

# History Armagh



- ◆ When jilted women took to the courts for compensation
- ◆ The imagined planetarium
- ◆ Warlocks in the Tontine & 800 tons of Guano

An Armagh History Group Publication





Armagh & District History Group enjoying a summer field trip to St. Patrick's Church of Ireland, Clonfeacle in Benburb. The tour guide was Mrs. Maureen McFarlane.



# History Armagh

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The Charlemont Arms Hotel, Armagh  
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Back Cover:  
Letterpress poster for a performance by  
Henry Frazer's Belfast Company at the  
Tontine Rooms 16 May 1845.

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# When jilted women took to the courts for compensation

by Mary McVeigh

*When the late, great footballer, George Best, famous for exploits both on and off the pitch, was sued for breach of promise to marry in 1969, the case was said to be the last of its kind in Britain because shortly afterwards there was a change in legislation. From 1971 it was no longer possible for an individual to seek financial recompense for a broken promise of marriage. Up until then all that was needed before legal action could be taken was a promise of marriage, no particular form of words or written commitment was required. Corroborative evidence was, of course, essential.*

*In the days before mass-communication, before social media or even radio and television, breaches of promise cases, as they were known, often filled court rooms and were reported widely in the press. From the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> to the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century they were undoubtedly considerable sources of entertainment and titillation. Why did people go down this legal route thus subjecting their private lives to public scrutiny and possible ridicule? It would appear that the monetary award for damages was a primary motive, but fear of loss of reputation or even simply revenge could also have been instigators. Nowadays these cases, apart from their novelty value, can give us some insights into societal views of the period on marriage, morals, money, class, courtship and the role of women.*

There was certainly no shortage of examples from the papers of Armagh women who took legal action to get redress from prospective spouses who failed to commit. It should be said that although this course of action was available to both sexes, the overwhelming majority of litigants were women. In fact, I found no instances of Armagh men suing women for breach of promise. Prior to the twentieth century cases were largely taken by parents or other senior family members on behalf of jilted victims, invariably people from the higher

echelons of society. Legal counsel, as you might expect, was beyond the pockets of the vast majority of Irish people at the time. In the twentieth century most cases were brought by women themselves, from all walks of life, as might be expected because, as the century progressed women's job opportunities expanded. They now could look for employment in factories, shops and offices whereas in the nineteenth century, for many the only occupations open to them were domestic service or farm work. Nonetheless, it should be borne in mind that women's wages were generally low, certainly less than those earned by men, and decisions to expend them on legal fees would have not been taken lightly.

## **Maria got neither her piano nor her wedding**

One breach of promise case which attracted considerable public interest featured a relationship which took place in 1847, a time when the Great Famine was affecting all parts of Ireland but the hunger and deprivation being suffered by the vast majority of the population did not appear to impinge on those concerned in this instance. John Douglas from Mountain Lodge, Keady described in court as being 'very wealthy' and the owner of 'a beautiful estate' was sued by John Wilson who had 'an extensive factory in Manchester' on behalf of his daughter, Maria. The couple met in the early summer of 1847 through a mutual friend, a business partner of Wilson, and, literally within weeks, were apparently in love and eager to marry. John Douglas was to take a year out to travel on the continent but just a fortnight after meeting Maria he changed his plans. At the outset of the relationship Mr Wilson made his pecuniary position clear, he pointed out the precarious nature of his business which meant he could lose all or he could become very wealthy. When he died all his assets were to be divided equally between his children, but he was not going to make a marriage settlement on Maria.





The former Mountain Lodge. Photo courtesy of Crown Historic Environment Division

He did, however, gift ‘a very handsome oil painting’ to the young Douglas who professed to have no interest in his future father in law’s finances as he had ‘plenty’ of money, all he wanted was Maria. He was also keen to assert that his relationship with another young lady from Manchester had ended.

Although he did not go abroad it would seem that the courtship was mainly conducted via letters across the Irish Sea. His estate work kept him busy and besides looking after his own land he was agent for others, seeing to the collection of rents etc. He was further curtailed at home after he had an accident on his horse which necessitated a period of recuperation by the sea at Warrenpoint. His correspondence which was read out in court was certainly affectionate, he referred to his fiancée as ‘my little pet.’ There were many references to their forthcoming marriage, the furnishing and decorating of the future marital home in Keady as well as the wedding preparations in Manchester, including a gift of a wedding dress of Limerick lace which was to be the present of the business partner mentioned earlier. Mr Wilson, another daughter and a couple of family friends were invited over on a visit to Mountain Lodge. They duly made their way by boat from Liverpool to Warrenpoint, spent a night on board before travelling to Keady. During their stay they went to Armagh to look for drawing-room furniture and there Mr Wilson bought a piano costing £45 for Maria to play in her new home.

In a letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> October 1847 addressed to ‘My dearest Maria’ John Douglas recorded that he was going to Belfast on the following Wednesday to buy carpets ‘and the like.’ He went on: “We had

our ‘harvest home’ on last Saturday night and all our people enjoyed themselves greatly and dancing was kept up in the most spirited style until twelve o’clock when they all separated, greatly pleased with their evening’s amusement. I must confess that I was the only person on the occasion who did not enjoy himself, as I wanted my little Maria there to add beauty and admiration to the scene and hope now I will not long be debarred of that pleasure.”

Within weeks however, of this profession of affection the unfortunate Maria learned that she would not be setting foot in the newly furnished and decorated Mountain Lodge as its mistress. In a further missive dated 22<sup>nd</sup> October she was informed: “I can’t marry without getting money. I see no chance at all of our wedding coming off, and which I most sincerely regret on your behalf as well as my own.” Apparently, Maria’s father had encountered financial difficulties which led to acrimony and accusations from his business partner, the friend of John Douglas. Surprisingly, although there was talk in the courtroom about where the money to pay for the piano came from there would seem to have been no mention of Douglas’s assertion that he could not marry ‘without getting money.’ Some fifteen months later he married the young woman, also from Manchester, with whom he had been in a relationship prior to meeting Maria Wilson.

The engagement was not denied but the lawyer for Douglas who described his client as ‘young, inexperienced and uneducated’ asked the jury to take account of his youth, ‘the brief period of his acquaintance with the lady and the circumstance that before he knew her he was attracted to another lady whom he afterwards married.’

In his summing up the judge reminded the jury that ‘they were called upon to give compensation not merely for the loss of a suitable settlement in life, but also for those blighted hopes and wounded affections which were a legitimate foundation for damages in such a case as the present.’ Just after a half hour discussion they awarded £800 to the young woman. Although £3000 was initially sought the sum granted was undoubtedly substantial for the period, probably the largest seen in the Armagh area.<sup>1</sup> It would seem that the social

standing of a person seeking damages was reflected in the amount awarded, essentially the higher up the social scale you were the more money came your way. However, in most instances the amount awarded was never as great as that sought.

John Douglas might have been out of pocket as the result of this case, but it obviously did not seriously damage his reputation or his social standing because he later became a magistrate and a Poor Law Guardian as well as being a leading figure locally in the Masonic Order. When he died in June, 1898 he left £9,109.10s.1d, a substantial legacy at that time.<sup>2</sup>

### **The Clergyman engaged to two women at the same time**

Such was the notoriety received by another case some years later that it even reached papers on the other side of the globe. *The Australian Town and Country Journal*, published in Sydney on 20th April, 1878 referred to it as 'An amusing breach of promise case.' However, it could likely have been termed 'acrimonious' rather than amusing, there was little cause for mirth among any of those concerned. Rev. Jeremiah Donovan (28), a curate who was then living in Jonesborough, Co. Armagh, was sued by his cousin, Emily D'Alton (22) through her father. Both were natives of Kilrush, Co. Clare and had been friends from childhood. They corresponded regularly from when he was away at university and she was still a schoolgirl, through the years when he served as curate in Kilkee and then Jonesborough. In November 1875 he wrote proposing marriage which would seem to have been well received by all parties. Donovan's late father had been a wealthy man with a successful medical practice in Kilrush and property in Dublin and while the D'Altons were not wealthy they were 'well connected.'

Unfortunately, in the following January a bombshell was dropped. Mrs Donovan wrote Mrs D'Alton a letter conveying the disturbing news that her son was also engaged to another young woman in Dublin. Esther O'Callaghan, a 'school mistress' was the sister of a deceased friend who had asked him to be her 'guardian' but over time they fell in

love, their relationship changed, and he became her betrothed. Emily thus wrote once again to Jeremiah, this time releasing him from the engagement. It transpired however, when Esther became acquainted with this information, she also broke off her engagement. Yet further correspondence passed between Emily and the Rev. Donovan, the engagement was on again and Esther was, apparently, no longer on the scene.

But the course of true love did not run smoothly because Jeremiah appeared reluctant to commit and sought to have the wedding delayed for a year. 'Suddenly in the autumn of 1876 he began to be afflicted with all sorts of symptoms that indicated that matrimony was impossible'. An incensed Mr D'Alton communicated in no uncertain terms that his daughter was not to be trifled with a second time. More letters were exchanged, and medical certificates were furnished. At one stage the young clergyman wrote that due to his state of health if they were to marry, they would need to have separate bedrooms. In yet another letter he wrote: "My only wish for deferring the marriage is to save myself from the living death of paralysis." His health issues did not impress Mr D'Alton who threatened to expose his behaviour to the bishop of his diocese. This proposed course of action infuriated the Reverend and thus in high dudgeon he wrote letters to his betrothed which were far from affectionate in tone. Indeed, on 17<sup>th</sup> October he tried to extricate himself from the relationship: "If you release me from my engagement, return all my letters, including the letter from my mother to yours and assure me that no copies have been kept, I will pay you £200..." She seemed to be still living in hope of being wed to him because at the end of October he wrote: "you have consented to defer our marriage for twelve months for the present...At the end of that time it will, of course, be in your power to compel me to perform my engagement with you..." By the following month, in his last letter to her it is evident that his attitude to her had little improved: "If you want me to ignore the past, as you seem disposed to do so and to think more kindly of your mother, at least you will procure for me my mother's letter of last January, of which your father threatened to such



improper use, and return it to me. It can be of no use except for the purpose of annoyance. I will not feel at my ease until it is out of unsafe hands. It is in your interests to conciliate me if you want to marry me.”

Apparently she was unable or, by this stage unwilling, to appease him because among the notices of marriage in the *Belfast Newsletter* in the following August the following appeared: “DONOVAN-O’CALLAGHAN- August 7, at St Peter’s Church, the Rev. Jeremiah Donovan, curate of Jonesboro’ County Armagh to Esther O’Callaghan, daughter of the late Rev. John O’Callaghan, rector, of Ross, County Galway.” His health problems were no longer a deterrent to matrimony and furthermore he vested all his property in the new bride.

In his summing up of the case, the judge advised the jury to bear in mind the social position in life to which she would have been entitled had she become his wife. Also, they should consider her injured feelings and ‘beyond doubt’, her feelings had been injured. He reminded them that he, Donovan, ‘in his own mother’s language, had forgotten truth and forfeited honour.’ After a short deliberation, the jury awarded £500 which was greeted with applause in the courtroom. That was not the end of the story however, Rev. Jeremiah Donovan was subsequently declared bankrupt and Emily D’Alton who was his only creditor had not received any damages by 1879 when he left Ireland to take up a position as curate in Hoby, Leics. A sad story which was undoubtedly an example of a prevailing view that marriage at any price was better than being a spinster.<sup>3</sup>

### **Smaller awards for the less advantaged**

Damages for breaches of promise to marry cases in the Armagh area in the 20<sup>th</sup> century were considerably smaller than in earlier times, the majority were under £100. Fifty pounds was the amount awarded to Sarah Annette who sued Henry Spiers Boyd who, when the case was taken in 1900, was a sales representative for Kirker, Greer and Co., whiskey and soda water manufacturers. He later became proprietor of Kirker and Co., Armagh,

based in Ogle Street. The couple met in Portadown where Sarah Annette was working in a hotel belonging to family members. When she became ill with pneumonia, Boyd, who was staying there was very attentive, brought her grapes and other luxuries. She eventually moved to Belfast where she supervised Robinson and Cleavers tearoom and the relationship continued both by letter and visits. He proposed at Whitehead and she duly accepted. Prior to this, in their letters, they addressed one another as ‘My dear Miss Annette’ and ‘My dear Mr Boyd.’ Henceforth they became “My dear Harry’ and ‘Dear Sarah’ but after a time it would appear that the prospective groom was cooling off. At one stage after probing he admitted he had money worries but refused assistance from her and his letters eventually petered out. In court it was revealed that Miss Annette was nine years older than her fiancé who was 24 and although she denied writing to other men in Portadown she admitted sending them photographs.

In his summation the judge said the case was ‘a very ordinary and small one.’ He went on to add that it did not seem that there was £10 to spare between the parties for the celebration of the marriage and the festivities that would follow. There could be no question that there had been a promise and that it had been broken. The question then, he concluded, was how much better off would Miss Annette be if she married ‘the young fellow with nothing at all and went into all the miseries of married life with a companion with such beggarly means?’<sup>4</sup>

Miss Annette, even though she had an occupation and her own money, was prepared to enter marriage with a man whose financial position was precarious at the time. There were other instances however, where women went to greater lengths to secure husbands but with certainly less favourable, sometimes dire, results. One of these was Elizabeth Muldrew, a 22 year old domestic servant from the Crossmaglen area, who became engaged to Patrick Fagy, a farmer who was also a cobbler, on her first meeting with him. She was introduced to him, obviously as a prospective bride, by her cousin and agreed to marry him after he told her that he needed

someone to look after his mother.

Just over a week later the pair plus the cousin met to go to Crossmaglen to buy the wedding ring. Before they left Fagy got £4 from his prospective bride and got another £1 when they arrived in town. Two rings costing five shillings each were purchased. Fagy kept one and gave the other to Elizabeth Muldrew. The imminent wedding date was fixed, the requisite papers were submitted to the priest and the 'wedding goods' consisting of beef, drink and 'all sorts of things' were purchased for the wedding breakfast. A car driver who had been hired to take them to the church turned up as arranged at 6.30am but the bridegroom did not. The wedding party waited until 10.00am but by that time there was still no sign of him so all went home. Some days later a penitent Fagy made another appearance, apologised and promised that he had taken 'the pledge.' A second date was fixed and this time Fagy turned up and the wedding party duly walked to the church in Crossmaglen. However, on arrival he refused to enter saying she was the fourth girl he had brought this length and he did not intend to marry. The priest came out and advised Elizabeth to go home. It transpired that before the second trip to the church Fagy had forced her into giving him another £2.

The judge said Fagy had acted in a 'blackguardly manner' and that she was 'a not unattractive girl' who had 'missed her market' and was entitled to be compensated. She was thus granted damages of £25 by the jury, hardly over generous in light of the fact that she had been considerably out of pocket as well as having been humiliated by being left, not once but twice, at the church gate. Her lowly social status and possibly her gullibility may well have been factors in this instance.<sup>5</sup>

Her demeanour could well have stood Catherine McCann from Armagh in good stead with the jury when her breach of promise case came up in 1911 because she was awarded £100 just after a few minutes' deliberation. Described as 'a respectfully dressed and quiet mannered looking girl,' she was aged 25 and worked in a local spinning mill. Her fiancé, Thomas Webb, a man twice her age, also lived in Armagh and was an agent for flax buyers.

After a courtship of around three years they got engaged in January and the wedding date was duly fixed for the following 15<sup>th</sup> March. However, the day before he was due at the altar he went on what he described as 'the hurst' so the wedding did not take place. He told the court that in January he had savings of £300 but by March they had dwindled to £84, he blamed drinking and gambling for his financial losses.<sup>6</sup>

### **They got the benefit of the doubt**

The awarding of damages was at the jury's discretion and generally reflected the ethos of the time: appearance and demeanour as mentioned above, social class and financial circumstances. In the majority of cases it would seem that juries were relatively sympathetic towards those who sought recompense for broken promises. An example of this was the treatment of Ellen Malone, Newtownhamilton, who, in 1894 had been working as a dairymaid for a farmer named Ross when she became involved with his son, Alexander, to whom she subsequently became engaged. He attempted to get released from the commitment because she had been jailed for stealing but the jury was not convinced that this was the real reason for the breakup. The judge declined to give any direction and allowed the jury to reach its own decision which was to grant her £150.<sup>7</sup>

As well, there was the case where a woman was awarded £40 compensation after her whirlwind, drink fuelled holiday romance which lasted just over a week. Mary Rice of Ayallogue was home from America when she met Bernard O'Hare, also home on holiday from Whitehaven, Cumberland. They met on a Sunday, got engaged on Thursday and on the following Sunday made arrangements with the priest for their wedding which was announced 'to all and sundry'. The following day however the prospective bridegroom up and left, his excuse was that Miss Rice had told him she was already promised to another man in America, a 'Russian Pole.'<sup>8</sup>

### **Novel excuses for not turning up on the day**

Some of the excuses furnished by those who



reneged on their promises to wed were certainly novel such as the one offered by a bricklayer from Blackwatertown in 1956 who explained in a letter to his fiancée from Co. Carlow whom he had met in England where they both had been working: "...I have been caught smuggling pigs and it will cost me £250 to get clear. When it is all over I am off to Canada. As to the ring, pawn it and keep the money. I hope you get as good a boy as you thought you had." He now had a further £40 to raise to meet the costs granted.<sup>9</sup>

### Letters as evidence

Letters often played a significant role in breach of promise actions as noted in some of the cases cited above. One in particular in 1916 could well have served as a warning to suitors to be careful about what they put down on paper. Patrick J. Brannigan, a farmer and stonemason from Armagh, would seem to have lost the run of himself when it came to expressing his feelings in his correspondence and duly paid for his outpourings of ardour. Indeed, the laughter was so loud in Castleblayney court that the judge threatened to have it cleared.<sup>10</sup>

After Alice Hughes, a domestic servant from Annaghly, Co. Monaghan left by train on the first leg of a journey to London he wrote: "I did my best to hold back the train but was unable." In a response to one of her letters, he noted: "When reading it about the 20<sup>th</sup> time, I noticed that it was about the time you were going for a walk so I was going to run to London." In another he waxed lyrically about her photograph which she sent him: "Your photo is just gorgeous. You are a wee beauty in it."

The pair had been in a relationship from February, 1913 and in April, 1915 he had given her a ring with the promise of going to Belfast to get married. Despite his apparent admiration and affection for his betrothed Brannigan denied he promised to marry her. His plea was not accepted and Alice Hughes, described as 'a handsome girl of 24' was awarded £25.

