive as we would see it in terms of women's rights and equality but nevertheless they displayed an impressive commitment to their cause and within the boundaries they set themselves appeared to be well-organised and efficient. Theirs was an active productive branch which sent two of its members to speak at a 'large number of meetings in England and Scotland' and had ' newspaper clubs' in Armagh and Milford sending material to voters in Britain.[16] Indeed they were part of an organisation which was within a year of its establishment 'was easily the largest female political group Ireland had ever seen'.[17]

Endnotes

1 *Ulster Gazette and Armagh Standard*, 20th January, 1912
2 *The Minutes of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council and Executive Committee 1911-1940,* edited by Diane Urquhart, Dublin, 2001
3 www.landedestates.ie
4 *Minutes of Ulster women's Unionist Council* p45 and p61
5 Steincke, W. John *Louis Emil Dreyer: a biography*, www.klima-luftdede/steincke/Artikel/Dreyer
6 *Armagh Guardian*, 29th March, 1912 and 5th April, 1912
7 *Ulster Gazette and Armagh Standard*, 25th May, 1912
8 *Armagh Guardian*, 19th January, 1912
9 *The Oxford Companion to Irish History* ed. By S.J. Connolly, Oxford, 1998
10 *Armagh Guardian*, 14th June, 1912
11 *Ulster Gazette and Armagh Standard*, 18th January, 1913
12 Urquhart, Diane, '"*The female of the species is more deadlier that the male'? The Ulster Women's Unionist Council 1911 -1940*" in "Coming into the light: the work, politics and religion of women in Ulster 1840 -1940" edited by J. Holmes and D. Urquhart, Belfast, 1994
13 *Armagh Guardian*, 19th April, 1912
14 *Ulster Gazette and Armagh Standard*, 10th February, 1912
15 *Armagh Guardian,* 5th April, 1912
16 *Ulster Gazette and Armagh Standard*, 13th January, 1913
17 *Minutes of the Ulster Women's Unionist Council*…pxi.

Local ladies watch as UVF march past at Drumilly, Loughgall

Armagh recollections

by D.R.M. Weatherup

I came to live and work in Armagh over a thousand years later, some fifty years ago now but still remember my first day here on the first Monday of a long passed July. It had rained steadily all that June as I finished in Belfast and it rained that day as I walked from the railway station to the Mall where I was to start as Deputy Curator of Armagh County Museum to assist the late T.G.F. Paterson (spelt with only one T for as he used to comment "I am not "TT") a fact I was to recognize as I learned the finer points of Powers, Bushmills and Paddy. Stout he said "is only for boys".

When I left school I had been rescued from the fate of becoming a school master by a timely advertisement in the "Northern Whig" inviting applications for a place as a junior assistant in the Belfast Museum & Art Gallery.

Some years on another newspaper advertisement told me that Armagh County Council required an active youth to help the Curator pack up its Museum in Armagh. The Council was embarking on a rebuilding scheme and both Museum and the County Library had to vacate their premises and it was deemed necessary to provide help to a Curator of over sixty summers.

It mattered not that he maintained that he was only a teenager as he was born on 29th February in a leap year. He only had a birthday party once in four years but as I soon learnt they were memorable parties indeed.

I was delighted to accept the post as being involved with planning and refurbishing an already notable museum was so much more exciting than merely helping to keep a department of a large impersonal one running in its accustomed course.

I was not however coming to Armagh without some knowledge of its legendary past or its architectural quality for I had memories of visiting it when small (some of you may well think so what has changed!). As a school boy I came with the Belfast Naturalists' Field Club and being led by a spry guide - Mr. Paterson himself - we saw cathedrals, Bank of Ireland, the Court House and other buildings as we walked around the streets before going by bus to Navan Fort. That monument in its lonely and mysterious setting intrigued me then as it still does today in spite of the intrusive and superfluous display centre built close by.

Armagh then was a small city, I could walk across it in half an hour, some what dilapidated, with little motor traffic and an air of relaxation now gone in the almost continuous roar of massive lorries and cars of all shapes and sizes. Then there were but a few motor vehicles amongst horse carts, bicycles and leisurely pedestrians and there was time to pause and chat. Coke was delivered by Bob McDowell on his horse drawn lorry for the gas works still made its gas. Farm carts and traps were plentiful although some farmers drove in on grey Ford Ferguson tractors often with a passenger perched perilously over the back axle. At the station the mahogany coaches of the Great Northern Railway came and went behind a variety of black locomotives, the stylish blue express engines only occasionally graced the Portadown to Clones line, but the "Shipper" with up to forty wagons of cattle from the west rumbled through on its way to Maysfields Depot. The shops, with a few exceptions such as Woolworths, were locally owned. The grocers' assistants wore white aprons and weighed out tea and sugar into paper bags, got biscuits from racks of glass fronted tins and made up orders for delivery by boys on bicycles while Mr. Emerson and Mr.Kells conducted a pioneering price war across Thomas Street. Cattle were still sold in Goal Square and horses in Barrack Street and butchers had carcasses of beef hanging against the walls above the sawdust strewn floors and rows of fowl in the windows.

In the summer evenings and at weekends I explored my new surroundings. I went into the Palace Demesne, with the permission of the formidable Archbishop Gregg then still in residence, to see the Friary, St. Brigid's Well, the Chapel and the stable yard, by then only a garage for His Grace's car, and discovered the horse stalls with their fine Belfast made cast iron horses heads on the ends of the stall partitions. All of them to vanish so that a few years later I got the last two for the Museum collection. Even now on odd gate pillars I come across pairs of very familiar looking heads but I am sure the similarity is just a coincidence.

Barrack Street before redevelopment, photographed by the author 21st March 1964

The golf course at that time had only 9 holes and was entered by the Newry Road pedestrian gate where a green wooden hut served as the unlicensed club house. No cars were allowed in and not even Surgeon Deane's Rolls Royce. On my bicycle I went to Navan again, to the King's Stables, Ballybrolly Stone Circles and St. Patrick's Well, then in a country field beyond the town, with beside it a venerable thorn draped with simple tokens of supplication and thanks.

When I got a car the range of exploration extended to South Armagh, counties Tyrone, Down and Louth and beyond often with T.F.G. as a knowledgeable companion and guide.

Many interesting people came to the Museum as Mr. Paterson had a world-wide reputation for scholarship. I encountered such characters as Kate O'Brian, writing "My Ireland", Paul Gallico researching his "Steadfast Man" on St. Patrick, Sir Albert Richardson, the doyen of British architects and John Betjeman, the poet. They came to consult him on many topics or just to continue old friendships. Archaeologists and historians of the eminence of Glyn Daniels, Gordon Childe, Joesph Raftery, Liam de Paor, Helen Roe and Eddie McParland were amongst his correspondents and visitors.

I recollect being driven up the neglected narrow road from the Old Callan Bridge with Gallico in his Cadillac as he was being taken to see St. Patrick's Well with Mr. Paterson in the front seat worrying about the cars gleaming paint work, but this was dismissed by the driver with a casual "paints expendable". I was in the back with the built in, but regrettably locked, cocktail cabinet.

Local writers and scholars also came like W.R. Rogers, Jack Loudan, W.R. Hutchinson and John Hewitt. Archaeologists of the County Survey, Dudley Waterman, Pat Collins and Dr. Ann Hamlin used the Museum as a base. At that time Ann was surveying religious sites. She travelled on a motor scooter which Danny McShane got to know very well for it kept breaking down and I was summoned to retrieve it and its rider. The machine went to McShane and I drove Ann around South Armagh as she directed.

I well remember Ann recounting her visit to a convent near Newry. She had written in advance of course on Queens' University notepaper simply headed Dr. A. Hamlin.

She arrived in pouring rain a bulky figure dressed in oilskins and a gardener was provided to show her round. When the rain stopped and the sun came out the oilskins were shed. A nun then appeared to convey an invitation to come for coffee with the Mother Superior who apologized that Ann had not been immediately received because they thought she was a man.

