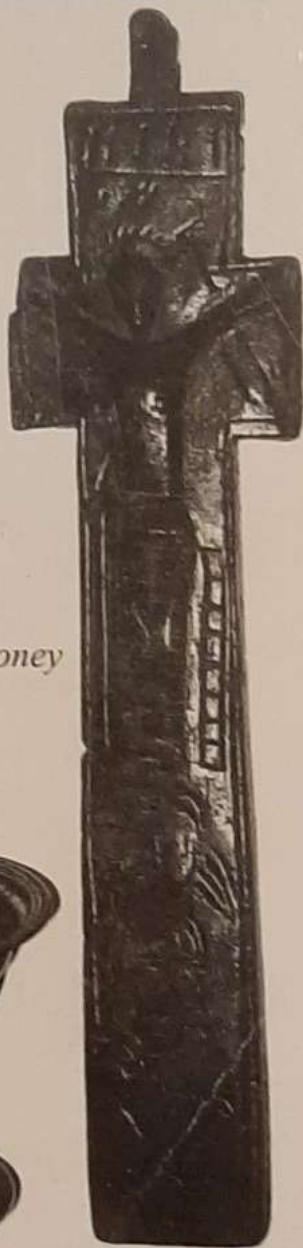


# A History of Saggart and Rathcoole Parishes

*By Maeve Mulryan Moloney*



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*For my husband, Dan Moloney.*

*d. 2 June 1997.*

For everything there is a season,  
and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-2.

## Introduction

In a general account of the history of a parish it is difficult to know when to begin and when to end. I decided to give a brief outline of the first millennium and start the history of Brittas, Rathcoole and Saggart with the coming of the Normans in 1171. The book initially started as an account of the United Irishmen's activities in the area in 1798. A background of events over the previous centuries laid the foundation for 1798. In 1798 road works were underway, churches, schools and the paper mill had been established. The book tells the story of the development of the community up to the present time. This book could not have been written without the help of many individuals in the Saggart – Rathcoole – Brittas area who told me stories which laid the foundation for much of my research.

*Maeve Mulryan Moloney*

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## Chapter I

SAINT Mosacre had his home – Teach Sacra – Saint Sacre’s house at the place which became known as Tassaggart – now shortened to Saggart. The church was dedicated to Saint Mosacre, by whom it was founded, before the middle of the seventh century. Other churches were at Newtown and Coolmine. 3<sup>rd</sup> March is the feast day of Saint Mosacre.

His lifestyle would have been very like the lifestyle of the monks at Tallaght. St. Maelruain lived at Tallaght. One of the rules at Tallaght was ‘He that works with the sickle or the flail, he that uses the mallet or makes the ditch, each has to recite the hundred and fifty Psalms as his additional daily work; and none of them goes to his evening meal until he has finished those one hundred and fifty Psalms.’

### **The People**

The low hills featured daily in the lives of the people. The rearing of cattle and sheep was the most important part of the local economy. Shepherds lived in the hills for months at a time – often for a whole lifetime. Sometimes they were on their own. In the milder weather their wives and families had shelters there. Some of these shelters were in groups when perhaps the



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extended family lived near each other. The shelters were made from tree branches with long posts hammered into the ground and lighter branches, forming a kind of basketwork, through the posts. Then they were covered with clay sods. They were not very durable, but they were easy to erect, and the materials were nearby. The floors were strewn with rushes.

### **Forts**

Wealthy farmers erected ditches around their farmhouses and farm buildings. A fort is a ditch around the early farmsteads. There are several forts in the parish. The forts show us that the people who lived here two hundred years ago were well organised and worked together. Rath is the Irish word for fort.

### **Rathcoole**

We have no definite explanation for the name Rathcoole. It could have been Rath Coole meaning the rath of Coole the father of Fionn; coole may come from the Irish word for forest – coil. The word rath is in some local place names as Raheen, Rathcreedan. The rath associated with Rathcoole is in a field between Rathcoole and Saggart. It is to be preserved in any future development of the area.

### **Wolves**

The hills could be dangerous places especially when covered in snow in Winter. In the daytime the well forested hills were a cover for wolves. The shepherds with their wolfhounds frightened them off and protected their sheep and lambs. They also had sheepdogs, spaniels and terriers. The deer and goats rambled freely. The hens and chickens were in plentiful supply, but they too had to be guarded.

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### **Weather Forecast**

*Red sky in the morning is the shepherd's warning*

*Red sky at night is the shepherd's delight*

Men could gauge the weather forecast by seeing how high or how low the clouds were on the tree covered hills. In the mornings when the mist hung low over the hills and the sheep scattered out uphill over a wide area, they made their plans to go food gathering. The animals could sense a sense of change in the weather. When the farmer saw his sheep come together on the commons and look for shelter under the trees, he knew that it was time for him to make sure that his shelter was secure against the storm that was coming. They moon and sun governed their days and seasons.

### **How the People Lived**

We can imagine the people sitting outside their shelters on the long Summer evenings, or beside a good log fire watching the stars, as they lay, wrapped in their sheep skins, listening to the stories of Fionn and the Fianna. In wintertime music and storytelling were the principal pastimes.

The people lived on their own produce – meat, milk and honey were plentiful. Fish was got in the streams and river. Cooking was always done outside as the wooden houses could catch fire. Meat was smoked over the fire to preserve it.

This is how meat was cooked: Stones were heated in a fire, then dropped into water in a trough, until it was brought to the boil. The joints of meat were then cooked in the water. That was the method of boiling meat used by the Fianna.

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The women and children took their baskets and went up the commons to get blackberries, sloes and damsons. An old saying was, 'to go to Saggart to stack blackberries.' Back home again they made jams and pickled some for the harsher months to come.

Milk was turned into butter, cheese and whey. Churns were made from the local timber. With the abundance of heather and wild flowers bees had plenty of nectar for honey production. Mead was made from honey, water, yeast and malt.

Some corn was grown. It was cut with a sickle. Winnowing of the corn was carried out on the ground with a flail so as to leave the grain. The straw was used as bedding in the houses and also as feed and bedding for the animals. The corn was ground into meal by means of quern stones. Porridge was a main part of the diet in winter. Some barley was grown for ale making.

Flax was also grown. It was woven into linen for garment making. Some of the women took home fleeces of wool. If they had no sheep of their own, they sought out the pieces of wool caught in the briars and took them home to card and spin and make them into garments. Leather was made from the hides of cattle.

### **Water Supply**

A plentiful supply of clear water was available from the river Camac and its tributaries – the two Slades which run down from the side of Slievethoul – they pass to the Camac under separate adjacent bridges on the Craddle road. There are many other streams so fresh water was never a problem. The usual river crossings were the fords.

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### Ninth Century Poem

In this ninth century poem the meatless diet is praised:

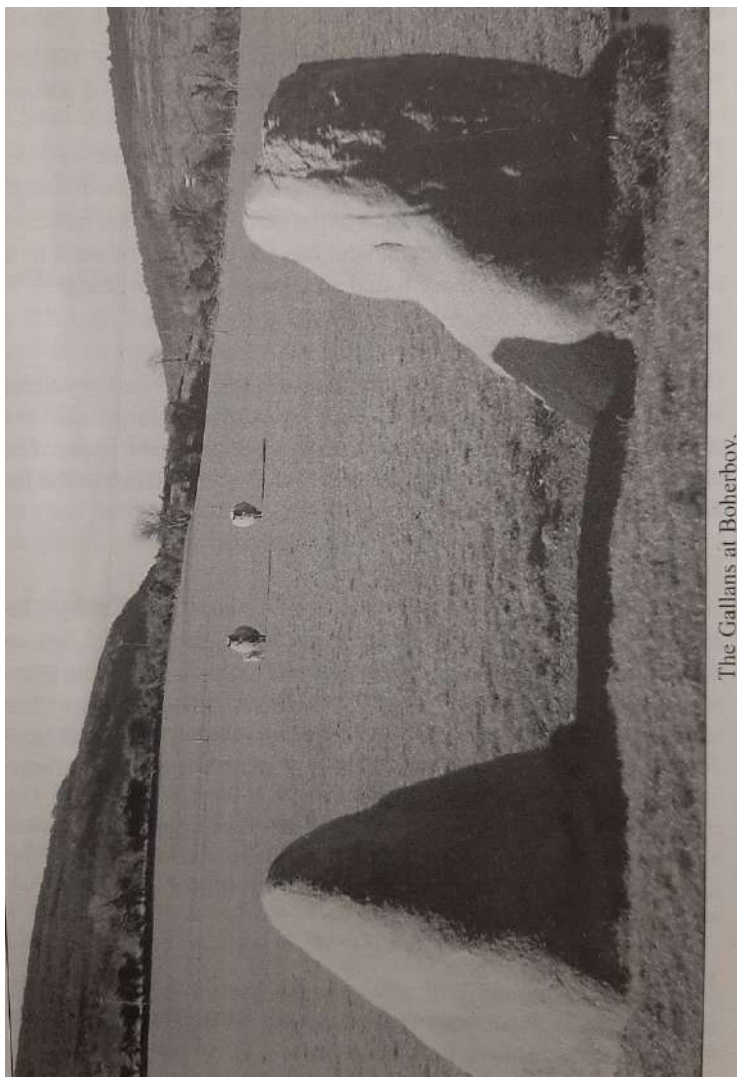
*Produce of a mountain ash, black sloes from  
a dark blackthorn, berry foods,*

*A clutch of eggs, honey, mast and heath peas  
(sent by God), sweet apples, red cranberries, whortleberries,*

*Beer and herbs a patch of strawberries, (good to taste in their  
plenty), haws, yew berries, nut kernels,*

*A cup of excellent hazel mead, swiftly served;  
brown acorns, manes of bramble with good blackberries.*

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The Gallans at Boherboy.

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### **Crockaunadreenagh**

People lived there long before the coming of Christianity. We know that from the cairns there. A cairn is a pile of stones or a group of boulders assembled as a memorial or a landmark.

The cairns are on the ground rising from the north, east and west on a slope of Saggart Hill. They are just north of the Crookaundadreenagh/Slievethoul boundary. The leaders of the communities who built them were well organised. The monument has features that relate it to the passage tombs such as those found at Knowth and Newgrange.

### **Bronze Age Burials at Aghfarrell**

On 20 April 1938 a stone lined cist was discovered. The top soil was removed for quarrying and a few feet down a large slab was discovered. Human remains and a bronze age pot were found. They were removed to the National Museum. The estimated age of the find was 900 – 600 B.C.

### **Gallan at Saggart**

A gallan is a standing stone. There are two of these at Boherboy. They are known locally as the Adam and Eve stones. They are 4.5 feet and 4 feet high. There is a single pillar stone at Coolmine. Standing stones were often used to mark boundaries. Sometimes, too, they were inscribed with ogham. Ogham letters are represented by lines up to five in number written above, below, or across a stem line. Some standing stones crosses or cross-in-circle inscribed on them. One of these was at the old cemetery at Saggart where a granite pillar stone with the cross-in-circle at each end of the stone was to be seen. A font

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stone known as the Wart Stone was also in the cemetery. A carved stone head was found buried there.

### **High King**

Pre-Christian Ireland was ruled by a High King. There were many lesser kings each ruling over his own tribe on its ancestral lands or tuath. Each of these kinds paid tribute, that is a tax, (known as the Borumha – the counting of cattle), to the over king who ruled the province. By Saint Patrick's time the two principal over kings were at Tara and Cashel. Throughout the fifth century, and into the sixth, the Ui Neill of Tara were still in conflict with the people of Leinster – who had inhabited the area before the coming of the Ui Neill. Sometimes the collection of this tribute led to hostilities. One such collection led to the battle at the Slade.

### **Battle of the Slade**

In 458 A.D. Laoighaire, the High King, tried to persuade the King of Leinster to pay the Borumha. When he failed, he attacked Leinster lands and gathered the tribute. Then his men drove the animals up through the long rift valley which begins between Brittas and Crookslin. The Leinster men had gathered at the Slade. Laoighaire was killed at the battle that then took place. His body was taken to Tara and interred with his weapons in the south east corner of Rath Laoghaire, with his face turned towards the Leinster men.

### **Local Chieftains**

A thousand years ago the road to the south west was more or less where the road through the village of Rathcoole is now. If the roads could speak, they would tell of the Kings of Leinster,

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from Nas na Ri (Naas), who toured the province after inauguration. They came to meet the local chiefs and receive their addresses of loyalty.

The area was ruled by the Irish Chieftains Mac Giolla Mocholmog who were of the O'Byrne clan. Ma Giolla Mocholmog can be translated as the son of the servant of St. Colman. Colmanstown probably gets its name from its associations with the chieftains. Giolla Chomghaill was the chief of the O'Toole Clan.

The Kings passed through the villages in their horse drawn chariots as they went, with their followers, on their way through Leinster. They were entitled to be feasted wherever they went. At the time of inauguration some cattle were presented as a gesture of goodwill. These supplemented the animals paid as the Borumha. Ordinary people rarely left their own area. Some of them were hired as soldiers and then they went to fight for their chief or king.

The Irish word for road is bothar – as in Boherboy, Green Bater (the name of the road leading uphill from St. Anne's Terrace in Rathcoole before the Lennons came). A bother was described as 'two cows travel on it, one lengthwise, the other sideways, their calves and yearlings with them.'

### **Kings of Leinster**

Many of the local families take their names from the kings of Leinster.

721 A.D. King Murchadh had three sons Faelan, Dunchada, Muireadhaigh.



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Faelan died in 737; from him the tribe name of Ui Faolain or Fallon was taken.

His descendants were:

King Ruadrach I, died in 780.

Diarmuid, Lord of Airthear Life (Liffey), died 831.

Muireagan, Lord of Naas and Airthear Life, slain by the Norsemen 861.

Maelmordha, slain by the Danes at the battle of Confey, near Leixlip, 915.

Finn, Tanaist of Leinster, was slain 921.

King Murchadh, slain 970.

King Maelmordha, slain at the battle of Clontarf, 1014.

King Bran, blinded at the battle of Clontarf, died 1018.

Dunchada was killed at a battle near Kilcullen in 722; from him the tribe name of Ui Dunchada or Dunne was taken.

Dunchada's descendants were:

King Ceallach, died 771.

Bran

Muireadhaigh

King Faelan, died 940.

King Lorcan, slain by the Norsemen, 941.

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Dunchadh

Giolla Mocholmog

Muireadhaigh died in 755; from him the tribe name of Ui Muireadhaigh or Murray was taken.

His descendants were:

King Bran, died 790.

King Muireadhaigh, died 813.

King Dunlang, died 867.

King Aitill, slain by the Norsemen 869.

King Ugair, slain 915 at Confey.

King Tuathal, died 956; from him the tribe name O'Toole was taken. Their name is in the place name of Slievethoul or O'Toole's mountain.

### **Present Day Names**

Many of the present day names come from those older names Colman, Conlan, Doolan, Dunne, Fallon, Finn, Kelly, Kenny, Larkin, McDermott, Moore, Morgan, Murphy, Murray, O'Byrne, O'Gara, O'Leary, O'Toole, Phelan, Rogers, Whelan, etc. Some of the names continue as first names: Brian, Conor, Dermot, Donough, Finn, Laurence, Morgan, Rory, etc.

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### **The War Cries**

O'Tooles was Fennock – abu.

O'Byrnes was Shillelagh – abu.

O'Dunnes was Mullach – abu.

O'Moores was Conlan – abu.

### **Vikings**

The Danes or Vikings started to come to Ireland about the end of the eighth century. The ships of the Vikings were small, light, pointed at both ends, and sailed very fast across or before the wind, sometimes the fore part of the boat lifting clear off the water like a modern speed boat. Navigators sailed without compasses and probably found their bearings by the North star. They never sailed too far from the coast with land seldom out of sight for more than three or four days at a time.

They settled here about a hundred years later. They were probably of mixed Scandinavian stock. The native Irish called them the Fionn Ghaill – Fingal – or fair strangers and Dub Ghaill the dark strangers. As time went on, they became like the native Irish. One of them, Olaf, King of Dublin, built a fortress at Clondalkin. While King Olaf was in Scotland in 868, the Irish destroyed that fortress.

### **Gormlaith**

A hundred years after that, Gormlaith, the sister of King Maelmordha of Leinster, married a later King Olaf of Dublin and had a son, Sitric. He succeeded his father as King of Dublin.

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Through this relationship the Dublin Norse and the Leinster men were allies.

### **O'Byrnes at the battle of Clontarf**

The Norse king, Sitric, married the daughter of Brian Boru, King of Munster and High King of Ireland. Brian Boru married Gormlaith, King Sitric's mother. A conflict arose and it ended with the battle of Clontarf in 1014. Maelmordha, the King of Leinster who fought on the side of the Danes, was killed. His son, Bran, was blinded by King Sitric. Brian Boru defeated the Danes. In his moment of victory, Brian Boru was killed in his tent after the battle.

### **Bishops**

King Ceallach of Leinster gave St. Maelruain land for Tallaght monastery. King Sitric gave extensive land to endow the church. He was the founder of a church on the site of Christ Church Cathedral in 1038.

The synod of Rathbreasil was convened in 1101 when Donat O hAingli was bishop of Dublin and Cormac O'Mail bishop of Glendalough. At that synod it was decided that there would be two archdiocese and twenty-four diocese. The priests of the diocese, parish and monastic, would be subject to the bishop of the diocese. Many of the abbots of monasteries were lay men; in some cases, the abbacy was regarded as a family right.

Malachy, later Archbishop of Armagh and later Saint Malachy was in charge of the transition period. It took about forty years to put the proposed scheme into effect. St. Kevin was the first bishop of Glendalough. He died in 618. The last bishop was

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William who died in 1214. Dublin and Glendalough united with Henry de Londres as Archbishop. He died in 1228.

### **A Poem**

Here is a poem of the time. It could just as well have been written at the end of the second millennium.

*My tidings for you; the stag bells,*

*Winter snows, summer is gone.*

*Wind high and cold, low the sun,*

*Short his course, sea running high.*

*Deep red the bracken, its shape all gone,*

*The wild goose has raised his wonted cry.*

*Cold has caught the wings of birds,*

*Seasons of ice – these are my tidings.*

In general, the people were born, lived and died in the parish. They found all the necessities of life, food, drink and shelter, in their own surroundings. This first chapter showed that in many respects the pattern of life remained unchanged for centuries.

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People looked forward to the second millennium and the changes that might bring. As we will see, great changes began about one hundred and fifty years into the second millennium, with the coming of the Normans.

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## Chapter II

In the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century Diarmaid Mac Murrough became king of Leinster. He was driven from his kingdom by one of the wars that broke out. This war was over his abduction of the wife of O'Rourke of Breffni (where Co. Leitrim now is). Mac Murrough was deposed, in 1166, by Rory O'Connor, the last High King of Ireland. Mac Murrough went to King Henry II of England. With the King's permission he was promised help, by some of the Welsh knights, to recover his kingdom.

### **The Normans**

The Norman knights and soldiers under Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke – known as Strongbow – came to help King Diarmaid. The Norman mail clad soldiers, archers, and fortification builders were too powerful for the Irish. The chieftains of the O'Byrne and O'Toole clans were removed from their lands. For hundreds of years afterwards they tried to get back to the farms where their ancestors had lived.

### **Strongbow**

Strongbow, after conquering Leinster, married the daughter of the man who had invited him to Ireland. Aoife MacMorrough

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was the daughter of Diarmaid MacMorrough and niece of Laurence O'Toole (Saint). An immense picture of their wedding, by Daniel Maclise, hangs in the National Gallery in Dublin. In 1171 Diarmaid died and Strongbow became King of Leinster.

He took possession of all the land of Leinster despite the opposition of the High King and of the Danes. Shortly after Strongbow became King of Leinster, King Henry II came to Ireland to make sure that the Welsh knights did not become too powerful. He took control of the lands which had been occupied. Strongbow retained the land he got when he married Aoife. On Christmas Day 1171 King Henry II attended Mass at the church, which later became Christ Church Cathedral. The first Archbishop of Dublin, Gregory, was in office at that time.

### **Royal Manors – King's land**

King Henry II formed four Royal Manors out of the land that had belonged to the Danes at Newcastle, Saggart, Crumlin and Esker. That is how the lands of Saggart and Rathcoole came to be known as the King's land. Kingswood is a local place name.