These are just a small selection of breach of promise to marry cases taken by women from all strata of society in the Armagh area up until the

middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. All of these women, it could be argued, may have gained some material recompense for being rejected, certainly not as much as they may have wanted or felt they deserved, and did so at the price of having their humiliation on being rejected, exposed to all and sundry, the targets of salacious gossip. It is highly probable that most, if not all, would have been prepared to accept any kind of marriage rather than being left as spinsters. Married women, until very lately, indeed perhaps even now, had higher social status than their single counterparts.

Women in the higher echelons of society until the early decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were not expected to seek paid employment so if they did not get married and become mistresses of their own households, they were seen as burdens on male members of their families. Women, lower on the social scale who had to work for a living, were paid less than men even if doing similar work. There were less prospects of promotion and there were fewer career options open to them. Thus marriage seemed to offer, though by no means guaranteed, a more secure future for many.

While these cases may seem incredulous and cause for mirth nowadays, they are nevertheless an important part of social and women's history.

### References

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3. *Freemans Journal*, 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> February, 1878, *Newry Reporter*, 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1879
4. *Northern Whig*, 13<sup>th</sup> December, 1900
5. *Freemans Journal*, 15<sup>th</sup> December, 1909
6. *Freemans Journal*, 9<sup>th</sup> June, 1911
7. *Belfast Newsletter*, 10<sup>th</sup> November, 1894
8. *Dundalk Democrat*, 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1935
9. *Irish Independent*, 6<sup>th</sup> July, 1956
10. *Liberator* (Tralee), 3<sup>rd</sup> June, 1916

# Armagh Family Names

by Gerry Oates

In this year's selection of local surnames I have included two well-known names with records going back almost 1,000 years and a lesser-known example from at least the early 17<sup>th</sup> century, and possibly the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Of particular note is that the eponym *Donn Sléibhe* of the Mac Aleavey sept from 1091 also occurs in the genealogy of the Mac Elvanna sept as *Donn Sleibhi* in 1216.

## Mac Aleavey

*Donn Slébe* is an Old Irish personal name which probably means 'lord of the mountain'. It occurs in the early genealogies of some south Leinster and east Ulster families. In the early medieval period it developed into the surname *Mac Duinnshléibhe* which much later became (*Mac*) *Dunlevy* in English.

The family claims descent from one *Donnshléibhe Ó hEochadha*, a chieftain of Ulidia in the 11<sup>th</sup> century; their patrimony, Ulidia, then comprised the present Co. Down and the southern portion of Co. Antrim. Woulfe describes them as 'a remnant of the ancient inhabitants of Ulster' that had its centre at Eamhain Macha (Navan) in Co. Armagh in the pre-Christian period. As lords of Ulidia they maintained their independence until 1177 when they were defeated and driven out by the Anglo-Normans under John de Courcy. Following their defeat many migrated to Donegal where they adopted the role of hereditary physicians to the O'Donnell chiefs of Tyrconnell. After the Battle of Kinsale in 1601 many migrated again, this time to north Connacht where the name *Dunlevy* is still common.

Apparently, not all of the *Mac Duinnshléibhe* sept took part in the migration to Donegal, several remained on their traditional lands including those calling themselves *Mac Dhuinnshléibhe* (with initial *D* lenited), better known at present as *Mac Aleavey*, which has since been associated largely with Cos. Down and Armagh. It appears under a

number of variants: *Mac Ale(a)vy*, *Mac Aleavey*, *Mac Eleav(e)y* and *Mac Elevy*, but are all usually pronounced similarly.

Among the early references to the name in Co. Armagh is a *Manus roe Mc Elevy* who was cited in the Co. Armagh depositions as a rebel insurgent in Kilmore on the outbreak of the Confederate War (1641-53) which attempted to undo the confiscations of the Plantation of 1609. The name occurs twice in the Hearth Money Rolls of 1664-65; *Daniell Mc Leavy* of Legagilly, Armagh parish, and a *Miles Mc Elleavy* of Lurgan, in Oneilland barony, paid 2/= per hearth. Possibly the same person, *Miles Mc Levy*, is named in the Brownlow Leasebook of 1666 alongside *George Mc Levy* who was witness to a lease in 1667. A rent roll for the town of Lurgan of 1667 also includes three tenants named *George mc Levie*, *Miles* and *Geo. mc Levy*, possibly father and sons.

Records of the Armagh assizes (1735-97) provide further evidence of the activities and presence of the *Mac Aleavey* sept in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Among litigants at the Lent assizes in 1738 was *Art Mc a Levy*, described as 'post boy', while other appearances include *Owen Mc alevy*, charged with 'rescue' at the summer assizes of 1749, and *William Mc aLeavey*, a plaintiff at the Lent session of 1757. At the Lent assizes of 1760 *Charles*, *Owen* and *James Mc Elevy* were accused with four others of assault but found 'not guilty'. Three decades later, during a period of serious sectarian disturbances in the county between the Catholic 'Defenders' and the Protestant 'Peep o' Day Boys' a *Fardy Mc Aleavy* was charged and found guilty at the summer assizes of 1790 of being 'a papist carrying arms', an offence punishable under the penal laws enacted in 1695; the same person faced another unspecified charge of 'felony' in 1791. A *Francis Mc Ileavey* also appeared at the same court session as a plaintiff.

Leases granted by the Charlemont Estate between



1795 and 1801 included two *Mc Aleavey* families in Carrickacloghan, Killeavy parish. In 1796 the Irish Linen Board, in a government-sponsored scheme to promote the cottage linen industry, awarded *Arthur, Francis and Hugh Mc Aleavy* of Tynan parish, and *Peter Mc Aleavy* of Armagh parish spinning wheels, based on their acreage of flax-seed sown.

Co. Armagh Tithe Applotment Books (1825-40) recorded 17 *Mc Aleav(e)y* tithe payers in Killeavy parish and 14 in Forkill with five in each of Derrynoose, Lisnadill and Tynan parishes. The most comprehensive 'survey' of the name, however, occurs in Griffith's Valuation (1848-64) which showed a concentration in Armagh city and the surrounding parishes of Tynan, Derrynoose, Lisnadill and Keady. In south Armagh the version *Mc Illeavy* was most common in Killeavy and Forkill parishes alongside *Mc Aleav(e)y* and *Mc Alevy*.

In the census of 1911 *Mac Aleavy* (132) accounted for slightly more entries than *Mac Aleavey* (108) with the majority of both versions recorded in Cos. Armagh and Down. *Mac Alevey* (48) again featured more often in Armagh and Down than elsewhere. Fewer entries were recorded for *Mac Eleavey* (29), *Mac Elevy* (7) and *Mac Alevy* (7), mostly in Cos. Armagh and Louth, with no entries in Co. Down for the last three.

A number of related surnames trace their beginnings to the original *Mac Duinnshléibhe* and *Mac Dhuinnshléibhe* forms. De Bhulbh suggests that *Mac Glew* and *Mac Cloy* can be traced to *Mac Dhuinnshléibhe*, while the diminutive variant *Mac Dhuinnshléibhín* has been reduced to *Levins* in Co. Louth, but in some instances has become *Livingston(e)* in Armagh and Down. Black also notes that *Livingstone* replaced *Maclevy* in Scotland.

When the *Mac Dunlevy* sept migrated to Donegal many of them were referred to as *Ultach* 'Ulsterman', from which the surname *Mac an Ultaigh* 'son of the Ulsterman' eventually developed into *Mac Anulty*, *Mac Nulty* and less often as *Nulty* in Co. Meath. An alternative form, *Ultachán* 'Ulsterman', became *Ó hUltacháin* 'descendant of the Ulsterman' and was initially anglicised *Hultaghan*, but later simplified to *Halton*

in Cos. Fermanagh and Cavan.

In Scotland, Black gives *Mac Dhunnshleibhe* as the Scots Gaelic form of *Macclay*, *Maclea(y)* and *Maclevy*; he also mentions that 'William Livingston, the Islay Bard, always wrote his name as Gaelic *M'Dhunleibhe*, and Dr. David Livingstone, the noted African traveller, was a *MacDonleavy* of Ulva.'

## Mac Elvanna

*Mac Elvanna* and its many variant spellings - *Mac Elvanny*, *Mac Elvenna*, *Mac Elvaney*, *Mac Ilvenna*, *Mac Ilvenney* and possibly *Mulvenna*, *Mulvenny* etc., are anglicized versions of the Gaelic name *Mac Giolla Mheana* 'son of the devotee of *Meana*'.

It is not certain who or what *Meana* was, but it has been suggested that it refers to the Old Irish name of the *River Maine* in Co. Antrim recorded in the Annals of the Four Masters under the year 928 as *Rubha Mena*. Wagner relates this to Old Irish *Mana* and *Manannán*, son of the sea-god for whom the Isle of Man is named.

Mac Lysaght remarks that the surnames *Mac Ilvenna* and *Mulvenna* etc., have been for centuries associated with Co. Antrim and also comments that *Mac Ilvenna* and *Mulvenna* have been used synonymously and occur largely in the same area. *Mulvenna* derives from *Ó Maoilmheana* 'descendant of the follower of *Meana*', more or less similar in meaning to *Mac Giolla Mheana* 'son of the servant of *Meana*'. The *Ó Maoilmheana* / *Mulvenna* name appears to be the older version, for entries in the Annals of Ulster relating to the years 1164 and 1216 refer to the obituaries of *Gilla Patraic hUa Mael Mena* and *Donn Sleibhi hUa Mail Mena* respectively.

There is a further reference to the name in the Annals of the Four Masters which tells us that *Mail Sechlainn hUa Mail Mhena*, who died in 1376, was professor of poetry to the chieftains of the Ó Catháin (O Kane) dynasty of Co. Derry. At that time they were located west of the Bann in O Kane's territory, but Ó Ceallaigh claims they moved east into Co. Antrim in the 17<sup>th</sup> century where the names *Mulvenna* and *Mac Ilvenna* have been most common in recent times. A papal

document, dated 1413, refers to a cleric named *Ó Maoilmheana (Mulvenna)* in Banagher parish of mid Derry. As retainers of O Kane they fell under the overlordship of the O Neills and the medieval document *Ceart Uí Néill* ('O Neill's rights') states that *Muintir I Mhaoilmheana* ('O Mulvenna') must supply provision for five men when requested.

Between the 14th and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries little is heard of the surname until it reappears in Jacobite army lists of 1689 as *Mulvany*, *Mulvenna* and *Mulvenny*. Both *Mulvenna* and *Mc Ilvenna* have been used interchangeably in Co. Antrim but it is not certain if they are from the same sept.

Only anglicized versions of *Mac Giolla Mheana* appear in records relating to Co. Armagh. The first possible documentary evidence of the name occurs in the Franciscan petition lists of 1670-71 when a *Bryan [Mac] Elvane* signed the petition in Loughgilly parish. However, the name begins to appear more frequently in the 18<sup>th</sup> century; the rent roll of the Manor of Armagh recorded *Bryan Mc Elvannagh*, *Art Mc Elvannah* and *Darby Mc Elvanna* as under-tenants in the townland of Lislea, Derrynoose, in 1714. Later, in 1766, *Pat* and *Owen Mc Iclevenny* (also recorded as *Mc leVenny*) of Cornakinnegar were listed as tenants and 'papists' on the Brownlow Estate, Lurgan, and in the same year the rent roll of the Manor of Balteagh included *Henry* and *William Mc Elvenna* of Dernalea, Derrynoose parish, who were granted leases of their holdings for 18 years. The latter *Henry* and *William Mc Elvena* of Dernalea also appeared in the tithe accounts of 1785-87 along with *Margaret Mc Elvena* of the same townland. The Register of Deeds (dated Oct. 10, 1787) contains a note relating to the conveyance of land in Lisglynny, Derrynoose, by Charles Whittington to one *Patrick Mc Elvenney*.

A variety of spellings occur in the Armagh assizes indictments which illustrate the difficulties officialdom experienced in recording Gaelic surnames: *Edward Mc Alvenna* (1757), *James* and *Thomas Mc Ilveney* (1759), *Phelemy Mc Ilvenna* (1760) and *John Mc Ilveny* (1766) all appeared as litigants. The *Roger Mc Levenny* who, along with several others, was found not guilty of 'rescue from the High Constable' at the summer session of

assize in 1780 is probably the same person as the *Roger Mc Ilvanny* found not guilty of assault at the same court session. The Spinning Wheel Premiums list of 1796 includes six *Mc Ilvenna* households in Derrynoose, Keady and Armagh parishes. All received spinning wheels from the Irish Linen Board in a scheme to encourage the cultivation of flax-seed. Only one reference to names based on *Ó Maoil Mheana*, an *Edward Mulvena* of Drummenagh, Drumcree, was recorded; it occurred in the Drumcree tithe payers' list of 1737.

The Tithe Applotment Books (1825-40) include five households named *Mc Elvenna* in Derrynoose and two *Mc Elvanas* in Lagan townland, Keady parish. Elsewhere, parish records noted three *Mc Ilven(n)ys* in Shankill and two named *Mc Ilvenna* in Lisnadill among the tithe payers. *Mc Ilvanna* is the most common form of the name in Griffith's Valuation (1848-64), particularly in Derrynoose where five holdings were recorded in Dernalea townland with three others in Lisglynny, Maddan and Maghery-Kilcrany. A further three *Mc Elvenna* holdings were noted in Keady. Griffith also includes entries for *Mc Elvany*, *Mc Ilvaney* and *Mc Levenny* in Shankill and Seagoe parishes in the north of the county.

Nationwide, variants based on *Ó Maoilmheana* were the more numerous in the 1911 census: *Mulvan(e)y* (695) and *Mulvenna / Mulvenny* (233); those based on *Mac Giolla Mheana* were less so: *Mac Ilvenn(e)y* (142) followed by *Mac Ilvenna* (119) and *Mac Elvanna* (11). In both cases the name was most common in Belfast and Co. Antrim.

In Co. Armagh more recent figures, for instance the electoral register of 1999, suggest that the spellings *Mac Ilvanna* and *Mac Elvanna* are more or less standard and found mainly in and around Armagh city, notably in the townland of Ballymartrim and in the Killylea and Charlemont electoral districts.

With regard to the Gaelic versions *Ó Maoilmheana* and *Mac Giolla Mheana* emanating from a single source surnames' scholars have noted that on occasions names beginning *Ó Maoil* + personal name have been replaced by names of the type *Mac Giolla* + personal name. This often occurs when



the prefix *Ó* is dropped and the element *Maoil-* is re-interpreted as *Mac Giolla* reduced to *Mac El-* or *Mac Il-* in English. We have an example of this in Co. Armagh with *Ó Maoil Chiaráin (Mulherron)*, an ecclesiastical family associated with the Abbey of Armagh, later re-interpreted as *Mac Giolla Ciaráin (Mac Ilherron)*. Something similar might possibly have happened in the case of *Ó Maoilmheana (Mulvenna)* and *Mac Giolla Mheana (Mac Elvanna)*.

## Catney

The surname *Catney* does not appear in the principal publications specialising in Irish family names, yet the name exists, although rare, and is currently on record in Belfast, north-west Down and south-west Antrim. It also occurs in the neighbouring district of Lurgan in north Armagh. The name, however, with slight variations in spelling has been on record in Co. Armagh from at least the early 17<sup>th</sup> century until the present.

The Patent Rolls of James I (1603-25) provide the first reference to the name in the county when a *Hugh O Cattine* of Co. Armagh was granted a pardon ca. 1608. The name also appears in records relating to Co. Cavan in 1662 when a *Tirlagh O Cattany* of Tomregan townland, Ballyconnell, was recorded in the Hearth Money Rolls of that county. In the following year a *James Catteny* of Muckno parish appeared in a list of the hearth tax payers in Co. Monaghan.

The surname shows up again in Co. Armagh in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century under a number of spellings. The local assizes indictments record an accusation of 'rescue' against a *Michael Cattney* at the summer session of 1776 and again at the Lent assizes of 1787 when three persons, *Owen Cathony*, *John Cathony* and *Patrick Catherny* appeared together and were found guilty on charges of assault. Finally, at the Lent assizes of 1789 a *John Catteny* was accused of handling counterfeit money.

The previous references to the name in Co. Armagh do not indicate which particular area the name was associated with, but the Tithe Applotment Books for the county include four households named *Cathony* in Clay townland, Keady parish, in 1825 and a further five *Catenay* households in the

townland of Tanderagee, Lisnadill, in 1835. An earlier record of tithe payers from the parish of Ballymore in 1830 recorded a *Patrick Cathney* in Lisraw townland. More recent evidence associates the name with the Lurgan area and Mac Corry in his recent travels (2000) notes graveyard inscriptions bearing the surname in Kilwarlin, Trummery and Tullylish in north-west Down, places within the general catchment area of Lurgan.

As previously mentioned the anglicized form *Catney* does not feature as a surname in the more authoritative publications on Irish family names, but the Gaelic name *Ó Caithniadh*, from the Old Irish personal name *Caithniadh* 'battle-champion', represents a sept of the Uí Fiachra tribe of Co. Mayo. Originally anglicized *O Caheny* / *O Cahany*, and later *Cann(e)y*, it is still extant in Co. Mayo where they were once lords of Erris in the far north-west of the county until dispossessed by the Anglo-Norman Barrett family in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Mac Namee, in his 'History of the Diocese of Ardagh' notes a *John Ochaney* as prior of St. Mary's Priory, Mohill (Co. Leitrim) in 1400, which he suggests might probably be *O Caheny* from an original *Ó Caithniadh*. The anglicized form *Caheny* was recorded only in Co. Sligo in the census of 1911.

On the dispersal of the *Ó Caithniadh* sept perhaps their migrations took some northwards from Mayo via Sligo to Cavan, Monaghan and Armagh where the name might have re-appeared as *O Cattine* (1608) and *O Cattany* (1662), with medial *t* unlenited, and its subsequent variant forms *Cathenay* *Catney* in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. Some 18/19<sup>th</sup> century records show a medial consonant cluster *-th-*, *Cathony* (1787, 1825) and *Catheny* (1830) which might represent the lenited consonant *t(h)* of the Gaelic *Ó Caithniadh*.

Later records find this name concentrated in an area where Cos. Antrim, Down and Armagh meet along the south-eastern shore of Lough Neagh. Griffith's Valuation (1848-64) of the 19<sup>th</sup> century records the surname *Catney* in Lurgan.

Both the census of 1901 and that of 1911 confirm the presence of the surname *Catney* in the above area which encompasses north-west Down, south-

west Antrim and Lurgan urban and rural areas as well as occurring in a cluster in the Belfast urban area. In 1911 *Catney* did not occur outside these areas, but the census of 1901 recorded *Mac Catney* three times in Co. Longford and twice in Lurgan.