Armagh County Museum – Reproduced with permission of the Trustees NMNI

The author (left) and T.G.F. Paterson in the early 1960s

Prof. Estyn Evans the world renowned geographer and pioneer of Irish rural history coming from Wales saw the need to record the altering patterns of rural life in Ulster but by the time he came T.G.F. was already aware of these changes and was noting the houses, their furnishings, tools and methods of farming. He was also putting on paper traditional tales of the area mainly remembered by the older folk. A selection of them was published under the title "Country Cracks" by his friend H.G. Tempest of the Dundalgan Press.

His dedication to his county was total he was "staunch" in his defence of its qualities and of its people and "staunch" also as he was in his belief in the link with Britain this never deteriorated into bigotry. As Prof. Evans wrote in the introduction to "Harvest Home" - the volume of T.G.F.'s essays published in his memory -"it is fitting to remember George Paterson's intense loyalty to friends of all classes and creeds, to his own townland and thence in widening circles to Armagh County and its proud city".

Dr. Oliver Davies the pioneer archaeologist was another special friend and after he had moved to Africa came to see T.G.F. whenever back here. I remember one time when to settle some point of difference it was decided that I would drive them to inspect the hill top cairn in Knockmany Forest near Clogher in Tyrone. As they were disinclined at their age to climb up the steep hill I was instructed to ring the head forester there and get a key to the gate. I requested this favour on behalf of a professor from Ghana. On arrival I went to the forester's house and was met by a group of children all staring at the car. His wife on giving me the key demanded to know "where is the African professor". "In the front seat" I said. "Oh" came the reply "the children will be disappointed they were hoping to see a black man".

Mr. Paterson had many friends in the Armagh Diocesan Historical Society of which he was a founding member and enthusiastic supporter contributing to its journal, Seanchas Ardmacha indeed some of his most erudite work was published in its early numbers. He enjoyed the company of such men as his late Eminence Cardinal O'Fee, Dean Quinn, Michael Glancy, Paddy Hamill, Major Terris and Dr. Hugh Shiels and Fathers McDermot, O'Kane and McIvor.

Very special however were two men who came to Armagh in 1911 the same year as T.G.F. and between the three there were the bonds of humour and of the love of history. Felix Hughes came to the Post Office and Rev. H.W. Rennison as Curate of St. Mark's. Hughes was a natural historian with a outlook ahead of his time, a traveller before it was a common or easy undertaking, a searcher after truth and a loyal friend. Rennison, a cadet of an old Church of Ireland family, in the fullness of time became Dean of Armagh and Keeper of the Armagh Public Library.

A library so often now miscalled the Robinson Library or the Church Library.

Armagh County Museum - Reproduced with permission of the Trustees NMNI

Armagh County Museum shortly after the new extention was added

There is a Marsh's Library in Dublin because Archbishop Marsh its founder decreed that it be so designated. Had Robinson desired the Armagh institution to be named after himself he would have said so. He did not and its title as in the 1771 Act by which was established is The Armagh Public Library. Any other name is wrong. Dean Rennison was a most humorous man and I remember his story of a clerical relation of an earlier generation who was chaplain to the then Archbishop of Dublin. The Palace was in the village of Little Bray and the Archbishop was in the habit of walking, accompanied by his chaplain, to the station to get the train to Dublin. One morning he was so occupied when a brisk step was heard and Father Healy the famous parish priest overtook them and suggested that they were rather late. The archbishop drew out his gold half hunter watch, opened it and opined that they had plenty of time. So they walked along discussing the weather and other topics and reached the station just in time to see the train disappear towards Dublin. The Archbishop was quite upset "Father Healy" he said "I am so sorry I have caused a busy man like you to miss your train but I had great faith in my watch". Like a shot Fr. Healy replied "It's not faith you need your Grace 'tis good works". Mr. Paterson had also a sense of humour and indeed along with generosity and enthusiasm this made him an inspiring superior, mentor and friend. On one occasion he pointed out to me a deserted farmyard in the Slieve Gullion area where many years earlier he had gone to record local traditions. The old lady had insisted in showing him first her prize billy goat and second the well in which swam a magic trout which if seen brought good luck. When he saw it he bent down to look more closely and then the goat charged his protruding rear. After she had driven off the goat and pulled him out of the well the lady assured him how lucky he was to have seen the fish. He wryly commented "standing there soaked at the top and sore at the bottom I was not completely convinced of my good luck". These three gentlemen used to meet on a Wednesday night in Hughes's house in Abbey Street when Mrs. Hughes left the supper ready and went out. On occasions Feilly would say to Mr. Paterson "bring the Boy along". These were evenings at which I was largely a "silent but enthralled listener" hearing of former days in Armagh as they remembered them. Events such as the when Lord Lieutenant came to open the Warrenpoint swimming pool in 1908 and Joe Loudan of the Imperial Hotel was engaged to go with his carriage horses and the Victoria to convey the party from the station as Joe was one of the finest coach drivers in Ireland. There is a photograph of the equipage with Joe and his nephew Robert riding as postilions taken outside the Liverpool Hotel in that seaside town. There was also the recollection of the same Joe, well oiled, following a haughty and offended lady around the Mall and commenting "your not a bad looking woman but your no chicken". They recalled such characters as "Truf the Duck" and "Robin Ate the Blue Bag", the murder of Specs Lindsay in his house on the Portadown Road and the old men who met to play cards in the Badger Hole.

Only once was I sorely tempted to intervene. This was when after reviewing the eccentricities of their erstwhile seniors the solemn pronouncement was made "there are no characters like that now". I would loved to have said "gentlemen go - look in the mirror". In this city I have lived and worked and found a tolerant and true companion in my wife Anne and here we raised a family and adjudged it a good place to have done so. I have seen it in good times and bad but down the centuries Armagh has suffered such fluctuations in its fortunes. The great religious foundation of St. Patrick, Emancipation, the growth of the fine Georgian city and the industrial prosperity of Victorian times. On the reverse of the coin are the raids of the Vikings, the Anglo-Irish wars, the burnings, the lootings and more recently the bombings but from these terrors Armagh has always recovered and is doing so now.

Armagh's Boer War memorials

by Stephen Day

On May 31, 1902 the Boer War (South African War 1899 – 1902) came to an end. What many had initially considered to be a colonial adventure by the British had turned out to be a bloody and protracted war of attrition lasting for almost two years and eight months. In Armagh City some of those who lost their lives are listed on two war memorials; the memorial to the locally recruited Royal Irish Fusiliers (the Faugh-a-Ballaghs) on the Mall which is dedicated to the 8 Officers, 27 Non Commissioned Officers and 117 other Ranks who fell and the less well known memorial to a member of MacBride's (Irish) Brigade who fought for the Boers and died in the first few months of the conflict. This can be found in the Catholic graveyard just off the Cathedral Road. Those commemorated 'joined up' for a variety of reasons; a military career, idealism, adventure, the necessity of a job in tough economic times. All paid with their lives.

The Road to War

In the late 19th Century the two landlocked Boer Republics, the Transvaal and the Orange Free State, were becoming increasingly uneasy about the number of outsiders who were coming onto their lands and threatening the stability of their Dutch settler community. The discovery of diamonds added to the influx and many of the immigrants were from the British territories of Cape Colony and Natal on their southern and eastern Borders.

The British Uitlanders (foreigners) petitioned Queen Victoria over their treatment by the Boers and, after a number of fruitless attempts at a settlement, Britain and the Boers prepared their ultimatums. The Boers issued theirs first, withdraw and end troop reinforcements or face war.

War broke out on October 12, 1899 and the Boers laid siege to Kimberly and Mafeking. They had 50,000 mounted troops (mostly farmers) compared with 15,000 British regulars and they hoped for a quick victory before the British could mobilise their reserves at home and send them out to reinforce their small garrison in South Africa.

Arrival of the Royal Irish Fusiliers

The 1st Battalion of the Royal Irish Fusiliers (RIF) was already en route. It had been based at Alexandria in Egypt and on September 24 had set sail for Durban via the Suez Canal arriving just in time on October 12.