Strongbow and Aoife had five sons and five daughters. One of the daughters, Isabella, married William Marshall, who became the King's Viceroy in 1224. As was the custom at the time, powerful men wanted monasteries on their lands, so William Marshall brought Cistercian monks to his newly built Duiske Abbey at Graignamanagh, Co. Kilkenny. He died in 1231. There is a record of a Marshall family living in Rathcoole after that time, perhaps his kinsmen.



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The family name Walsh or Breathnach comes directly from those Welsh families of that period. Fitz was the Norman word for son – Fitzgerald, Fitzmaurice, Fitzpatrick, Fitzsimon.

### **Archbishop's Land**

Following the death of Laurence O'Toole, Archbishop of Dublin, an Englishman, John Comyn, was appointed as the third Archbishop of Dublin in 1181. King Henry's son, Prince John, who held the title Lord of Ireland, granted the land of Rathcoole, with its church and titles, to the Archbishop of Dublin about the year 1184. The Archbishop granted the titles from Rathcoole to St. Patrick's Cathedral. That gift was acknowledged by Pope Clement III in 1187 and again by Pope Innocent in 1216.

### **Dublin Castle**

In 1189 King Henry II died. He was succeeded by his son, King Richard I, known as Richard the Lion Hearted, who fought in the Crusades. Ten years later he died from a crossbow wound. Prince John then became King. He built Dublin Castle which was the seat of the government for the next seven hundred years.

In 1207 an inquiry was held by the justices of Ireland to see if the king had taken away any lands belonging to Saggart church. Twelve local men acted as jury at the inquiry. Any land taken from the church was to be exchanged with the King's land.

### **Mac Giolla Mocholmog**

When the conquest of Leinster was complete, Mac Giolla Mocholmog was no longer chief. He seems to have settled into

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the position of a landlord with extensive lands in the districts he had ruled. The family continued as landowners in the district for nearly a century and a half after the invasion, though they no longer ruled the people of the area. The grandson of Mac Giolla Mocholmog married a Norman Welsh lady, Clarissa, probably of the Fitzgerald family.

### **Rathcoole Borough**

Some years later Archbishop Luke elevated Rathcoole to the status of a borough and granted four acres of land for each freeman. Each freeman was granted commonage in the mountains of Sleestoll (Slievethoul), both of turbary and pasture as Gillaholmoc had perambulated the same, but the ditch which stretches on the east from the King's lands at Saggart in a line to Greistone, and from Greistone to the lands of the nuns at Calliaghstown monastery on the west, with a promise that if in later years the Archbishop wanted to take the lands of Rathcoole for himself that he might participate in the commonage. By a later charter he granted to the burgesses of Rathcoole all the customs and privileges which the burgesses of Bristol enjoyed.

He granted to the men of Newtown (Nova Villa), their proper pasture which lies between Greistone on one hand and Newtown and extend on one side to the proper pasture of Rathcoole and on the other to the land of the nuns at Calliaghstown.

In distributing the land to the newcomers, it is evident that the existing divisions were recognised as still in force. Grants were made simply naming the land to be conferred, generally without any indication as to its position or boundaries. Clearly

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the people were still on the spot who knew the old names and understood them as applying to definite scopes of land.

The Archbishop was the new proprietor of lands already fully settled and occupied. The occupants continued in the lands and retained their memories and traditions with respect to them. The land was leased by middlemen and rented out in smaller parcels to the tenants. One of the middlemen was John Cosyns. The name continued in Rathcoole for more than the next five hundred years.

### **Calliaghstown Monastery**

It was founded by Dermot Mac Murrough for nuns of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Hogges. The monastery was probably affiliated to the Augustinian Order. About 1326 Rathcoole manor was surveyed. Part of the lands were waste and described as lying among the Irish.

Calliaghstown monastery is mentioned in that survey. Sometime over the next two hundred years the nuns left the monastery. As we will see later, they may have gone to Dublin city. It was probably too dangerous for them to continue living in the Calliaghstown area. However, the name given to that part of the parish is still used. Calliaghstown was a distinct parish up to the census of 1831. It is mentioned in 1831 as having a population of 67 persons and 600 acres.

### **Brittas**

The Normans were great builders of fortifications which were used as observation posts. The observation tower was called a bretasche from which comes the name Brittas. The Normans had a look out post at Brittas to keep an eye on the native Irish.

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The low land was under grass with a common pasture. It was difficult to farm it as it was liable to be invaded by the O'Byrne and O'Toole tribes and suffer the consequences of wars.

### **St. Patrick's Cathedral**

In 1229 Luke, Archbishop of Dublin, was allowed to cut the woods and sell the timber from Saggart forests. The money he got for the timber was used to reconstruct the magnificent St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. Some of the timber may have been used for the actual building. By cutting down the timber, it was hoped that there would be less shelter for persons coming to war. The Slade is the only remaining part of that forest. It is a natural habitat for native flora and fauna. Crown receipts from Tassagart for £75.2.4d. appear in the account of the Sheriff of County Dublin for 1235.

### **Middlemen**

The middlemen were Thomas Kussock, Walter Aylmer, Adam le Dyere and Richard Gerveyse of Saggart. They held their land by military, or knight service. That meant that they had to supply the King one-armed horseman for each knight's fee held. The horse and armed rider were to be made available each time that the knight's service was called to the battlefield. Before the middle of the thirteenth century this liability became of money payment of 40/- for each knight's fees. John, grandson of Mac Giolla, paid 45/- for one knight's fee and the service of one sergeant on foot. He also had to supply two otter skins.

The native agricultural population continued, after the Norman settlement, to occupy most of the land. They gave the same

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services to their new Norman lords as they had given to their Irish chieftains.

### **Protection**

The O'Byrnes and O'Tooles continued to return to their lands. In 1272 there was mention of a judicial review to transfer the King's lands from the war-torn lands of Saggart to the peaceful lands in Newcastle. Some of the Irish became like the Normans. They even protected the lands, as when in 1277 Ralph, great grandson of Mac Giolla Mocholmog was paid to guard against the invasion of the Irish. Payment for the protection of the lands was paid in 1276 to Richard le Bret of Rathfarnham; in 1277 to Hugh de Cruise, he was leased the lands of Newcastle/Saggart for 12 years; in 1282 and 1294 £18 was paid to John Riryth. In 1284 the lands of the New Castle at Lyons were rented for £147/5/8 a year. In 1286 letters of protection for three years were granted to the vicar of Rathcoole William O'Bothic. A great portion of the lands was under grass, as it was impossible to farm it, owing to the frequent raids.

### **Manor Towns**

As the centuries went on Rathcoole became a place of considerable importance. It was a manor town ruled by a provost of portreeve. In the thirteenth century it formed one of the smaller manors of the Archbishop of Dublin.

### **Saggart**

Saggart, too, was important. It was a manor town ruled by the provost. The principal building was a water mill, which was leased in 1296 by Henry Ash and later by Henry de Freyne.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

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## Chapter III

The English lived close to Dublin and the area they lived in became known as the Pale. The Pale varied in size but generally it stretched from Dalkey to Tallaght to Rathcoole to Rathmore to Ballymore Eustace to Kilcullen to Clane to Kilcock and northwards to counties Meath and Louth. The O'Byrnes and the O'Tooles continued to make many incursions northwards from Brittas, through Saggart, into the Pale and Dublin city. A more substantial boundary was needed to keep them out. Great stone fortresses were built at many places. Two castles were built at Rathcolle and three at Saggart. In 1311 Saggart was again destroyed. The houses were made of wood, so they were easy to burn.

### **The Castles**

The castles were built from local stone. They were usually three or four stories high with a small square tower at each corner. One of the towers had a spiral stone staircase. the main hall and dining area were at the top with large open fireplaces. A minstrel's gallery was, sometimes, around three sides of the main hall. Other floors served as sleeping chambers and living quarters. The narrow-slit windows gave lots of light to the

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

interior. The walkaway around the roof of the house served the double purpose of providing a lookout and acting as a gutter. A castle was on the left-hand side of Castle Road, another at City West Hotel, one at Rathcoole House site and one at Cheeverstown.

### **Edward Bruce**

In 1315 Edward Bruce, brother of Robert Bruce King of Scotland, was crowned King of Ireland by the Irish at Dundalk. His army advanced on Dublin where the inhabitants burned part of the city and destroyed one bridge across the Liffey. At that time the O'Tooles and O'Byrnes got as far as the gates of Dublin city.

### **Coolmine**

The manor of Coolmine comprised about 100 acres of arable land. It had its own chapel within the parish of Saggart. In 1303 Peter Haket let the manor land to Peter Bermingham. In 1328 Peter Haket's son, John, leased Coolmine to Geoffrey Crumpe at a lesser rent on condition that Crumpe paid the rent whether 'there was peace or war in Ireland.' The Archbishop of Dublin, Alexander de Bicknor, released that land in 1330 from Crumpe and five years later he purchased the lease from Peter Hacket's widow, Helene le Petit. The King granted the Manor for the maintenance of St. Patrick's Choral. For most of the next seven hundred years the land was owned by the Archbishop and by the Vicar's Choral of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

In 1340 the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles again invaded the area. The incursions continued, for in 1359 William and Walter Harold received a reward of 100 shillings for rescuing some spoils which



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the O'Byrnes and O'Tooles were carrying off from Saggart and for slaying five of 'these enemies.'

### **Statutes of Kilkenny**

In 1366 the Irish Parliament met at Kilkenny. It passed laws for the prohibition of private wars; marriage between the Old Irish and the Anglo Irish was forbidden; the Anglo Irish were not to use the Irish language, Irish names, Irish dress, not to ride their horses without saddles as the Irish did. As the years passed less and less notice was taken of these laws and the Anglo Irish became more Irish than the Irish themselves. This helped the Irish to form friendly alliances and in some cases to return as tenants to the lands they once owned. It is possible that the O'Byrnes returned to their Saggart lands, or at least part of them, at that time. The Old Irish took on many of the English customs. The statutes of Kilkenny were written in French.

### **Hogtherne**

In March 1387 John, a son of Gilbert Lawless, and his servant John Browne found a pure gold ring in a field at Hogtherne between Saggart and Rathcoole. The ring was valued at about £40 Sterling – a huge amount of money at that time. They hid the ring. When it was discovered, they were taken before the judge. They explained that the King had already forgiven them for the transgression.

### **Fifteenth Century**

In 1403 Thomas Chernocks, the prebendary of Saggart went to Rome for two years. In 1422 the prebendary, Richard Stanyhurst, went to study in England.

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### **Janeco Dartas**

About this time Janeco Dartas, Admiral of Ireland and a constable of Dublin Castle, got a grant of Saggart Manor for life. He had a lot of land in the Pale. He intended to use the rents to build vessels of war at Drogheda for the purpose of resisting the Scottish incursions. In 1422 he was appointed to a commission to inquire into the weighing of gold in Ireland. He did not retain his Saggart land as during his lifetime the land was granted to others.

### **Rent Free**

It continued to be very difficult to farm at Saggart and Rathcoole. In 1416 the king granted to Thomas Everyngham the Manor of Rathcoole, rent free; Saggart was given to Thomas Pensax. Sir Richard Fitz Eustace leased them after that. Rathcoole did not suffer as much as Saggart at that time as it was not in the direct path between the hills and Dublin. The water mill, the market's and the seneschal's court were all sources of profit. Richard Aylmer was portreeve or chief official of Saggart town in 1432. In 1450 Archbishop Mey, with the consent of the dean and chapter, united the tithes from Rathcoole to St. Peter's Church in Drogheda.

### **Esmond O'Toole**

The O'Tooles continued to come northwards and attack the homes of the Anglo Irish. In 1470 the people of Saggart made a truce with Esmond O'Toole. They put themselves under his protection. A year later the parliament gave a 50% grant to the inhabitants of the Pale to employ eighty archers for their own protection. Again Saggart was destroyed by the Irish who came

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up from the hills. Some local names of that period were Thomas Mergan and Richard Schide of Rathcoole; Thomas Bernarde and John Lange of Saggart; Joan Clynych, Colmanstown; Richard Clynych and William Carryke, Newcastle.

### **Surnames**

In 1466 a law was enacted which stated that 'Every Irishman dwelling amongst the English in the counties of Dublin, Kildare, Meath or Uriel shall go like an English man in apparel, and shaving off his beard about the mouth, and shall within one year take to him an English name of one town as Sutton, Chester, Trim, Cork, Kinsale; or colour, as white, black, brown; or art or science, as smith, carpenter; or office, as cook, butler; and he and his issue shall use this name under penalty of forfeiting his goods yearly till the aforesaid be done, to be levied two times by the year for the King's wars.' That was how the Whites, Blacks, Browns, Greens, Greys, Coopers, Gardiners, Smiths, Cooks, Butlers, etc. got their names.

### **Rathcreedan Castle**

The Scurlocks were the chief family in Rathcoole from 1470 onwards. They lived at Rathcreedan Castle. They had land as far away as Castleknock. The Scurlocks were given belongings to the Abbey of Thomas the Martyr, so called after the murder of Thomas Becket in Canterbury Cathedral.

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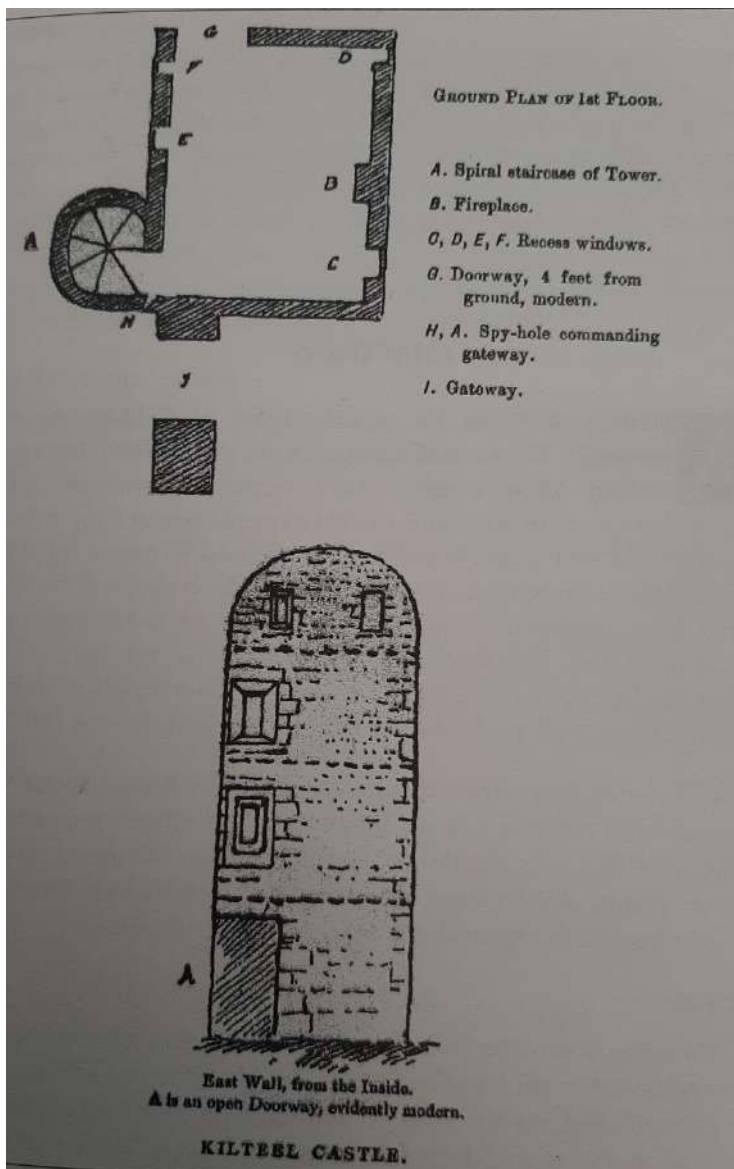
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### Chapter IV

About 1470 the Fitzgeralds, Earls of Kildare, became powerful. The seventh Earl was King Edward IV's Deputy in Ireland. At his death in 1477, Garret Mor was elected to succeed his father. In order to curb the Fitzgerald power, King Edward IV appointed Sir Edward Poynings as his deputy. Poynings ruled that no parliament was to meet in Ireland without the consent of the king. Garret Mor threatened to fight King Edward IV for the restoration of the deputy's post. War was averted when Poynings was recalled and Garret Mor affirmed in the post. However, that law remained in force for more than three hundred years until the Act of Union in 1800.

In 1487 Garret Mor crowned Lambert Simnel as King Edward V of England and France at Christ Church. Lambert Simnel pretended to be the rightful heir to the throne. Garret Mor was the most powerful man in Ireland. King Henry VII is reported to have said, 'Since all Ireland cannot rule this man, this man must rule all Ireland.'

#### **The Pale**

In 1494 a law was passed which decreed that 'every inhabitant, earth tiller and occupier do build and make a double ditch of six

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

feet high about the ground, on his lands around the Pale.’ The lord of the land was to allow the rent of the said lands to the builder for one year.

### **Dublin Castle**

Garret Mor died in 1513. His son, Garret Og, succeeded him. For the next twenty-two years this area enjoyed peace. Garrent Og continued as the king’s deputy. In 1535 the king requested him to come to London. His son, Thomas (Silken Thomas) heard rumours that his father was executed. As a result of this he declared war, but the castle authorities sent sixty archers on horseback looking for him. He went to Dublin and flung down the Sword of State at a meeting of the King’s Council. He then lay siege to Dublin Castle but was defeated. Maynooth Castle was destroyed on 23 March 1535.

### **The Tower of London**

After his short-lived rebellion Thomas was taken to the Tower of London where he was executed in February 1537. War went on for some years. The great power of the Fitzgerald family was broken.

At an inquiry at Newcastle on September 21<sup>st</sup>, 1538 it was stated that Gerald Fitzgerald (Garret Og) and Oliver, his brother, were attainted of high treason, as from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1538. Richard, Oliver and Walter Fitzgerald were attainted a parliament held at Westminster on July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1538, and were condemned to death with forfeiture of all lands etc, they held on August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1534. ‘Attainted’ meant that they were sentenced to death and that all their property was confiscated.

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### **Jurors**

There were many local embers of sixteenth century juries.

1515: Saggart – Thomas Stones, John Den, William Beggs,  
John Dowdall.

1521: Colmastown – Richard Loke, Gerald Penrun, John  
Wyse, Thomas Cals.

1525: Newcastle – William Clynch

Saggart – David Seman (probably Fitzsimon), Nicholas  
Lawless, Richard Loke.

1526: Richard Jacob

Coolmine – Simon Crenan

1529: Newcastle – Alexander Thonder, John Barry.

1532: Colmanstown – Patrick Locke.

1535: Saggart – Thomas Fount, Richard Doyle,

Newcastle – Patrick Russell.

### **O'Tooles**

Once more the O'Tooles invaded Saggart and destroyed it. The king reached an agreement with Turlough O'Toole in 1540.

O'Toole was to surrender his lands to the king, to receive them back to be held by knight-service, to keep no private forces except with the consent of the deputy, and to use English laws and customs. At that time the lands at Saggart were leased by James Bathe of Drimnagh; the Fitzgeralds and the Durlases of Maynooth.



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### **The Reformation**

In 1536, the British parliament ordered the confiscation of all monasteries with an income of less than £200. The lands belonging to St. Patrick's Cathedral were confiscated and all the tithes payable to St. Patrick's Cathedral were appropriated.

In 1547, a survey of the possessions of the dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral was done. Thirteen acres of land at Rathcoole, which the dean had, and the tithes of Windmill Hill and Rathcreedan, were given to the vicar of Rathcoole. Rathcoole parish church was repaired by the dean in 1547.

Saggart glebe had 16 acres. The Vicar's Choral of St. Patrick's Cathedral had a castle and 22 acres. In 1555, the Archbishop of Armagh, George Dowdall, was named prebendary of Saggart, by the charter of restitution of St. Patrick's Cathedral.

### **Calliaghstown**

In 1538, an inquiry into the king's land at Calliaghstown was held at Newcastle. The jurors, before Judge Richard Sedgrave, were Philip Talbot, Rathcoole; Richard Donnell, Baldonnell; Patrick Begg, Patrick Cordon, David Fitzsimons, Thomas Font and David Galroy (all of Saggart). After due consideration they decided that the whole village of Calliaghstown, including the 200 acres and some mountain which the nuns claimed, really belonged to the king.

Five years later, King Henry VII took the monastery of St. Mary del Hogges (where Trinity College, Dublin is sited) from Margaret Gaydon, the abbess. The monastery had a church with bell tower, a chapter house and other buildings. She also gave the

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king three hundred houses and two hundred and eighty acres of land at Calliaghstown.