*Catney* and variants, if derived from *Ó Caithniadh*, would seem to have been in transit down the centuries from the western seaboard northwards before finally settling in the neighbourhood of Lough Neagh's south-eastern shore.

In Scotland the surname *Cattanach*, which also occurs as *Catnach* and *Catan* and belongs to the *Clan Chattan*, dates from the mid 15<sup>th</sup> century and might possibly produce a version similar to *Catney*. However, the presence of the prefix *Ó* in 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century versions is usually indicative of an Irish origin.

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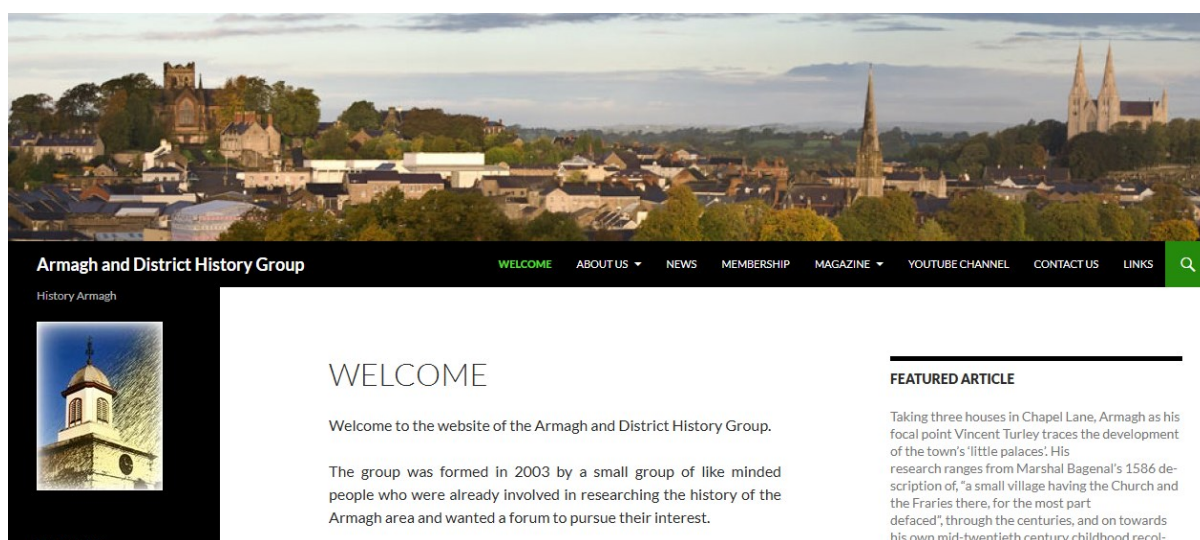
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# Armagh & District History Group Website



Our website is at <https://www.history-armagh.org/>. The site contains details of our monthly meetings and news of other events of interest, there are links to back copies of the magazine and to articles from some of the earlier magazines that we don't have a complete image of. There are also details of the group itself, how to join, how to contact us and links to some useful websites in the area.

# The Five Townlands

by Pooler Archbold

## Introduction

Sixty or more years ago, I came across a book of hand drawn maps in my grandfather's house at the Navan. These maps were of five townlands near Armagh: Navan, Tullygarran, Drumbee, Tullynichol, and Creaghan. They gave some idea of topography, detailed the field shapes and areas, listed the subtenants for each numbered field in four of the five townlands, but had no scale or mark of orientation. The book, measuring 31 x 47 cm (12.2 inches x 18.5 inches), had a torn label on its cover which gave little indication of its date or history. I thought it must have predated the start of Ordnance Survey mapping. It certainly predated the building of the county road from Armagh to Caledon which was completed in the early 1840s. I did not know the provenance of the maps. My grandfather had a farm at the Navan but no interest in any of the other townlands. Many years later, about late 2019 or very early 2020, when I was visiting the Irish Studies Library, Armagh (now the Cultural Heritage Service Library Armagh) I was surprised to come across a 'negative' black and white photocopy of an almost identical book of maps of the five townlands with no label on its cover but a title page bearing 'A Survey of Several Townlands in the Parish, Barony and County of Armagh by Hugh Hanna 1830' and a handwritten inscription 'The Miss Porters, Birlingham, Worcestershire'<sup>1</sup>. This photocopy was from an original in the Public Records Office of Northern Ireland<sup>2</sup> and set me off on a journey to discover the history of the maps and the history of the five townlands until the breakup of estates by the Irish Land Commission.

## Land Surveying

The principles of 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century land surveying were essentially based on the ability to measure angles with a device called a circumferentor, or surveyor's compass, and to measure distance, usually with a chain, for example the 66-foot-long Gunter's chain. By the

late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the circumferentor had been superseded by the theodolite. This brief description is, of course, an over-simplification of the surveyors' skill and other instruments and techniques were also available to them. The precision and accuracy of these instruments improved greatly over the course of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Estate Maps were very important records for landlords and were generally displayed, handled and stored with care. Good maps would show the extent of a landlord's estate, with field size and shape, which might determine the outcome of any boundary dispute. They would indicate the names of the tenantry, and they ideally would give an indication of the 'quality' of land, indicating areas of bog or heath. They should show important topography, and they should indicate any industry on the land. All these were important to landlords, a significant number of whom were absentee. Like all document-based material, deterioration and damage could occur due to environmental conditions, especially heat and humidity. Damage could also occur from moulds, mildew, insects and their larvae, and, even, rodents. It was, therefore, not uncommon for these maps to be replaced periodically for several reasons in addition to loss or damage, such as to mark a new landlord or tenant, or the landlord's wish to know whether the tenant had complied with various conditions or covenants or whether a tenant had made improvements thus adding value to the property<sup>3</sup>.

Hugh Hanna was a 19<sup>th</sup> century Land Surveyor from Magheratimpany, a townland halfway between Ballynahinch and Seaforde, Co Down. He surveyed and drew the maps of the five townlands for the Misses Porter in 1830 in the early stage of his career. By 1850 he was at 27 Hamilton Street, Belfast and later 8 Clarendon Place, May Street, Belfast. The Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI) holds an extensive collection of maps and plans drawn by him throughout the north



of Ireland for various landowners and agencies. The earliest map in PRONI is dated 'circa 1820' (D654/M/69/18 'Map of proposed new road into Newtownards'). Hanna was still working in 1879 (D424/90 'Ground Plan of site for Bangor New Church').

Hugh Hanna was married and had two daughters. He obviously had a developed social conscience as he was a regular subscriber to many charitable causes including the Soup Kitchen in Hercules Street, The Town Relief Fund, Coal Relief Fund, Fund for the relief of distress in Chicago after the great fire 1871, Distress existing in India 1877. These charities listed their subscribers in the newspapers. He usually appended 'surveyor' to his name, possibly to distinguish himself from his contemporary namesakes, Hugh Hanna, a well-known Belfast publican, and the Rev Hugh Hanna ('Roaring Hanna'), the 19<sup>th</sup> century Belfast Presbyterian clergyman known for his evangelism and anti-Catholicism. Hugh Hanna, surveyor, died in October 1883 and was buried in Clifton Street Burying-ground. His estate was valued at £4267-6s -1d.

Regarding the maps of the five townlands, there are known to be two copies, the PRONI copy and the 'Home' copy. The labelling and handwritten script is different in the two copies with more prominent 'fonts' in the PRONI copy. The font for Creaghan is entirely different to the font for the other townlands in the 'Home' copy. There is a compass rose with scale along the East-West axis on the maps of the PRONI copy. There are some slight differences in the details of the maps such as the placement of houses or trees. All the maps, bar Tullynichol (see below), have an associated reference page with each field listed by number, acreage and name of subtenant. In the 'Home' copy only there is table at the end listing the five townlands and their overall acreages. There is a major discrepancy in the respective maps of Tullynichol with the PRONI map a closer representation of the true topography. How can the differences between the maps be explained? The PRONI copy with the title page and handwritten inscription and compass rose is presumably the top copy and the 'Home' copy most probably a draft or office copy. I surmise that Hugh Hanna re-visited

the five townlands and made changes to the draft copy based on his final inspection before presenting his work to his clients.

Only the scale on the map of Navan has 'Four chains Irish', all the other four maps simply have the scale 'Four chains'. This is important because an Irish chain was 28 yards whereas an English chain was 22 yards making an Irish acre 7840sq yds or 1.62 English acres. Imperial or statute measure was mandated in 1824, but Irish measure persisted in memory and fact for much longer. Land measured in Irish acres was still occasionally advertised, even alongside statute measure, in rural press into the early 21<sup>st</sup> century. The scale of 'Four chains Irish' on the PRONI Hanna estate map of Navan was an error that escaped correction and should have simply been 'Four chains' i.e. statute measure: the calculated field areas and overall townland acreages tie in with Griffith's valuation which used statute measure. The scale of the Hanna maps is equivalent to 20 inches to one mile.

By the very early 19<sup>th</sup> century, surveying in Ireland was at a watershed. The Government wanted to update land valuations for the purpose of assessing and levying the local 'cess' tax to fund services such as roads, bridges, courthouses and traditionally calculated on a townland basis. For this it needed accurate maps. The Army's Board of Ordnance had previously been used to map Great Britain, so it was to military engineers, and not Irish surveyors, that the task was entrusted. They established a primary base point at Magilligan from which they measured with great accuracy a baseline along Lough Foyle to Ballykelly. From this baseline, beginning in 1827, triangulation with trigonometric and geodetic calculation permitted the accurate mapping of Ireland, at a scale of 6 inches to 1 mile, which was completed in Munster in 1846.

The land survey described in this article was, therefore, contemporary with the start of the Ordnance Survey of Ireland. Although local land surveyors continued to be useful, they were increasingly overshadowed by the Ordnance Survey. Landowners could now buy accurate printed plans of their holdings at a much cheaper price.



Maps of townland of Navan. 'Home' copy (L), PRONI copy (R).

## Background history of the five townlands

To the West of Armagh in the vicinity of the River Blackwater is the area known as Cluain Dabhail ('the meadow of the Blackwater') anglicized to Clandawell or Clonaule. This is roughly the area of the modern electoral division of Glenaul. Much of Cluain Dabhail had been granted to the Church by the local clan chiefs one of whom, Daire Dearn, granted St Patrick the site at Drumsaileach (the hill of the willows; later named Ardsaileach and later still Ard Macha) for his church, and also about 20 townlands in the Territory of Cosway ('the plain') which lies between Cluain Dabhail and Armagh. These latter townlands continued to be tenanted by the ancient septs, descendants of Daire, up to the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century when they were seized by two junior septs of the O'Neills – sliocht McLaughlin [*progeny/lineage of McLaughlin*] and sliocht Murtagh [*progeny/lineage of Murtagh*]. The territory was subsequently split into Coscallen (McLaughlin land), with the remaining portion retaining the name Cosway (Murtagh land). Creaghan lies in Coscallen. Tullynichol, Drumbee, Tullygarran and the Navan are included in the townlands of Cosway.

With the plantation, the native Irish were dispossessed. The land was still held by the church,

but now the Anglican Church of Ireland. There was a corresponding change of chief tenants. In 1615 John Brown was chief tenant, paying a rent of £26.13s4d per annum, for the six balliboes (townlands) of Ballybrogh, Ballymartrim etra, Ballymartrim otra, Drumbee, Tullynichol and Tullygarran and for 2 sessiagh at the Navan (a sessiagh is roughly equivalent to one third of a balliboe). An entry in 1620 states that he 'is to paie yearly at Christmas, one coople of fatt capons at Christmas, and at Shrovetide one coople of hens, he is to build 3 English houses, to find 2 light horses and men for his Majesty's service, he cannot alien (*transfer*), sell or dispose his estate but with the licence of the Archbishop'. He held the property until 1634 when John Symons secured the lease and assigned the lands by a form of mesne agreement to Geoffrey Walker, Walter Dawson and Nicholas Seaver (a mesne agreement allows the tenant to sublet the property). In 1660 Captain Powell, Nicholas Glover, Major Boltan, who had married the co-heirs of Symons, presumably his daughters or possibly nieces, were chief tenants and remained so until the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century when the lands passed into the exclusive possession of the Powell family apart from the Navan, which Nicholas Seaver retained as principal tenant<sup>4,5</sup>.



Hugh Ker, Merchant, PLAINTIFF. Whereas by a Decree of His Majesty's High Court of Chancery in Ireland, bearing Date the 18th Day of June 1763, it was decreed that the several Lands in the Decree in this Cause, and hereafter mentioned, should be sold for the Payment of the sum of £4979 7s. 0d. to the Plaintiff, together with the Interest and Costs, that is to say, the Towns and Lands of Teragh, Creghan, and Tieregarty, the three Town Lands of Drombee, Tullinickhall and Tulliesaran; the Towns and Lands of Lisdrumard, and Balticeren, and 40 Acres of Land in Knockadreen, and several Houses and Tenements in the Town of Armagh, also, the Town and Lands of Navan, also a waste Tenement in Mill-street in Armagh, and a Parcel of Land called Carricklogheran, and another Parcel of Land known by the Name of the Flag Park, situate near the Town of Armagh, all which said Lands are held under the See of Armagh, and situate in the County and Town of Armagh. Now, I do hereby give Notice, that I will pursuant to the said Decree, on Friday the 7th Day of December next, at six o'Clock in the Afternoon, at my Chambers in Chancery-lane, Dublin, proceed and sell by publick Cant to the best and highest Bidder, the several mortgaged Premises herein before and in the Pleadings mentioned. Dated this 6th Day of November 1764. THO. STOPFORD.

Note, The Leases and a Rent-Roll may be seen in the Hands of the Plaintiff Hugh Ker, at his House in Anne-street, near the Linen-hall, Dublin.

\* The Purchaser on his being so declared, is to deposite a fourth Part of the Purchase-Money.

The above Sale is adjourned to Monday the 17th Day of December, Instant at six o'Clock in the Evening, at my Chambers in Chancery-lane, Dated this 10th Day of December 1764. THO. STOPFORD.

Hugh Ker, Merchant, PLAINTIFF. Whereas by a Decree of His Majesty's High Court of Chancery in Ireland, bearing Date this 18th Day of June 1763, it was decreed that the several Lands in the Decree in this Cause, and hereafter mentioned, should be sold for the Payment of the sum of £4979 7s-0d, to the Plaintiff, together with the Interest and Costs, that is to say, the Towns and Lands of Teragh, Creghan, and Tieregarty, the three Town Lands of Drombee, Tullinickhall and Tulliesaran; the Town and Lands of Lisdrumard, and Balticeren, and 40 Acres of Land in Knockadreen, and several Houses and Tenements in the Town of Armagh, also, the Town and Lands of Navan, also a waste Tenement in Mill-street in Armagh, and a Parcel of Land called Carricklogheran, and another Parcel of Land known by the Name of Flag Park, situate near the Town of Armagh, all which said Lands are held under the See of Armagh, and situate in the County and Town of Armagh. Now I do hereby give Notice, that I will pursuant of the said Decree, on Friday the 7th Day of December next, at six o'Clock in the Afternoon, at my Chambers in Chancery-lane, Dublin, proceed and sell by publick Cant to the best and highest Bidder, the several mortgaged Premises herein before and in the Pleadings mentioned. Dated this 6th Day of November 1764. THO. STOPFORD.

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The Dublin Gazette, Tuesday December 11 to Saturday December 15 1764 with facsimile (R). \*Flag Park was formerly part of the Common of Armagh. Knockadreen is the townland on which St Patrick's Roman Catholic Cathedral now stands.

In 1615 Edmond Oge O'Donel held Creaghan. About 1620 the 8 townlands of Coscallen, including Creaghan, were leased to George Chambers for £42.8s.4d yearly with a heriot of £4 'to build for himself an English house, to find a light horse and a man for his Maj's service'. The lands remained in the possession of his descendents until the start of the 18<sup>th</sup> century when they were leased to John Maxwell<sup>4,5</sup>.

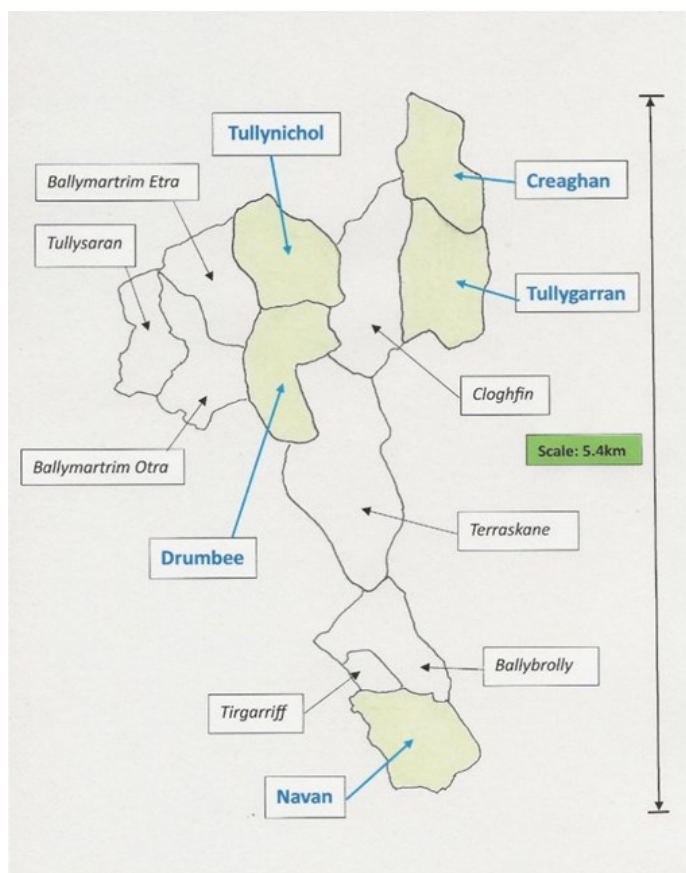
What happened between 1735 and 1760 is unclear as the Rent rolls do not attribute the recorded names of lessees to any particular parcels of land. Then, in the early 1760s, Hugh Ker, a Dublin based Linen Merchant instituted proceedings through the Irish High Court of Chancery to recover £4979-7s-0d owed to him by a group of defenders (John Bond, Jane Bond, Blayney Townley Balfour, William Godly, Robert Hamilton, Alexander McAulay, Edward Bond) at least some of whom lived in the environs of Armagh. Set against the monetary debt owed to him by the defenders, Ker appears to have held mortgages on a number of townlands in the area of Armagh and houses and tenements in Armagh. Ker, under the terms of judgement of the High Court of Chancery, was threatening to sell these properties 'by public Cant to the best and highest bidder' in order to redeem

his money. The townlands included Lisdrumard, Balticeren (Baltarran), Creghan (Creaghan), Teragh (Teeraw), Tieregarty (Tireagerty), Drumbee, Tullinickhall (Tullynichol), Tulliesaran (*sic*), Navan, and parcels of land at Knockadreen, Carricklogheran (Carrickaloughran), and Flag Park.