Amongst their party was Major Munn, Captain Connor and 2nd Lieutenant Hill. The Boers were moving against northern Natal and the RIF immediately travelled by rail to Ladysmith setting up an advance camp some miles further on at the mining town of Dundee as part of General Symons' force.

A Hot Reception

The precise location of the Boers was not known but at 5.30am on October 20 the camp suddenly became the target of an artillery attack and a large force of Boers could be seen on the hills to the east. One of these hills was called Talana. The Battle of Talana Hill had begun.

The Fusiliers carried out a Frontal assault.

> *'We went for the Boers and, when within a thousand yards, shot and shell began to fly about us. There is no mistake they can shoot. Dead and dying were all around but we lose all feeling in battle. Up the hill we went with fixed bayonets.'* (Pte F Burns RIF)

The Boers sustained casualties but mostly kept under cover and demonstrated their shooting skills with deadly effect. When the Fusiliers reached the summit the main Boer force had carried out a tactical retreat.

Captain Connor had been shot in the stomach leading the advance and died in agony that evening. The 6'4" 2nd Lieutenant Hill lay dead at the top with two bullet wounds in his head. (He had joked about being an easy target just before the battle.) Also killed in this action were Sergeant Burns, Drummer Durgan, Lance Corporal J. McCann and Privates Bell, McDonald, Kane, Campbell, Carey, O'Rourke, Duffy, O'Brien, Quinn, Fitzpatrick and Brady. It appears that Sergeant Burns was killed by his own artillery as they provided 'supporting fire.' Other Regiments in the Brigade suffered similar losses in the overall action and the Brigade Commander, General Symons was also killed. Perhaps, partly because of this, the British did not follow up their success and, in fact, had to abandon the hill two days later to go to the assistance of the garrison at Ladysmith.

Royal Irish Fusiliers' Boer War memorial on the mall

The Battle of Ladysmith

The Fusiliers arrived at Ladysmith on the 26th and on the 30th an expedition under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Carleton set out to the north with orders to attack the Boers in the rear. Major Munn led the RIF and was accompanied by the Gloucestershire Regiment and a Mountain Battery. During the night, in the hills, they were ambushed. For the majority there was no way out and 13 officers (including Major Munn) and 480 men were taken prisoner. Amongst those killed was Private E. Walsh, shot whilst attempting to organise a charge.

This action at Nicholson's Nek was a humiliating defeat and on the same day at nearby Modderspruit the Irish Transvaal Brigade, commanded by Major John MacBride, assisted the Boers in a further defeat of the British. However, considering their small numbers the pro Boer Irish suffered badly. Their camp was destroyed by shells and there were many dead and wounded. Amongst the wounded at Modderspruit was 32 year old Hugh Carberry, a native of Armagh City (English Street) and the son of a cattle dealer, Patrick Carberry. He was shot in the forehead and the bullet was removed by a Doctor. He was up and about in three days and appeared to be making a good recovery. However, three months later, in Pretoria, he collapsed and died of a stroke.

The battle of Nicholson's Nek and Modderspruit were collectively known as the Battle of Ladysmith and represented a desperate attempt by the British to prevent the encirclement of the town. They failed and the long siege of Ladysmith began. Amongst the garrison were 150 men of C and D Companies, RIF.

'Black Week' – The Battle of Colenso:

In the first weeks of the war the Boer commandos had demonstrated their superior skills in mobility, tactics and marksmanship but they had not achieved the swift knock-out blow that they wanted. The sieges at Ladysmith, Kimberly and Mafeking were now tying up their men in static warfare.

Meanwhile, British reinforcements were on the way. These included 2nd Battalion RIF, strengthened with reservists from their Depot at Gough Barracks, Armagh. They had left Colchester for Southampton on October 24 and arrived in Cape Town on November 11.

The Boers grew uneasy and began to retire on Colenso where they established good

Detail on the shaft of the Hugh Carberry memorial cross

defensive positions on the northern side of the Tugela River. A large British force commanded by General Buller launched an attack on these positions on December 15. Again, British tactics were found to be naïve and uncoordinated with the ordinary soldier suffering the consequences of a full frontal attack against a well entrenched enemy. Those who reached the river found it almost impossible to cross. Only half of the 2nd Battalion RIF were involved in the Battle of Colenso. Some later wrote home.

> *'The Boers never made a move but stopped in their trenches until we got to within 1000 yards of them. Then they opened fire. Heavy rapid firing and we were in six miles of open plain. We had neither trench nor shelter. We had to lie down flat on the ground. We advanced up to within 400 yards of them and then we had to retire. There was a river 12 foot deep between us and the Boers so we retreated back to within 1200 yards and lay down. We could not move for 8 hours. We had 42 big guns and for 8 hours the battlefield was like a dark, dirty town with the smoke of the cannons and the light they made. The Boers have a terrible gun. It fires and you can see nothing only horses and bullocks and men falling. On account of the Boers not making a move our artillery were within rifle range of them and were shot down like sheep. Ten of our guns were abandoned.'* (Private James Edward McCaughey, 2 RIF, Lurgan)

> *'We lost 1250 out of the Division I was in. We were the first regiment in the fighting line and we lost the least of any. It was a miracle how we did escape for there was nothing but a shower of bullets and cannon shot for nine hours and the sun was scorching. We could not get a drink of water.'* (Private William Burns, 2 RIF, Tandragee)

> *'Our regiment fared very well although we were in the thick of it. We had to attack them on open plain, without covering for our men and the regiment lost but two killed and nine wounded. While we were retiring the bullets fell about us like hail but we got through alright. Jack Kelly is alright.'* (Private Forbes, 2 RIF, Tyross, Killylea)

General Fitzroy Hart-Synott, CB, CMG was also heavily involved in the Battle of Colenso as Commanding Officer, 5th Brigade (the Irish Brigade) which included the Inniskilling Fusiliers. He also played a key role in action in the vicinity of the infamous Spion Kop in February 1900. After the war he retired to his wife's estate at Ballymoyer, Whitecross, County Armagh.

Earlier in the week Buller had suffered two similar reverses at Stormberg (Northern Cape Colony) and on the approaches to Kimberly. He had committed the elementary error of dividing his force into three and deploying raw soldiers piecemeal in uncoordinated actions. December 10 to 15 was called 'Black Week' and as a result two new commanders, Lord Roberts and General Kitchener, were appointed to oversee operations.

Breaking the Tugela Line – the Relief of Ladysmith

January and February 1900 saw both sides locked in stalemate with a number of small indecisive actions in the vicinity of the Tugela. The British suffered serious losses at Spion Kop in late January but the Boers were also being worn down and on February 27 a determined attack on their positions – Pieter's Hill, Railway Hill and Hart's Hill forced the Boers into a major retreat and broke the Tugela Line.

The Irish Fusiliers played a key role in the attack on Pieters Hill in the face of with-

ering fire. Every officer involved in that attack was wounded. Lieutenant CJ Daly, who had only arrived from England 10 days earlier, was shot through the head and killed. Lance Corporal O'Neill was killed in close quarter fixed bayonet fighting on the summit. Others killed in the assault were Sergeant E. Walsh, Corporal W. Gallagher, Privates Brown J. 3926, Brown J. 6224, Tobbin, McGovern, Braisby, Doolin, Hallinger, Armstrong, Battles and Loney.

These victories led directly to the relief of Ladysmith on February 28 and some 2 RIF soldiers had the satisfaction of marching in to greet their 1 RIF colleagues who had been besieged in the town since October. However, for some on guard duty elsewhere there was not much to celebrate.

> *'We have a very poor time of it here. No tobacco nor bread. The train can't get up the line. The Boers have it occupied……..We lost a lot of men in the battle (Pieter's Hill) killed and wounded. The field was full of them. If you only moved your head you would get popped off…..These Boers are well up in everything. They put up dummy men for us to fire at and use big stumps of trees disguised as guns. I can't say when this war will be over but it is a big one.'* (Private Creaney, 2 RIF to his father at Deansbridge, Armagh.)