Castles confiscated: Rober Talbot/Rathcoole; Walter Fitzsimons/Saggart; Richard Fitzsimons/Cheeverstown. They got possession of their castles after court cases.

By 1560, the Reformation in Ireland was complete, but the Irish people remained true to the Catholic faith. In order to complete the Reformation Irish lands were given to English people who conformed. This led to more conflict.

### **Leases**

'Thomas Lokewood, dean of Holy Trinity church, leases to Mortaghe Smythe, the Corbally lands in Rathcoole and thereabouts, which were occupied by Brendan Callse, Philip Talbote, Alslander Whidder or Widder and David Piers for 21 years; rent £10/13/4, 6 couple of watch hens at Christmas, and 200 eggs at Easter, with covenants for repair and re-entry. Lessor may remove all corn crops at the end of lease.' That lease is interesting in that it shows a connection between eggs and Easter in 1555. The confiscations continued.

### **Rebellion 1580**

Within the Pale, the confiscations, the burden of taxation to support the increasing number of royal troops, and the billeting of soldiers in private homes resulted in protest and non-co-operation on the part of landowners and merchants. James Eustace (Viscount Baltinglass) and Fiach McHugh O'Brien rebelled. Saggart, Rathcoole and Coomine were burned. The soldiers of Rathcoole were ordered to assemble at Belgard and while there their homes were destroyed at Rathcoole. The

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Master of the Rolls, Sir Nicholas White, tried to save the village. People were questioned about their part in the rebellion of 1580 and succeeding outbreaks of violence. Many local people had their lands confiscated. They appeared in court in the following years.

### **Manor of Tassagart Court 1592 – 1600**

#### Jurors

Thomas Browne, William Burne, Owen Mac Edmond, Patrick Condon, Daniel Denn, Robert Donill, William Donill. John Font, Patrick Font, Thomas Galbally, Thomas Reynolds, John Seman (Fitzsimon), John Warde, Patrick Warde.

People sought the restoration of their lands. The legal business of confiscation went on for some years. They were later pardoned on payment of fines up to £100 and had their lands restored to them.

Brittas: Allen's, 360 acres of mountain.

Rathcoole: Allen's; Thomas Fagan, 120 acres, 6 houses.

Patrick Russell 66 acres, 15 houses; George Taylor; Martin Scurlock, land, houses and mill at Rathcreedan.

Saggart: James Begg; Gerald Yonge, 70 acres, castle, 6 houses; Matthew Handcock, 120 acres, castle, 8 houses.

Colmanstown: Lutrell's and Fitzsimons' land.

Cheeverstown: William Fitzsimons, 100 acres, castle.

The court listed the following names: John Allen, William Bath, John Begg, Simon Clark, David Denn, William Donill, Nicholas

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Eustace, John Finglas, John Fitzsimon, Patrick Gormly, Matthew Handcock, Thomas Kent, Richard Moghill, Simon Preston, Thomas Reynolds, Christopher Russell, Sir William Sarsfield, Gilbert Talbot, Richard Talbot, Robert Violl, Garrett Yonge.

### **Decisions of the Court**

Some of the decisions of the court are not unlike decisions of the present time:

Whoever shall turn the water course out of the natural course for their private commodities and shall not open the same immediately after taking benefit thereof, he or they shall forfeit 12d, every time.

Patrick Font, William Font, Thomas Galbally and Thomas Reynolds are appointed by the court to view the meare between David Denn's land and William Donill's land called Karmus and to clarify the same the next court upon their oaths.

A decision of the time was that 'it is now again ordered by like consent that it shall be lawful to kill any goats that shall be found trespassing any of the inhabitants from the church to the end of the town towards Dublin.'

### **Leases**

Edmund Fitzsimons leased Newtown at a rent of £6/13/4 for twenty-one years from 1575. In 1587, he leased Calliaghstown for twenty-one years at £4/13/10 a year. His lease stated that he was to maintain one English archer and was not to let any part of the land to any person who was not English by both parents.

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Ten years later, the tithes of Calliaghstown were leased to Edward Fitzgerald.

In 1596, Rathcoole once more suffered in the war with the Irish. Christopher Peyton, Auditor of Ireland, who owned the village at that time wrote that 'his poor town lay waste and unmanned being pillaged by the rebels and burnt by the soldiers.'

In 1598, the English were defeated at the battle of Yellow Ford. This gave some hope to the O'Tooles and the O'Byrnes, but it was short-lived as following the battle of Kinsale the Irish chiefs had to submit to King James I.

### **Queen's Pardon 1578**

Queen Elizabeth granted a pardon to Nicholas Rinkell of Coolmine – a housekeeper. He was alleged to have robbed William Gibbons of Baldonane of two copper pots worth 40/- each. Seven gallons of butter worth 5/- each. Three pounds of linen thread worth 16/- a lb, and 4 lbs. of wool worth 8d a pound. He was pardoned on August 25<sup>th</sup>, 1578 provided he behave lawfully in future. The linen thread was a very expensive commodity and was probably produced from locally grown flax. The oldest grave in Colmanstown cemetery is an early eighteenth-century grave of a member of the Rinkell family.

### **James Aylmer's Will 1588**

In his will he left his land at Greenogue to his wife, Anne. if she remarried the land was to go to his son and heir, Richard.

His will lists his other property – 34 couple of corn in the haggard, and 10 couple in the field; 22 garrans; 3 plough

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

harnesses, 6 coulter, 6 shares, 6 carts with 3 sets of harnesses; 46 cattle; 2 bullocks; 1 ox; 15 1.5 year old heifers; 18 yearling calves; 200 sheep; 100 lambs; 47 pigs.

### **Sixteenth Century House**

He gave a list of his kitchen equipment:

A brass pot, 3 pans, a chafer, a large and small mortar, a pestle, 2 large and 1 small broaches, a trivet, 3 platters and some saucers made of pewter, 10 new dishes, 2 ewers and 1 basin, porringer and saucers, 12 spoons, 3 knives, 2 hogsheds.

The sleeping chambers contained 5 standing beds, 2 low beds, 5 feather beds, 4 flock beds and bolsters, 3 pillows, 9 pillow byres, 12 pairs of sheets, 3 coverlets, 12 caddowes, 7 towels.

Other house equipment: 4 carpets, 4 cupboard, 4 tables, 6 tablecloths, 3 dozen napkins, 5 benches, 7 stools, 6 chairs, 27 cushions, 6 coffer, a cloth of gold and velvet, woollen sayes, etc.

### **Glossary**

Coulter: A blade attached to a plough.

Garran: Horse.

Broach: Spit for roasting meat.

Cadowe: Coarse rug or blanket.

Chafer: Dish for cooking or keeping food warm.

Coffer: Strong box or chest.

Hogsheds: A large cask or barrel.

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Mortar: Stone vessel in which substances were pounded or ground with a pestle.

No drinking vessels are mentioned in the above. The usual drinking vessel was a noggin – a type of mug or cup made from wood. Meat was usually carved and eaten by hand – hence the absence of forks and the inclusion of so many napkins and spoons.

### **Co. Wicklow**

In 1605, the Lord Deputy, Sir Arthur Chichester, gave an order to have the territory of the O'Byrnes and the O'Tooles surveyed and formed into the county of Wicklow.

### **Trinity College**

Trinity College, Dublin, was established in 1591. The owner of Rathcreedan Castle, Martin Scurlock, died in 1599. His son and heir, Patrick, was eight years old. He was educated from the age of twelve to eighteen 'in the English religion, and in the English apparel.' at the newly founded Trinity College.

### **O'Byrnes**

At the time the following was written about the fallen state of the O'Byrnes:

*'Torment it is to me, that in the very tribal gatherings, foreigners proscribe them that are Ireland's royal chiefs, in whose own ancestral territory, is vouchsafed them now, no designation other than the lowly wood kernes name.'*

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

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## Chapter V

The parish of Rathcoole in the seventeenth century consisted of the townlands of Rathcoole, Westmanstown, Johnstown, The College, Rathcreedan and Calliaghstown.

### **Newcastle**

In 1613, King James I granted a charter to some Irish small towns to become boroughs with corporations. They were to have a portreeve and 12 free burgesses. Among the towns granted charters were Newcastle Lyons, Belfast and Londonderry. Newcastle borough sent two members to parliament until the Act of Union was passed in 1800.

### **Saggart**

With the confiscations and regrants at the end of the previous century it was necessary to decide on title to land. The government decided that land titles were to be confirmed after sixty years possession. On Marh 9<sup>th</sup>, 1620 an inquisition was held at Saggart into the title to lands held by Richard, Oliver and Walter Fitzgerald. In the mid 1530's, the Fitzgeralds were attainted. They were executed in the Tower of London.

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### **William Parsons**

About 1620, the manor, town and lands of Saggart and Cheeverstown were given to Sir William Parsons who later became M.P. for Newcastle and afterwards Lord Chief Justice.

### **More Land**

About the same time Sir Arthur Savage was granted lands at Saggart. The lands had belonged to Edmund Byrne who was attainted in 1606. Byrne's wife was Catherine Locke, daughter of William Locke of Newcastle. Byrne owned a chief house (possibly an old castle or new manor house), 6 cottages with gardens, 43 acres in Saggart (Pacefield, Middle field, Congil, Heynot field, Burgage field, Newes field, Farther Knockline, Nearer Knockline, Portway, Maudlins ley, Callan leyes, Callans park, Greenhill, Rathcowlesway, Much park and Meade nenus). Savage was given a house and eight acres of commons; commons of pasture and turbary belonging to the same lands in the Pacefield, the Hill field, in Knockline near Read's land in Tassagart, Cowsans acre near Coolmine, in the Gurtines near the mill there, near Habecken by Read's land. Meadow Eaves near Preston's and Read's land, the Older acre, the plots near Preston's yard and garden near Preston's and Allin's land; a house, yard and garden near the common gates; the like near Preston's and Eustace's land. To the estate of the crown rent 3s 8d. A capital message means a good residence.

### **Living Conditions**

For the ordinary person life went on much the same as it did for their parents, grandparents and for centuries before that. Their houses were still made of timber, and whatever other materials

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

were available. The food was of good quality with mild and meat products. Bread was available to those who sowed wheat. Food was eaten from noggins – a kind of mug made from timber. The occupations were farmer, farrier, saddlemaker, smith, weaver, spinner, woodworker, stone mason and allied trades.

### **1641**

In 1641, the Irish still wanted the return of their lands that had been confiscated; they wanted the freedom to practise their religion; and the right to govern their country. Rathcoole was a stronghold of the Irish. Patrick Scurlock M.P. for Newcastle, his sons Thomas and Martin and the Hetherington family were among them. The parish clerk turned from the Protestant religion to Mass and took an active part in the rebellion. The portreeve at that time was Richard Crofts and Digby Cory was a churchwarden.

### **Local Landlords**

Callestown – Thomas Fitzsimons (295 acres of good land and 210 acres unprofitable)/

Coolmine – James Allen

Newtown – Sir Henry Bealing (180 acres), Sir Henry Talbot (257 acres).

Rathcoole – Dublin College (310 acres), Eustace of Convey, Fagan of Feltrim, Cadwell Fitzsimons, Lock (Johnstown part of Colmanstown), Mallone, Sarsfield of Lucan, Scurlock at Rathcreedan (164 acres) at Ballynakelly (73 acres), at Newcastle (1057 acres). Sir Henry Talbot, Taylor of Swords (110 acres at

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Greenogue). It was from that family that Tay Lane got its name – Taylor's Lane, which was shortened to Tay Lane – going north from the village, as it still does. Commons (573 acres).

Saggart – James Allen, John Begg, Dean and Chapter of St. Patrick's Cathedral, John Dunne, John Font, Jane Fyans (18 acres). Sir William Parsons (500 acres), Patrick Reynolds, Mr. Sarsfield of Lucan, Henry Sedgrave, Sir Henry Talbot.

### **Rebellion**

The town of Rathcoole was attacked in January 1642 by Sir Thomas Armstrong. There were 2000 Irish soldiers there. The English army was forced to withdraw to open ground a short distance to the Dublin side. The Irish followed them, and a battle took place. This time the Irish were beaten. Most of them managed to escape, but fifty of the were killed including Captain Lee. Saggart was also destroyed at that time.

### **April 1642**

Three months later toward the end of April, some Englishmen with their wives and families were making their way from the home of the Earl of Castlehaven at Maddenstown, Co. Kildare to Dublin for their protection. The men of Rathcoole led by the Scurlocks and Hetheringtons gathered on the Dublin side of Rathcoole. The English men were supposed to be in charge of four wagons laden with wool. The Irish saw through their disguise. They attacked the group. The man in charge of the English, Colonel Mervyn Touchet (Castlehaven's brother), escaped quickly on his horse. Four of the English were killed and three wounded. A son of Sir Walter Dungan of Celbridge

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compelled the Irish to allow him to bring the English and their wagons to his father's estate in Celbridge.

### **Tootenhill**

A few days later, James Butler, the 12<sup>th</sup> Early of Ormond, who commanded the loyal forces against the Irish rebels, came with a force from Dublin to avenge the outrage. He brought 3,000 foot-soldiers, 500 horsemen and five small field pieces. At Rathcoole this party of solidiers was joined by some dragoons under Sir Arthur Loftus the Governor of Naas. They were well trained for hand to hand combat with muskets or short light rifles. When the sound of marching reached the ears of the people or Rathcoole they feared for their lives. Some of the inhabitants fled westwards to a furze covered hill. Ormond had the place surrounded by troops. The soldiers surrounded the hill and set the furze on fire. All the men, women and children who had taken refuge were burned as they tried to escape. This probably took place at Tootenhill – the name means burnt hill – and the name was not in the area before that.

### **Rathcreedan**

About this time Sir William Parsons who knew the area well drew the attention of the Earl of Ormond to the protection given to the Irish by the Scurlocks of Ratchcreedan castle. He mentioned that the Irish had seized cattle that were being taken from Naas to Dublin. Three of the men in charge were killed. Parsons asked the Earl to send some horsemen from Leixlip to burn Rathcreedan. The castle was destroyed about that time; the mill and church were not.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Rathcoole Garrison**

Shortly after this a garrison of English soldiers was stationed at Rathcoole. In 1648, Captain Sir Thomas Wharton, Lieutenant Thomas Chambers, Ensign Gilbert Nicholson, seven non-commissioned officers and fifty-three soldiers were stationed there. Soldiers stayed with local families and returned to barracks when not on duty.

### **Edward Hethrington**

Edward Hetherington and his family of Kilnamanagh were, in 1654, transplanted to Connaught for his conduct at Rathcoole in 1642. He refused to leave Kilnamanagh. In March 1655 he was brought before the court sitting at St. Patrick's Cathedral. He was sentenced to death and was hanged on April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1655. After that other local families who were transplanted left for Connaught. These included Scurlocks of Rathcreedan, Dungans of Castletown and Talbots of Belgard. Some of them later moved to America.

### **America**

George Talbot went from Co. Roscommon to America where he was well received. By 1684 he had a manor and 80,000 acres of land in the newly name county of Ireland, in Maryland. He subdivided the land into farms and brought out other farmers to whom he sold or leased them. Other major land holders were Major John Fitzgerald (5333 acres) and Captain John Fitzgerald (4666 acres). Some of the Dungan family of Castletown also went to America and prospered.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **State Governors**

In 1683, Thomas Dungan, born at Castletown, Celbridge, was elected Governor of Connecticut. He wrote that the natives of Ireland should be sent to America where they might live and be very happy. In 1700, James Moore, grandson of Rory O'Moore who was at Rathcoole many years previously, was elected Governor of Carolina.

### **Down Survey 1654**

In 1653 the surveyor General Benjamin Worsley began to prepare a descriptive list of all forfeited lands, barony by barony. The rate of progress was very slow. Worsley's methods were criticised by the physician general to the forces of Sir William Petty. He suggested that the results of the survey should be noted down in maps – this became known as the Down Survey.

In 1654 the surveyor James Archer surveyed the district. From his records we find that:

Rathcoole had two old castles, many good houses and cabins, and the ruins of an old chapel.

Rathcreedan had a chapel and mill in repair.

Saggart had two castles in repair, one stump of a castle and some thatched houses and cabins.

### **Peace at Last**

When Charles II was king of England in 1660, peaceful times were restored. After the wars, money was needed to pay the army and restore the country, so some new taxes were brought in. A tax, according to the number of chimneys on a house, was

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

brought in. It was known as Hearth Money. Rathcoole had many fine houses. They had replaced the old style of mud walled house. Stone was available locally, so some stone houses were built. Sash windows were used for the first time in 1630.

### **Hearth Money Roll 1664**

#### Calliaghstown

One fireplace – Stephan Belan, Edmond Caman, William Dunn, Oliver Fitzgerald, Maurice Keenan, Thomas Lynagh, Roger McConry, Margaret Menagh, Ona Neale, Phillip Pursell, Benjamin Reade, Nocholas Islaw, Anne Wade, Clinch's shepherd.

Colemyne:- Thomas Archbold. Patrick Dillaghan, John Nangle, Thomas Robinson.

#### Johnstown

One fireplace – Donnogh Connor.

#### New Towne

One fireplace:- Phelim Bane, Dennis Gaffney, John McCAAnna, Samuel Wilson.

#### Rathcoole

Five chimneys: - Thomas Robinson.

Four chimneys : - John Robinson.

Three chimneys : - Matthew Barry, Moses Reyly.



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Two chimneys : - Charles Eaten, David Lawler, William Lawless, Rev. Edward Lovelace, Henry Murphy, James Reyley, John Walsh.

One chimney : - Arhtur Armstringe, Patrick Burne, Teigue Burne, Thomas Burne, James Byrne, William Cockeran, Edmond Connellan. Edward Connor, Gartett Conner, John Cooke, John Cozens, John Davies, Owen Dunn, Patrick Farrell, John Gowen, Thomas Gowen, Symon Graham, Thomas Hand, John Jordan, Luke Jordan, Darby Kelly, Andrew Kilmurry, Matthew McCann, Donagh M'Graffe, Conner Madden, Darby Mooney, William Mooney, James Murrey, John Osborne, John Rainsbottom, Thomas Rankin, William Skully, Edward Shepley, Robert Stoddard.

One fireplace – James Drynan, William Kehoe, Morgan Mahone, Thomas Molan, Thomas Mooney, Donnagh McConry.

Rathcreedand

Two chimneys: Richard Harvey.

One chimney: Thomas Bermingham, John Clerke, John Cosgrey, James Lawless, Morris Lynan, Bryan M'Graffe, Roger Shehy, Thomas Sherley.

Saggart

One chimney: Richard Burne, John Byrne, Miles Byrne, Patrick Byrne, William Byrne, Thomas Cageberry, Nicholas Chester, Thady Connor, Richard Crowden, John Denn, Arthur Gonyn, Nicholas Hoyle, Patrick Hoyle, Hugh Larkin, Edmund Mooney,

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Thomas Murphy, Roger Purcell, John Reyley, Edward Williams.

One hearth: Patrick Boreman, Thady Bruan, Nicholas Carroll, William Denn, Doongh Enos, William Loghnan, James Patrick.

### **London**

Two years after this list was made, the great fire of London happened. The timber houses burned out of control for nearly a week and destroyed many fine medieval buildings including St. Paul's Cathedral. The centre of London had narrow, unhygienic, plague-filled streets, so the restoration after the fire brought a much healthier city. In 1696, a tax on windows was introduced and this influenced architecture for the next fifty years.

### **Kilmainham Hospital**

As time went on there were many old soldiers in Ireland who were homeless and stayed around the barracks and became a nuisance. There was a need for a place 'where such of the Army, as hath faithfully served in the strength and vigour of their youth, may in the weakness and disasters that their old age, wounds or other misfortunes may bring them into, find a comfortable retreat and a competence maintenance therein.' These are the words of the founding charter of the Royal Hospital Kilmainham. The Royal Hospital was to house three hundred old soldiers. It was founded in 1684 and built at a cost of £23,560. It was used for that purpose for the next two hundred and forty-five years. The hospital chapel was dedicated in 1687. In 1980, when Mr. Jack Lynch was Taoiseach, the hospital was restored by the Office of Public Works at a cost of

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

twenty million pounds. In the dining hall of the building is a full-length portrait of James, Duke of Ormond.