It is not known whether any of the monetary debt was repaid before the public auction, which was scheduled for December 1764 or whether the auction even took place, but Hugh Ker ended up holding the title of the townlands of Creaghan, Drumbee, Tullynichol, Tullygarran and Navan.

Note that four townlands to the west of Tullygarran lies the townland of Tullysaran. The legal notices in The Dublin Gazette use the 'long' s [ſ] in their font. One of the townlands is listed as Tulliefaran (Tullysaran) but Tullygarran is not listed. Glancy was rigorous in recording alternative names for townlands in the pre-plantation era and for Tullygarran all he recorded are Tulligarran and Tollygarran<sup>4</sup>. The first-time uncertainty occurs is in the Rent roll of 1676 where Tullygarran is denoted as Tullysarran. The Rent Roll of 1714 describes Tulliosarran als [otherwise] Tullygarran. Elsewhere, in his will, Hugh Ker refers to 'Tullysaran, otherwise Tullygaran' (see later) and

as late as 1870 when Anne Porter was renewing her leases, the new lease describes ‘Tullysaron otherwise Tullygarron’<sup>6</sup>. I suspect that a scribe or clerk in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century simply made the transcription error of an ‘s’ for the ‘g’ in Tullygarron, with the error carried forward. Tullygarran, as well as the other four townlands described in the maps was held under the See of Armagh. The townland of Tullysaron was held under The Earls of Charlemont.



The five townlands (in yellow with blue labelling) described in this text.

The townland of Tullysaron is also shown (see text).

Note: Tirgarriiff appears as Teergarve bordering Navan to the north, not to be confused with Teergarve (Tirgarve) which borders Creaghan to the east in the maps. Tirgarriiff is not shown in any of the 17<sup>th</sup> century registers. The name appears to have been given to part of a sessiagh of the townland of Navan in the early 18<sup>th</sup> century<sup>4</sup>. Tirgarriiff is now recognised as a townland in its own right.

## The Kers

The story of the Ker family has been fully described<sup>7</sup>. Very briefly, the original David Ker, Laird of Monfod, fled to Ulster from Scotland in 1566 in the aftermath of the murder of Rizzio (the Italian Secretary of Mary, Queen of Scots)<sup>7</sup>. By the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century the Kers were well established linen manufacturers in Ballymena. Hugh (b 1705) and David (II) (b 1709) were two of the ten children born to David (I) and his wife Jean (Boyd). Hugh moved to Dublin and David (II) moved to London to represent and further the family business. David (II) married Martha, the

widowed daughter of Sir William Macpheadris, a wealthy merchant and one-time Lord Mayor of London. Martha brought into the marriage three fortunes, one from her late barrister husband, one from her father and eventually one from her childless sister. Their children were David (III) (b1751), Richard Gervais (b1756) and Martha (b1759). David (II) bought the Portavo Estate, Donaghadee in 1765 with Hugh acting covertly on his behalf so that the price would not be inflated for a London ‘fat cat’. David (II) visited Portavo briefly in the spring of 1766 but never lived there.

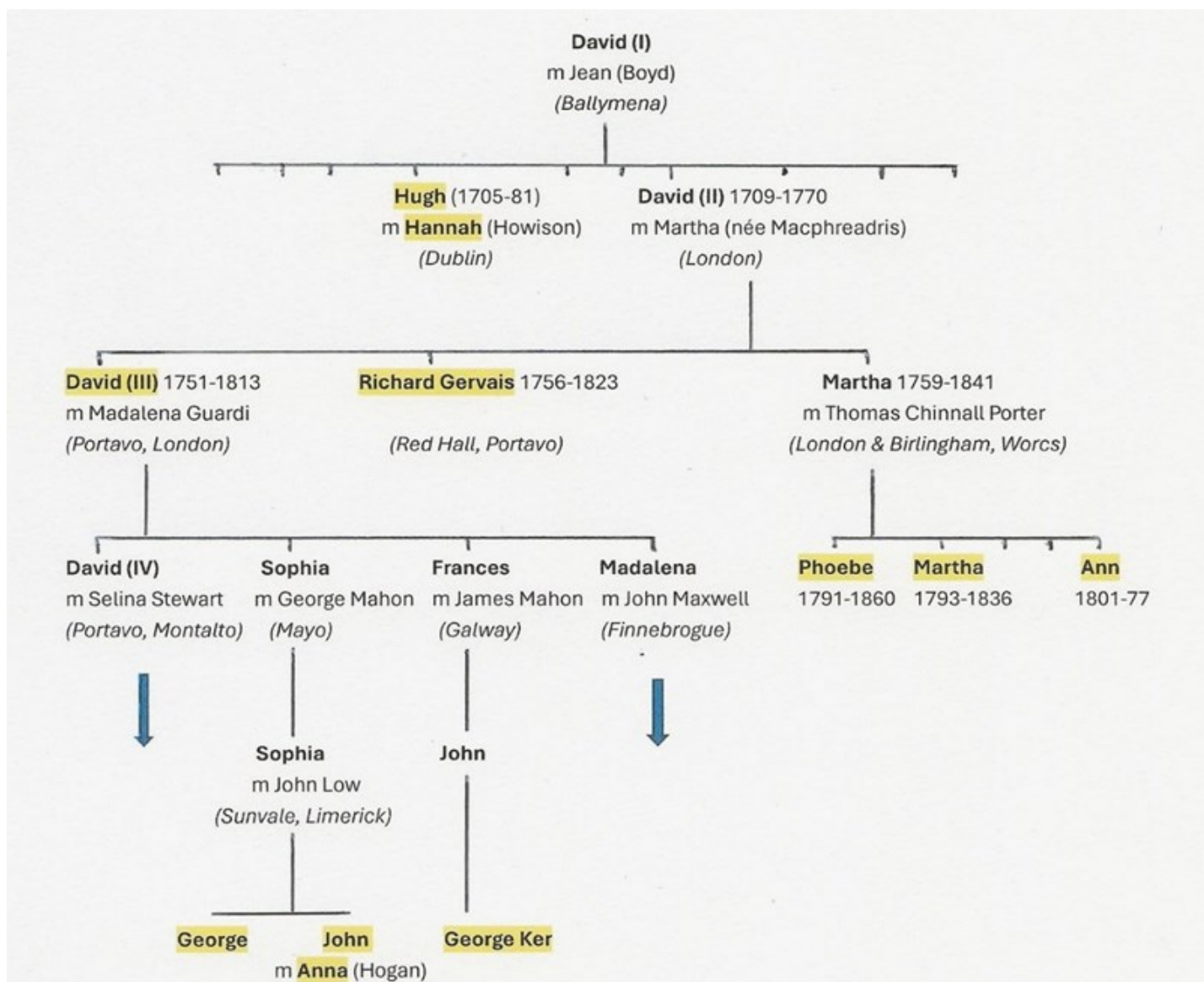
While on a Grand Tour of Europe aged 23 years, David (III) met and fell in love with fourteen-year-old Madalena Guardi, purportedly the daughter of the celebrated Venetian painter Francesco Guardi. They ‘eloped’, hotly pursued, but never caught, by Madalena’s brothers. They lived at Portavo and in London. They finally formally married only in 1785 in the Parish of St Marylebone, Middlesex with David (III) declared a bachelor and Madalena a spinster. Madalena was, in fact, in her final pregnancy and already dying. They had four children, David (IV) b1779, Sophia b1781, Frances b1783 and Madalena b1785.

In addition to Portavo, David (III) owned extensive land in Co Down including Montalto, Ballynahinch. Richard Gervais had his own holding of property including the Red Hall Estate, Ballycarry, Co Antrim.

Martha Ker (b1759) married Thomas Chinnall Porter, a London-based merchant, with property in Worcestershire, and had two sons, one of whom died in infancy and the other who died as a young man in 1821, and three daughters Phoebe (1791-1861), Martha (1793-1836) and Ann (1802-1877) all spinsters who lived between London and Birlingham, Worcestershire.

David (IV) married Lady Selina Stewart of Mountstewart, sister of the Foreign Secretary, Lord Castlereagh; they refurbished Montalto and rebuilt the house at Portavo. Frances married Rev James Mahon, Dean of Dromore and later settled in County Galway. Sophia married George Mahon, brother of James and went to Mayo. Madalena married John Maxwell of Finnebrogue.





The descent of the Title of the five townlands within the Ker family with the relevant 'owners' highlighted in yellow.

## The descent of the Title to the five Townlands

Hugh Ker in his Will referred to *'my three leasehold interests which I hold under the See of Armagh one of them the lands of Navan another of them of the lands of Creaghan and the other of them of the lands of Drumboe Tullynicholl Tullysaran (otherwise Tullygaran) all situate in the County of Armagh'*<sup>8</sup>. Hugh Ker and his wife, Hannah, had no family and the title of the land descended as follows:

**1781** Hugh Ker to his wife Hannah Ker

**1795** Hannah Ker to David & Richard Gervais Ker (brothers; nephews of Hugh Ker)

**1811** David Ker to his brother Richard Gervais Ker

**1823** Richard Gervais Ker to his nieces Martha, Phoebe & Anne Porter<sup>a</sup>

**1837** Martha Porter to her sisters Phoebe & Anne Porter<sup>b</sup>

**1861** Phoebe Porter to her sister Anne Porter<sup>c</sup>

**1877** Anne Porter to George & John Low (brothers; 2<sup>nd</sup> cousins of Anne Porter)

**1894** George Low to his brother John Low

**1905** John Low, the lands of Tullynichol to George Ker Mahon (his 2<sup>nd</sup> cousin)<sup>d</sup>

**1912** John Low to his wife Anna Low and through her in the subsequent few years to sub-tenants by purchase through the Irish Land Commission<sup>e</sup>

There is no evidence that any of the Ker/Porter/ Low title owners ever visited any of the five townlands.

<sup>a</sup> Richard left the Red Hall estate and a Ballymena estate to his nephew David (IV), with a generous legacy for life to his sister Martha Porter out of the rental income of Red Hall, and, apart from some minor legacies, the rest of his property was divided between his three Ker nieces and his three Porter nieces. The Porter girls inherited money and freeholds in London and the five Townlands in Armagh. Despite this, the Porters remained aggrieved, believing that they should have inherited the Red Hall Estate. Thomas Chinnall Porter pursued legal action against David (IV) questioning David's legitimacy by birth and hence his right to inherit<sup>8</sup>. In a learned and liberal judgement, the question of legitimacy was considered irrelevant – Richard could leave his property to whoever he liked.

At the time the land was being surveyed for the maps, the annual rent, for the five townlands, paid to the See of Armagh was £42.9s.3d with £3.0s.0d heriot (a sort of feudal death duty) and the rental income from the subtenants was £875-15s-5p (1829)<sup>9,10</sup>.

<sup>b</sup> The land of Tullynichol was devised in a mesne agreement of 1781 by Hannah Ker to Robert Jackson from thence to John McCullagh and his representatives, and in 1858 by Phoebe and Anne Porter to William and Mary Wallace of Lisnafedy<sup>11</sup>. In Griffith's Valuation of 1865, the name Wallace appears as the immediate lessor although, by that time, Anne Porter remained the outright chief tenant. This arrangement presumably explains why in both the PRONI and 'home' maps of Tullynichol no field demarcations appear and no sub-tenants are listed.

<sup>c</sup> With the disestablishment of the Church of Ireland, the Church lands were transferred to the Commissioners of Church Temporalities. In March 1874 the Commissioners of Church Temporalities granted the lands of the five townlands to Anne Porter in perpetuity subject to annual rents of, in total, £160.1s.8d to secure the payment of mortgages of £1368.5s.3d with interest at 5%

reducible to 4%<sup>12</sup>. The role and work of the Commissioners of Church Temporalities was transferred to the Irish Land Commission in 1881.

<sup>d</sup> George and John Low redeemed the mortgages now held by the Irish Land Commission in February 1892 thereby owning the land outright. Thereafter, the land appears to have been held as collateral to secure various loans. George Low died in May 1894 intestate and unmarried leaving his brother, John Low, heir in law. John Low conveyed Tullynichol to George Ker Mahon, his kinsman, in 1905 most probably to redeem a debt. However, the rest of the estate still remained encumbered by debt<sup>12</sup>. John Low died in 1912 and it was left to his widow, Anna, to sort out the estate and complete the sale of the land to the tenants through the Irish Land Commission.

<sup>e</sup> The Irish Land Acts of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and early 20<sup>th</sup> century transformed tenancy and ownership of land in Ireland. Unscrupulous landlords certainly existed and there was agitation for reform which, no doubt, precipitated or, at least, accelerated the enactment of various Land Acts. There was a fault line between the law which defended landlords' property rights and the notional ideal that tenants should enjoy an 'interest' in the property. Generally the majority of landlords acknowledged some degree of tenant-right especially in Ulster. This had probably evolved during the 17<sup>th</sup> century to give planter-tenants some protection when the success of the plantation itself remained fragile and not assured. Tenants had security of tenure as long as the rent was paid, and the freedom to sell the right of occupancy to any new tenant who met the landlord's approval. This practice was never formalised but had near universal respect and became known as 'The Custom of Ulster'. It was essentially this custom that was made statutory in Gladstone's Irish Land Act of 1870. Further Land Acts were introduced even after the partition of Ireland, by the governments of the Irish Free State and Northern Ireland respectively. Arguably, the three most important Acts were the Great Irish Land Act of 1881, the Ashbourne Land Act of 1885 and the Wyndham Land Act of 1903.

The Great Irish Land Act introduced a system of

*judicial rent review and provided for the establishment of 'a land commission' which initially settled rent disputes between landlords and their tenants. The Ashbourne Land Act transformed the commission to a land purchase agency, facilitating tenant purchase of their holdings. The Wyndham Land Act increased the remit of the Land Commission by involving it in every step of the government-sponsored compulsory transfer of land from the landed classes to the tenantry with the owners compensated by money provided from government funds and the purchasers repaying through long term mortgages, called land annuities, paid twice yearly over 65-70 years. The purchase valuation of land by the Irish Land Commission was usually calculated as circa 25 times the annual rent with the annuity rate to be paid by the individual subtenants calculated at 3.25% of the purchase valuation of individual farms. In the case of Navan, Drumbee, Tullygarron, and Creaghan (622 acres in total) the purchase price calculated by the Irish Land Commission in 1912 was £12,054<sup>12</sup>.*

*Between 1885 and 1920 the commission is said to have overseen the transfer of 13.5 million acres. The land reform brought about by the Irish Land Acts was revolutionary in its scope and achievement. One possible downside was that it perpetuated or even extended a class of landowner whose farms were too small to be economically viable.*

## Conclusion

The book of maps gives a snapshot of the five townlands in 1830. Behind this snapshot is a story of land surveying for, frequently absentee, landlords and a history of the change of 'ownership' of these lands over the years. Some areas of confusion and inconsistency have been highlighted and possible explanations given.

The subtenants through the generations have not been discussed but the transience of 'ownership' will be reflected at least as keenly in this group.

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10. PRONI D1747/2/6 Account of Rents Navan estate 1829
11. Armagh County Museum, ARMCM.34.2017.385: Papers from the Dougan collection.
12. PRONI LR1/245/1: Papers of John Maxwell Low 1823-1924



Front of 'Home' copy of maps



# The Imagined Planetarium - Lost designs and Hidden Influences

by Matthew McMahon

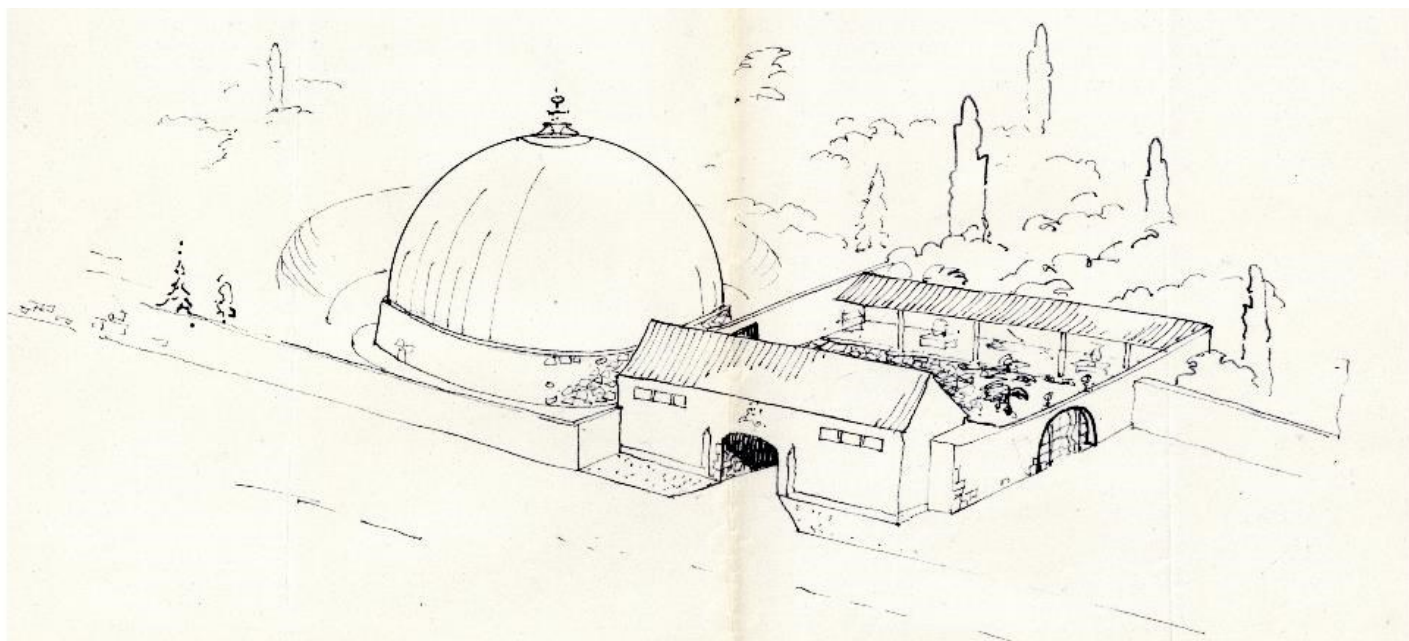


Figure 1. Sketch drawing of the Armagh Planetarium in 1956, by George Philip Bell, incorporating the original Observatory Stables of 1790. (Armagh Observatory and Planetarium)

*This short paper is based on discoveries prompted by the feedback and discussion following my presentation by the same title on 14 February 2024 at the Armagh and District History Group. These discoveries have led to the uncovering of previously unrecognised influences from both far from, and close to, home.*

The Armagh Planetarium was opened to the public on 1 May 1968, the first such institution on the island of Ireland. It remains the longest in continuous operation in the British Isles to this day. My research on the history and nature of the Armagh Planetarium led me to examine in great depth the ‘pre-history’ of the institution. That is; everything that came before the opening in the summer of 1968.