War of Attrition

The war was not nearly over but it had entered a new stage. The large Boer forces could not hope to match the growing British forces (including some reinforcements from across the Empire) in conventional warfare. They had to revert increasingly to guerrilla tactics. Mafeking was relieved on May 17, 1900 and Britain annexed the Orange Free State at the end of the month. The Transvaal was annexed in October but the Boers were still able to inflict heavy casualties in hit and run raids and ambushes.

In June Pretoria fell and many prisoners, including Major Munn and the other soldiers captured at Nicholson's Nek, were released. The Major was back in action on July 16 when, along with soldiers of 2 RIF, he successfully resisted a sustained Boer attack on the Tigerpoort Range. He continued to lead his men in dangerous situations but just over a year later, in August 1901, the Major was dead….not as a result of enemy action but as a result of pneumonia. Indeed many of the soldiers named on the Armagh Memorial died of similar illnesses contracted in the harsh campaign conditions.

The war of attrition continued with the Fusiliers involved in many more minor actions. They were also involved in the monotonous duty of manning a vast line of blockhouses which had been built across the Veldt during 1901 to disrupt Boer movement. It was an integral part of Kitchener's 'drives' against the Boer commando as was the controversial scorched earth policy and the establishment of concentration camps for homeless Boer families.

One of the last major actions in which the Fusiliers were involved took place at Blood River Poort on the border of Natal between Dundee and Vryheid on September 17, 1901. Major Gough's mounted infantry were involved in a fierce fight against overwhelming odds when he was ambushed by Botha's commando. Half of them were killed, wounded or captured. Amongst the dead were the following Fusiliers: Captain Colin Dick, Sergeant R Taylor, Sergeant H Doake, Lance Corporals Gilliard, Dineen and Fitzpatrick, Privates J Gahon, P Leavey, J Wilson and Donogue. Like all of the others listed on the memorial they are buried far from home, close to where they fell.

Peace Negotiations:

It was actions like Botha's attack at Blood River Poort which reinforced the Fusiliers' respect for their opponents and indeed the world's admiration of the Boer determination in the face of increasingly overwhelming odds. Nevertheless, by early 1902, there seemed little point in causing further suffering by continuing with the war. In March peace negotiations had begun. The Boers secured favourable terms and conceded defeat. The peace treaty was signed at the end of May.

English language as spoken in Armagh

Anglo-Irish, Hiberno-English and Irish-English

By Réamonn Ó Ciaráin

She's after cutting her finger

The phone went and me in the middle of me dinner

Hey youse pair, where are yis going?

Now if you've read the above list and thought that there's nothing terribly unusual, you probably speak what is most often called Hiberno-English, Anglo Irish or Irish English: which is an admixture of the Irish language and English. None of the above conforms to Standard English. Can you imagine Sir Trevor Mc Donald saying any of the above and him in the middle of the Ten O'clock News? I think not. This form of English does not adhere to any traditional religious or political breakdown of society in Northern Ireland but is a part of our rich and shared heritage.

Without the influence of Irish language on English there would be no Joyce, no Yeats, no Synge, no O'Casey, no Kavanagh, no Heaney and so on. As well as adding hugely to the world of literature the Irish language has contributed numerous words to World English. (See table 1)

English was first introduced into this country during the Anglo-Norman Invasion circa 1170 and first written down in 1250. English made no major inroads during the Tudor conquest and the (subsequent) Plantation of Ulster under James 1st with the majority of the population but had, from this point on, a more dominant role in the larger towns and in legal and political administration. However, Irish remained the majority language up until the onset of the Famine years of the 1840's. The 1851 census returns, for instance, shows a rapid decline in the number of monoglot Gaelic speakers; the result of death, emigration and an economic and educational marginalisation of the language. The last native speakers in Antrim died in the 1940's up in the Glens and in the Sperrins the last native speaker of Tyrone survived into the 1960's. Barney Collins of Carricknagavna near Mullaghbane is thought to have been the last native speaker in County Armagh and he died in the 1940s. In recent years the Irish language has experienced an increase in usage and popularity particularly with the growth of Irish medium education and not least here in County Armagh.

Irish has impacted on the way we speak English in this part of the world to a very large extent. For the record, there have been other influences: Elizabethan English; fornenst (over against), betwixt (between), lithe (fit & flexible), cog (copy) and mitch (truant). It has been claimed that there are more Elizabethan words in Armagh today than in Warwickshire, Shakespeare's own county. Scots Gaelic which is a sister language of Irish also deposited traces; Smashing (wonderful) Is maith sin, Sheugh, (a drain to some a ditch to others) and similarly Scots; He made a hames of it (mess, part of a horse's harness), He had an awful drooth on him (thirst), farntickles, (freckles). The 'Oxford Concise Ulster Dictionary' would be a great book to get your hands on if you wanted to look up more words with surprising origins with lovely little illustrations as well.

Gaelic has influenced the way we speak English in phonology (pronunciation), lexis (vocabulary and turn of phrase) and syntax (grammar or word order). As for our pronunciation well the next time you hear country folk from Grange, Newtown Hamilton, Keady, Cullyhanna or Crossmaglen speaking informally, outside mass, at the shop or in the pub, you'll know what I'm on about, it's not exactly Kate Adie or Alister Cook is it? But listen to the way you yourself say the 'r' in garden and car and also the 'g' and 'c' at the start of both those words and then imagine the Queen or Prince Charles tackling the same. Hear the difference? We have good broad 'a's and fricative 'g's and 'c's and rolling 'r's which we have borrowed from Irish. Anglo Irish is a rhotic language except for county Louth it seems in places like Dundalk and Drogheda. We often put the emphasis on the second syllable of many placenames like Belfast or Tyrone which is a good Ulster Irish language trait (Béal Feirste, Tír Eoghan). In short we don't have to put on any 'fancy accent' to speak Irish – just speak the way we would our own brand of Armagh English. Those who do alter the way they speak radically when speaking Irish are probably doing a good impression of Donegal Irish or Connemara Irish, but what would be wrong with Armagh Irish?

In Irish we have the epenthetic vowel phenomenon or the guta cúnta, assisting vowel in words like coirm (concert) or gairm, (profession) where there is a phantom vowel which has transferred into the English spoken on this Island in words such as 'film' and 'worm' when they are realized as 'wor-im' and 'fil-im' much to

English	Irish	Example
Banshee	bean sí	fairy woman/ harbinger of death
Bloke	Buachaill (from Shelta via Irish boy/male),	A really decent bloke
Bog	Bog (soft peatland)	There still remain numerous raised bogs in County Armagh
Galore	go leor (plenty)	There was whisky galore that night
Leprechaun	lúchorpán (small bodied)	The leprechaun is associated with St. Patrick's Day.
Phony	Fáinne (false rings sold in America)	This is nothing but a phony war.
Shamrock	seamróg	type of clover (trifolium dubium)
Slogan	Sluaghairm (battle cry)	We need a new slogan to get our product recognised
Tory	Tóraí (adapted disparagingly for conservative party, raparee in the 17th C	Redmond O'Hanlon was one of the most notorious tories in County Armagh

Table 1

the amusement of standard English speakers. Much amusement is also derived from the difficulty that speakers of Irish English have pronouncing words beginning with 'th' which are frequently rendered as dental stops rather than dental fricatives in words such as thunder, thump, thumb (tunder, tump and tumb) and 'dis' and 'dat' for this and that etc. A great example of this id the name of the comic duo originally from Limerick known as D'unbelievables. There is an historical reason for this as the t in 'th' is silent or aspirated in Irish and the dental fricative 'th' as in thorn does not exist in the Irish language and hence the difficulty with such words.