### **Peace at Last**

Peace came to Rathcoole and the village thrived. Around 1660, the portreeve was James Wilson. In 1666, the Duke of York, afterwards King James II, passed patent for 150 acres at Rathcoole, 295 acres in Calliaghstown, 164 acres at Rathcreedan, 10 acres at Colmanstown and had his lands at Rathcoole surveyed by Thomas Emerson. A copy of the map is preserved in the National Library. While the Catholic Duke of Ormond was Viceroy, Catholics were allowed more freedom to practise their religion. The church was active and priests were able to come out of hiding. In 1670, Fr. Oliver Plunkett returned from Rome to become Archbishop of Armagh.

### **1673**

Three years later, trouble started again. Archbishop Plunkett had to go into hiding. In 1678, the act forbidding Catholics from being elected to parliament was enacted. The act was in force until Catholic Emancipation in 1829. The Archbishop was arrested in 1678 and tried for treason. He was later taken to London to be tried again. In 1678, Oliver Plunkett was convicted. He was the last person to be martyred for his faith on the public scaffold at Tyburn (now Marble Arch) in the city of London. He was beatified in 1920 and canonised in 1975.

### **Churches**

The clergy of the Church of Ireland were in a good financial position as they were allowed to keep up to £200 in tithes for their own use. There were churches at Calliaghstown and at

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Rathcoole for hundreds of years. They were ruins before 1654. In Rathcoole, the nave of the church was in good repair but the chancel was in ruins. Rathcoole and Calliaghstown remained separate parishes until the early eighteen hundreds.

### **Church of Ireland Vicars**

1615 – Rev. Emmanuel Bullock

1630 – Rev. John Hughes    Curate – Rev. Robert Jones

1639 – Rev. Christopher Cardiff

1645 – Rev. Henry Birch

1662 – Rev. Edward Lovelace

1674 – Rev. William Williamson

### **Trade**

Peace brought increased trade. The main trade was the increase in the amount of wool being exported to England. Every day, carts of wool on their way to the port of Dublin passed through the village of Rathcoole. The wool came from the West Wicklow area. It came down by what we now call the Killeel road. At that time the road up from the bridge towards the Kennedy Estate (Beechpark Golf Club entrance) had not been made. The road went from the bridge towards Punchestown. It became known as the Woolpack road.

### **Fairs**

In 1682, Thomas Den was given the right to hold three fairs yearly and a weekly market in Saggart; this was renewed in 1705 for John Den, and for Phillip Den in 1741. Rathcoole also had

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

fairs on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, June 18<sup>th</sup> and October 9<sup>th</sup>. Increase trade called for better roads.

### **Earl of Tyrconnell**

When the Duke of York became King James II in 1685, he intended to place the Catholics on a par with Protestants. He appointed Richard Talbot, the Earl of Tyrconnell as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. In June 1688, James' Catholic heir was born. James' son in law, the Protestant William, Prince of Orange, arrive in Ireland in 1688. Over the next two years the followers of James were outlawed and attainted. Among them were Thomas Vacker, Vicar of Rathcoole and Viscount Tracy.

### **Confiscations**

The Earl of Tyrconnell forfeited 110 acres at Saggart; 295 acres at Calliaghstown; 164 acres at Ratchcreedan. His land at Saggart was granted to John Pacey of Dublin.

At an inquisition at Kilmainham on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1694 it was stated that James Talbot of Templeogue was outlawed and attainted at Kilmainham on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 1691 for high treason at Swords on August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1689. He had 12 houses with gardens, and 60 acres of land in Rathcoole; 4 houses with 60 acres in Saggart. On March 6<sup>th</sup>, 1677, he leased the premises in Rathcoole to Matthew Barry of Dublin for 99 years at a peppercorn rent and a consideration of £85; On May 9<sup>th</sup> of the same year, he leased the same to him for a further 51 years at a rent of £7 a year. On May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1683, he leased his Saggart lands to John Denn. In the next century those lands featured prominently.

Simon Luttrell of Luttrellstown was outlawed and attainted at the same time for the same offence. He had 50 acres of land at

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Rathcoole and Colmanstown, which he had leased to Peter Read of Dublin, since 1675.

Richard Fagan of Feltrim was outlawed for the same offence. He had 6 houses and 60 acres in Rathcoole. His land was given to Richard Baldwin, afterwards Provost of Trinity College.

Fagan's, Luttrell's and Talbot's lands were confiscated, just as they had been confiscated one hundred years earlier. Then members of the families went to Europe and America.

### **Roads**

The Pale kept in touch with the major port towns of Waterford, Cork, Limerick and Galway by sea. Up until the time of Oliver Cromwell the local landlord was relied upon to keep the road at his land in good repair. Some landlords did that, so some roads were well kept. Then an Act of Parliament in 1654 empowered surveyors to assess the inhabitants of each parish, hire labour and carts and mend the highways; this led to rapid improvements in the roads and the speed of travel as each parish was responsible for their own roads. For some years towards the end of the century a survey was undertaken to establish the best road from Dublin to the country places. However good the roads might be, normal transport was limited to horseback and was therefore slow, and for long journeys very uncomfortable.

### **Best Routes**

Road surveying was done by the army. In 1690, a list of roads of Ireland was published 'according to the last and best survey.' It gave 'the true distances of all the cities, towns, castles and other passes and places of strength (each from the other) and the most

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

passable roads for the army to travel to the siege of any place.’ The road from Dublin to Waterford went through Rathcoole and Naas as it still does. The road from Dublin to Cork went as follows: Dublin, Maynooth, Cloncurry, Carbury, Kilcormac, Birr, Nenag, Abby a Webeg, Mallow to Cork – a total of 117 miles. The roads were very bad. The big problem was how to finance any improvements. Then in 1706, parliament created the first Turnpike Trust. This empowered the local gentry to take over a certain length of road from the parish, and to improve and maintain it by charging tolls. The next century saw a lot of road works and several other developments in this area.

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### Chapter VI

The road from Dublin to Kilcullen was the first Irish turnpike. A turnpike is a road on which a toll or fee is paid for the right to travel on that road. In the early 1700's, the journey from Naas into Dublin was a winter days journey on horseback. There was a need for a new and better road. The problem was how to finance it. Local landowners were appointed. Trustees to a turnpike trust. In 1729, it was decided that a toll road would be built.

#### **£7,000 for road**

The trustees harrowed £7,000 in order to get the road built. The toll road was to become a public road after 21 years of the road was sufficiently repaired and all debts paid. The trustees had underestimated the cost and in 1733 the tolls were raised with the possibility of the road becoming a public road after 24 years. The improved road brought more people through Rathcoole. The new road and the new Church of Ireland were reasons why the trustees of Mary Mercer's will considered Rathcoole as a site for the school. Jonathan Ponder saw that a new inn was needed so he leases seven acres from the church warden in 1736. The inn was built beside the present-day entrance to Coolamber.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Part of the surrounding wall still remains. The inn continued for nearly 200 years.

### **Coach Service**

The weekly Dublin to Limerick coach service through Rathcoole began around 1760 and took four days to complete. As the years went on hotels and post houses were started in towns. There was a coaching inn at Rathcoole and another at Blackchurch. The horses were rested, and fresh horses took the coach onto the next stop so that the journey time shortened.

### **Tolls**

The aim of the trustees to be free of debt on the road was not being achieved. In 1762, the tolls were raised again, and the time extended to 41 years after which it would become a public road.

Tolls	1729	1733	1763	1787
Coach + 6 horses	1/-	1/6	2/-	6.5d
Coach + 4 horses	6d	1/-	1/6	6.5d
Coach + 2 horses	6d	6d	6d	6d

There were higher rates for goods vehicles with narrow wheels. Over the next twenty years a great deal of research was done into the effects on roads of wheel width and vehicle springing. On country roads a horse could pull a 5 hundredweight load, but on a turnpike road it could pull 12 hundredweight.

In June 1763, it was decided that all freemen of Dublin could take their own goods in or out without paying any tolls. Any

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

good coming into the city for one's private use were exempted from tolls.

Here are some of the tolls charged:

Tub of butter 1d

Every horse load of eggs 1d

Every clieve load on a person's back of eggs 5d

Every horse load of dead fowl 2d

Every horse load of dead rabbits 2d

### **Eighteenth century Rathcoole**

Some travellers kept diaries which were later published.

John Dunton – 1668: he had a bottle of cider in a Rathcoole pub when he stopped on his way to Kilkenny. He spoke about the little town.

John Loveday – 1732: The road was a very fine made way of considerable breadth, with only one turnpike between Dublin and Naas, at which to his surprise no more than a half penny a horse was charged.

Campbell's Philosophical Society of the South of Ireland, 1777 –

Rathcoole was mostly composed of clay huts, which are sometimes both warm and neat, but these were awkwardly built. The landscape was prettily chequered by an abundance or little white villas, spangling the country all around, and rendering it upon the whole very delightful.'

Philip Luckombe – Tour through Ireland in 1779:

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Rathcoole had a very good inn in the village kept by Mr. Leedom.

Lewis 1837: The town, which is about a quarter of a mile long, contains 112 houses irregularly built.

Rathcoole police barracks was where Carey's had the post office – beside Westpark.

Clergy were free to travel within their parishes whether on horseback or in a carriage.

### **Post Office**

In 1784, the Irish Post Office was established. The coming of the mail coaches brought the possibility of a new way to increase the funding of the toll road. The carmen in general had ceased to travel on the turnpikes on account of the high tolls so the revenue had considerably declined. In 1786, there were 16 roads into Dublin including 5 turnpikes. Some tolls were reduced in August 1787. The toll gates were at Blacklyon, Red Cow, Kill and Kilcullen. There were three gatekeepers for each of the toll houses.

### **Accounts 1787**

June – New toll gate at Blackchurch cost £1/8/4 for gate, posts, railing, blacksmith's work, and hanging the gates. Mahon, the side gatekeeper there, was paid £4/12/3 a year. He was given 2/8 for a horse ride he made to Dublin.

July – It was decided that the road at Fox and Geese should be widened to 60 feet. The road was gravelled 8 inches deep in the

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

middle and 6 inches deep at the sides. The road at Rathcoole was 50 feet wide.

### **Inn at Rathcoole**

There was a very good inn kept at Rathcoole by Mr. Leedom. With the improvements in transport the inns began to advertise in the Dublin Evening Post. Here is one from Thomas Ransford on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 1788:

Thomas Ransford returns his sincere thanks to the Nobility and Public for their great encouragement since his commencement in business, begs leave to inform them that he has at great expense filled up his house in the neatest manner with good wines, etc., and from his great care and attention to his business hopes for the protection of his Friends and the Public as long as he shall be found deserving of it.

N.B. He has excellent Post Carriages and Horses ready at Rathcoole and in Dublin, by applying at John Nevil's No. 19 Duke Street or at Patt McCan's, No. 1 Princes Street.

### **Local Trustees**

In 1788, 31 local landowners were named as trustees. The trustees established a board of directors. The first directors were Lord Kilwarden (Arthur Wolfe), his nephew John Wolfe of Forenaghts, a cousin, Thomas Burgh, Robert Graydon and Edward Kendrick. The director appointed three commissioners, Edward Read, Curtis Crofton and Alexander Taylor. Alexander Taylor came to Ireland from Scotland and married Elizabeth Bonner of Naas. The commissioners pay was fixed at no more than a guinea a week. The trustees were allowed to borrow

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

£2000 for further work on the road. The initial £7000 was still unpaid.

### **Accounts 1788**

April – 145 perches of the road were made for £260.

May – Thomas Leedom of Rathcoole was paid £7/6/5 for widening and levelling part of the street of Rathcoole. Land for road widening cost from 5 to 6 guineas an acre.

John Clinch paid to the directors £545 for 218 perches.

Edward Crofton was paid £423 for work done.

Tolls were to be collected at Rathcoole so two side gates were built at the Dublin end of the village. The side gatekeeper was paid £3/12/10 a year.

Decided to build a new toll house at Colmanstown.

### **Accounts 1789**

February – Edward Read was ordered to repair ‘all the bad steps between Rathcoole and Dublin.’

He had:

160 men raising gravel for £6/13/4

567 men filling gravel and breaking stones £23/12/6

946 carts drawing gravel £94/12

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Accounts 1790**

Edward Read had in August 1790, with John Curran as ganger, 462 carts drawing gravel £46/4/-; 200 raising and filling gravel £8/13/4.

### **In September**

1,500 quarrying and breaking limestone £62/10/-;

20 crowning the road between the new line and Broadfield £8.

20 carts repairing the streets of Rathcoole with limestone £2;

40 carts repairing the road between Mullens and Broadfield bridge;

24 men filling and spreading limestone between Mullens and Broadfield bridge £1.

2,173 loads of gravel drawn to cover the road from Goldenbridge to Bluebell cost £10.22.

Tarmacadam was first laid in England in 1815.

### **Highwaymen**

The road works gave a lot of employment. The materials came from the local quarries. After all that quarrying the disused quarries had to be filled in because highwaymen were a threat. The promoters of the Dublin – Cork coach service in 180 announced that their coaches were copper lined – probably that was to assure the passengers of a journey free from attack.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

One incident was commemorated though we do not know the date. The Blackchurch Inn was a coaching inn in the early nineteenth century. A silver teapot was inscribed:

‘To Patrick Berry, Innkeeper, Blackchurch. In testimony of his spirited conduct in apprehending a notorious highway robber and thereby contributing to the security of persons travelling this road to whose countenance and protection he is deservedly recommended. This piece of plate is inscribed by the Rathcoole, Kill and Newcastle Association.’

### **More Employment**

At Newlands the side gate cost £6/17/5 to erect with posts and turnstile. John Tindall was paid £6/4/- for a turnpike gate. John Perkins got the contract to attend the collecting at the gates from Dublin to Kilcullen. He was paid £5/13/9 for 5 weeks work and his boy assistant was paid £1/10/4. The toll collectors were supplied with account books that cost 9/2 for five.

The local forges and tradesmen were busy too.

Iron and steel for hammers cost 9/8d.

To carpenter £1/6/10 for making handles.

To blacksmith £1/4/6 for repairing the tools.

### **Turnpike Houses**

Two turnpike houses were built. They were slated and plastered by Patrick Bell who supplied materials and labour for £43/2/6.

The Gothic window frames cost £5/13/6 and Francis Kelly got £5/0/5 for glazing them.



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Post Office**

The expenditure was worthwhile, because from the beginning of 1791 the Cork Mail Coach passed through Rathcoole every day. The directors of the turnpike got £200 a year tolls from the Irish Post Office. The Post Office insisted on the coach timetable being observed and contractors were fined a shilling for each minute's delay. The postmaster at Rathcoole Post Office was Laurence Dillon. The post office was opposite the Church of Ireland.

### **Taylor's Roads of Ireland**

In 1797, the debts of the turnpike were no nearer being paid. Under a government act in 1797 another Scotsman, John Anderson of Fermoy, who had mail coaches on the Dublin – Cork route. Alexander Taylor and his brother George undertook to advance their own money if they were given the tolls. They would not pay off the £9000 debt immediately but would reduce it by £200 a year. They would keep the road repaired for the following 50 years. Tolls were again increased. George Taylor was employed to survey the route and his maps of the Roads of Ireland were published. The main expenses over the next 50 years were stones, gravel, sand, wages for overseers with gangs of labourers taken on as required. In the mid 1830's the men were paid at the rate of 1d per half ton heap of stones broken. 10 heaps were considered a good day's work.

### **Charles Bianconi**

Charles Bianconi was born in the north of Italy in 1786. When he came to Ireland, he saw that a fast, cheap transport was needed. After the defeat of Napoleon Bonaparte at the battle of

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Waterloo in June 1815 the demand for Irish horses for war purposes declined. In 1815, Bianconi bought some horses and coaches. 20 years later his bianconis or bians as they were known travelled around the country. The bian was an open sided two-wheeler car that carried six passengers, three a side and the driver. The cars were painted crimson and yellow. The Royal Garter stables on the Naas road were occupied in 1831 by the carriers Stuckly and Purcell. They had 31 acres of the land for grazing their horses. Other occupiers of the lands were Heffernan (31 acres), Peter O'Rourke (8 acres), John Craven (1 acre).

### **Coming of the Railways**

About the year 1838 Charles Bianconi was invited to a meeting in the Imperial Hotel in Dublin. The Imperial Hotel was where Clery's in O'Connell Street is now. The meeting was called by the proprietors of canal and coach transport firms. They wished to protest against the advent of the railways. Charles Bianconi addressed the meeting. He said, 'I look upon it to be as foolish to try to prevent the establishment of railways as to try to stem the Liffey. My own loss by the establishment of the railways would be greater than that of any gentlemen here present – I may say greater than the combined losses of all the gentlemen here present. I not only do not oppose them, but I have taken shares in the undertakings.' He bought the business of some coaching firms that decided to sell out.

### **Bian's Barn**

Within the next few years his business expanded. Charles Bianconi moved his headquarters from Clonmel to the Naas road at Royal Garter Stables. His buildings, housing more than

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

200 horses as well as cars and coaches, were known as Bian's Barn. The building was denoted by the distinctive sign of a wheel, set in the wall like a big porthole. It's still there.

### **Mail Coach**

Four years before the changeover from turnpike mail coaches to rail mail trains, John Croall of Edinburgh was accepted by the Post Office as the maker of new coaches. He supplied the coaches at 1.375d a mile, a fee that included daily maintenance. They were fitted to carry inside and outside passengers, a coachman, a guard and a mailbox or boot of the largest possible dimensions. The coaches were specially built for the service. The mails stopped travelling on the Naas road on Wednesday September 30<sup>th</sup>, 1846.

### **Railways**

The mails commenced travelling by train on Thursday October 1<sup>st</sup>, 1846. The Grand Canal Company ran scheduled passenger services from 1833 to 1852. Times were hard for gatekeepers who saw the source of their wages decline. The gangers and workmen were also affected. In the 1840's, the gangers were J. Kearns, C O'Hara, who was succeeded by James Conway. There were 14 contractors supplying materials to the road. They bought the stones from the quarries that they owned or rented. The main contractors were J. Farran and J. Devine.

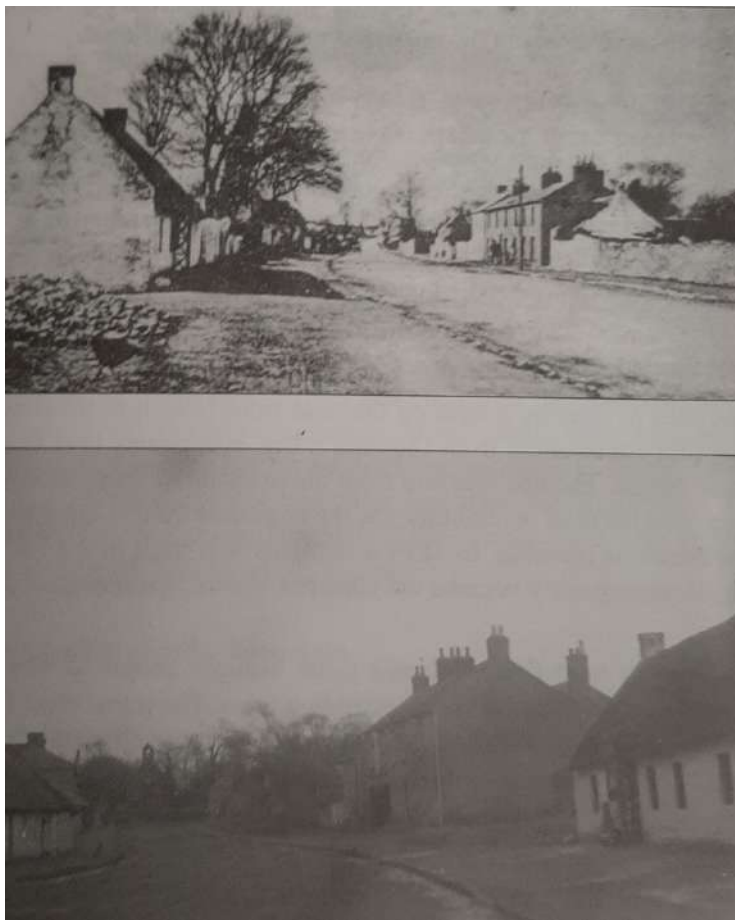
The demand for stones decreased as follows (in tons):

1844	1845	1846	1847
16,699	20,257	19,006	6,988

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

An era was coming to an end in the area. People began to look towards education as the way forward.