This pre-history began with the arrival, or rather the return of, Dr Eric Mervyn Lindsay in November 1937 to the Armagh Observatory. Born in Portadown in 1907, Dr Lindsay visited the Armagh Observatory on 5 April 1926, while still an undergraduate student at Queen’s University Belfast<sup>1</sup>. After graduating he had won a scholarship to Harvard in the United States and there, he was awarded his PhD. Pinning an exact date at which

the pre-history begins is difficult beyond this. Despite hundreds of letters from Dr Lindsay surviving in the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium archive, none make clear when he first saw a planetarium for the first time, nor which it may have been.

Over the next two decades Dr Lindsay would make various approaches to the Northern Irish government, wealthy individuals in the United States and even the Japanese government to gather support for his ambition to have a planetarium built for the City of Armagh. As outlined in the talk, it was a difficult road, beset by numerous setbacks, serious health problems, and disappointment<sup>2</sup>. During the discussion after the talk, it was pointed out that one of the government documents referred to a sketch, and that the sketch was not attached<sup>3</sup>. Following extensive searching in the archive, and no small amount of luck, the sketches were found and can be seen in figures 1 and 2 of this paper.

As anyone who remembers the original scale and design of the Armagh Planetarium as it was eventually built, these drawings represent a wildly different view of what might have been. Nested approximately twenty metres to the north of where



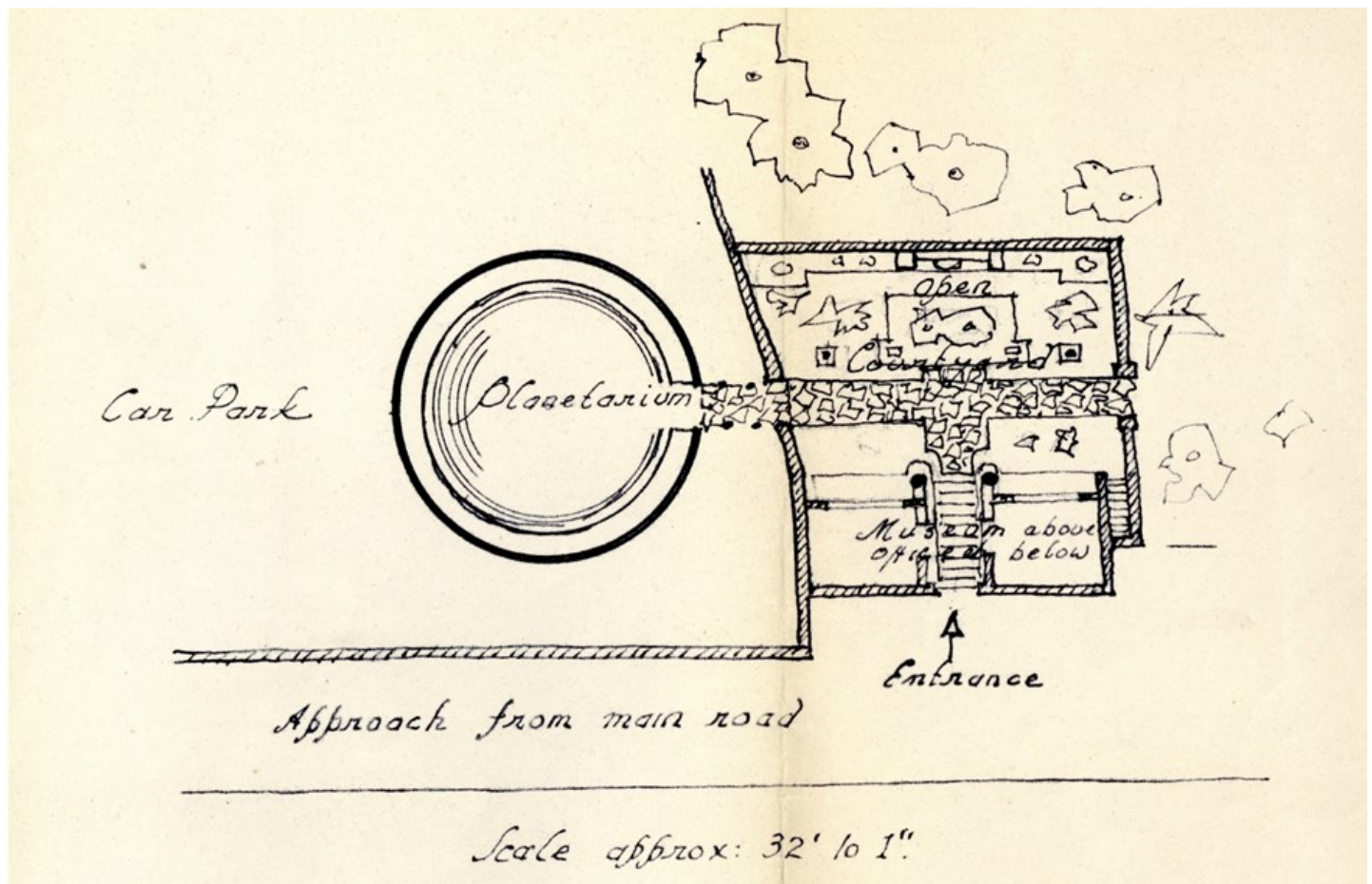


Figure 2. Sketch plans of the proposed Planetarium, drawn by George Philip Bell. (Armagh Observatory and Planetarium)

it stands today, this new structure would have been enclosed with the historic garden walls. The terrain, which rises steeply from the southwest, to the northeast of the garden, would have required landscaping. The resulting shape, much lower than the two-story structure built in 1967, was a much more unique building, demonstrating a great deal of originality in design. The incorporation of the traditional stables and walls would have created the effect of submerging and blending the dome into the landscape. This was in stark contrast to any planetaria that existed in the United States, where institutions such as Griffith Observatory dominated the skyline with immense art-deco structures<sup>4</sup>.

The planetarium that was eventually built was of a very different design, a photograph of it can be seen in figure 3. The design of the dome had been provided by Ian McLennan, the director of the Queen Elizabeth II Planetarium in Canada, to Dr Lindsay in the early 1960's. No correspondence between the two men survived in the Armagh Observatory and Planetarium archive, and the form of the Queen Elizabeth II Planetarium was markedly different to what was built in Armagh. The Canadian Planetarium was a single-story

building, influenced by the visuals of the planet Saturn, with a large encompassing ring surrounding the planetarium dome. However, on a recent visit to Armagh in September 2024, Ian McLennan was able to confirm that he corresponded with Dr Lindsay. He put Dr Lindsay in contact with Dennis Mulvaney, the architect responsible for the modernist design of the Planetarium in Canada. Frames from a video of the press conference announcing the new Planetarium in March 1965 do show a building that looks remarkably similar to the Queen Elizabeth II Planetarium<sup>5</sup>. By June the plans which would be adopted were in the final stages and bore none of the earlier resemblance on account of the revised budget. Though the exterior of the building was not adopted for Armagh the dome itself was adopted in the Armagh design.

The Armagh Planetarium has been expanded four times since 1968, most recently in 2006. This has obscured much of the original design, which has been recovered in a new facade giving it the much more modernist, Space Age appearance it has today. However, when examining the original structure, it appears to have been influenced by a much closer relation than the Queen Elizabeth II



Figure 3. The Armagh Planetarium as it was built in 1967, with Armagh Marble and skirting and enclosing the vestibule and staircase, and finial on the dome barely visible. (Armagh Observatory and Planetarium)

Planetarium. Barely one hundred metres further up College Hill is another dome, the Robinson Memorial Dome built in 1885. The Robinson Memorial Dome, seen in figure 4, was purchased from the Grubb Telescope Company in Rathmines Dublin. The Grubb company provided not only some of the finest astronomical telescopes in the world, but also sold the domes as part of their catalogue<sup>6</sup>. The Robinson Memorial Dome would have been familiar to George Philip Bell, as he had been responsible for the architectural work at the Armagh Observatory for many years. The influence of the stone foundation extending into a skirt around the base of the building, the vertical slat walls, and the finial atop the dome, can all be seen in the final design of the Armagh Planetarium.

This influence is not mentioned in any of the surviving correspondence, nor has it been mentioned elsewhere to the author's knowledge, but when compared side by side, the influence of the Robinson Memorial Dome can be clearly seen. Planetaria in this period, defined by Marché (2005) as the 'third wave' were often highly futuristic, influenced by the modernist trend of university campuses and museums. Armagh Planetarium was designed to fit into an existing landscape, and heritage, in the grounds of the Armagh Observatory, creating a distinctive symbiosis between the two institutions. When the Armagh



Figure 4. The Robinson Memorial Dome, erected in 1885 and purchased directly from the Grubb Telescope Company in Rathmines Dublin. (Armagh Observatory and Planetarium)

Planetarium was surveyed in 1992 by the Ulster Architectural Heritage Society, the facade of the building had been recovered during renovations. The disappearance of the original character, which is noted in the description of the building, but no connection is drawn to the Robinson Dome<sup>7</sup>.

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# Warlocks in the Tontine & 800 Tons of Guano - Poster discovery sheds light on 19th century Armagh

by Sean Barden

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## Introduction

In November 2023 redevelopment work on a house in Upper English Street, Armagh led to a locally significant discovery of historic documents. Thirteen advertising posters from 1845 had been stuck in layers on top of each other on a door in the house where they had remained undisturbed for 180 years.

## The discovery

The building work was part funded by the Armagh Townscape Heritage Scheme, which forms part of a broader initiative across the United Kingdom focused on the regeneration of historic urban environments through grant funding. Since its establishment in 2018, the Armagh scheme has aided the renovation of several buildings within the city centre. Unlike conventional redevelopment projects, the Townscape Heritage Scheme stresses the principles of architectural conservation ensuring that the historic integrity and significance of each building are preserved.

During the autumn of 2023, restoration was underway at numbers 14 to 20 Upper English Street. In one of the properties, members of the work team made a remarkable discovery when they noticed an extremely old and heavily soiled printed poster affixed to the woodwork. Upon closer inspection, it became apparent that this was merely the surface of a much larger find; beneath the initial fragile sheet lay multiple layers of similar posters. As the team carefully peeled away each delicate sheet, they uncovered a total of thirteen 180-year-old advertising posters. These artifacts provide a unique insight into Armagh's commerce and culture during the 1840s, reflecting the economic and social dynamics of the period.

The successful recovery of these significant historical documents is largely attributed to the foresight of Malcolm Vallely, who first recognized their importance, and to the efforts of Martin

McCague's team. Their keen awareness and attention to detail ensured that these invaluable pieces of local history were preserved.

## The woodtype revolution

The posters are made using woodtype which was the most common method of producing posters after 1830. However, printing has a long history in Armagh and as early as 1743 William Dickie was running a printing press and by the 1760s publishing a newspaper<sup>1</sup>. Posters, unlike newsprint and books, necessitated large, prominent typefaces for effective communication. By the early nineteenth century, it became clear that using foundry cast lead type for this purpose was both costly and challenging. Metal type was expensive, difficult to handle, and prone to breakage. However with the commercial production of woodtype after 1830 printers were able to create posters utilising cheap, reliable type that was now available in an ever increasing variety of elaborate and decorative letterforms. This development met the growing demand for innovative advertising in an economy that increasingly relied on eye-catching promotional materials to succeed.

Overall, the evolution of poster design during the nineteenth century, characterized by eye-catching design and diverse new typefaces made posters attractive and engaging. These qualities, along with the elaborate language used, continue to resonate today, proving that posters still fulfil the original intent of their creators<sup>2</sup>.

All the posters were printed in Armagh in 1845, some by John McWatters and the remainder produced at The Guardian Office. McWatters operated a printing press from premises in Upper English Street from the late 1830s having been apprenticed to its previous owner, Morgan Jellett in 1827<sup>3</sup>. Several generations of the McWatters family ran the business throughout the nineteenth century until it closed its doors for the



last time around 1918 following the death of Robert McWatters<sup>4</sup>.

The Guardian Office still operates a printing business albeit under the tradename Trimprint. Coincidentally both printers were situated in English Street just a few doors away from the building where the posters were discovered.

### Conservation and Treatment

Although it is remarkable that the posters survived, staining from dirt and their age made them fragile and so they were in urgent need of careful treatment by a paper conservator.

When they reached Sean Madden's conservation studio he found that nearly two centuries of dirt and mould had caused a lot of damage to the structure of the paper fibres. Water damage combined with surviving old adhesive contributed to acidic conditions which caused further damage. Although the posters were fairly complete, attacks by paper loving insects and nearly 200 years of physical wear and tear resulted in some structural damage too.

Over several months Sean worked to clean the surface dirt, carefully washing each delicate poster and using chemicals to neutralise the acidity. They then went through a process of 'light bleaching' using sunlight to restore the original colour of the paper. Japanese tissue paper was then used to painstakingly repair and strengthen the posters before each was mounted and framed.

Twelve transformed posters were displayed as the centrepiece of an exhibition at Armagh County Museum in November and December 2024.

### Theatrical playbills

Seven of the posters are classified as playbills and advertised performances at Armagh's Tontine Rooms. This concert hall in Upper English Street was established in the 1790s and for nearly 120 years was the social hub for the city hosting theatrical entertainment and balls until 1908 when the City Hall replaced it<sup>5</sup>.

The playbills reveal that between the 15<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> of May 1845 "The Belfast Company" led by Henry



English Street showing the three storey Tontine Rooms below the cathedral spires.

Lawrence collection L\_CAB\_03034, reproduced with kind permission of the National Library of Ireland


Frazer staged over twenty different plays, farces and musical performances in a specially fitted up theatre in 'The Tontine'. This practice of touring was common among theatrical companies, especially when larger theatres were closed between seasons. He was the newly arrived stage manager of Belfast's Theatre Royal and at his first appearance there in March 1845 it was announced he came from the Theatre Royal Liverpool. His small troupe of actors included his wife whose talents included singing and dancing and Mr and Mrs Royston. Frazer was later involved in theatres in London, Nottingham and Devonport and after retiring from the stage ran a small grocery shop in Loughborough where he died in 1892<sup>6</sup>.

The performances included both comedies and tragedies, among the latter type was "Douglas" written in 1756 by John Homes that touched on themes such as Scottish patriotism and cultural independence. Another Scottish themed melodrama The Warlock of the Glen was a dark Gothic tale of intrigue and mystery.

On the other hand the romantic farces like, 'Perfection or the Lady of Munster' used familiar themes from romantic comedy and societal critique.

The Lady of Munster is Kate O'Brien whose potential suitor Charles has high standards for a wife, insisting on perfection in beauty and character. A comedic dilemma arises when Charles is told Kate has a cork leg due to an accident. His servant mocks him, referring to a "matrimonial tripod," yet Charles remains intent on proposing. In a clever twist, Kate ultimately reveals that she does





# THEATRE, ARMAGH

## Tontine Rooms.

---

Under the Management of Messrs. H. FRAZER and ROYSTON.

---

### THE BELFAST COMPANY.

Messrs. H. FRAZER and ROYSTON, beg most respectfully to acquaint the Nobility, Gentry, and Inhabitants of Armagh and its vicinity, that they have fitted up an **ELEGANT THEATRE** in the above Rooms, with new Scenery, Dresses, &c., &c., and beg most respectfully to assure those Ladies and Gentlemen who may honour them with their patronage, that the strictest propriety and attention will be paid in the selection of the

**Most Pleasing and Fashionable Productions of the Day.**

---

On **THURSDAY EVENING, MAY 15, 1845.**

The Performance will commence with the highly admired Vandeville of

# PERFECTION,

## OR, THE LADY OF MUNSTER.

Sir Lawrence Paragon,.....Mr. McDONALD.  
Charles Paragon,.....Mr. HENRY FRAZER.  
Sam.....Mr. ROYSTON.  
Kate O'Brien, (with the Song of "Happy Land,").....Mrs. HENRY FRAZER.  
Susan,.....Mrs. McDONALD.

---

To be followed by the Laughable Interlude of THE

# Dumb Belle.

Mr. Manvers,.....Mr. ROYSTON.  
Harry Vivian,.....Mr. H. FRAZER.  
Eliza, (THE DUMB BELLE).....Mrs. H. FRAZER.

---

The whole to conclude with the Laughable Farce of

# WHY DON'T She Marry?

Nantz Teik,.....Mr. H. FRAZER.  
Corporal Maix, (with the Song of "He who wears a Regimental Suit,").....Mr. McDONALD.  
1st Soldier,.....Mr. ROYSTON, 2d Soldier,.....Mr. MARTSON,  
Lisette (with the Song of "My native happy valley," and "Ill) Mrs. H. FRAZER.  
be no Submissive Wife,".....Mrs. McDONALD.  
Jeanette,.....Mrs. ROYSTON.  
Louisa,.....Mrs. ROYSTON.

---

Reserved Seats, 3s.—Body of the room, 1s.—Gallery, 6d. Half Price, to commence at half-past nine—Reserved Seats, 1s. 6d.—Body of the room, 6d.

NO HALF PRICE TO THE GALLERY.

---

**Doors open at half-past 7, Performance to commence at 8.**

**Acting and Stage Manager. Mr. Henry Frazer.—Violinist, Mr. Dorman.**

ARMAGH: PRINTED AT THE GUARDIAN OFFICE.

not have a disability but the Lady of Munster hails from Cork city in that province and boasts two Cork legs!

A search of contemporary newspapers reveals no advertisements for these performances, suggesting it was more economical for Frazer to commission locally printed playbills. If this is indeed the only evidence of his troupe's appearance in Armagh, the survival of the playbills is significant.

## Sales & Auctions

The posters advertising goods and property are an insight into the businessmen and merchant classes in Armagh of the time. In 1841 Armagh was a town of 10,245 people with a flourishing linen and grain market<sup>7</sup>. However the city was different from other urban centres in the north of Ireland because a significant minority of the population were affluent professionals, clergy and army officers. This demographic was an acknowledgement of Armagh's status as a garrison town and ecclesiastical capital and the content of the posters suggest the presence of these elite groups.