Very often we will see Irish-English borrowing useful linguistic devices from Irish that don't exist in English. This gives rise to not only the way we speak English being richer but more accurate as well. Consider this example: 'Hey youse pair where are youse going?' The standard English here is: 'Hey you pair where are you going?' Note that in Irish English we incorporate a You singular and a You plural which mirrors Irish's Tú and Sibh. This you plural can manifest itself in a number of forms; youse/yi(n)z/yousins. Here's an example or two for yiz. 'Yiz'll not be half as smart the marra morning' (You'll regret....often when drink has been taken), 'Yez are good crack' (The criticism/slagging is either unwarranted or sweet coming from such a person in particular). The incorporation of the imperfect tense which does not exist in standard English is also more specific in the speech of Irish. 'Where does your fella be this weather?' (Where is your brother these days). This is the English language being used with an Irish language framework. 'Cá háit a mbíonn do dheartháir an aimsir seo?' Weather is interchangeable with time in Irish English as it is in the Irish language; Is maith an scéalaí an aimsir (time will tell).

I want to look now at what is very often called the 'subordinating and' feature of Irish English. A good example of this is quoted above in 'The phone went and me in the middle of me dinner'. This requires a bit of a stretch for standard English speakers but on the other hand this sentence makes perfect sense in the Irish idiom. 'Bhuail an fón agus mé i lár mo dhinnéir'(the phone rang whilst I was eating my dinner). The 'subordinating And' clause shows up frequently in Irish and that's where we've got it and have incorporated it widely in our everyday vernacular in Ireland.

You can think of some examples yourself and you sittin' there reading this. But I would like to point out that this particular linguistic device, the 'subordinating And' clause, is a great little job for conveying the irony or tragedy of a particular set of circumstances – I'm thinking of the likes of; 'He was put out of work and them only after buying a house' or 'He would always charm the blades and him as ugly as sin' (blade was originally a derogatory term for women/girl with a sharp tongue, Isn't it surprising how frequently it is still heard?). Irish English and Armagh English regularly mimic the Irish language's use of prepositions. A fine example of this is the 'on of disadvantage'. Ailments and afflictions tend to be 'on' the sufferers and by the same token this turn of phrase can also be used in a benign manner; (see Table 3)

Another use of preposition which has been transferred from the substrate language is, 'Have you your coat with ye?' An bhfuil do chóta leat? Have you brought your coat? The 'with you' in the Hiberno-English is taken directly from the 'leat' of the Irish and is tautological in standard English.

When you hear people saying things like 'He's after scoring' or 'She's after headin' out through the door', it's what linguists call simply 'hot news'. In English this idea of hot news is conveyed with the term 'just'; 'He's just eaten the last one' or 'She's just driven off'. The use of 'after' in Hiberno-English is an example of the Irish language showing through in English and a direct translation of the frequent 'tar éis' or 'i ndiaidh' phrases in Irish; 'Tá sé i ndiaidh cúl a scóráil' (He's after scoring a goal) or 'Tá sí i ndiaidh diúltiú dom' (She's after refusing me).

Mrs Doyle out of Fr. Ted reminds me that questions are seldom answered with a straightforward yes or no. Consider the pantomime that ensues when someone's offered a drink in an Irish pub, 'Ah where are you going with that?', 'Get up the yard with ye', 'There was no call for that', 'Yer an awful man', Well the reason for all this is that in Irish you have to use the verb in the affirmative or the negative for yes or no. As a matter of fact there are no Irish words for yes or no giving rise to little spiels to answer the simplest of questions. Incidentally the above mentioned 'call' is not the English word 'call' meaning shout, but rather an Irish word cál meaning need....Ní raibh cál ar bith fána choinne sin'. Ciarán Carson the Belfast poet of renown used this notion in one of his well known books of poetry entitled – 'The Irish fro no'.

'Do you want a lift?' 'I do surely thanks.' Not yes thank you. Note the verb being repeated.

'Do you go to the odd fleadh?' 'Awe I would aye surely to God.'

'Would you like an ice cream?' 'No you'll be alright.'

We in this part of the World have a tendency to say things like, 'I have the spuds peeled', 'She's me head turned' or 'I've the pint called for you'. In these examples we have the Irish language translated directly in to English, verbatim. The Irish for the above would be repectively: Tá an craiceann bainte de na prátaí agam', 'Tá mé curtha ar strae sa chloigeann aici' and 'Ta an pionta ceannaithe agam duit' and

Hiberno-English	Irish	Standard English
'He wouldn't give ye a penny and him rotten with money.'	'Ní thabharfadh sé pingin duit agus a sháith saibhris aige.'	He wouldn't give you a penny despite being most wealthy.
He landed in and him roaring drunk.	Isteach leis agus é dall-ólta.	He arrived completely drunk.

Table 2 - A few examples and them explained

Hiberno-English	Irish	Standard English
Me wee dog died on me.	Fuair mo mhadadh beag bás orm.	My little dog died.
He broke my front window on me.	Bhris sé m'fhuinneog tosaigh orm.	He broke my front window.

Table 3

the standard English for the same would run along the lines of; 'I've the potatoes peeled', 'She's got me at my wit's end' and 'I've ordered the pint for you.'

This propensity to speak English with an Irish language grammar is to be found in everyday 'spakes' and really colours our turn of phrase as I hope you will see in the following exchanges (and I'll leave the explanatory speels to a minimum - See Table 4)

Now I want to sound out some of the more frequently heard words around County Armagh that we have borrowed from Irish or 'loan-words'. See (Table 5) how many you know/use!

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Hiberno English	Irish	Standard English
Don't be whinging	Ná bí ag caoineadh	Don't cry
What age are you?	Cá haois thú?	How old are you?
Let on ye never saw him	Lig ort nach bhfaca tú é	Pretend you haven't seen him
He let a roar out of him	Lig sé scread as	He roared
That'll put manners on ye.	Cuirfidh sé sin múineadh ort.	That will chasten you.
Ah yer on the pig's back.	Tá tú ar mhuin na muice.	You are prospering (the welfare of the poor swine has never really been considered in the out-workings of this commonly used phrase).
He's a through-other sort of fellow.	Tá sé fríd a chéile.	He's dishevelled.
I don't be at myself until dinner time this weather.	Ní bhím agam féin go dtí am loin an aimsir seo.	I don't feel well until dinner time these days.

Table 4

Hiberno-English	Irish	Standard English/Example
A smidgen/ smithereens	-ín – suffix meaning diminutive, small	little bits e.g. 'Trout were flipping the sky/ Into smithereens' Seamus Heaney, Wintering Out '75
Barnbrack	Bairín Breac (speck-led loaf)	a loaf of bread with currents etc.
Blather	bladar	smooth talk –e.g. What's she blathering about?, also blatherskite.
Brogue	bróg	accent/shoe (The funny shoes that Irish language speakers wore on their visits to the fair where English was spoken became equated with their difficulty in attempting to use their limited English much to the amusement of the townies and that is why the word for shoe came to mean 'strange accent' e.g. She has a wild southern brogue).
Cap	ceap	to corner in –e.g. to cap the cattle.
Ceo-boy	ceo	Fog - a wild young fellow (bringing disrepute, sucpicion on family), a likable rogue
Clabber	clábar	Muck, dirt –e.g. 'I'm livin in Drumlister, in clabber to the knees' W F Marshall.
Gab	gob	Beak, mouth/talk –e.g. gift of the gab and also gobshite
Gansy	geansaí	pullover
Glar	glár	scum/dirty film –glar is really finely broken down clay mixed with water such as might be found in the worn down entrance to a field : a scum
Gra	grá	love – e.g. He had a great gra for the music.
Gulpin	guilpín	greedy rough young man, also a lout
Gunk	gonc	a setback – a sobering collision with reality e.g. a quare gunk
Keen	caoin	lament (keening at a funeral)
Kesh	ceis	– a rough ridge of wattles in a bog or over a stream –(as in Longkesh, The Kesh Jig)
Kitter	ciotóg	– a left-handed person –(also means awkward in Irish and in Hiberno-English)
Meelamurder	míle murdar	a thousand murders, outcry, scandal
On the batter	ar an bhóthar, lit. On the road	On the tear/drink
Prakas	pracas	mess e.g. The children made a packas in the back of the car with their ice cream.
Puss	Pus – face	Sour face – e.g. Would ye look at the puss on yer one?
Sally rod	Saileog – slat saileoige	willow shrub stick
Shebeen	Sibín	Place for illegal drinking (stemming from the pewter vessels used for serving drink in such venues in former times).
Skelp	sceilp	slap/cut of a whip e.g. a face on it like a well skelpped arse.
Slug	slog	a drink/a gulp –e.g. gimme a slug o' that whiskey
Tague	Tadhg/ Mac Thaidhg	A catholic/ nationalist – originally from the number of men called Tadhg/ Mac Thaidhg at the time of the plantation, latterly Tim
Twig on	tig (An dtigeann tú?)	to understand e.g. they were all mocking him but he never twigged on.