## Two pictures of Main Street, Rathcoole c. 1905



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Changes**

Some of the road workers went on to work on the Great Southern and Western railway line that was built along by the Grand Canal from Clondalkin to Hazel Hatch and on to Sallins. For some years heavy goods traffic had gone by canal boat. By 1850, the Dublin to Cork route could be covered in 18.5 hours with the coach travelling at an average of 9 miles an hour. Over the next century many inventions were to have undreamt of consequences for the Naas Road.

### **Transport**

In 1861 a horse drawn bus service began between Dublin and Naas. In 1878 Lawson invented the modern bicycle. In 1888 John Boyd Dunlop invented the tyre with a rubber outer casing and an air-filled inner tube inflated through a valve. In 1900 the Dunlop Motor Company introduced the first pneumatic tyre.

### **Dublin and Blessington Steam Tramway**

The idea of running a tram on the road from Dublin to Blessington was first talked about from 1864, but it was over twenty years later that the trams began. The line was laid from the roadside in Terenure village. It crossed the road several times as the engineers tried to lay it with as few bends as possible. In 1894 a terminus was built in the building which subsequently became the Classic cinema, Rathfarnham Road.

The no. 15 tram from Nelson's pillar brought people to Terenure where they transferred to the Blessington tram. The trams were drawn by a steam engine which had a very tall smokestack so that smoke would not be blown over the top of the tram. The carriages had an engine with a driver's cab at each

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end. The tram carried goods out from the big Dublin warehouses and on the return journey took cattle, stones from the De Selby quarry and goods for the Dublin markets. Special trams ran for the Punchestown Races and for the Dublin Horse Show.

Fares remained much the same from the beginning until 1902. The return fare from Terenure to Blessington was 4/6 for first class and 3/6 for third class. The first-class passengers travelled in the lower deck. The seats were nicely upholstered with plenty of room and ventilation. The third class were on the upper deck. The top was covered in, but the sides were open.

### **Picnic in the Slade of Saggart**

In the early 1900's the Tramway Company was advertising 'Ways to spend Saturdays.' One was to take the tram to the country and picnic in the Slade of Saggart – disembark at the Embankment Station – with trams to Terenure every forty-five minutes (fare 8d). There were also cheap excursions on Sundays.

The line was on the right-hand side of the road at the Embankment with a stop for Rathcoole and Saggart. Other local stops were at Fortunestown Lane, Jobstown, Mt. Seskin Road, Mahon's Lane, Old Saggart Road, Crooksling, Brittas and The Lamb. The steepest part of the journey was towards Crooksling. Initially there were three trams daily in each direction, but the service increased later. Eventually there was a tram nearly every hour. The last tram for Blessington left Terenure at 6.15 p.m. on Saturday December 31<sup>st</sup>, 1932 with the last tram arriving at Tallaght at 11.20 p.m.

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### **An Old Ballad Recalls Those Days**

*But yet I have a feeling, when the world's come to an end*

*That the steam train will come stealing back like an old and  
trusted friend,*

*When we're standing around in billions trying to get across the  
Styx*

*And the cars are lined up in millions, and we're really in a fix*

*When the buses cannot shift on, and the traffic is all a jam*

*Perhaps we'll get a life on THE OLD STEAM TRAM*

### **Census 1891**

The roads, canal and railway continued to give employment. In the 1891 census for Celbridge Union there were:

58 domestic coachmen

26 hotel and innkeepers

32 connected with the canal

16 blacksmiths/forge keepers

14 connected with the roads

14 connected with the railway

4 saddle makers

1 coach maker



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In 1913 the De Selby quarries produced 60,000 tons of green whinstone and gave much local employment.

### **Motor Cars**

On January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1904 the first motor vehicle registration plate in Britain was given to Earl Russell. In April of the same year Henry Royce's firm made its first car. A month later Charles Rolls joined him to form the car manufacturing firm – Rolls Royce. Five years later the closed top double decker bus came into production. In 1920 the Road Fund was established with the licence money collected from motorists to be used for road building and maintenance. Over the next fifty years the Naas Road through Rathcoole was maintained. Vehicular traffic increased through the village, so it was decided to bypass Main Street.

### **Dual Carriageway**

In the early 1960's the village of Rathcoole was bypassed with the construction of the Dual Carriageway. The sewerage system was installed at that time.

### **Houses**

The lands on Main Street were bought for housing developments. Beechwood Lawns, Coolamber, Forest Hills, Greenogue, Hillview, Maple Grove, Rathcoole Park, Rathlawns, Stoney Lane and St. Patrick's Crescent were built in the following ten years. Houses ranged in price range from £4,000 – £6,000 each in 1970.

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### The Year 2000

Traffic from the Naas Road at Rathcoole and Saggart was controlled by traffic lights. The volume of traffic grew to that in 1998 the bridge over the Naas Road to link Rathcoole and Newcastle was constructed. The road joining Rathcoole with Saggart was built. By the end of the twentieth century the maximum speed limit on the Naas Road was 70 miles an hour. With the improved infrastructure Rathcoole and Saggart became the homes of a lot more people. House prices had increased to that very few houses were under £100,000.

Housing extended from Tallaght towards Saggart. Some of the old names are remembered in the names of some recently developed housing estates – De Selby, Corbally, Verschoyle and Saggart Abbey. Brookview and Westbrook are recent developments. Springbank and Pairc Mhuire are at Saggart village.

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### Chapter VII

In 1733 a society was established by the Protestant Archbishop Hugh Boulter of Armagh, an Englishman, to provide schools where the children of poor Roman Catholics would receive and industrial education and be brought up in the Protestant faith. This was known as the Charter School movement. The society was at first dependent on private charity, but from 1757 it received considerable state funding when its function was changed. From 1750 only children of Protestant parents attended the school.

#### **The Glebe**

The building known as the Glebe, opposite the Main Street entrance to Forest Hills, was the first school we have records of in Rathcoole. The students probably ranged in age from about 11 to 14. This school, which was endowed in 1734 by the trustees of Mary Mercer's will, was opened about ten years later. The Mercer school started out with the same ideals as the Charter schools, but it remained a privately endowed school as there is no record of state funding.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Mary Mercer**

George Mercer, from Liverpool, came to Trinity College, Dublin as a medical student in the 1660's. He became Senior Greek lecturer and Vice Provost of Trinity College. He was a fellow of Trinity College. Fellows were not allowed to marry so he became friendly with his 'sister.' In due course she became his wife and the mother of their child, Mary. When the lady, Ms. Mary Barry, he introduced as his sister was discovered to be his wife, he was dismissed. He died shortly afterwards.

Mary remained unmarried. She was a remarkable businesswoman. She went into property dealing and became very wealthy with land in Abbey St. and Jervis St. Then she bought lands on the edge of Dublin city centre which became much more valuable during her lifetime. By the time of her death on March 4<sup>th</sup>, 1735 she was a very wealthy woman. In her will she left part of the rent from her lands to be used for charitable purposes. One such purpose was to clothe, diet, maintain and support 25 or more girls who were to be trained as good housekeepers capable to pass on skills to their families. There was a constant demand for well-trained persons for the local big houses.

### **Mercer's Hospital**

Mary Mercer left the rent from her estate for two purposes – the first of which was the annual payment of £100 to the sick poor of each of the Dublin parishes of St. Bridget or Bride, St. Peter's, St. Nicholas's without and St. Lukes. The remainder was for maintenance of as many Protestant children – at least 20 – as the residue of the estate could afford.

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Mary Mercer had a school and alms house in St. Stephen's Street in Dublin. The provision of services for poor and sick people had been severely affected by the instability of the country following the suppression of the monasteries. Some wealthy persons such as Dr. Richard Steevens, Jonathan Swift and Sir Patrick Dun bequeathed income from their estates for the provision of hospitals.

In 1734 a group of doctors and clergymen petitioned Dublin Corporation seeking money to turn Mary Mercer's premises into a hospital for poor people. Mercer's Hospital opened the following year. Johnathan Swift, a friend of Mary Mercers, was governor of it. In the early 1990's it was acquired by the College of Surgeons.

### **Dean Johnathan Swift**

Swift was Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. The Dean of St. Patrick's was entitled to tithes from the parishes of Rathcoole and Saggart since the thirteenth century. It is more than likely that Swife had some influence in the decision to move the Mary Mercer school from the city to Rathcoole. Around this time Swift acquired Den's lands at Saggart. In his will he left the income from his Saggart lands for the endowment of St. Patrick's Mental Hospital in Dublin. He died in 1745.

### **Rathcoole**

It was decided to move the school away from the city. Very definite guidelines were put in place as to the type of environment needed for the new school. A good healthy environment was essential. It was decided that the Barry land at

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Rathcoole, which was near a main road and near a parish church, might be suitable – a most beautiful site looking out to the hills and with lush green fields behind it. The turnpike had opened a few years previously, so the time taken to get to Dublin was much shorter.

The minutes of the meeting of trustees states that ‘we are all of the opinion that that part of Mr. Barry’s farm which we viewed is a most proper, convenient and beautiful situation for the school house or hospital intended to be built. We observe that it is placed a small distance from the parish church, is adjoining Rathcoole Common of which Manor the Archbishop of Dublin is Lord and is almost surrounded with a fine rivulet which can occasionally water the fields as well as serve the uses of the hospital.’

The Barry estate was bought in 1741 and the trustees became landlords with tenants in Rathcoole. Clement Barry, a grandson of Matthew Barry – mentioned in the Hearth Money Roll became a tenant of the trustees and he let the land to under tenants. The governors of the school were the Archbishop of Dublin, the Bishop of Kildare, the Dean of St. Patrick’s Cathedral, The Archdeacon of Dublin, the minister of Bride’s parish (who was the treasure) – all appointed by the will of Mrs. Mercer for the time being.

### **Mercer School**

Mr. Cummin was asked to design the building for the accommodation of a master/mistress and 25 girls. The stone was quarried on the land. John Kenny was appointed as building overseer. John Tracey led the masons. The school was painted by a Mr. Keating. Carpentry work was done by Mr. Walsh.

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When the school was finished and ready for occupation a drink was ordered for all the workmen at a cost of £1/10/-.

By the year 1744 a substantial building for a schoolhouse was complete. Building cost £742/6/4 and the furniture and fittings were £100. For a contemporary account, we have in 1780 Austin Cooper writing in his book, 'An 18<sup>th</sup> century antiquary' that in Rathcoole he saw a handsome house on the gates of which was written, 'Mrs. Mercer's Alms House for poor girls 1744.'

### **Teachers**

John Kenny, a man of many talents, became the first headmaster with the same salary as a master in the Charter Schools. The early teachers were Mr. and Mrs. Kenny, Mary Owen (1747). Widow Susannah Harricks (1757), Ann Johnson (1769), Mary McClean (1776). The school had two teachers – usually a married couple. It seems that a married couple was a prerequisite for the post. The wife was the headmistress, or the matron and her husband was a master or overseer. They each had a salary of £12 per annum and were also allowed 6d a day or about £9 a year extra cash for their keeps.

### **Gregorian Calendar**

It was around this time in 1752 that the Gregorian Calendar was adopted in this country. The change-over resulted in a loss of 11 days, losing the 11 days September 3 – 13 inclusive. There was widespread protest from people who innocently believed that their lives had been shortened. This led to the call 'give us back our 11 days.' 1752 was the first time that New Year's Day was on January 1<sup>st</sup>. Before that New Year's Day had been March 25<sup>th</sup>.

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### **The Pupils**

On September 27<sup>th</sup>, 1745 the first pupils were admitted. At first 20 girls were educated there but over the years the number increased to 50 who were boarded, lodged and taught. Up to 5,000 pupils passed through the school in its 89 years in existence. From 1750 only children of Protestant parents were allowed at the school.

### **Day to Day**

The food was mainly produced at home. An allowance of 3.5d a day was made for each pupil – this covered their keep and clothes. It cost about £5 or £6 a year to keep each pupil. This allowance was augmented by the produce of the garden and of the 6 cows provided by the school. The twenty acres of schoolhouse land – the land actually producing food for the scholars – was where Forest Hills is. Mr. Kenny gave a barrel of flax seed to be grown for the girls to spin and weave into linen.

Between February 1<sup>st</sup>, 1752 and January 1<sup>st</sup>, 1753 the girls spun 125 yards of flax one yard wide, 20 yards of tow one yard wide, 170 yards of camblett stuff spun the long was 1 yard wide, 90 yards of druggett for petticoats, 60 yards of twilled chequer for aprons, 465 yards of material in all. They knitted 44 pairs of stockings and made shifts. Then they were going to spin flax to make sheeting. A gardener and a maid were employed by the trustees. In 1752 the land yielded 62 loads of hay, 40 barrels of potatoes, 13 barrels of oats for meal and 2.5 barrels of wheat.



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Forest Hills, 1998

### Curriculum

The girls were taught reading, writing, arithmetic, spinning, knitting, needlework, milking, cheese and butter making, cooking and 'every species of household country employment.' Spinning was regarded as a very necessary household skill as all spinning was done by hand until 1768 when Richard Arkwright invented a water powered machine for spinning cotton into strong thread.

As the girls progressed, they were apprenticed into trades and services. How many of them went on to care for sick in Mercer's Hospital or into the homes of the local landlords as governesses or housekeepers? Of course, many of the landlords did not live locally – but some of the girls must have gone the Kennedy's at Johnstown, to the Conollys at Castletown and to Russborough House.

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If we cast our minds back 200 years we can see the girls in the ankle-length dresses, shawls and bonnets, crossing the road to the field at Forest Hills – going up Tay Lane for their pails of spring water – walking to the Church of Ireland and the three-cornered field.

### 1771 Letter

In March 1771, Ann Johnson petitioned for an increase in the daily food allowance for each pupil.

*To the Most Revd. the Lord Archbishop of Dublin, the Lord Bishop of Kildare, and the Other Revd. Trustees of Mrs. Mercer's Charity School.*

*The humble Petition of Ann Johnson most humbly sheweth*

*That your petitioner had the honour of being appointed to the care of your said school in Nov., 1769, and humbly hopes, she hath discharged her trust, to the satisfaction of your Lordships and Reverences.*

*That your petitioner can inform with a good conscience she hath done her duty with her utmost care, fidelity and vigilance said children sick and well.*

*That your petitioner confirms that she did undertake to maintain the said girls, now 36 in number, at 3 pence a day for each, but has for some time past, and is now, not able to do them justice at that price. on account of the great rise in provisions, for which reason she was obliged to apply for her own salary and private means to the support of the family.*

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*Wherefore your petitioner most humbly prays for an augmentation of one penny a head for the better enabling your petitioner to support the house.*

*All which is most humbly submitted to your consideration by your Lordships and Reverences.*

*Most humble and most obliged and most dutiful servant.*

*Ann Johnson.*

### **March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1771**

Three months later she was paid £8 'on account of her extraordinary care of the children when ill of measles last February and also on account of the rise of provisions.'

### **Richard Benson**

Their religious education was also attended to. In 1762 a gallery was added to the protestant church for them. Richard Brennan, the parish clerk, was paid £3/10/- a year for teaching the children to sing psalms, read, write and cypher.

### **1800**

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Mercer endowment amounted to £400 p.a. By 1826 the salary of the master was £18 p.a. but for the master and his wife, the matron, the salary was £21/2/6 p.a. with £24 p.a. to the female assistant. The salary of a married couple was regarded as a family income and was supplemented by a live-in allowance. The school continued at Rathcoole under Joseph and Elizabeth Senior until 1826 when it was transferred to Castelknock.

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The school and land were let to Frederick Bourne. It became the doctor's house. Thirty years later the rector and doctor exchanged houses. The old rectory became the dispensary doctor's residence and is now the Day Care Centre. The rector Canon Thornhill moved from the old rectory to the Glebe. He lived there for thirty-two years until his death in 1888. In the mid 1900's the new rectory was built behind the Glebe.

### **Mercer Estate**

The Mercer estate was let out in parcels of land to the farmers of Rathcoole. The rents varied from £2 p.a. to £212 p.a. according to the size of the farm. Some of the leases were for periods up to 99 years. Under the Penal laws, Catholics could not take leases for longer than 21 years – so the leaseholders on the Mercer estate with leases longer than 31 years were Protestant landholders and the other shorter leaseholders were Catholic. Edmund Burke had much to say about that.

### **Edmund Burke**

Edmund Burke was born at Arran Quay in Dublin and became Private Secretary to the Prime Minister Lord Rockingham in 1766. At the age of 36 he was elected a member of parliament. He held that the severity of the Penal laws would lead to mass emigration to America where Catholic people would be well received and get as much land as they required.

There were many people who had already gone to America and had been made welcome. One of those was Daniel McCarthy from Kinsale who went to America in 1690. He was granted land, which he called Kinsale, in George Washington's home county – Westmoreland County in Virginia. In 1724 his son

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Denis married Sarah Ball. Her first cousin Mary Ball married Augustine Washington. Mary and Augustine were the parents of George Washington who became the Commander in Chief of the armed forces. George Washington showed his interest in the Irish when he attended some dinners hosted by the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick. In 1789 he was elected President of America.

Many of the Irish who had gone to France in 1690 made their way to America. In August 1756 the British soldiers at Lake Ontario surrendered to Col. Byrne. He had been an officer in the French Army and wore the red uniform faced with green of the Irish Brigade.

The Irish were held in high regard in the American War of Independence with 26 Butlers, 30 Kellys and 21 Walshes serving as officers. 38 members of the Rourke name were soldiers in the war. It is possible that some of them were kinsmen of the Rourkes who were involved in the Rathcoole United Irishmen. Lord Edward Fitzgerald fought there, too.

### **St. Mary's Church in Philadelphia**

John Barry was born in Tacumshane on the South Wexford coast in 1745. He went to America. When the war started, Barry was placed in charge of a privately owned ship. Eventually Barry persuaded the American government to find a peacetime Navy. His grave is revered at St. Mary's Church in Philadelphia. A plaque bears the inscription 'Commodore John Barry, Father of the American Navy. He was chosen by the Continental Congress to command the first warship owned by the colonies and he fought the last naval battle of the Revolution.' He died in 1803.

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Other Irish commemorated there are: Thomas Fitzsimons, Signer of the Constitution of the United States, Member of the Congressional Congress, Representative of the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Congress of the United States. He may be of the Fitzsimons family who were dispossessed of land here.

General Stephen Moyland, was Aide de Camp to Washington and commander of all the calvary as the close of the revolution. Matthew Carey was the leading publisher in the early years of the republic and the chief force in the creation of early American literature. 'Be ye worthy as were they' is the last line on their commemorative plaque.

That church has connections with Rathcoole as Fr. Harold was attached to it when he lived in Philadelphia for a time on his return from Australia. The Irish were welcome and received with land. An example of this was the 25,000 acres reserved in 1772 for and Irish colony at Queensborough township in the state of Georgia.

### **Catholic Relief**

The members of parliament were very aware that mass emigration was a probability.

Many of the proponents of the bill for relief of Catholics in the 1770's were landlords who were also members of parliament. Among them was Thomas Conolly of Castletown House in Celbridge. They were appalled at the scenario of mass emigration. The result was that in 1778 the law was changed and then Catholics were allowed to take longer leases.

In a further change to property rights in 1782 Catholics were placed on the same footing as Protestants as regards property

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rights. However, some of the Mercer tenants were not lease holders but tenants at will. Many of the tenancies expired in the early 1800's. It is interesting to note that most of the names of lease holders are no longer in Rathcoole, but the surnames of the tenants as will are.

Maps of property in and near Rathcoole, managed by the trustees of Mrs. Mercer's property, are preserved in the National Library. The field known to generations of Rathcoole people as the three-cornered fields behind Beechwood Lawns probably was in active use even 200 years ago for the pupils of the school. It is marked on an old map as 'Poor House Meadow.' This name probably derives from its association with the school.

### **Tenants**

The Mercer tenants were James Barry, James Bermingham, John Booth, William Cromie, John Dillon, Michael Dillon, Isaac Ambrose Eccles, James Geraghty, Martin Horseman, John Howel, James Grey, Thomas Leedon, John Kerins, Robert Lightbody, Martin Mullally, William Mullally, James Ormsby, James Pageit, Michael Smith, John Walsh. At one time the trustees wanted to become tenants of the Inn at Rathcoole known as The White Horse and Black Lyon which was leased by Matthew Bermingham and David Birtchell.

### **Daniel Brady's School**

Under the Penal Laws Catholics were not permitted to be schoolteachers. In the parish Daniel Brady had his own solution to the exclusion. He was a licenced schoolmaster for 40 years from 1780 until his death in 1821. He got his licence from

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Archbishop Fowler. About 1780 a schoolhouse was built, and Mr. Brady was installed as the licenced schoolmaster.