For instance, the poster advertising the auction of the late Major Shaw's house furnishings include a Square Piano by Broadwood (the oldest and one of the most prodigious piano makers in the world). It can be assumed there were wealthy bidders willing to pay a premium for such an instrument.

Shaw's house, Avon Lodge sat in its own grounds of two gardens with glasshouse and a separate

# AVON LODGE.

## AUCTION OF HOUSE FURNITURE,

*An Excellent New Piano-Forte,*  
BY BROADWOOD;  
**AN EASY CHARIOT,**  
BUILT BY HUTTON, IN GOOD ORDER;  
**FARM STOCK, INTEREST in FARM, &c.**

---

*to be Sold, by Unreserved Auction, at Avon Lodge,  
the late Residence of MAJOR SHAW, deceased, on  
Wednesday, the 23d of April instant, and follow-  
ing day:—*

**THE FURNITURE**, which comprises every thing suitable for a Small House, consisting of Parlour, Drawing-Room, Hall, Stair, Lobby, 3 Bed-Rooms, Servants' Apartments, Kitchen, Laundry, &c., is of a choice description, and in nice order, includes Sofa; Easy Chairs; Drawing-Room, Parlour, and Bed-Room Do.; Loo and Card Tables; Sacrophagus; Square Piano-Forte, only a few weeks arrived from the Makers, Broadwood and Co., London, where it was chosen by a Professional Gentleman; Moreen Window Curtains; Carpeting and Rugs; Oil Cloth; Eight-day Clock; Mahogany and other Bedsteads; Chimney and Dressing Glasses; Mahogany Wardrobe; Nests of Drawers; Toilet Tables; Basin Stands; Glass, China, Delf, Kitchen Ware, &c.

Interest in about Seven Acres Town Parks, which is in the highest state of cultivation, and at present under Crop—there are two Gardens thereon; also under Crop, and tastefully laid off—Teap-house Plants, and Beds of choice and valuable Flower Roots; with a Dwelling-House for a Gardener, and Offices.

**THE FARM STOCK**—One Milch Cow, newly Calved, together with her Calf; One Ditto, or Heifers; Three Pigs, of a particularly good breed; Donkey; Donkey Cart and Den Roller, and some Farming Tools; also,

**AN EASY CHARIOT.**

**SALE TO COMMENCE EACH MORNING AT ELEVEN O'CLOCK A.M.**  
On the First Day will be Sold the Principal Furniture; and at 3 o'Clock the Piano-Forte; and the Interest in the Farm.—TERMS AT SALE.

**J. T. ANDREWS, Auctioneer.**

ARMAGH:—PRINTED BY J. M'WATERS.



house which might accommodate a gardener. There was also seven acres of town parks that operated as a small farm with cattle, pigs and a donkey. According to his obituary Major Thomas Shaw died on 31 March 1845 aged 75 ‘universally respected and regretted’<sup>8</sup>. Avon Lodge still stands and is a grade B listed building near the junction of Portadown Road and Drumadd Road.

Three of the posters are advertisements from auctioneer Jeremiah Andrews, one of only two auctioneers operating in Armagh in 1845. While auctions were commonly held in public venues such as the Market House, Andrews distinguished himself by establishing his own sales rooms on English Street, directly opposite the Tontine Rooms, the location referenced in the playbills found within the collection.



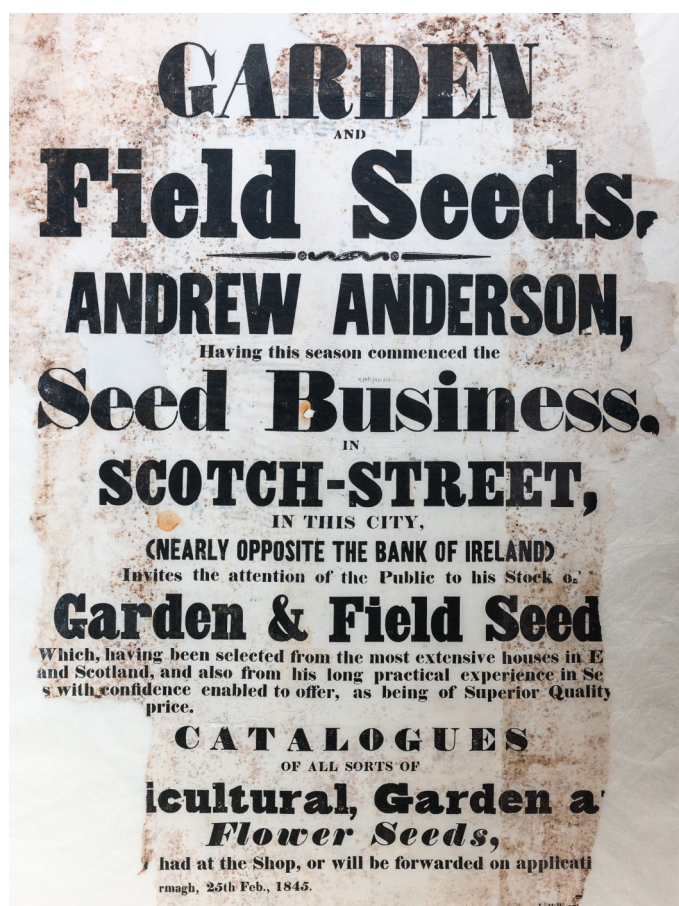
One of Andrews' advertisements mentions a property for rent, the residence of Osborne Kidd, a member of a prominent family of flour merchants and millers with a shop on Thomas Street and mills near Keady. Because multiple members of the Kidd family bore the name Osborne it is difficult to identify the person mentioned on the poster. However, it is probable that it refers to Osborne son of Osborne Kidd who was a solicitor and died in 1867<sup>9</sup>. Osborne senior resided at Tullymore House in Ballycrummy, on the outskirts of Armagh.

Although there are few clues about the exact location of Osborne's residence, described as 'that excellent new house in Upper English Street', it is worth noting that inquiries could be directed to the Belfast Bank, which was then housed in the home of its manager, Thomas Kidd (a relative and

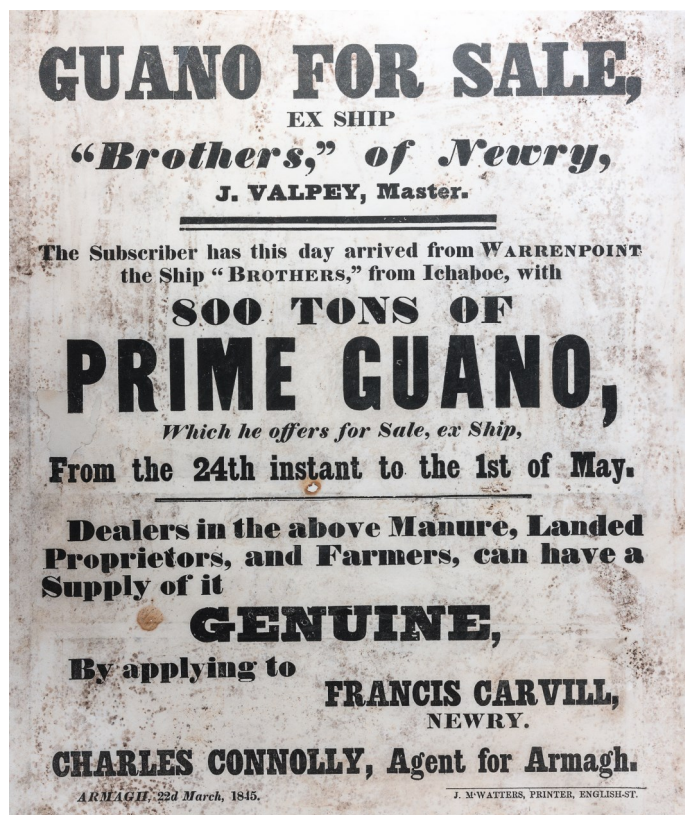
perhaps brother of Osborne). Kidd's house, built in the mid-eighteenth century by Thomas Macan, is easy to locate. Macan was a prominent figure in Armagh, serving continuously as the city's sovereign from 1776 until his death in 1795<sup>10</sup>. In the later nineteenth century, the house was known as the bank manager's residence and was later incorporated into the St. Patrick's Trian complex in the 1990s. It's intriguing to consider that Osborne's home might have been nearby.

## Agriculture and Horticulture

The poster advertising Garden & Field Seeds is a snapshot of a short-term business. Born about 1790, Andrew Anderson became the Head Gardener for Charles Brownlow at his Lurgan estate by 1830. He had a high reputation triumphing at numerous horticultural shows for his employer, particularly for prize winning dahlias. Upon retirement he established a seed business in Armagh in 1845, as noted in this poster, located on Scotch Street (nearly opposite the Bank of Ireland). Today, that bank has been transformed into a suite of retirement apartments known as Patrick's Fold. Although Anderson's venture was initially successful, it was short-lived as he died at his home, "Dahliavale," in Lurgan on October 23, 1848<sup>11</sup>.







The poster advertising a cargo of Guano for sale mentions several notable merchants. Guano (sea bird droppings) was an effective fertilizer that accumulated on isolated coastal regions notably Peru. The ship ‘Brothers’ had brought 800 tons of the stuff to Newry from a source closer to the UK; Ichaboe island off the Namibian coast which was exploited intensively from 1843. It is estimated that during the ‘guano rush’ about 333,000 tons of the valuable commodity was stripped from Ichaboe<sup>12</sup>. Francis Carvill to whom applications could be made was a ship owner, member of Newry Navigation Company and built his wealth through the import and export of a timber and other merchandise. The Armagh agent Charles Connolly operated an ironmongery business in Market Street during the 1840s.

## Conclusion

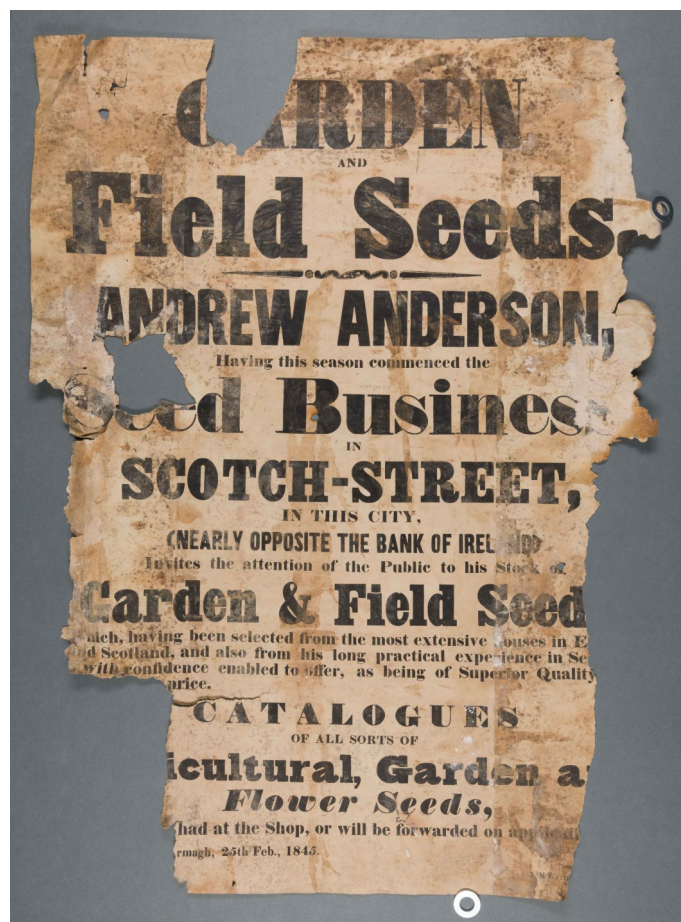
This discovery is significant because of the limited time period it covers and the detailed insights it provides into the people, places, and events of Armagh in 1845. It serves as compelling evidence that ephemera from the past offer local historians a unique opportunity to access small yet valuable details that contribute to a broader understanding of general trends and larger historical narratives.

The Author thanks the owner of the posters for

permitting the reproduction of their images in this article.

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The Anderson poster photographed prior to conservation treatment showing its fragile condition. All photos reproduced with permission of the owner of the posters.

# Henry Stanley: Life as a Dispensary Doctor and Police Surgeon in County Armagh

by Richard Burns

My great, great, grandfather Henry Stanley was born on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1820, and baptised in St Marks, Armagh on 5<sup>th</sup> March 1820, the tenth child of John Stanley and his wife Septima nee Walker. An earlier child also named Henry having died in 1818 at the age of 8. Henry is a Stanley forename, I have a first cousin called Henry, his father was also called Henry as was my great uncle Henry Benjamin Stanley and my great grandfather Henry Robinson Stanley all descended from the above Henry.

While his name does not appear on the Register of pupils in the Royal School Armagh, he did complete his education at Trinity College Dublin and underwent training as a doctor with the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI). He became a licentiate of the RCSI in 1842 and was licensed to practice midwifery in the same year. He obtained his Doctorate in Medicine from the University of Glasgow in 1843.<sup>1</sup>

The following advert in the Newry Telegraph in May 1843 announced the commencement of his career in Armagh.<sup>2</sup>

*Doctor Stanley, Licentiate of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, and Accoucheur*<sup>NOTE 1</sup>, begs to inform the inhabitants of Armagh and its vicinity that he will now practise the several branches of his profession. Doctor Stanley has given his particular attention to the Stethoscope, of the advantages to which instrument to the true diagnosis of diseases of the chest, and of its great value in fevers, the public should now be fully aware; as, without a correct knowledge of it, it is utterly impossible to treat the diseases of infants and children, so subject as they are to congestion and inflammation of the thoracic viscera, existing either as a primary or secondary disease, more particularly as they are unable to answer, or give correct answers to the Physician. Advice will be

*given to the poor gratuitously.*

*Seven Houses, Armagh, 9<sup>th</sup> May 1843.*

His subsequent career can be followed in the Irish Medical Directory first published in 1843 a year before the British Medical Directory appeared.

His first appointment as a Dispensary Doctor was as the Medical Officer to Forkhill Dispensary and Constabulary and he worked there from 1844 to 1852. The Forkhill Dispensary was set up in 1821 using funds from the Richard Jackson Trust. It was located at Belmont a former military barracks built in 1795. The Dispensary was housed in the nearest of the two houses pictured. He met his future wife Frances Grace Robinson in Forkhill, and they were married in the Parish Church there on 13<sup>th</sup> February 1845. Six children were born to the couple in Forkhill, Frances Grace, John Robinson, Mary Grace, Sarah Grace, Nicholas Bindon Robinson and my grandfather, Henry Robinson,

The following extract from an article in the Armagh Guardian gives an example of the type of work he was involved with in relation to the police<sup>3</sup>.

*Henry Stanley was called to give evidence at Armagh Assizes in the case of Peter Magill, a labourer, aged 45, who was indicted for the wilful murder of Christopher Jordan, on 1st April 1845, at Tifferum, near Forkhill, County of Armagh, by strangling him. Another count charged the prisoner with striking Jordan on the eye, and knocking him down, and afterwards throwing him into a bog-hole, and thereby causing his death.*

*In giving evidence Dr Stanley remembers on the evening of Saturday, the 5th of April last, being called to see a body taken out of a hole; there was a rope fastened round the body and a stone attached to the rope; it was a large, flat, weighty stone, he had the body stripped to examine it and*





The former Forkhill Dispensary, Belmont

*formed the opinion that death came by strangulation; he stated that on looking at the body the face presented a very livid and bloated appearance; the eyes were remarkable congested, full, and prominent; the conjunctive of both eyes were also congested like the eyes themselves; the right eyelid and right cheek presented several livid marks; in the outer corner of the left eye there was an extravasation of blood; the mouth was open and the tip of the tongue protruded, it was resting on the lower jaw; the right arm was rigid across the chest; the chest was rather of a red appearance, contrasted with the lower parts of the body; no marks on the throat, it was full and gloated; he examined the back of the neck particularly, and observed nothing worthy of taking note of; on the following day he examined internally and found extravasation of blood under the skin in each side of the windpipe; could find no injury whatever done to windpipe; on raising forepart of the chest found the lungs did fill the chest; on turning out the lungs found them more weighty than usual; found stomach distended and very full of fluid mixed with a little potatoes; intestines free from all diseases.*

*To the COURT—A very healthy subject; not in a*

*weakly state of health.*

*To Mr. TOMB—On opening head found large veins and sinews of the brain greatly congested; the brain was also greatly congested.*

*To the COURT—The result of witness's judgment is that deceased died of strangulation.*

*To Mr. TOMB—Would conclude after his minute examination that the body was immersed in a bog-hole; found bits of bog in the stomach; bog water has an anti-septic power; would not like to say how long the body was in the water.*

Inevitably the major concern of his time in Forkhill was with the famine from 1845 to 1850. Confirmation that the potato blight had crossed to Ireland from continental Europe came in September 1845, and in October the consequences were becoming apparent locally. An emergency committee met in December to discuss the situation and made recommendations to monitor the potato crop and the availability of food for the winter, and to devise measures for relief and employment if the situation deteriorated. This became a relief committee composed of local clergymen, resident landlords and substantial

farmers. The distress had already accelerated the spread of fever in the region. In September 1846 Henry acting as the superintendent of the Forkhill Dispensary, presented a memorial to the Forkhill trustees expressing the “great inconvenience” that was experienced in the parish from the want of a fever hospital, the nearest one was twelve miles away.<sup>4</sup> The initial problems were starvation and diarrhoea, these were followed later by fevers, dysentery, typhus, catarrhal fever, general dropsy (oedema), scarlatina, smallpox, measles, whooping cough, marasmus (severe malnutrition) while things improved slightly after the winter of 1847/8 cholera arrived in early 1849.<sup>5</sup>

In 1851 an incident closer to home occurred with an inquest into the death of his children’s nurse Anne Jane McMahon.<sup>6</sup>

*Henry Stanley, M.D., of Forkhill, Armagh, being sworn, stated to the jury the following facts:- about 25 minutes to 5, on the morning of the 22nd of October last, was awakened by a knocking at the door, and after that, in rapid succession, heard two or three knocks; was surprised some of the servants did not attend to it, and on getting up, met the nurse; asked her where the deceased was, she having usually answered the door, to such calls. He went down, and recognised the voice of a labouring man, John Bennett; opened the door; there was another man with Bennett, named Peter Kelly; immediately asked them what was the matter; “Oh,” said he, Anne Jane has destroyed herself;” asked how? found she stated to him she had taken vitriol; as she been nursing his infant, ran up to see if it was safe, and finding it so, got a large plate of butter and some candles; reached her about five minutes to five. On arriving at the house where she was lying, said, “Anne Jane what has driven you to do this?” she would not tell; at first would not speak to him; he said perhaps she had only a few minutes to live, and if she had any respect for him or a mistress, she’d tell what had driven her to it. Then she said – “Oh, that policeman!” On further inquiry, she said he (the policeman), had deceived her, and promised her marriage, and broke his word. Examined her throat and saw she had not [sic] taken vitriol; wanted her to take some butter he had brought, but*