Irish Street's Irish-speaking Presbyterians

By Eric Villiers

As the twentieth century opened Armagh's Irish Street was a thriving centre of commerce, a self-contained community complete with services providing life's necessities – a rather different place to the quiet residential area of today.

Even a cursory survey of the 1901 Census, which can be viewed at the Irish and Local Studies Library in Abbey Street, Armagh conjures up an intriguing picture.

Together Upper and Lower Irish Street had around 450 residents: some 200 living down the street in 43 houses, while there were 55 homes housing some 250 people in Upper Irish Street.

The religion of most of the residents was given as 'RC' with English as their only language, although some gave English and Irish, while a significant minority gave Irish only.

Among that minority were several families of Presbyterians who, surprisingly, differed linguistically from most of their Catholic neighbours because they professed to speak Irish only.

One of those families was called Diffin. Head of the house was Mary Jane Diffin, a 58-year-old Presbyterian widow who lived with her daughter Annie (28) and Mae Stoiss, a 17 year-old live-in shop assistant who was originally from Monaghan [the surname Stoiss, which may have German or Huguenot origins, is not entirely clear on the Census form].

The family owned a shop at No. 38, one of two grocery stores in the street. All three residents gave their only language as Irish, which is odd since they presumably had English to communicate with the majority of their customers who, according to their forms only spoke English.

English had of course long since become the established language but having both languages was not uncommon and among the families that gave Irish as their only language were the Donnellys: 43-year-old widow, Connie Donnelly and two children, James (14) and Bernard (5). It is interesting that at the age of 14 James was already in full-time employment as a butter-maker presumably in the street's dairy.

A dairy boy working from a town address is not unusual given the rural nature of the area circa 1900: as well as the dairy Irish Street had 24 stables, six cowsheds, a piggery, several fowl houses, 16 sheds and four stores.

Clearly the sounds of the street both night and day gave it a character that is a world away from today's tranquillity – if of course you discount motor traffic.

PRIVATE COLLECTION

Irish Street RUC barracks c.1955. It was situated at the corner of Castle St., Callan St. and Irish St. in one of the oldest houses in the city

Ballybrolly monuments

Old stones & ancient kings

by Sean Barden

Ballybrolly

Two miles from Armagh - West A druid's circle is found here: 72 stones standing 150 yrds. paces directly South is another circle, the stones of which were removed for road metal. In the next field south, some workmen came on a skeleton measuring more than 6 ft. On the roadside is a stone with a footprint. This I take to be the "Inauguration" stone. West of this is the "Giant's Jackstones" removed for road making: Below is found the "Kings Well". South of this is Connor McNessa's grave in "Nugent's Garden". [1]

Introduction

In 1913 a local man Patrick Downey compiled a notebook in which the above text appeared. It is now held in the Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Library & Archive in Armagh and I am grateful to that institution for permission to reproduce the extract above.

Ballybrolly is a townland of 135 acres about half a mile north of Navan Fort. The stone circles mentioned are now destroyed and in the first part of this article, I recorded how they had been described over the years.[2] Even though they no longer exist, the circles were easier to write about because they were relatively well known. The other sites and monuments outlined above are more elusive and open to wider interpetation. Apparently Downey was the only one to commit some of these names to paper but that does not mean they were forgotton. It became surprisingly apparent while researching this article that local oral tradition has kept several of them alive and well.

I will take each of Downey's 'sites' in turn and describe what, if anything remains today and then discuss how they may or may not fit into the archaeological landscape around Navan Fort.

Stones and Bones

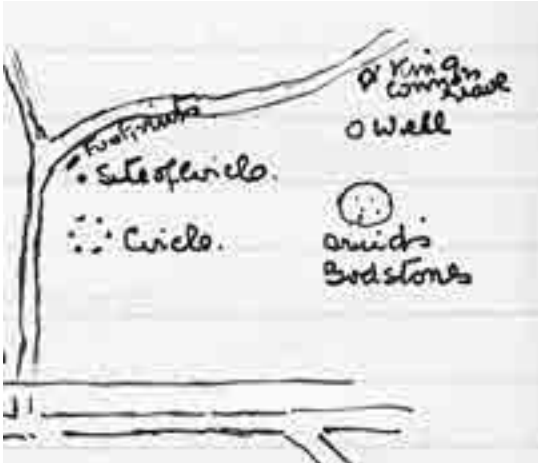
Downey mentions an oversized skeleton found buried in the "next field south" to the stone circles and "a Stone with foot-print" on the roadside. The "next field" is between the southern-most circle and the junction of three lanes where there is a rough flag-stone known as Conway's Grave at the roadside. We will talk about these two together because the Stone is traditionally associated with a burial.

This flat limestone boulder was known in printed sources as Conway's Grave since the mid nineteenth century. It is marked as such on the 1862 OS map.[3] The nineteenth century Ordnance Survey Name Books give us the following details, "Three crossroads where a man named Conway was interred who committed suicide at Wilson's Rock. This grave is identified by a stone or rock on a level with the ground, in the face of which is a curious indentation resembling a foot print and said to be the track of Conway's foot". Wilson's Rock was another name for the southern-most of the stone circles.

In 1931 T.G.F. Paterson wrote the following account when he visited the site and also recounted a version of this tale he had heard in the neighbouring townland of Lisadian.

> *Conway's Grave: This is a boulder on the road side quite close to the "Druid's Temple" and equally well known locally. Tradition says that the body of a man named Conway is interred underneath. The stone is a "foot indented" boulder similar to the stone near Warrenpoint on which the Maginnis chieftains were crowned or elected. However the story in Lisadian is that "Conway hung he'self be his gallaces (braces) till an Ash tree but they broke" with the result that he "lit on he's fut on the stone and the mark be there 'til this very day."* [4]

An Ash tree still grows in the hedge beside the stone and local people of all generations can re-tell versions of the tale. In 1996 an elderly man from Creeveroe townland told the author that Conway was a highwayman who having been caught by a lynch-mob was hanged from the tree above the stone and then buried beneath it. In August 2009, a young informant recounted a story she heard from her father that the stone bore the foot print of the Devil and was set in place to keep Conway, (or the Devil), underground.[5] The common thread between the versions is that the stone was intended not simply to mark a grave but also to prevent the malevolent individual beneath returning to this world. Although Downey does not explicitly associate the unusually tall skeleton with Conway's Grave, the significance would not be lost on many people from the area who know the tales recounted above. Having said that, two local informants have told me of human remains being discovered in the adjoining field during the laying of water mains in recent decades. So it appears that the stone either marks the last resting place of a notorious rogue



T.G.F. Paterson's copy of Downey's sketch map of Ballybrolly monuments. (Paterson ms I 77)

or fabled suicide and the indentations on its surface present significant evidence of supernatural associations and perhaps an older ritual function.

A recent theory argues that the stone is closely tied to the legendry landscape of Navan. Richard Warner suggests that Conway is a modern corruption of Conmáel the mythical leader who died in the battle of Óenach Macha and that either the stone or one of the destroyed stone circles was believed in the seventeenth century to be Conmáel's grave.[6]

Whether it happened in history or legend, an actual interment at a road junction beneath a boulder is not as outlandish as it sounds. The practice of burying suicides in the public highway sometimes with a stake driven through the body was only outlawed by an 1823 act of Parliament![7]

Conway's Grave, note the the 'footprints has been filled in with cement

Burials

Several isolated burials of human remains have been uncovered near Navan Fort several times over the years. In 1798 when four bronze horns or trumpets were found near Loughnashade, several human skulls were unearthed nearby.[8] They were probably as old as the horns and may be considered, like them, to be votive deposits from the Iron Age.