The house was built by the people of the Church of Ireland parish on an acre of land on Rathcoole common. A hundred years later the first National School in the village was built on the village side of it and a further one hundred years later the Community School was built on the other side of it so it may be regarded as the nucleus of Rathcoole schools.

It was given to Mr. Brady as a schoolhouse by the general consent of the Church of Ireland parishioners. Daniel Brady was a man of his time and in a way before his time. In 1872 a law was passed which permitted Catholics to teach school under licence from the Protestant bishop of the diocese. They could not accept Protestant children or teach in a Protestant school.

Daniel Brady continued to teach in Rathcoole until his death in 1821. He taught Catholic and Protestant children in the building provided for him by the parish. After his death his family refused to give up on the schoolhouse and land. They were born and reared there. Daniel Brady had lived there by the general consent of the parishioners but there was no legal agreement regarding his tenure.

### **School Fees**

The school had been regarded as an endowed school during the stewardship of Daniel Brady. The Protestant rector gave £2 p.a. in the early 1800's. Daniel made the rest of his income on a fee per subject basis.

He charged 3/- per quarter for teaching spelling and 6/- per quarter for teaching reading and writing.



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As well as this he taught 5 or 6 foundlings free. So his income may be calculated as follows – as the records of his school show:

For 6 months

15 spellers at 3/- per quarter per pupil      £4/19/-

15 readers and writers at 6/- per quarter per pupil £9

For the other 6 months

10 spellers at 3/- per quarter per pupil      £3

10 readers and writers at 6/- per quarter per pupil      £6

To his income – from the incumbent      £2

Thus his total income per annum came to £24/10/-

The pupils paid only when they attended school

For 6 months he had 15 pupils and for the other 6 months he had 10 pupils. The average attendance was about 50%. There were other important things to be done – sowing the crops, harvesting and lambing time. Brady also had a free house.

### **The Deserted Village**

Oliver Goldsmith's (1728-1774) poem The Deserted Village probably sums him up –

*'The village all declared how much he knew;*

*'Twas certain he could write and cipher too*

*Lands he could measure, terms and tides presage;*

*-While words of learned length and thundering sound*

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*Amazed the gazing rustics hanging around;  
And still they gazed and still the wonder grew  
that one small head could carry all he knew.  
But passed is all his face. The very spot,  
Where many a time he triumphed is forgot.'*

### **Rev. Thomas Hayden**

The Vicar Rev. Thomas Hayden rented a house at £4 p.a. to use as a schoolhouse. He had to pay the new teacher, William Pitman, twice what he paid Mr. Brady. He stayed until November 1823 when he left because the Rev. Hayden would not nominate him to an endowment then talked about by the men of property in the parish. He had 23 scholars in the summer months and 14 in winter.

### **John Brady**

In 1825 John Brady taught in Rathcoole. He taught in the building which was not ceded to the Protestant trustees on the death of Daniel Brady 4 years earlier. He followed in the footsteps of his father in that most of his pupils were Catholic. The Douay version of the bible was read. He too taught about 45 pupils fairly evenly divided between boys and girls. Rathcoole doesn't seem to have had a school solely for Protestants as both Mr. Boyle's school and Mr. Brady's had Protestant pupils.

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### Hedge Schools

About twenty boys and girls attended Catherin Whelan's school in a poor cabin in Rathcoole Hill. William Saunders taught 23 boys and girls in an old cow house at Rathcoole Hill. The Rathcoole Hill schools had no Protestant pupils. At Slademore John Murphy taught 10 males and 5 females.

One of the local landlords was La Touche. He lived at Harristown in Co. Kildare. He supported a school in Rathcoole for 70 children before the famine. A private school for 40 children was also there. When John Brady took over the schoolhouse, he secured support from La Touche.

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### Chapter VIII

The Four Districts 1798 Commemoration Committee was convened in Autumn 1997 by Mary Sheil McNally. Its purpose was to commemorate the events of 200 years previously, and especially to commemorate Rev. James Harold, Richard Fyans, J. Molloy, John Clinch and Felix Rourke.

During the first weekend of March 1998 a seminar 'Echoes of 1798' was organised by Brenda Nic Ginnea, principal, and by the staff of the newly build Scoil Chronain.

On Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>, July 1998 the monument was unveiled by the Tanaiste, Mary Harney of Newcastle. An ecumenical prayer service was held with Bishop Eamonn Walsh and Rev. Olive Boothman. Members of the Fyans and Rourke families attended the commemoration.

The Committee members were Rev. Colm O'Siocru CC., Jack Graham, Monica Hanlon, Martin Hoban, Rathcoole N.S.; John Keegan, Brittas N.S.; Brona Long, Liam McDermott, Saggart N.S.; Mary McNally, Ann Keegan and her sister Evelyn Murphy; Mary Roche, Saggart and Annie Timmons. The meetings at Graham's Rathcoole Inn were attended by local County Council

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representatives Catherine Quinn and Tony O'Hagan, Community Officer, South Dublin County Council.

At mass, preceding the unveiling, Fr. O'Siochru was thanked on behalf of the parishioners, by Liam Nolan, Stoney Lane. He received a presentation before he went to Narraghmore Parish, Co. Kildare.

This chapter will tell the stories of the people commemorated.

### **Lord Edward Fitzgerald**

Madden in his Lives of the United Irishmen mentions 'a young gentleman named Clinch, of Rathcoole, the preparations for whose execution was the occasion of the excitement of poor Lord Edward Fitzgerald, which hastened his dissolution.' The doctor attending Lord Edward said that Lord Edward had a fever and convulsions and on hearing the noise in the street below he shouted out, 'God look down on those who suffer. God preserve me and have mercy on me and those who act with me.'

### **Clinch Family**

The family of Clinch was the most noted family in Rathcoole village in 1798. The family was closely associated with Newcastle for many centuries. In the Hearth Money Rolls the shepherd of Mr. Clinch is recorded as having a house in Calliaghstown. There was no mention of a Clinch in Rathcoole itself, so it is likely that James Clinch came to Rathcoole in the early 1700's. In Rathcoole cemetery the Clinch headstone records James Clinch, died 1747, age 65 years; son William, died 1748, age 35 years; daughter Jane Lucy, died 1803, age 74; granddaughter Christina Dignam, died 1823, aged 72.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **John Clinch**

Eighteen-year-old John Clinch of Rathcoole House, allegedly in Captain James Ormsby's Rathcoole yeomanry corps, was arrested in the last days of May 1798. The Clinch family had owned a lot of land in the Newcastle area. They were well known in legal circles. John was brought up in the Big House – Rathcoole House. The Freeman's Journal June 2<sup>nd</sup> wrote 'a young man named Clinch, the son of a respectable farmer who lived in Rathcoole, has been apprehended and yesterday was in the guard house in the castle. He is a young man and was a member of Rathcoole yeomanry.' His arrest caused a lot of alarm in the neighbourhood. He was court martialled and convicted on Friday June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1798. The following day he was executed.

### **James Ormsby**

On May 7<sup>th</sup>, 1798 James Ormsby wrote to Dublin Castle alleging the pikes were stored in Newcastle chapel and that the priests house in Rathcoole should also be searched. The rebels were allegedly training on Saggart commons. John Clinch was arrested on the information of an informer.

### **Father Harold**

The Freeman's Journal of Jun 5<sup>th</sup> said that Clinch of Rathcoole who was executed on Saturday confessed that 'he was sworn by a priest sometime ago against his king, his country and that God who has commanded subjection to the lawful and constituted authorities of the land.'

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### Last letter

*Honoured Father;*

*I expected to have seen or heard from you ere this. I fear my fate is determined. I am told I am to suffer death this day. It would be a great satisfaction to me to see you before I die, and if you could bring or send a priest to me, I think I could then die happy. At all events I will meet my fate with faith and fortitude. I would not for worlds exchange situations with Walsh, my persecutor, who has behaved in the most base and treacherous manner, and swore to several falsehoods.*

*His charges were as follows:*

*That I swore him to true to the French, and that I was a sergeant in the rebels, and that I attended a meeting of sergeants to elect a captain.*

*Dear Father, I assure you the foregoing charges are false, and as I hope for salvation, I declared the truth at the court-martial.*

*I hope dear father, you will bear this with fortitude, and comfort my dear mother on this trying occasion. I feel more for my friends than for myself. My love to my dear sister Swords, Ann, Kitty, Fanny, Alicia, Michael and Larrey, and my brother-in-law Swords. As I am preparing for that awful moment, I beg you excuse any omission on my side.*

*I am, honoured father,*

*Your ever dutiful and now unfortunate son.*

*John Clinch.*

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

*Provost Prison, June 2 1798.*

*Eight o'clock in the morning.*

### **Execution**

He was executed in front of Newgate prison. The gallows was immediately over the principal entrance. Lord Edward Fitzgerald heard the noise as he lay in his bed; his room was on the second storey of the right-hand side of the prison as you enter Green St.

Lord Edward shouted out, 'God look down on those who suffer. God preserve me and have mercy on me and those who act with me.' Two days later Lord Edward was dead.

### **The Following Days**

These Rathcoole happenings were commemorated in a ballad:

*My curse attend you --- and ---.*

*My curse attend you night and day,*

*You hung John Clinch and sent the priest away.*

According to tradition John Clinch was offered pardon in return for betrayal of others but refused in the following words:

*'Information I deny. A gentleman I lived, a gentleman I'll die.'*



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Parish Priest Transported to Australia**

Father James Harold was appointed to Rathcoole in 1794. Before Rathcoole he was priest at Kilcullen for five years. On the Sunday before the rebellion fifty-year-old Father Harold exhorted his people in Rathcoole to forbearance and peace. He urged them to shun all disorder and discord. Then he went on to rebuke the yeomanry and military for the reckless barbarity they displayed. The military issued an order for his arrest.

### **Hazel Hatch**

He managed to get to the house of a Protestant at Hazel Hatch. He eventually came out to say Mass for his people and was taken prisoner from the altar. He was allowed to finish Mass. Local tradition has it that he was arrested at Rathcoole House as he was in hiding there. The soldiers came to look for him and when the occupants of the house were being verbally abused, he came out and surrendered.

A cross and chalice from that period were found hidden in the village of Rathcoole. The cross was found in the priest's hiding place in the older part of Rathcoole House. That part of the house extended out to the road and was demolished in 1934. The chalice was found in the rafters of a thatched house on the far side of the road. That was used as a schoolhouse and Fr. Harold said his last Mass in Rathcoole there. They were probably deposited there for safe keeping at that time. It was an awful day in Rathcoole – Clinch executed and the parish priest in jail.

The Freeman's Journal of June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1798 stated that a Roman Catholic clergyman was on Thursday brought up to town from

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

the neighbourhood of Rathcoole, a prisoner, who is accused of being an abettor to the rebels in that part of the country.'

### **Thomas Brunton**

Thomas Brunton's house at Rathcoole was attacked by rebels. A rebel said, *'he had the deeds of the property and would soon be in possession of the townland.'* – *Freeman's Journal*

### **Richard Fyans and Molloy**

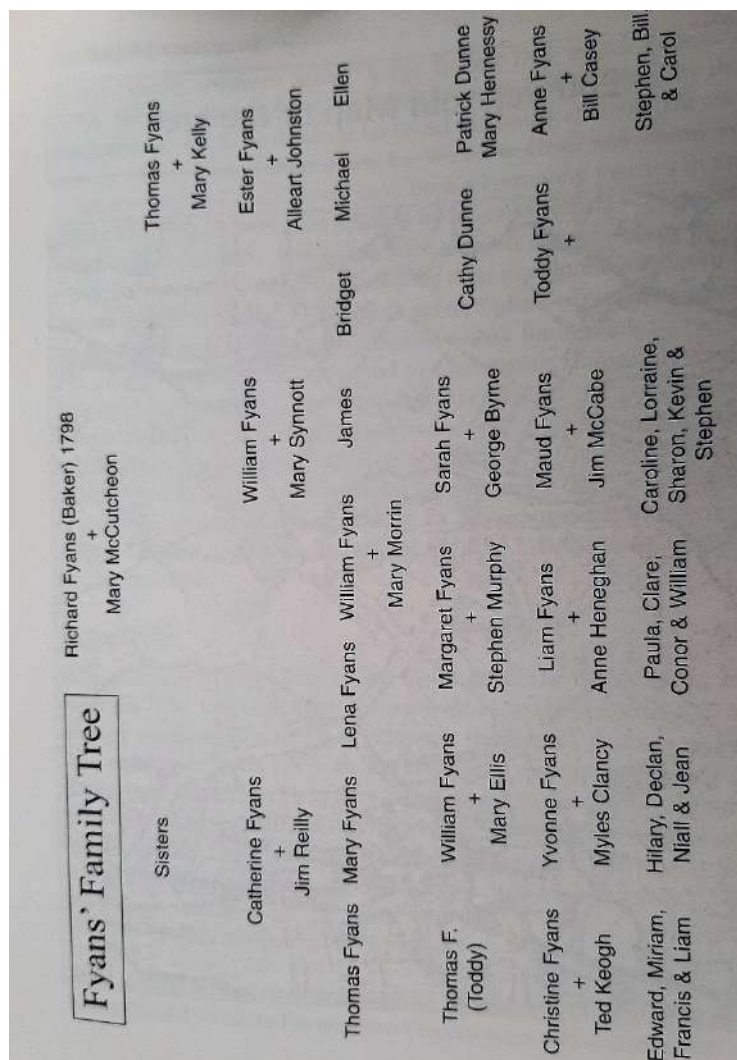
A few days later The Freeman's Journal said a baker at Rathcoole and his journeyman entered into a conspiracy with other persons to poison the military stationed there. Local tradition has it that the redcoats were out all night looking for rebels. There were very hungry when, early one morning, they came to Rathcoole. They raided Fyans bakery and found a batch of freshly baked hot bread. Some of them took too much of the hot bread with buttermilk and became very ill. Fyans and Molloy were immediately hanged where the garda barracks now stands. They are buried in the old Catholic section of the Church of Ireland cemetery, Rathcoole.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Anne, Cristine, Yvonne and Liam Fyans with their cousins Niall and Pauline Fyans Murphy. This photograph was taken at the unveiling of the monument at the Old Library in Rathcoole on Sunday 5<sup>th</sup>, July 1998.

# A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

200 year old map of the area



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### Father Harold Sentenced

Father Harold appeared before Judge Robert Day on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 1799. He was sentenced to transportation to Botany Bay. In the meantime, he was to be detained on board the *Lively* at Cobh. He was sent by sloop from Dublin, down by Wicklow Head and around by Carnsore Point to Cobh. It must have been a harrowing journey in the spring of 1799. He was accompanied by at least 2 others – a General Holt from Co. Wicklow and a Protestant minister named Fulton – both of whom were also being transported for their part in the rebellion. It was an appalling journey. They were given a plank of wood as a seat by day and a bed by night with a bundle of hay for a pillow.

The *Lively* was under the command of Christopher Dobson. It was a prison ship having been a transport ship for convicts. The government did not insure his vessel and Dobson wondered about his safety since he thought that his ‘cargo’ was a hazardous one. A Timothy Mahony of Blackpool in Cork got a vestment box on the ship. It consisted of a chalice, vestments and altar linen. Fr. Harold applied for a writ of Habeas Corpus. That was granted but the ship sailed away before it could be implemented.

### To Australia

In August 1799 Father Harold left Cobh on board the *Minerva* for Australia. The first few days out were an easy sail travelling at an average speed of 8.5 miles a day through the Bay of Biscay – a 400-mile passage of open sea with no landmarks and no possibility of shelter from its storms. Then they sailed across to the Canary Islands. They were blown steadily in the warm trade winds across the Equator and on to Rio. There was much illness

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

on the trip. The reason put forward was that the meat on board was salted to preserve it. The passengers needed a lot of water but only 1 pint of water was available to each of them in the 24 hours.

The arrived at Rio de Janeiro on October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1799. While at Rio, Father Harold wrote to his nephew Vincent who was a seminarian in Lisbon. That relative wrote home to Ireland that he would like to join James on the Australian mission if that were possible at some time in the future. At Rio the ship got provisions including maize, pineapples and sweet potato. Any maintenance that the ship needed was done at Rio in preparation for the long Trans-Pacific trip to Sydney – nearly 7,000 miles. From Rio they sailed down the east coast of South America and round by Cape Horn and into the South Pacific. Christmas 1799 was spent on the high seas. What a Christmas – exhausted, hungry, thirsty, and without a decent sleep for many, many months.

### **The First Settlers**

The first settlers arrived in Australia in 1788. The site of the settlement was determined by the availability of water. A letter written by one Ellen Moore, an Irish prisoner at Sydney in 1803, to Dr. Archer the Inspector General at Dublin said, ‘the climate is finest in the world; crops most abundant; health good; no epidemics but much drunkenness.’ So, what was it really like to be there then?

The convicts had built the houses from sandstone bricks baked from the clay on the site. They followed plans of similar houses in England. The kitchen or cook’s room was separate from the main building because of fear of fire as it was not uncommon

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

for kitchens with open fireplaces to catch fire in the hot climate. Each kitchen had 2 fireplaces. The heavy pots were hung by chains over one large log fire. Here the meat and in winter the soups and stews were cooked. On the other fireplace a heavy black urn of water, filled from the water tank or barrel outside the kitchen door, was kept boiling to satisfy the demands for tea. The temperature was regulated by the size of the fire.

Food was simple. Bags of flour and sugar and chests of tea had to be brought from the seaport by bullock wagons. The roads were rough unmade tracks and the rivers flooded frequently. The bread was a scone mixture of flour and water or flour and milk. The mugs, or quart pots as they were called, were made on site by tin smiths. Meat was plentiful. Sheep were killed in summer and beef in winter. Milk was plentiful and butter and cheese were made from the cream. Fruit was bottled or preserved. There was a good supply of vegetables and potatoes. Candles were made from mutton tallow or fat. The long-handled irons for clothes ironing and cooking pots were brought from England. Prisoners led a normal life on the continent, but they were denied their liberty to leave.

### **Father Harold Reached Sydney**

Father Harold reached Sydney on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 1800. He arrived at Paramatta, Botany Bay after being at sea for almost 5 months. The Irish prisoners there were delighted to have a priest of their own among them, but he was not allowed to minister. 40,000 Irish convicts were political prisoners – the rest were common criminals. The Irish comprised about 25% of the convicts sent to the penal colonies.



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### **Norfolk Island**

Nine months later Father Harold was alleged to be involved with some United Irishmen in Paramatta, so he was transferred to Norfolk Island in the Pacific. The island was discovered in 1774 by James Cook. It was a rugged volcanic island with a very pleasant climate. The Lieutenant Governor allowed him to open a school there. Fr. Harold's health began to fail. He was about 60 years old and the hardships he had to endure were getting the better of him.

The regime on Norfolk Island was a very severe one. All convicts, including Catholics, had to attend the Protestant prayers which were read by the commandant. In the first years of Norfolk Island as a penal settlement it was never visited by the Protestant chaplain. The penalty for non-attendance was deduction of 3lbs of flour from the ration of each overseer or the deduction of 2lbs of flour from the ration of each labouring convict. It was compulsory to attend prayers at least once on Sunday. A notice was issued on Norfolk Island that anyone found to be not in church during Divine Service was to be put in jail. The island was abandoned in 1814 when the whole population was moved to Tasmania. Norfolk Island remained uninhabited until 1856 when the descendants of mutineers on the *Bounty* were landed there.

### **Tasmania**

Sometime later he was moved to Tasmania. He was the first Catholic priest to arrive there, although he was not allowed to minister. He applied to leave the Australian colony, but he was refused permission to leave either for Spain, Portugal or Ireland. Sometime before 1810 Fr. Harold arrived in Sydney.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Liberty**

He had succeeded in his efforts to be granted his liberty. On July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1810 a notice appeared in the Sydney Gazette and New South Wales Advertiser. The notice stated that 'All claims and demands on the Rev. James Harold are requested to be presented for payment, he designing to leave the country as per *Concord*.' On the homeward journey the ship sailed up the east coast of South America. Fr. Harold spent some time in Rio de Janeiro.

### **Philadelphia to Kilcullen**

Then they sailed up the east coast of North America to Philadelphia. It seems that Fr. James kept in touch with his nephew Vincent, a priest, for on his departure from Australia he made his way to Fr. Vincent who was by now Vicar General for the diocese of Philadelphia. Fr. James was received in Philadelphia by Bishop Egan, a Franciscan who was born in Limerick in 1761. He was the first Catholic Bishop of Philadelphia. Fr. Harold was assigned to St. Mary's Church.