*she would not, resisting all she could – though he spoke to her about endangering her soul by such persistence in wishing to destroy yourself. On threatening to bring the stomach-pump, she consented to take a lump of it, and in three or four such doses, each administered with like difficulty, she took about a pound of butter; this had the desired effect in discharging her stomach, and a quantity of the acid was discharged. The Rev. Mr. Young, whom he had sent for, now came, and he kindly went to the dispensary and got a quantity of oil; made her drink fully three glasses of it, and it had the desired effect; the agonising pain ceased, except the pain still in part of the gullet. He thought she had considerable chance of recovery, as the acid was apparently all removed. He further asked her where she got this acid; she said out of a bottle, in Dispensary – that she had got it the morning before; and had hid it in the kitchen; that she went into the garden behind the house, and before taking it prayed to be forgiven for what she was about to do, she then drank it, and leaped into the well, which is between three and four feet deep. She said the bottle was at the well – when it was brought to him, there remained about two spoonfuls of the nitric acid. She could not finish it, as the fumes, she said, were choking her; and that she left the well when she could stand for the cold of it no longer. Mr Young also questioned her – He put her upon boiled milk for diet; on the fourth day after the occurrence her mind began to wander; she remained in his care for ten days, and her health continued improving, that is, the effects of the poison sensibly decreased, during that time. On the tenth day he thought it well to send her to her uncle’s, at Newbliss, from whose house he originally got her in 1846; wanted to get her committed to Armagh gaol, as he knew she would then be sent to the asylum; but the Rev. Dr. Campbell, the magistrate to whom he applied, thought he could not commit her as there is no violence offered to any one but herself. Mr Mayne remarked that this was a very prevalent mistake; the words of the act expressly [sic] were “either dangerous to themselves or others”.*

*Deposition continued – Rev. Mr Young offered to let her stay in his house; but Dr. Cumming thought it best for her to go home to Newbliss. (A letter*

from the policeman was read which seem to prove an attachment between deceased and him). Dr. Stanley explained that for a long time this has been going on. He has heard from Dr. Cumming, that on Sunday, in Church, deceased had a strange look in the eyes, but witness saw nothing himself; always thought her strictly honest, and a good girl, and had raised her wages two or three times; he would not have sent her away, but he felt confident she was strong enough for the journey, and he sent a man and a woman with her, and had horses, etc., provided on the road. He believed had she recovered from this mental disease that she would most likely have got consumption. There was a dispute between the servants; some small article was missed; it was found his kitchen maid, Rosy Grant, had stolen it. This led to an investigation, and other articles were missed; the mother of Rosy Grant used to carry letters between deceased and the policeman; deceased confessed to Rev. Mr Young she had given some of his property to them; these people threatened to make a disclosure of this to him, and he thought that acted very much on her mind. Ellen Brannigan, servant in Dr Stanley's family, deposed that after Rosie Grant went, that was, day previous to the occurrence, deceased said to her in the garden, that very little would make her throw herself into the well; for she heard she'd be mingled up with the Grants' stealing of the clothes. Deceased made the children say their prayers the night before she took the poison, as usual.

Dr. Stanley, further stated, that he believed the poison was finally removed; thinks that the thickening of the stomach was the effect of a chronic disease, and that for six months past she had been sinking evidently; at the time she took the poison she was very much emaciated; but most probably the poison hastened her death, as it certainly increased her mental derangement.

The Coroner having read over the evidence for the Jury, they, after a full and pains-taking consideration of the case, returned the following verdict:- "We find that the, deceased, Anne Jane McMahon, came to her death on the morning of the 12th of December, from an organic disease of the lower end of the stomach, accelerated by her

having taken a quantity of nitric acid, on the morning of the 22nd October last, at Forkhill, County Armagh, while labouring under great mental depression."

The following year he gave notice of his intention to resign his post in Forkhill to the Newry Board of Guardians on 31st October 1852. His brother-in-law Dr William Leebody was at that time the Medical Officer to Tartaraghan Dispensary District but may well have been in poor health as he died on 3rd December 1852. The post was advertised on 13<sup>th</sup> December, and Henry Stanley was subsequently appointed to the post. The Rev. Fleming describes the Dispensary District<sup>7</sup> as follows:

*It is evident that the post of Medical Officer for the Tartaraghan Dispensary District placed a heavy workload on the Doctor, partly because of the high density of population involved a large number of call-outs, and the nature of the terrain in the northern part, which was largely fenland with poor roads and many "ramparts" <sup>Note 2</sup> meant that especially in wintertime some homes were well-nigh inaccessible, hence some of the appointments were of short duration.*

Henry had been left the townland of Derrykeevan in his father's will of 1846 and had set up his dispensary in a house there. A further six children were added to the family between 1854 and 1862 they were Charles, Edward, Septima Walker, Robert Oliver Grace, Kezia, and Elizabeth Catherine. The birth of Elizabeth Catherine proved to be too much for her mother who died on Christmas Day 1862, less than a week after giving birth. She had been predeceased by her daughter Septima in November at the age of 5.

Disputes over pay with the Board of Guardians of the Lurgan Union eventually led to him leaving Tartaraghan Dispensary. He was on a salary of £70 per annum and was aware that some of the other Medical Officers in the surrounding area were on £80 per annum. In January 1861 his salary was finally increased to £80 per annum. The previous year there had been a dispute over payment for vaccinations. There was a disparity between the number of children he vaccinated and





The former Tartaraghan Dispensary

the number he was entitled to claim for.<sup>8</sup> This rumbled on for several months before the over payment was paid back. Things came to a head in March 1861 when the Board of Guardians charged him with dereliction of duty, an investigation into these charges was to be held in the Manchester Arms Hotel in Portadown on 21<sup>st</sup> March.<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately, I could not find a report of the meeting in the newspapers. The next report came in July with news of his resignation, a subsequent article in the Portadown News following an advert for his replacement, stated that following the investigation *the committee of the dispensary and the people of Tartaraghan expressed their satisfaction in the manner in which Dr. Stanley has attended to the business of it.*<sup>10</sup> The article continues with a reference to a Dr. Stewart who attended the dispensary during Dr. Stanley's illness. Dr. Stewart was subsequently appointed to the post in September.

Following his resignation from Tartaraghan, he took up the post as Police Surgeon in Portadown.

The following incident reported in the Portadown News in February 1864, came to me courtesy of the late Des Fitzgerald.<sup>11</sup> It refers to an accident which occurred on the Portadown and Omagh Junction line about a fortnight prior to the newspaper article.

*It would seem that a person calling himself the Rev. John O'Donnell, of Kilsallagh, County Derry, a Roman Catholic priest, got into the train that leaves Omagh at six o'clock. It is said that he was then noticed not to be very steady, and some objection was made to allowing him to travel. Ultimately, however, he was suffered to proceed. On the arrival of the train at Portadown, at eight o'clock Mr. O'Donnell was missing, and could be found nowhere. The train for Dungannon leaves a short time after the arrival of the train from it, and the driver was told to keep a sharp look-out on the line, which, fortunately for the reverend gentleman he did, and about a mile and-a-half from Portadown discovered him lying on the rails. The train was immediately stopped and he was removed to a house adjoining, and a messenger despatched to Portadown for assistance. A car with Constable McLoughlin and some other help was promptly on the spot, and the injured man was moved to Mrs Grew's hotel in Portadown. Dr Stanley was called in and found the man suffering from a wound on the scalp three inches long, a broken shoulder blade, and some internal injuries. We understand that for nearly two hours his life was despaired of, so serious were the injuries inflicted, and up to the present he has not been able to leave his bed.*

*We heard that in this very case Mr O'Donnell was*

*in the carriage with a wedding party, from Omagh or Dungannon, and he so annoyed them that he would likely have received a good beating were it not for the interference of a butter buyer belonging to this neighbourhood.*

Henry Stanley married again on 8<sup>th</sup> February 1865 in St Anne's Cathedral, Belfast to Elizabeth Browne of Belfast.

Around Christmas of 1871 Henry's youngest son Robert was involved in an incident in West Street<sup>12</sup>.

*An assault of a most wanton character was committed on Monday night, in Portadown, on Robert Stanley, twelve years, youngest son of Henry Stanley, M.D. It appears that a row took place about eight o'clock, in West-street, a short distance from Dr. Stanley's residence. Robert Stanley, who was standing at the door, went over, and in returning was set upon and stabbed in the back with a knife. At the time he thought it was only a blow and was proceeding when his assailant again rushed at him. He then turned round and said, "Let me alone; I did nothing on you." The fellow then ran away, and Master Stanley went home and found he had been stabbed. Next morning several persons were arrested on suspicion, and he identified one Samuel Grimes, a baker's apprentice, as the person who stabbed him. Grimes was ultimately allowed out on bail. The wound is not dangerous.*

In 1873 a greater tragedy hit the household when on 10<sup>th</sup> November two of Henry's sons died from pulmonary consumption (tuberculosis); Nicholas, an arts student aged 20 and Charles, a drapers assistant aged 19.

He retired from medical practice in 1877, moving from his house in Church Street, Portadown to Annagh House/Terrace. Dr George Dougan from Markethill Dispensary became the Dispensary Doctor in Tartaraghan in that year and most likely took over Henry's practice in Church Street in the same year.

Henry Stanley died on 15<sup>th</sup> April 1888 and in his will, he left his house in Edenderry to his wife for the rest of her life and on her death, it was to pass to his daughter Kezia. The rest of his estate was to be sold off and invested to provide an income for his

wife and on her death the principal money was to be divided between his children. He left various sums of money to the following children: Sarah Grace, Frances Grace, Henry Robinson, Mary Grace and Robert Oliver Grace and names Kezia as his residual legatee. His eldest son John Robinson Stanley is mentioned as being already provided for, presumably this is an indication that the land in Derrykeevan had already been given over to him. There is no mention of Elizabeth Catherine in the will, it may mean that she had died in the intervening time but I can find no record of her death in that time.

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## Notes

1. An accoucheur is a French term meaning a physician specializing in obstetrics.
2. A rampart is a raised road through a bog, the peat on both sides having been cut away.



# The Charlemont Arms Hotel, Armagh

by Kevin Quinn

Located in Upper English Street, the Charlemont Arms Hotel is one of Armagh's foremost business landmarks. The hotel has been providing accommodation and hospitality for the past 178 years to guests from far and wide as well as to many generations of Armachians. Although the Charlemont was established as a hotel by local businessman, John Hughes, in February 1846, one source places the Charlemont's origins in the middle of the 17<sup>th</sup> Century.

## The Goat Inn est. 1641?

In Armachiana, unpublished writings by the first curator of Armagh County Museum: T.G.F. Paterson, an inn was first established on the site of the Charlemont in 1641. Paterson cites Robert Pillow, a local historian and archaeologist active in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century:

*'According to an undated newspaper cutting in the Pillow collection of Newspaper Abstracts the oldest known Inn in the city of Armagh was one known as the 'Goat Inn' whose designation was changed in 1688 to the 'Real Old Goat'. If the original sign was a goat, it was probably a place of call for shoemakers. Later it is said to have borne the title of the 'Caulfield Arms' afterwards becoming the 'Charlemont Arms', presumably in honour of the volunteer Earl'.*

However, Paterson notes that there is limited written evidence for the existence of the Goat Inn:

*I have not found Pillow's authority for the Goat Inn, it may be that there was local tradition regarding it, if so, no remembrance now remains'*

## Local sources

Local sources, such as Ashe's account of the lands of the Archbishopric of Armagh (1703), lists four inns or taverns in Armagh: 'The Three Nags Head' and 'The Kings Arms' both in English Street, and 'The Sign of the Swan' and 'The Sign of the Spread Eagle', both in Market Street. However, the

Freeman Lists from the Corporation of Armagh (1738-1798) names 27 individual Inn-holders, Ale-sellers and Distillers. Unfortunately, the names of their premises are not recorded.

## Tradition suggests Charlemont est. 1760-70s.

Due to the lack of information in the written sources, we must rely on oral tradition for an approximate date for either the change of name of an earlier inn to the Charlemont or the establishment of the Charlemont on the current site. T.G.F. Paterson cites a newspaper article concerning the likely reason for the name change from Caulfield to Charlemont and the likely site of the previous premises:

*The Charlemont is a place of some antiquity and derives its title from the famous Earl of Charlemont. In the heyday of the Irish Volunteers, there was a Charlemont Arms in every town of note, now there is probably not another surviving in the whole of Ireland. Originally, the licensed portion of the present premises was known as the 'Caulfield Arms', Caulfield being the family name of the Viscounts Charlemont. When James Caulfield the 4<sup>th</sup> Viscount, was created an Earl in 1763 and later became so notable a figure in public affairs, the designation was changed so that travelers passing through the city might be suitably*



Figure 1. As the above quote states 'there was a Charlemont Arms in every town of note'. Another Charlemont Arms Hotel. Location unknown. Courtesy of the Foster family.



*impressed with its importance. The hotel proper was, however, in those days the residence of Dr. Atkinson, a member of the family long settled at Crow Hill.*

However, Paterson takes issue with the article's view on the location of the hotel premises: It is more than likely that the 'Charlemont Arms' was adjacent to rather than a part of Dr. Atkinson's house at that time:

*'The hotel was a later formation than the volunteer period and in the closing days of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was the residence of Dr. Atkinson a member of the Crow Hill family who died therein.'*

However, it is important to note that Dr. Atkinson's house would later become the main body of the hotel. (See fig.2)

### **From 1770s to 1840s**

There are no sources from the late 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> Century that corroborate the name change to the Charlemont mentioned by the newspaper article cited by Paterson. There is no mention of the Charlemont Arms on the list of Armagh Inns between 1819-1822. However, it is possible that it was not listed due to it being a less significant inn and/or tavern which did not have a sign and only public houses with signs were recorded, or, it had potentially changed to a distiller or wine and spirit merchant (as was the case by 1840).

### **Two taverns, a wine and spirit merchant, and a tanner**

The 1839 Armagh Plan and Valuation Records show that there were 3 distinct businesses on the current hotel premises (numbers 33, 34, and 35 Upper English Street). The 1840 Lennox Business Directory provides the names of the occupants and their trade surprisingly showing that all occupants were licensed to sell alcohol: Numbers 33 and 34 were taverns occupied by Bernard Hagan and Arthur Brannigan respectively. Number 35 contained two businesses: The principal occupant was William Davidson and Davidson, a wine and spirit merchant, and in the rear of the building was a tanner, Thomas Craig. The valuation records show that number 35 had an annual valuation of £34 which was significantly higher than the £12 for

numbers 33 and 34. The annual valuation would indicate that number 35 was a more substantial building or business. Unfortunately, the names of the taverns are not given.

### **Arrival of the railway in Armagh**

By the 1840s, Armagh was ranked fourth among the Ulster towns after Belfast, Derry and Newry in terms of economic activity. Opportunities arose for small family businesses with the development of postal and telegraphic services, banks, and most significantly, the arrival of the railway, which reached Armagh in March 1848. Many hotels were established around this time to meet the increased demand for overnight accommodation from new rail visitors to Armagh. These included: The Ulster Inn (est. 1848/9) and the Railway Arms Hotel (est. 1852) both located next to the new railway station, the Temperance Hotel, the White Cross Inn, the Plough Hotel and the Harp Inn all established on Lower English Street in the early 1850s, and the Traveller's Home (1856) which was established on Ogle Street.

### **The sale of number 35**

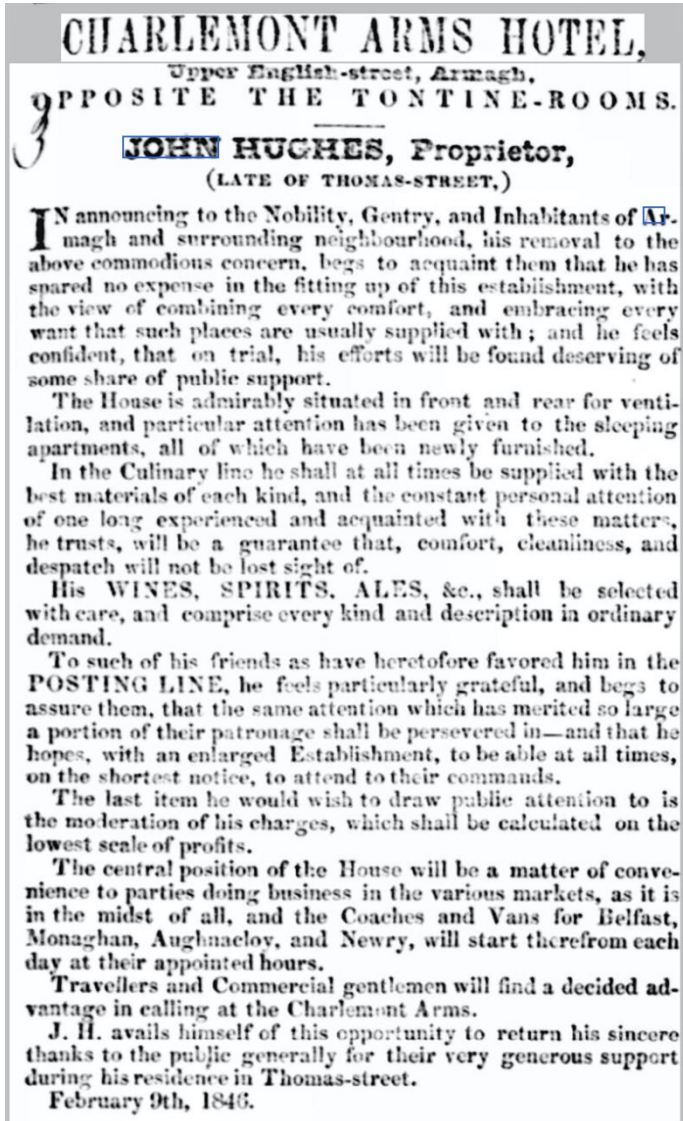
On August 5<sup>th</sup>, 1845, an advertisement was placed in the Armagh Guardian for the sale of number 35 Upper English Street which would indicate that number 35 had not in fact been a hotel before 1845:

*'To be sold. The dwelling- house, tenement and premises in Upper English-Street in the City of Armagh, lately in the possession of Mr. Thomas Craig. Comprised a most commodious Dwelling-house, Tanyard, complete in every aspect with extensive offices and an excellent garden and from their immediate proximity to the intended termini of the Belfast, Coleraine and Omagh railways, they afford a most excellent opportunity for the opening of a hotel or any other business.'*

### **The Charlemont Arms Hotel est. 1846**

By February 1846, number 35, had been refurbished and was declared open and ready for business under the name of 'The Charlemont Arms Hotel'. (see.fig.2) The proprietor was John Hughes who was already in the hospitality trade, as proprietor of a public house in Thomas Street. In the early 1840s, there was also a Patrick Hughes

who was proprietor of the Victoria Hotel in Castle Street, but it is uncertain if they were related. In fact, in the early decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the 'Hughes' name was prominent in the business life of Armagh so much so that an 1819 Armagh business directory lists seven people named 'Hughes'.