In 1967 skeletal fragments of an adult female were found "below a boulder, adjacent to a cottage to the south-east of Navan Fort".[9] In recent years another burial was discovered within the quarry site between the Navan Fort and Loughnashade but an attempt to date this skeleton using radio carbon techniques proved unsuccessful.[10]

During 1992 when excavations took place on the, soon to be developed, site of the Navan Interpretive Centre a burial was found close to where the visitor centre now stands. This skeleton of a ten year old child dated from the early 1600s.[11] Downey's unusually large skeleton from Ballybrolly sounds very similar to these other isolated inhumations in the area.

Inauguration

The other facet both Paterson and Downey mention in connection with Conway's Grave is that they believed the stone was used in inaugurations. The concept of making a king on a special stone is widespread in history and mythology. Irish sites are well known such the Lia Fail or Coronation Stone at Tara and the stone chair at Tulach Óg near Cookstown Co. Tyrone where The O'Neill was made.

While Downey simply speculates that it is "the inauguration stone", Paterson goes further and compares it to the stone near Warrenpoint where it is said the Maginnis kings were made.[12] He also had an oral tradition of its king-making function which he recorded in a notebook of folktales gathered in the 1920s. The *"foot indented boulder associated by some people with the kings of the oul days who stud on it."*[13]

Obviously some of Downey and Paterson's local informants thought the stone had an inauguration function and was not simply a grave marker.

I have not been able to discover if this idea lives on in the area however it is worth mentioning that the stone's distinctive foot-shaped indentation has recently been carefully filled in and smoothed over with cement. If kings were made here in the past by placing their foot in a scared space no present day candidate can repeat the ritual. The inert stone remains but its special purpose has been revoked.

The local traditions may be limited and varied but they could establish a speculative link with a lost monument documented in medieval sources. A stone called Leac na nGíall (flagstone of the hostages), was recorded near Eamhain Macha and although it precise location was not detailed, a leac or flagstone is very frequently associated with ritual and inauguration.[14] What significance can be attached to its link with hostages is not known but perhaps it marked a boundary where hostages were exchanged or a place where they were executed.

Giant's Jackstones

Unlike the previous sites the "Giant's Jackstones" are not marked on OS maps or indeed on Downey's sketch. He does however mark a site west of Conway's Grave which he captions "Druid's Godstones" but does not mention it in his text. I assume he used these names interchangeably and is referring to the same monument. The symbol on his sketch map is a solid circle containing several dots, which look to represent stones. Its location coincides with the edge of a short wedge-shaped ridge running east-west which is marked as coarse undergrowth on the OS maps. This wooded and rock-strewn slope is today a landscape of steep banks above areas of wild flowers and hazel trees. (marked '**c**'

on map on p35) However its vertical walls of exposed limestone and an abundance of scattered boulders suggest an old quarry. Indeed a sizable quarry is clearly marked on a map of the area of 1760.[15] The broad northern end is roughly the area where Downey located the Druid's Godstones/Giant's Jackstones. From his map symbol and nomenclature it is unlikely he was describing an open stone circle like the two destroyed monuments. Even the name Giant's Jackstones gives the impression of scattered rocks tossed on the landscape and his circle enclosing several dots looks like a loosely defined area containing many rocks or stones. It looks remarkably similar to the quarry shown on the 1760 map by John Rocque.

Could this man-made feature have acquired the names Downey preserved because by the 1890s the old spent quarry had an uncertain origin and happened to lie in an area rich with archaeology and legends? Or was there a prehistoric monument here, known locally but unnoticed by the map-makers. In his Ramblers notebook quoted above Paterson says there were other cairns on the same hill, which lends support to the latter theory.

If it was a genuine monument then it took an unusual form unlike a cairn or stone circle. Downey tells us it was removed for road making, so the remains he saw might have been the last vestiges of a cairn. It may have looked to him something akin to one of the stone circles at Beaghmore, Co. Tyrone which has its entire interior space filled with rough boulders and bears the equally enigmatic name of the Dragon's Teeth. Whatever the case, apart from some small outcrops of weathered limestone bedrock emerging through the grass in the adjacent field there is little surviving above ground today that could be interpreted as Downey's stones.

King's Well

The Kings Well, Downey tells us is below the Giant's Jackstones south of which is Connor McNessa's grave in "Nugent's Garden". James Nugent had a 30 acre farm that in the mid-nineteenth century ran from the road junction at Conway's Grave all the way west to the townland boundary.[16] His farmhouse was on the lane west of Conway's Grave too. (Marked '**d**' on map)

Two written sources mention this site; firstly T.G.F. Paterson's Ramblers notebook already mention. In 1931 the Ramblers.

> *...passed in succession "The King's Well" and the "King's Garden" both on the farm of Mr Patrick Kearney and traditionally connected with Emain Macha.*

By that date Kearney had replaced Nugent as land owner. The other brief mention in writing is from the same year. The editor of The Armagh Guardian, Delmege Trimble wrote to Richhill based amateur antiquarian Col. Berry saying that

> *"The King's Well is well known to a few, quite close to the Garden."* [17]

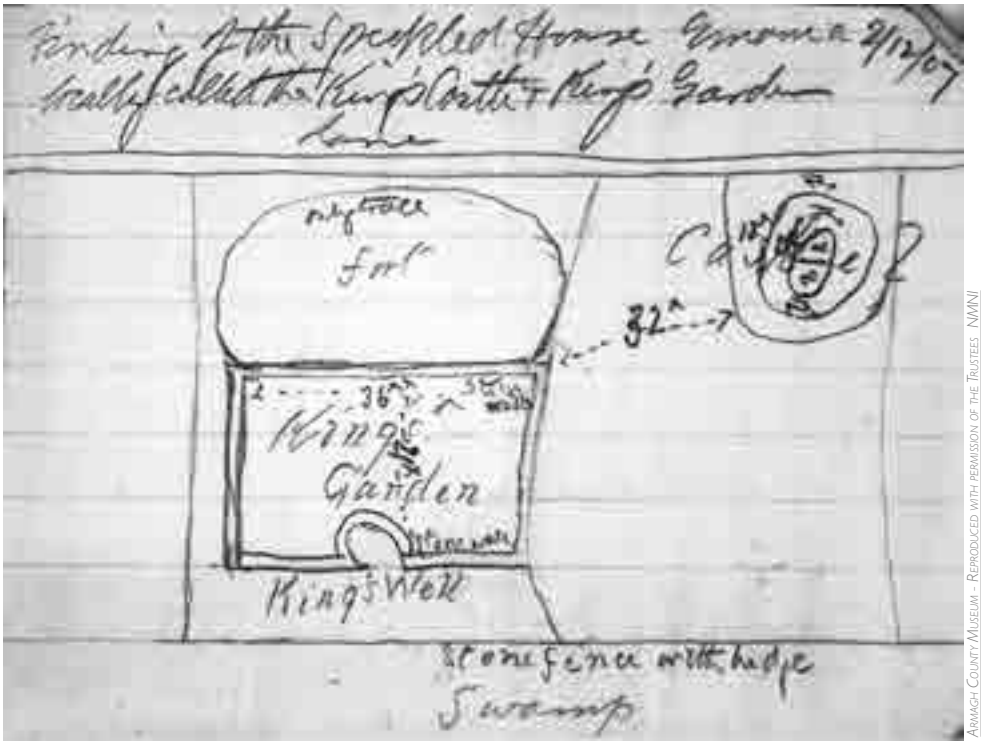
A well is indeed shown, depicted with the usual symbol of a small circle, on the 1862 OS map of the area. It is unnamed and abuts a field boundary north-west of Kearney's farm house at the bottom a steep wooded slope. (Marked '**b**' on my annotated map) The map shows it was reached by a narrow path that went from the rear of the dwelling. Like the ridge to its north already discussed, this sloping ground is strewn in places with numerous, smooth football-sized stones and becomes quite wet when the bottom is reached. Local informants have confirmed that this is the site of the King's Well.