Sometime after Father James arrived the bishop decided he would move him to Pittsburgh parish. Fr. James did not wish to leave his nephew nor did the nephew want to lose him again. Both Harolds protested and Fr. Vincent resigned as Vicar General. In April 1813 they both returned to Ireland. Fr. James was in his late sixties. He was appointed parish priest in Kilcullen and later to Clontarf and Fairview.

### **Dominican Provincial**

He visited Fr. Vincent in Lisbon in 1820 before Fr. Vincent was invited back to resume his post as Vicar General of Philadelphia

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diocese. By this time Bishop Egan had died. He went back in 1821. He was later to become the Provincial of the Irish Province of the Dominican Order from 1840 – 1844.

### Later Years

The period in Australia had caused Fr. James much ill health. In his later years he lived with his cousin Michael Ryan at 21 Lower Dominic St. in Dublin.

He lies in the old Richmond cemetery beside the Grand Canal at Inchicore. Fr. Vincent (died (1856) lies with him and also another member of the family Rev. William D. Harold who died in 1830 aged 29 years. The inscription reads:

*Rev. James Harold was parish priest in this diocese for many years. He died on 15 August 1830 in the 85<sup>th</sup> year of his age. A faithful Christian and a firm friend. Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord.*

### *Felix Rourke*

#### His Family

Broadfield was a place name up to the early nineteenth century. It was where parts of Tootenhill, Crockshane, Carrigeen, Windmill Hill and Keating's Park are now. Felix Rourke was a farmer at Broadfield. He kept the turnpike gate at the Naas road. He had a carman's stage where the Blackchurch Inn now stands. He and his wife had a daughter and at least four sons – John, Charles, Matthew and Felix. John had a pub at Thomas Street in Dublin.

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### **United Irishmen**

Felix, Charles and their first cousin, Bryan Rourke, became active in the United Irishmen. They enjoyed the confidence of Lord Edward Fitzgerald. As time went on, Felix rose in rank to become Colonel in the rebel army. Charles was a captain. Two friends of theirs – Nicholas Lyons and Bartholemew Mahon also attained the rank of captain. A short time before the rebellion broke out, Lord Edward made him a present of his favourite mare.

### **Rebellion**

At the outbreak of the rebellion Felix was made a Colonel of the Kildare insurgents, and fought at Clonard, Johnstown and Hacketstown.

### **Cornwallis**

In May 1798 Charles Cornwallis was appointed Viceroy and Commander in Chief in Ireland. He had gained military experience as a British Commander in America. He was in America when the Declaration of Independence was drawn up by Thomas Jefferson (later 3<sup>rd</sup> President). It was signed on 4<sup>th</sup> July 1776 by the members of the American Congress. The American War of Independence followed and continued until 1783. George Washington became the Commander in Chief of the American army. He suffered many defeats.

In 1781 Washington and his combined forces managed to completely surround Charles Cornwallis and 7,000 army at Yorktown, Virginia. On October 19<sup>th</sup> Cornwallis surrendered and the war was effectively over. Cornwallis returned to England. On November 4<sup>th</sup> the American and French allies

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joined in a Mass of thanksgiving at St. Mary's Church in Philadelphia. The conquered flags of the British army laid upon the altar. George Washington became the first President of the United States. He was inaugurated at Federal Hall in New York City on April 30th 1789. Cornwallis subsequently became Governor – General of India.

### **Discipline**

When Cornwallis arrived in Dublin, he set out to restore military discipline. He wanted an end to the reprisals and revenge policies. On September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1798 Felix and Charles Rourke, Lyons and Mahon surrendered to Captain Dundas at Castlemartin near Kilcullen. They gave up their arms without starting anything in their own favour or looking for any favours. They were sent as prisoners to the guardhouse in Kilcullen.

### **Naas Jail**

The next day they were reported to Castlereagh, the acting Chief Secretary of Ireland. The guardhouse in Kilcullen was full so they were taken to Naas jail. In his report to Castlereagh, Dundas wrote that 'the conduct of the two brothers to the McAllister family is praiseworthy and in their favour.'

A letter in their favour came from Chris. McAllister.

*'Sir,*

*Two men of the name of Rourke who were at my house on the 12<sup>th</sup> day of July have requested that I would mention their treatment to me, when the rebels came to my house – suffice to say, that I owe my life and that of my family, and the preservation of my house, to their humanity and the resistance*

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*they made against the villains who several times presented their guns to shoot me and my wife – there is a man also of the name Lyons, who behaved remarkably well towards us – I must add that these men rescued part of my property from one of my own servants – I do assure you sir I think they saved my life at the hazard of their own. – Chris. McAllister. Dublin August 21<sup>st</sup>, 1798.’*

### **Eighteenth Century Jail**

The four men were taken to Naas jail.

Felix wrote to the government:

Prison Naas – Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>. 1798

*Sir,*

*When I, with three rebel captains, my friends, had the honour to surrender to you, at Castlemartin – we declared our having been concerned in the rebellion, with the rank we held as officers – this we did for three reasons, first if by evasion we procured protections, we would be exposed to the chance of being taken by the yeomen and with insult contumely consigned to a prison, in contempt of said protections, secondly Govt. had pledged itself in a most solemn manner, by their proclamation for our personal security: - and by a subsequent Act gave to ever leader, an offer of the same terms as those accede to Messrs. O’Connor, Neilson, Emmett, etc. thirdl, on the honour of General Dundas, we had the most perfect reliance, and he treated us with that humanity; that has ever characterised him – and when it was found necessary to send us to prison, Captain Orway by his order, politely sent with us a letter, to General Wilford, to have us well treated – we are now*

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*a month in this prison and the only indulgence we have enjoyed is in being in a room abstracted from the common prison, where we have been necessitated to procure beds and bedding, for ourselves, yet this day we have been furnished by the Keeper of the Prison, with a bill for lodging of 5/5 per week for each man – now we conceive this charge should not fall on us – as we are informed when Mr. Aylmer surrendered to General Wilford, he was immediately sent to Dublin.*

*Ever since he and his friends, have been treated with every attention at the expense of Govt, as state prisoners with state allowances – quite the reverse with us. At our own expense (which could not be trifling) have we subsisted without any allowance: -*

*I have the honour*

*To be sir with the greatest respect*

*Your devoted and obedient servant*

*Felix Rourke*

*late Colonel in the rebel army.*

Felix Rourke and his companions were released from jail some time in 1799.

### **Rathcoole 1803**

Felix Rourke continued his association with the United Irishmen. Five years after his time in Naas jail he was involved in the 1803 rebellion. Preparations for the uprising were going ahead. In response to a query from the Secretary of the General Post Office in Dublin the deputy post master of Rathcoole,

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Laurence Dillon, wrote in July that, 'the town and parish of Rathcoole are in a great state of fermentation the cause of which I am ignorant of.' On Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>, July preparations for the uprising were complete.

### **Thomas Street**

The military and yeomen raided a house in Thomas Street. They found thousands of copies of a proclamation, several cartloads of pikes, machines for manufacturing gun powder and many bullets. They also found a green superbly made regimental coat, seemingly intended for a leader, green pantaloons, a couple of helmets and ostrich plumes and a very big quantity of bread. An unusual number of countrymen thronged the public houses in the afternoon.

### **Lord Kilwarden**

The Lord Chief Justice Arthur Wolfe, Lord Kilwarden, his daughter and his nephew Rev. Mr. Wolfe left his home at Newlands, Clondalkin to travel to Dublin. In Thomas Street his coach was stopped by a group of men. Rev. Wolfe was killed. Lord Kilwarden was wounded. The lady escaped unharmed and was allowed to go to Dublin Castle. As night fell several of the rebels and military were killed.

### **Bryan Rourke Wounded**

Many people were wounded including Bryan Rourke when a ball lodged in his shoulder. A week later he was arrested in his bed and taken to the new prison. Two doctors attended him but both of them had kept their attendance on him a secret.



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Felix Arrested**

On August 6<sup>th</sup> Felix Rourke was arrested by Alderman Blonham and the Liberty Rangers. He was taken to the new prison at Kilmainham. Kilmainham Jail was built in 1787. It replaced the thirteenth century jail at Old Kilmainham. It contained fifty-two cells, but two hundred persons were there following the rebellion in 1803. The building that is now the Bank of Ireland in College Green was used as a prison to cope with the great numbers arrested. It was the Irish House of Commons for 70 years until the Act of Union in 1800. Robert Emmett was arrested nine days later at Mr. Palmer's house in Harold's Cross.

### **Trial**

On August 24<sup>th</sup> a special commission was opened for the trial of the rebels. Felix Rourke was indicted for high treason and sent for trial. In evidence his brother, John, said that Felix had left to go home. His other brother, Matthew, said that his mother was worried about Felix when she heard about the insurrection in Dublin. Matthew told his mother that Felix was in Grimes' house near Saggart. The only witness to Felix being involved in the rebellion was a pedlar called Mahaffy. He was then in the Kildare militia. He swore that he saw him in Dirty Lane on the night of the insurrection, armed with a blunderbuss, commanding as a colonel of the rebels. Another man name Ryan said that he couldn't positively recognise Rourke. Felix thanked the court and the jury. He said he 'relied on a verdict influenced alone by a rigid sense of justice.'

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### Guilty

The verdict of guilty was returned a few minutes later by the jury. Two days after the trial began, Felix was called to the bar. He gave a short speech. He protested his innocence. He had 'never contributed in any manner to have injured a neighbour in either person or property.' He was sentenced to death by hanging outside his father's door.

Felix Rourke's last letter

*Newgate Prison  
9<sup>th</sup> September 1803*

*Dear and honoured father and mother*

*For the last time I address you in this world hoping to convey to your minds that peace and consolation I feel and which I trust will support you in that moment which tomorrow is destined to terminate my life. My innocence inspires me with a fervent hope of meeting through the merits of a crucified Jesus that mercy which He promised all who would truly repent and avail themselves of the opportunity held out by His suffering.*

*I remain dear Sir and Madam  
with love to brothers and sisters  
Your dutiful and I hope happy Son  
Felix Rourke.*

**10 September 1803**

He was taken by cart from Dublin and out by Dolphin's Barn and up the coach road through Jobstown and on through Saggart. On 10 September 1803 he met his death at the burned-

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out house of Father Harold. His sister petitioned the government for his burial. 'The town of Rathcoole at the time of execution of Felix Rourke on Saturday last seemed to be deserted of all its inhabitants, not one in coloured clothes was to be seen.'

*Freemans Journal 13 September 1803*

### **Lord Kilwarden (1739 – 1803)**

Arthur Wolfe was the son of John Wolfe and his wife was Mary Philpot of Fournaghts. He became a King's Counsel in 1778; Solicitor General in 1778; Attorney General and member of Privy Council in Ireland in 1789; Member of Parliament for Coleraine in Irish House of Commons in 1783; Chief Justice and elected M.P. for Dublin and for Ardfert but elected to sit for Dublin; created a peer by the title Baron Kilwarden of Newlands in 1798; Vice Chancellor of Trinity College in 1802. His home was at Newlands House, Clondalkin, where Newlands Golf Club now is.

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James, Thomas and Gretta Rourke



Maeve Moloney and Mary McNally

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### Chapter IX

King James II and many of the Irish Catholics, including some local landowners, went to Europe after the Treaty of Limerick in Autumn 1691. Twenty thousand of the Irish officers and soldiers who had served with King James went to France and joined the French army. There the regiment of Limerick was commanded by Colonel Richard Talbot. James Talbot, third Earl of Tyrconnell, was a Brigadier General in the French army. The regiment of Athlone was commanded by Colonel Sir Maurice Eustace. Simon and Henry Luttrell and Patrick Sarsfield were Colonels.

The Protestant Prince William of Orange became King William III of England. In 1692 King Louis XIV of France and King James II of England contemplated an invasion of England. In May 1692 a battle at sea took place at Cap de la Hogue. This was followed by many other battles. At the battle of Landen, Patrick Sarsfield, first Earl of Lucan, was killed on July 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1693. The war continued until 1697 when William III was acknowledged as King of England. He had many laws against Catholics passed.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Penal Laws**

In 1697 an Act was passed. It decreed that all popish archbishops, bishops, vicars general, deans, Jesuits, monks, friars, and all other regular popish parish clergy and all papists exercising ecclesiastical jurisdiction shall depart out of this kingdom before May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1698. Any Catholic clergy remaining would be imprisoned pending transportation. Any person who helped to evade the Act would be fined £20 the first time and by the third time would be deprived of all their goods and lands.

### **Queen Anne**

In March 1702 King William died following a fall from his horse. William's sister in law, Anne (daughter of the Catholic King James II) succeeded him as Queen Anne. Some laws were relaxed. In 1704 diocesan priests had to register with the government. Then they were allowed to say Mass and administer the Sacraments. Catholic chapels were allowed. The theory was that all registered priests would die out in due course and that in time Catholicism would die out for want of priests as no new priests would be allowed to enter the country.

By 1700 all of Queen Anne's children had died. It seemed that descendant of King Charles I might seek to succeed Queen Anne. That would mean a Catholic monarch. So, parliament chose as Anne's heir a German Protestant, the great grandson of King James I, who became King George I and from who the present British royal family are descended.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Rev. William Brett**

In 1697 Fr. William Brett was Parish Priest of Kill, Newcastle, Rathcoole and Saggart. His curate was Fr. Patrick Duffy.

### **Rev. James O'Toole**

James O'Toole of Co. Wicklow went to France about 1710 to study for the priesthood. France and England were still at war and O'Toole joined the French army as captain. After a very heavy battle he assisted an English officer who had been wounded in battle. That man was the first Early Fitzwilliam, a friend of King George I. As he recovered, he invited O'Toole to visit him in England so that he might repay his kindness.

After ordination Fr. O'Toole was on his way back to Ireland and called on Fitzwilliam in London. He was well received and invited to meet King George I. Fitzwilliam told the King that he owed his life to Fr. O'Toole. The King granted Fr. O'Toole's request that he be allowed to perform his priestly duties and to say Mass in public. Fr. O'Toole returned to Ireland.

### **Saggart**

Fr. O'Toole was appointed Parish Priest of Saggart. He opened a chapel there around 1730. One Sunday morning he arrived to say Mass but found his Church locked. A local magistrate had decided to test the validity of Fr. O'Toole's authority to say Mass publicly. Fr. O'Toole said Mass in the open air. Then he returned to his dwelling and put on his French officer's uniform. Accompanied by a blacksmith, he went to the magistrate's house where they broke down the door and eventually came across the magistrate hiding in a bedroom closet. From that day



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

on Fr. O'Toole continued to say Mass at Saggart and to administer the Sacraments of the church until his death in 1769.

### **Rev. Simon Barlow**

In Saggart graveyard lies a flat slab stone marking the grave of Fr. Barlow – *Here lieth the body of the Rev. Simon Barlow Roman Catholic pastor of the United parishes of Saggart, Rathcoole and Newcastle; who departed his life on the 25<sup>th</sup> day of September, 1794 aged 76 years. In the vigour of youth, he renounced the world and its prospects, to embrace the rigour and severity of the clerical state; during a period of 32 years he edified the flock committed to his care; by his punctual discharge of every Christian and social duty.*

*To a primitive simplicity of manners, he joined the most solid strength and penetration of mind. Charitable without ostentation and always feeling for the distresses of his people, he carried with him to the grave no other riches than those of their tears and affections.*

*Requiescat in pace.*

### **Rev. James Harold**

#### **Rev. Laurence Byrne 1798 – 1812**

When Fr. Byrne arrived in the parish, he found a parish reeling under the shock of Fr. Harold's arrest. The priest's home at Rathcoole had been burned to the ground. The Act of Union was discussed. Soon it was learned that the Borough of Newcastle would no longer send elected representatives to parliament and furthermore the parliament would in future be in London. The much longed for Catholic Emancipation did not

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

happen. Subversion continued. In 1803 Rathcoole was again stunned with the execution of Felix Rourke.

### **Rev. Andrew Hart 1812 – 1815**

Rev. Andrew Hart was the first Maynooth educated priest in the parish. St. Patrick's College, Maynooth, was founded in 1795. He purchased .5 acre for a church at Saggart. Fr. Hart died in 1815 aged 30. A monument in his memory is in Saggart church.

In the following list + denotes he died in the parish:

### **1815 – 183 Rev. Michael O'Toole    To Blessington**

He was associated with the Trinitarian Orphan Society in Saggart.

### **1823 – 1832 Rev. James Campbell    To James Street**

He sent a report on the Parish to the Archbishop in 1830 which stated that Saggart was united to the parishes of Rathcoole, Newcastle and a few townlands of Tallaght. The parish of Saggart is dedicated to St. Mosacre. There were two chapels in the parish – one in the village of Saggart, with the parochial house, the other in Newcastle.

Mass times in Saggart were Winter 9 a.m. and noon, and in Summer 8 a.m. and noon. On Sundays, catechism was taught in the chapel after Mass.

### **1832 – 1853 Rev. John Dunne    + 1853**

About fifteen years after he arrived in the parish, Fr. Dunne was ready to proceed with the building of the magnificent church at Saggart.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Saggart Church 1849**

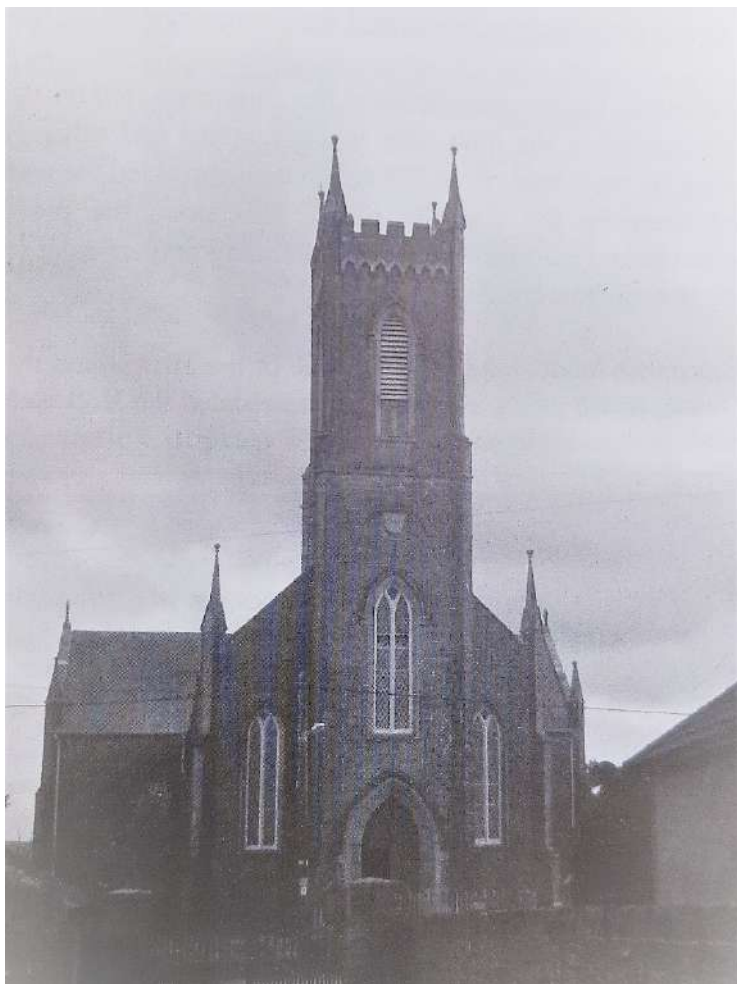
The Freeman's Journal of August 20<sup>th</sup>, 1849 gave the following account:

Solemn Dedication of the new Catholic church of the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary at Saggart. Amongst the most beautiful structures which have been raised within the last few years in the metropolitan diocese to the honour and glory of God, there are but a few which can surpass the recently erected edifice at Saggart which has been in progress of building since 1847.

A large and respectable assemblage of the citizens of Dublin and the gentry and inhabitants of the parishes of Saggart and Newcastle attended to witness the solemn service of the Dedication of the new Chapel, from the altar of which in future, they will hear the words of Redemption and Peace propounded.