**CHARLEMONT ARMS HOTEL,**  
Upper English-street, Armagh,  
OPPOSITE THE TONTINE-ROOMS.  
**JOHN HUGHES, Proprietor,**  
(LATE OF THOMAS-STREET,)

IN announcing to the Nobility, Gentry, and Inhabitants of Armagh and surrounding neighbourhood, his removal to the above commodious concern, begs to acquaint them that he has spared no expense in the fitting up of this establishment, with the view of combining every comfort, and embracing every want that such places are usually supplied with; and he feels confident, that on trial, his efforts will be found deserving of some share of public support.

The House is admirably situated in front and rear for ventilation, and particular attention has been given to the sleeping apartments, all of which have been newly furnished.

In the Culinary line he shall at all times be supplied with the best materials of each kind, and the constant personal attention of one long experienced and acquainted with these matters, he trusts, will be a guarantee that, comfort, cleanliness, and despatch will not be lost sight of.

His WINES, SPIRITS, ALES, &c., shall be selected with care, and comprise every kind and description in ordinary demand.

To such of his friends as have heretofore favored him in the POSTING LINE, he feels particularly grateful, and begs to assure them, that the same attention which has merited so large a portion of their patronage shall be persevered in—and that he hopes, with an enlarged Establishment, to be able at all times, on the shortest notice, to attend to their commands.

The last item he would wish to draw public attention to is the moderation of his charges, which shall be calculated on the lowest scale of profits.

The central position of the House will be a matter of convenience to parties doing business in the various markets, as it is in the midst of all, and the Coaches and Vans for Belfast, Monaghan, Aughnacloy, and Newry, will start therefrom each day at their appointed hours.

Travellers and Commercial gentlemen will find a decided advantage in calling at the Charlemont Arms.

J. H. avails himself of this opportunity to return his sincere thanks to the public generally for their very generous support during his residence in Thomas-street.

February 9th, 1846.

Figure 2. Armagh Guardian February 1846 announcing the opening of the Charlemont Arms Hotel

## John Hughes (b.1812- d.1900).

John Hughes was an enterprising and innovative entrepreneur in the business life of Armagh between the 1840s and 1880s. The Charlemont remained in his ownership until 1884 during which time the hotel was expanded to incorporate numbers 33 and 34 Upper English Street. From the early 1850s, he was also the proprietor of the Plough Hotel on Lower English Street. Throughout his proprietorship of the Charlemont, Hughes embraced the latest technological innovations of the day to enhance his business. (See fig.3)

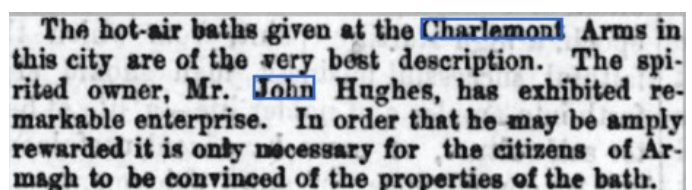
## Omnibus

In 1856, the ever-inspired John Hughes took delivery of a new omnibus which he had commissioned from local coach makers, Henry and Edward Taylor who were of Armagh Coach Factory situated on the Mall West. An omnibus was a large, enclosed, horse-drawn vehicle used for passenger transport before the introduction of motor vehicles. With the increase in the volume of passengers arriving at new railway station, Hughes no doubt saw the omnibus as a worthwhile investment for transporting his guests to and from the hotel. This investment was well-received by the Armagh Guardian on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1856:

*'The proprietor of the Charlemont Arms Hotel has just given a remarkable token of his desire to maintain the highest character of his establishment while providing for the comfort and accommodation of the public. A new and beautiful omnibus, which has been admired by all who have either sat in or seen it, is a creditable to his enterprise as it the skill of our mechanics. It was built by Mr. Taylor of this city and said to be superior in design and finish to any vehicle of the kind either in Dublin or in Belfast'. (See front cover for photo of the omnibus outside the hotel)*

## Turkish Baths

In 1862, Turkish baths were attached to the rear of the hotel probably in the old tannery. Again, this was a very timely and shrewd investment by Hughes as the first Turkish bath to open in Ireland was in Cork City in 1859. Hughes most likely made the investment with the view to attract more middle-class visitors who were touring on the ever-expanding rail network by tapping into the emerging Victorian focus on health and well-being. (See fig. 3)



The hot-air baths given at the Charlemont Arms in this city are of the very best description. The spirited owner, Mr. John Hughes, has exhibited remarkable enterprise. In order that he may be amply rewarded it is only necessary for the citizens of Armagh to be convinced of the properties of the bath.

Figure 3. Armagh Guardian April 1870

## Innovative farmer

John Hughes was also a substantial and innovative farmer owning lands in the townlands of Tigarariff

and Ballybrolly just north of the city. His focus appears to have been crop farming, especially potatoes. During the famine years, he experimented with new methods of planting potatoes and introduced new potato varieties that yielded better harvests and were more resistant to disease. Below are some extracts from the Armagh Guardian which reference his innovative planting methods and the introduction of a new species of potato:

*'Mr. Thompson of Loughgall plans to put a few grains of turnip seeds between the sets, others intend to put beans instead of turnip between the sets...Mr. John Hughes of the Charlemont Arms Hotel has already planted 1 and ½ acres of potatoes.'* Armagh Guardian, 13th April 1847.

*'Mr. John Hughes of the Charlemont Arms Hotel states that no more than one fourth of his crop of Ballygawley pinks is diseased and the remaining potatoes is so abundant as to lead him to conclude he had more than an average crop.'* Armagh Guardian, 6<sup>th</sup> April 1848.

*'The White Rock species which has so successfully resisted the disease in this neighbourhood last year, and we believe was principally introduced here by Mr. John Hughes of the Charlemont Arms Hotel.'* Armagh Guardian, 5<sup>th</sup> June 1852.

*'On Monday a splendid Devon Cow lately purchased by John Hughes, proprietor of the Charlemont Arms Hotel brought forth twin calves which is believed to be a very rare occurrence. Mr. Hughes is fortunate in all his rural affairs, and we hope the present increase in stock is ominous of greater prosperity, which he fully deserves.'* Armagh Guardian, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1854.

### New ownership

In January 1883, due to a serious illness, John Hughes put the hotel up for sale. A Mr. J. H Mann purchased it in March 1884. It underwent a complete refurbishment which included the Turkish baths and all the previous owners' furnishings being auctioned off. It is unclear if the hotel continued to operate during the refurbishment before it reopened as Mann's Hotel in 1886. However, what is clear is that the name change did not last long as Bassett's Tour Guide lists the premises as 'The Charlemont

Arms Hotel' in 1888. By 1890 the hotel was once again up for sale, this time listed by Mr. Mann's widow. The hotel appears to have remained on the market until 1894 when it was purchased by a James McMahon. The 1890 'For Sale' advertisement provides an insight into the interior layout of the hotel (See fig. 4).

**HOTEL TO BE SOLD OR LET.**  
**TO BE SOLD or LET,** for term of Years, that  
 Old-established and well-known **HOTEL** in  
 the CITY of ARMAGH, called "The **Charlemont**  
**Arms**." The House is centrally situated, large and  
 commodious, and in thorough repair; has on the  
 premises Turkish and other Baths, and possesses  
 all the requirements of a first-class Family and  
 commercial Hotel.  
 In connection with it there is an extensive Posting  
 and undertaking Establishment, which may or may  
 not be taken by a Purchaser or Lessee.  
 The business done in all the branches is of a large  
 and respectable class.  
 If Sold, a considerable portion of the Purchase-  
 money will be allowed to remain out on Mortgage  
 should such accommodation be required.  
 For further Particulars apply to the Proprietor,  
 Mr. **JOHN HUGHES**, on the Premises; or to  
**WILLIAM GALLAGHER,**  
 Solicitor, College-street, Armagh.  
**(12 B)**

Figure 4. Armagh Guardian 1883

### Ownership from 1902 to 1934

In 1902, James McMahon put the hotel up for auction. Between 1902 to 1910, it changed ownership several times. In 1904, there were two proprietors, Samuel McCausland followed by Amelia Marsden. In 1907, it was unoccupied for a period. From 1908 to 1910, it was in the proprietorship of Thomas Weiss followed by Rose Ann O Hagan from 1910 to 1924. In 1924, the hotel changed ownership to the Charlemont Company Ltd. In October 1933, due to depressed trading conditions, the hotel went into receivership and was handed over to the liquidator. (See fig. 5)

### Liquidation

In October 1933, Shaw, Leslie, and Shaw Chartered Accountants of Wellington Place, Belfast oversaw the liquidation. The property consisted of the hotel premises: Two yards and a garden at the rear, two dwelling houses with shops, and a three-storey dwelling house. The property was put on the market for £1150. This price included furniture, catering



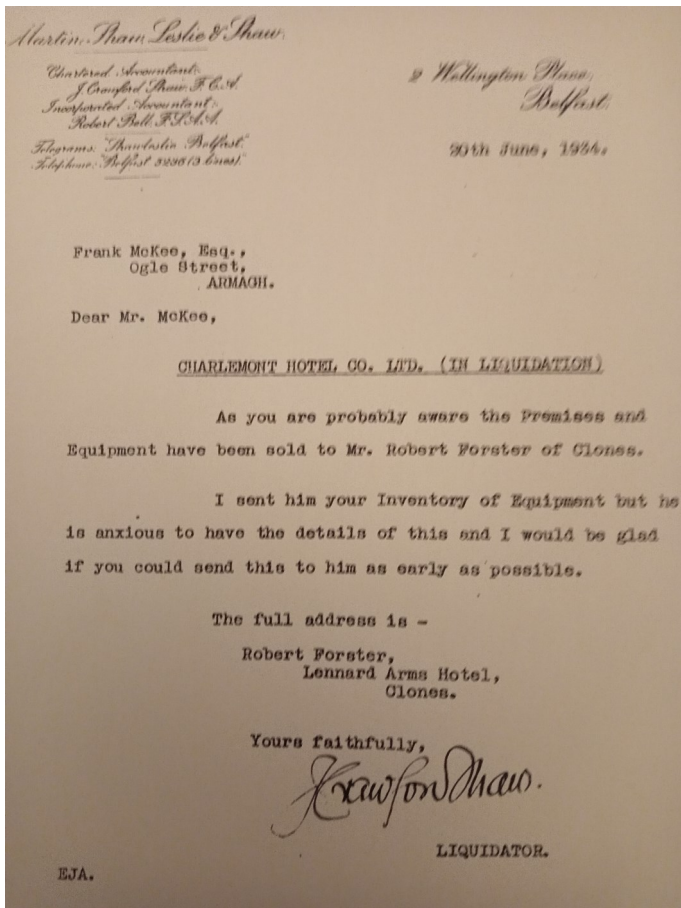


Figure 5. Letter of confirmation of sale to Robert Foster

equipment and utensils. Mr. Frank McKee, Auctioneer and Valuer of Ogle Street, assisted in bringing the sale to potential interested parties. It was offered to Mrs. Maud Mackle owner of the Lough Neagh Hotel in Maghery who declined. It was also brought to the attention of a Mr. Cauldwell who also declined. It was suggested to Mr. James Finnelly of Banbridge the possibility of converting the hotel into a cinema. Mr. Finnelly replied that Armagh already had two cinemas and that the cost of repurposing would be prohibitive. Finally, in May 1934, it was decided to put the hotel up for auction at the value of £750.00 or the nearest

Figure 6. Telegram (difficulty selling the hotel) © Armagh County Museum T048.3

offered. However, before it went to auction, a Mr. Robert Foster, who co-owned the Lennard Hotel in Clones with his brother Christy bought it.

### Foster family ownership: 1934 to present.

Robert Foster came from Co. Fermanagh and was previously a commercial traveller in the shoe trade before entering the hotel business. The hotel has remained in the ownership of the Foster family since this time with significant investment having been made in the hotel over the past 90 years, making it into the successful business it is today. There have been two main structural changes under the Foster's ownership: Between 1976 and 79, the hotel was practically rebuilt after being badly damaged by a bomb explosion in 1975 and in 1999 two derelict buildings adjacent to the hotel were incorporated significantly increasing the overall size of the hotel. (see figs. 8 & 9) Having passed the ownership on to son Robin and his wife, Greta, and now their children, the hotel has now been in the ownership of the Foster family for three generations

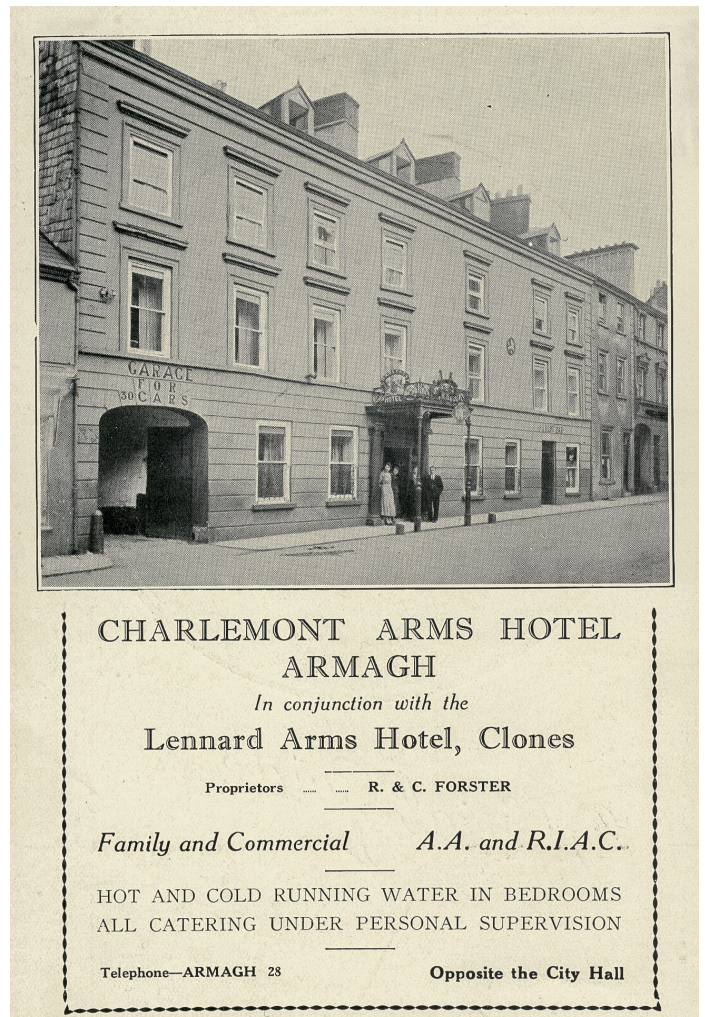


Figure 7. Hotel, Foster family and staff in 1939

From Armagh City Guide (1939) courtesy of Armagh County Museum

and I hope that it will remain in the family's ownership for many years to come.

**Guests**

Over the years, many commercial travellers used the hotel as well as barristers and judges who stayed over for the winter assizes. The latter would often sit down to a seven-course bar dinner upon arrival. The hotel has also hosted many weddings over the years with a wedding breakfast costing half a crown a head in the 1930s and ten shillings and sixpence for bed and breakfast in the 1950s. During the Second World War, army officers, such as Colonel Shirley who was distinctive for having had a wooden arm, often used the hotel. Since the early 1950s, the bullet throwers from Cork have stayed over in the hotel when in Armagh to play against the Armagh bowlsmen. It is said that the Cork bullet thrower, Mick Barry, was as well-known in the Charlemont as he was in his native Cork .

**Famous guests**

Over the years, the Charlemont has hosted many famous guests from sports stars such as Gene Tunney, the world heavyweight-boxing champion (1926-28), to stars of stage and screen such as Liam Neeson, who was beginning his career in a local theatre company, and Anne Charleston, who acted as Madge in Neighbours. Many famous musicians have also stayed such as the Joe Loss, Roger Whittaker, Dubliners, Horselips, and Elkie Brooks. However, the most famous of all the famous guests to have stayed in the Charlemont was the legendary cast and director of the iconic movie, ‘The Quiet Man.’ after shooting the movie in Co. Mayo, John Wayne, Maureen O Hara, Victor McLaglan and John Ford stayed over on their way to Belfast.

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Figure 8. above shows the hotel in the early 1970s.



Figure 9. to the left shows the hotel in the 1980s. Both photographs courtesy of the Foster family.





# THEATRE, ARMAGH

## Tontine Rooms.

Under the Management of Messrs. H. FRAZER and ROYSTON.

### THE BELFAST COMPANY.

Messrs. H. FRAZER and ROYSTON, beg most respectfully to acquaint the Nobility, Gentry, and Inhabitants of Armagh and its vicinity, that they have fitted up an **ELEGANT THEATRE** in the above Rooms, with new Scenery, Dresses, &c., &c., and beg most respectfully to assure those Ladies and Gentlemen who may honour them with their patronage, that the strictest propriety and attention will be paid in the selection of the

**Most Pleasing and Fashionable Productions of the Day.**

**On Friday Evening, May 16,**

Will be presented, the Romantic Drama of—THE

# WARLOCK

OF

# THE GLEN!

Clanronald, usurping Laird of Glencairn,	Mr. ROYSTON,
Adelbert, the rightful heir, his infant nephew,	Miss F. M'DOALD.
Matthew, { Rightfull Laird of Glencairn, in the disguise of the	Mr. H. FRAZER.
Warlock of the Glen,	
Andrew, a Fisherman,	Mr. M'DONALD.
Sandie, a young peasant,	Master CONNOR.
Murdock,...	{ Mr. MARTSON.
Ruthven,...	{ Mr. JONES.
Adela, Countess of Glencairn, and Mother of Adelbert,	Mrs. H. FRAZER.
Marrion, betrothed to Sandie,	Mrs. ROYSTON,
Mause, Mother of Sandie,	Mrs. M'DONALD.