In the undergrowth it is difficult to discern the precise location of a well but about three quarters of the way down the slope there is a water source that trickles into the vegetation and feeds a swampy area at the base of the hill. The ground above this location is dry and is further differentiated by a band or concentration of loose stones. They run across the slope forming a line like a tumbled dry-stone wall and create a distinct step on the incline. Approximately half way along this 'wall' makes a well-defined semi-circular indentation into the hill.

The site was roughly mapped and measured by Col. Berry and the sketch survives among his papers held in Armagh County Museum, (see below). It is dated 2nd December 1907 and has the remarkable title

> *Finding of the Speckled House Emania 2/12/07 locally called the Kings Castle & King's Garden.*

Berry labels the sloping ground Kings Garden and marks the Well where the boundry wall makes a distinct notch. This clearly a representation of the slope explored by the author and although there is little evidence for Berry's exten-



Col. Berry's sketch map showing the King's Garden and Well and proposed location for the Speckled House

sive wall now, the notch at the site of the well coincides with the indentation in the tubmle of stones.

Berry also designates a low ridge or mound in the field above the well as the "Castle". (Marked 'a' on my annotated map)

This brings us to Downey's last monument which south of the Well, it is "Connor McNessa's grave in 'Nugent's Garden'". It seems what Downey calls Connor McNessa's grave Berry reckoned was "The Speckled House" or castle.

The Speckled house was one of three Royal Houses or palaces in the mythological landscape of Emania. They were Croebruadh (Ruddy Branch), Crobderg, (Red Branch) and Teite Brecc (Speckled House). The latter is where the legendary Ulster warriors kept their weapons.[18]

This site was excavated by a team led by Chris Lynn in 1979 having been brought to the attention of archaeologists investigating the Navan Fort some years before. No weapons fit for heroes were unearthed but finds included some pottery sherds and a fragment of a knife blade. The excavation also discovered evidence of an Early Christian period settlement but was inconclusive about its function.[19] Interestingly on some sheets of the first edition 1835 OS maps the site is marked as an antiquity with the caption "Abbey Ruin" but this was revised after the first maps were printed and the original copper plate amended so that the two words were erased.

If Downey and Berry disagreed about the mythological monarch's last resting place then Delmage Trimble who corresponded with Col Berry about the various sites in the area offered a third opinion. He thought Conway's Grave was a corruption of "Connery's Grave, and really is Conor Mac Nessa's".

Conclusion

In such a short article it is difficult to discuss all aspects of this area which has a richness of mythology, archaeology as well as living folklore. Yet it is hoped this introduction will generate further interest and debate not just about the Ballybrolly monuments, but in how oral traditions can keep alive and actively protect sensitive landscapes by preserving a respect for 'special places' regardless of their importance in archaeological terms.

Endnotes

[1] Patrick Downey notebook, in Cardinal Tomás Ó Fiaich Library & Archive, Armagh.

[2] History Armagh vol.2 No.2, 2010, p33

[3] 6 inch - 1 mile OS map, County Armagh, Sheet 12, 1862 revision.

[4] South Armagh Ramblers notebook IV Ramble 13th March 1931, in Armagh County Museum collection.

[5] Personal communication August 2009 from local resident in her 70's and her granddaughter.

[6] Warner, R.B., Emania Varia I in Emania No. 12, 1994, p69

[7] 4 George IV. c. 52, An act to alter and amend the laws relating to the interment of the remains of any person found Felo de se, 1823

[8] Stuart, James, Historical Memoir of Armagh, 1819, p608

[9] SMR No. ARM 012:072, Emania, No.1 p7

[10] Warner, R.B., The Navan Complex: A new schedule of sites and finds, in Emania No.12, 1994, p42

[11] Crothers, Norman, Further excavation at Ballyrea townland, Co. Armagh, in Emania No.11, 1993, pp48-54

[12] The monument is still in situ and is catalogued as SMR No. DOW 054:022 by Northern Ireland Environment Agency

[13] Paterson ms229, Armagh County Museum, p112

[14] Stokes (ed.), The Prose tales in the Rennes Dindsenchas

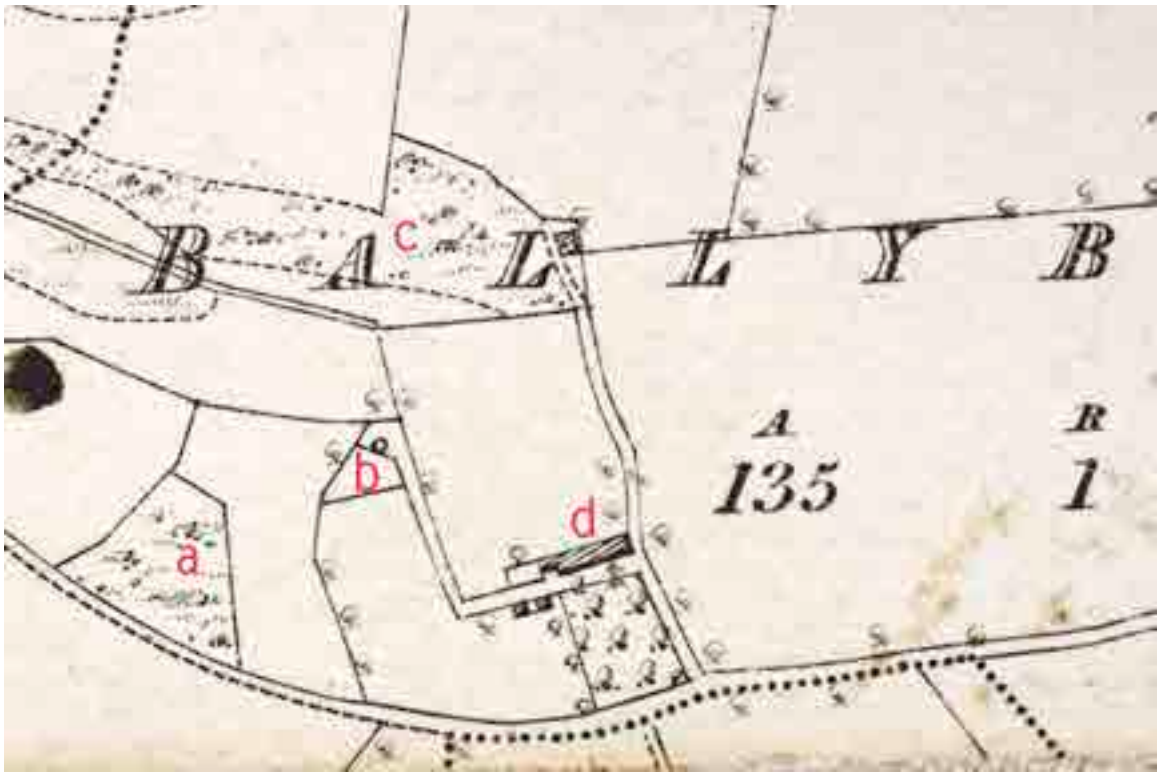
[15] John Rocque's map of County Armagh, 1760

[16] Griffith's Valuation, 1864, Armagh Union, Eglish Parish, p308

[17] Berry papers, Armagh County Museum

[18] Mallory, J.P., The Literary Topography of Emain Macha, in Emania No.2, 1987

[19] Lynn, C. J., Early Christian Period site in Ballybrolly, County Armagh, in Ulster Journal of Archaeology 3rd series, Vol.46, 1983



Armagh Local Studies Library

Section of 1862 6inch = 1 mile OS map showing the sites A - D mentioned in the text,

Upper Irish street as it appeared in the late 1960s. The terrace of old stone houses were demolished soon after this photo was taken by DRM Weatherup.

❖ An Armagh History Group publication ❖