The church has been built on a site at once striking and picturesque. The aisle is beautifully lit by windows at either side and at the north is placed a neat gallery for the choir. The style of architecture is purely pointed Gothic such as may be seen in the churches of the Middle ages.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Saggart Church

As early as 10 o'clock yesterday morning, numbers of respectable citizens had collected at the chapel and the surrounding district also contributed well to the assemblage. At

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

11 o'clock the sacred edifice was crowded as His Grace, the Archbishop of Dublin, Dr. Murray, robed in full pontifical, commenced the ceremony.

The procession having encompassed the church entered by the aisle door, proceeded to the high altar where litanies and other prayers were sung by the whole choir. His Grace then sprinkled the walls etc, as laid down in the Catholic ritual. This done, the procession assembled before the altar where the concluding prayers were recited, and the benediction given.

His Grace then knelt at the left-hand side of the altar, which the Rev. Mr. Dunned, parish priest, ascended and celebrated the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, assisted by the clergy.

### **Confirmations**

After mass, His Grace, still attired in his robes, ascended the altar, the clergy kneeling around, when a most gratifying spectacle was presented to the congregation: Upwards of two hundred female children, all dressed in white were presented to the Archbishop for Confirmation. Afterwards over 400 boys were also confirmed. His Grace the Archbishop concluded by giving his Solemn Benediction to all present and thus ended one of the most solemn and interesting religious ceremonies that we have witnessed for some time.

1853 – 1873 Rev. Christopher Burke      +1873

1873 – 1876 Rev. Thomas McCormack      To Donnybrook

1876 – 1884 Rev. Michael Barry      +1884

He was involved in the building of National Schools.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

1884 – 1887 Rev. James Hunt	To Maynooth
1887 – 1897 Rev. Michael Walsh	+1896
1896 – 1910 Rev. Richard Duggan	To Dundrum
1910 – 1915 Rev. Walter Hurley	+1915
1915 – 1916 Rev. John Healy	To Terenure
1916 – 1926 Rev. Charles O'Carroll	To Blanchardstown
1926 – 1929 Rev. John Sheehan	To Terenure
1929 – 1947 Rev. Louis Ryan	+1947
1948 – 1956 Rev. John Larkin	+1956
1956 – 1961 Rev. Bernard Brady	To Larkhill
1961 – 1970 Rev. James Leahy	+1970
1970 – 1984 Rev. Robert Walsh	+1988
1984 –	Rev. Laurence O'Sullivan

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### Eucharistic Congress 1932 – Rathcoole National School



Back row: Massie O'Haire, Babs Quinn, Rose Hannon (McMahon), Kathleen Mansfield (McNally), Eileen Kelly (Murphy), Nellie Harte (Coogan), Mrs. Mary Lennon (Teacher).

Front row: Una Grey (McEntee), Bridie Smyth (Murphy), Annie Timmins (McMahon), May Murphy, Maureen Quinn, Annie Reilly (Nolan), Maggie Kavanagh (Timmins), May Timmins (Keogh).

### Rathcoole Church

Rev. Robert Walsh came to Saggart in 1970. The population of Rathcoole had grown rapidly in the previous five years. A church building fund was organised throughout the whole parish. Many functions were organised. Ladies had a bring & buy book sale in the old library every Sunday. Local people held meetings in the prefab church. The parish needed a new church and many people helped to raise the necessary funds. By 1983 the fund stood at £100,000.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **A Wooden Church**

In the meantime, some church accommodation was badly needed in Rathcoole. A site with a builder's suite of offices was bought and converted at a cost of £12,000. That prefab church at the Main Street entrance to Forest Hills was used from 1973 – 1988. In 1974, Newcastle, until then a part of Saggart parish, was set up as a parish on its own. A Mass centre was opened in Brittas. Meanwhile, the site of the provision of a new church was sought. Hayden's field, which went from Main Street to the dual carriageway, was bought for £5,000. The Community Council and the Church shared the £12,000 cost of the new roadway into the church and hall.

### **Holy Family Church**

The main considerations set out for the 500-person church were that it should be simple and appropriate for its site and function. The first sod for the church was turned on Easter Sunday April 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1988. A month later Archbishop Desmond Connell blessed and laid the foundation stone. Five months later on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 1988 he dedicated the church to the Holy Family. The parish clergy were Fr. Laurence O'Sullivan, Fr. Michael Ward (later at Foxrock – died 1997), Fr. Patrick Monaghan (later at Rathfarnham), Fr. Eamonn Cotter (a native of Celbridge and later Parish Priest at Esker, who had been at Rathcoole, joined the parish clergy as celebrants of the Dedication Mass. The choir directors were Grace Molloy, John Rogers and Enda Smith. The commentator was Helen O'Keefe, a Presentation Sister who made her final vows at the prefab church. She made the Stations of the Cross for the church. In July 1998 Rev. Colm O'Siochru, curate, transferred to Narraghmore, Co. Kildare.



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Holy Family Church, Rathcoole

### **Bishop**

Bishop Eamonn Walsh (a native of Celbridge), who came in the early 1990's, was the first auxiliary bishop of Dublin to live in the parish.

### **Presentation Sisters**

The Presentation Sisters were appointed Trustees of the Community School in 1981. They lived at Stoney Lane and later at Hillview. Sr. Paula Farrelly was Parish Sister.

## **Vicars of Rathcoole**

### **1714 – 1737 Rev. Edward Drury**

The present Church of Ireland was built in his time. The money came from private subscription and from the rent for the church land. The lands were leased to Jonathan Ponder for £50. He built an inn on part of the land. The church replaced an earlier building which Archbishop Narcissus Marsh visited in 1694. He founded the first public library in Dublin in 1701 – it is still known as Marsh's library.

### **1737 – 1756 Rev. Roger Ford**

Mercer School opened.

### **1756 – 1770 Rev. George Williams**

In 1762 a gallery for the Mercer pupils use was made in the church. The church holds 200 persons.

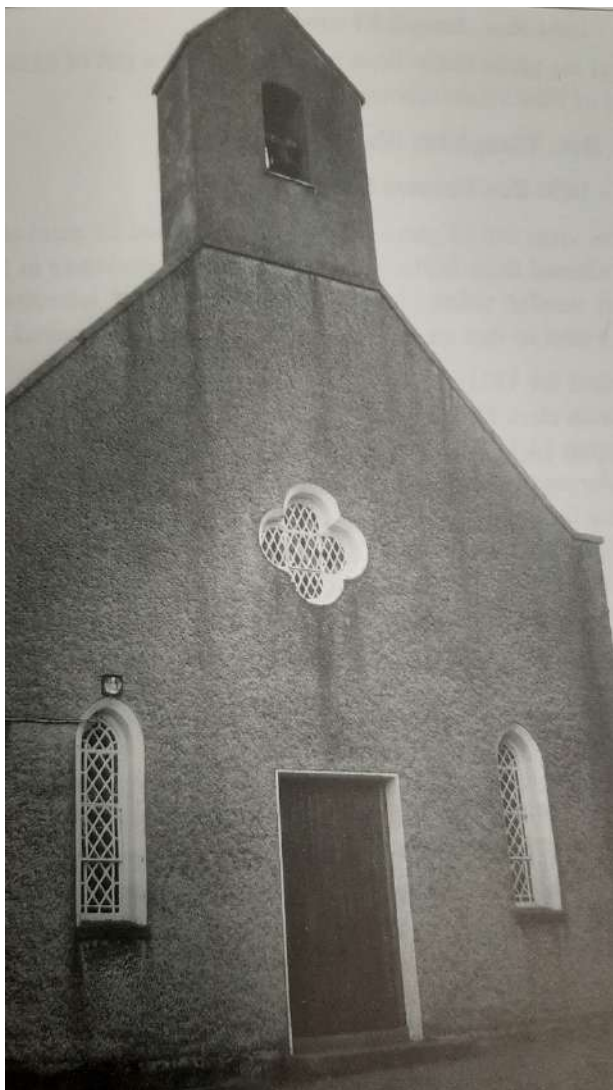
### **1770 – 1771 Rev. William Blatchford**

### **1771 – 1804 Rev. Joseph Elwood**

He had the glebe house built in 1792. He received a gift of £138 from the Board of First Trust towards it.

### **1806 Rev. Theophilus Blakency**

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Church of Ireland, Rathcoole.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **1806 – 1856 Rev. Thomas Hayden**

He was a vicar for 50 years. The glebe comprised 15 acres of which 6 were allotted from Rathcoole Common on its enclosure in 1818. The church needed refurbishment. John Kennedy of Johnstown House gave a loan so that the church could be slated and repaired.

Accounts for 1831:

To parish clerk £9/3/4 a year.

To sexton £4/11/8 a year.

Laundering of the church linen cost 10/-.

Coffins for the poor £1/6/8.

In 1836 the church was repaired with a grant of £111 from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

### **1856 – 1888 Rev. William Johnson Thornhill**

He was the last vicar to live in the old glebe (health centre). Canon Thornhill lived in the rectory until his death in 1888.

### **1888 – 1953 Rev William Francis Shea**

He was the last rector to live at the glebe. The new rectory was built behind the glebe. Rathcoole had only three vicars between 1806 and 1953 – a period of nearly 150 years.

### **1952 – 1964 Rev. Herbert John Victor Packham**

In 1964 he moved to Harold's Cross parish. Then Rathcoole and Newcastle united with Clondalkin with Canon F.R. Alexander as Rector. Rev. Packham died on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 1987.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### Sources:

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O'Toole, P.L. *History of the Clan of O'Toole and other Leinster Septs*, 1890.

## Chapter X

After the Act of Union in 1800 a combination of private charity and grants from the Grand Juries produced a network of local medical services. The people of the area went to the dispensary at Newcastle which opened in 1811. There was rarely any need for medical assistance at births as the local midwives were considered to be 'a tolerably well-educated set of women.' The villages had no medical service of their own until 1830.

The epidemic of typhus in 1817 – 19 followed a very wet year in 1816 when people failed to harvest their crops. Hygiene standards were very poor and caused an outbreak of typhus. It was widespread by 1818. Temporary fever hospitals were opened and in 1819 Celbridge Fever Hospital opened. Sick people were usually cared for at home and only when there was the possibility of a successful result were people taken to hospital.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Saggart Orphanage**

An orphan society attached to St. Michael's and St. John's Church in Lr. Exchange St. had an orphanage for 56 boys and 29 girls beside Saggart Chapel. Its Patron was Lord Cloncurry of Newcastle Lyons. It was founded in August 1796 by Rev. Dr. Betagh S.J. In 1799 Fr. Betagh was appointed Parish Priest. The orphanage was financed by a special collection, at his parish chapel, St. Michael's and St. John's every Sunday. It was known as the Trinitarian Orphan Society.

Many children were orphaned as a result of epidemics of typhus in Dublin city. There was no state funding for them. Many of the Catholic churches had orphan societies. The children were educated, supported and apprenticed. The Board of Health was formed in 1820. The role of the church in providing directly for orphans lessened.

Fr. Betagh was appointed Vicar General by Archbishop John Thomas Troy in 1801 and he died in 1811. The orphanage was absorbed into the church's general parochial activities. In 1815 the new Catholic church was built in Lr. Exchange St. in the Gothic style. The church was deconsecrated a decade ago. Some seats from the church were purchased for Saggart church.

### **Newcastle Dispensary**

Dispensaries were very effective and alleviated a lot of suffering in their immediate areas. Their records show that when epidemics occurred, they provided much needed relief from qualified personnel. Charles Madden the apothecary lived in Celbridge. He rode to Newcastle dispensary on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings. About 18,000 outpatient visits

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

to the dispensary were looked after each year. The dispensary provided clothes, fuel and food to needy persons. Smallpox vaccination was not given as there were no outbreaks of smallpox for a number of years.

### **Celbridge Fever Hospital**

The service was funded by 'subscribers' who were the local landlords and the factory owners and by a grant from the Co. Dublin Grand Jury for patients from this area. The Grand Jury grant matched the voluntary subscriptions. The management committee met weekly when there were usually 3 – 5 members present. Those who subscribed to the hospital had many duties. The visiting governors were appointed from among them. The doctor was paid from local funds, so he was appointed by being elected to the post by them. Those who could afford to pay were charged 10/6 and were admitted only under the same criteria as anyone else. The service was available free to the poor who had to get a note for admission from a subscriber except in the most urgent cases.

The hospital was a fine three-storey building, on an acre site, with accommodation for 25 persons. It served an area about 10 miles around Celbridge that is Clane, Clondalkin, Dunboyne, Kilcock, Leixlip, Lucan, Maynooth, Newcastle, Rathcoole and Saggart.

The doctor attended on Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings for two hours each time. He was an all-round man – surgeon, dentist, gynaecologist and chemist. In the early years of the hospital some operations were done but they ceased. Accident cases such as fractures were attended to on an



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

outpatient basis. The only surgical instrument he had was for the extraction of teeth.

A steward and his wife – the matron – and one nurse, were also employed. The convalescing patients maintained the hospital. 152 patients were admitted in 1834. Visitors were admitted only when the patient was convalescing and then only with the consent of the subscribers. Clergy of all denominations were welcome.

### Accounts 1830's

	Receipts	Expenditure	
1830	£431/8/6	£360/9/9	
1831	£312/0/4	£329/15/11	
1832	£368/15/1	£356/13/7	
Expenditure	1830	1831	1832
Salaries	£222/14/10	£220/14/2	£220/15/4

The doctor was paid £90/6/2 a year. The apothecary was paid the same, but he was allowed 'travel expenses' as he was paid an extra allowance for his horse. The steward and matron had a combined pay of £40 a year. A second nurse (at 1/- a day) was employed temporarily when there were more than eight patients.

Expenditure	1830	1831	1832
Provisions	£35/8/0	£26/6/9	£21/4/7

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

The provisions included spirits, beer, wine, tea, sugar and milk. Milk was contracted at 1.75d a quart. All the rest of the provisions were bought locally as needed.

Medicines	£28/8/10	£26/15/8	£41/7/10
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The only medicines were quinine and morphia. Leeches were used even though they were considered expensive and were not used at all at Naas hospital.

Rent/Repairs	£28/13/10	£15/3/2	£30/9/2
Firing	£17/0/7	£14/13/3	£29/15/11
Contingency	£28/3/7	£27/2/9	£29/15/11

Cholera came to Dublin in 183. It was a much-dreaded disease. Cholera patients were admitted but kept isolated. Very often the patient died within twelve hours of contracting the disease.

### **Celbridge Union**

In 1838 the Poor Law Relief Act was passed. Ireland was divided into unions. It was hoped that every person would be within a ten mile walk of a workhouse. A market town was the centre of the Union. Celbridge already had a hospital so it was decided to set up the Celbridge Union. The Union was managed by a Board of Guardians who were elected by the local rate payers. Among the guardians were members of the Kennedy family of Rathcoole. They decided to levy and collect rates for the relief of the poor and for the upkeep of the fever hospital. A workhouse was also built.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Famine Years**

In Autumn 1845 potato disease was reported in the area. It spread. The government put measures in place to alleviate the worst effects of the famine. The potato crop was partially destroyed again in 1846 – 8. There was a general good understanding between local landlords and people. The landlords helped by providing work for all who needed it, so the district was exempted from the worst depression. No government aid was applied for, and no road works were undertaken as a means of helping the people.

Those who were ill or unable to work were admitted to Celbridge Workhouse. In March 1848 there were nearly 400 persons in the workhouse and about 25 in the fever hospital. The Union had no problems in meeting its liabilities. It was described as being the richest Union in Ireland.

A small number of people emigrated to America. The ship fare from Dublin was £7 and the price included two provisions for the six or seven-week voyage.

### **Celbridge Workhouse 1881**

In 1881 there was an average of 40 patients in Celbridge Infirmary, 1 in the fever ward and 3 males and 5 females in the wards for mentally ill. They were cared for by a paid ward master, three paid nurses and ten unpaid pauper assistants.

### **Rathcoole Dispensary**

With the previously mentioned method of funding dispensaries it was very difficult to start a dispensary where the local landlords, or most of them, were absentees. Eventually

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Rathcoole dispensary was established in the early 1830's. The same criteria, as for hospital admissions, were put in place to avail of the dispensary services. The subscribers were inundated with requests for dispensary notes, so they appointed local persons to issue them. Miss Sheil was dispensary warden for many years. The dispensary doctors over the following 130 years were Dr. Martin O'Kelly, Dr. John O'Riordan and Dr. Josephine Clarke.

Part of the building at Rathcoole is still used for medical services. The district nurses work from there with clinics for mothers and children. Eileen Browne from Wexford who was the public health nurse for many years died in 1997.

### **Day Care Centre**

On March 15<sup>th</sup>, 1981 the Four Districts Day Care Centre clients and committee welcomed Dr. Patrick Hillery, President of Ireland, to officially open the centre. He planted a tree to commemorate the opening. The spade used at the planting is preserved with a plaque in honour of the occasion.

The centre was established by a group of interested people in the community, in consultation with the Eastern Health Board. It provided a place where the senior citizens of Brittas, Newcastle, Rathcoole and Saggart met socially in pleasant surroundings. The centre was managed by a committee, elected at the annual general meeting who met, monthly. A corps of volunteers was supervised by Vera McCormack.

### **Fund Raising**

One of the major expenses of the centre was the provision of transport. In the early 1990's the people of the district

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

subscribed to the purchase of a custom fitted ambulance. Other fundraising activities were the annual fundraising garden fete each June. A Lord Mayor of Rathcoole campaign was popular – the person who raised most money towards the centre was proclaimed Lord Mayor for a year. A local telephone directory was also published.

### **Day to Day**

The centre opened five days a week. A cheerful fire in the big living room, tea and biscuits awaited the clients. Newspapers were handed-out, needlework and card games began while on fine days a spot of gardening was done. A physiotherapist was available on Tuesdays and Fridays. Lunch was followed by the Rosary for those who wished to pray. Bingo and T.V. programmes filled the rest of the afternoon. The Christmas party for clients and helpers was catered for by Michael Ganly of Cathal Brugha Catering College, who lived at Beechwood Lawns.

### **Outings**

Outings were a regular feature at the centre. The group was received by the President of Ireland, Mrs. Mary Robinson, at Áras An Uachtaráin in the Phoenix Park, Kilkenny Castle, Newbridge House, Cork and Blarney Castle were visited. Shopping trips and an appearance on a T.V. show at Montrose – Live at Three – were all part of the way the district showed its appreciation of its seniors.

### **Retreat**

The spiritual side was catered for with an annual visit to Knock Shrine in Co. Mayo and a day retreat at the Augustinian Retreat

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

House at Orlagh in the Dublin hills. From one famous old house to another – Rathcoole Glebe, which housed the Day Care Centre was built in 1792 in the same decade as Orlagh. A chapel at Orlagh was formerly the banqueting hall in which Daniel O’Connell was lavishly entertained.

### **Crooksling Hospital**

It was established as a sanatorium for persons with tuberculosis. With the decline in that disease the hospital became a facility for older persons.

### **Tallaght Hospital**

For many years the people wanted a hospital sited on the south west side of Dublin city to cater for the rapidly expanding population. It was to replace the Meath, Adelaide and the National Children’s Hospital at Harcourt Street. A site was got at Tallaght and building began. The hospital, with nearly 600 beds and a staff of 1800, opened in June 1998. Medical care had come a long way since the formation of Celbridge Fever Hospital 180 years previously.

### **Sources:**

*Catholic Directory*, 1821.

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Leinster Express. *The Famine in County Kildare*, vol. 1 and vol. 5.

O’Neill, Timothy P. *Fever and Public Health in pre-Famine Ireland*, *J.R.S.A.I.* vol. 103, Dublin, 1973.

*Return of Average Numbers in Union Workhouses in Ireland, 1879 -81*, H.C. 1881 LXXIX (433).

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Day Care Centre

## Chapter XI

This parish remained a farming community. The paper mills was the only big industry. The parish had its own blacksmiths, butchers, dressmakers, innkeepers, shopkeepers, thatchers, tailors and weavers. Other occupations were doctor, clergy, police, solicitor and teachers.

### Nineteenth century farming

#### Census 1831

Uppercross Barony	Houses	Persons
Rathcoole parish	140	884
Rathcoole Town	105	602
Newcastle Barony		
Rathcoole parish	35	238
Saggart	210	1405
Saggart village	42	266



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

<i>Family Occupations</i>	Agriculture	Trade/Handcrafts	Other
Rathcoole parish	218	34	41
Saggart parish	190	45	30

<i>Agriculture</i>	Occupiers Employing Labour	Occupiers not employing	Labourers
Rathcoole parish	13	60	222
Saggart	17	90	194

For the labourers, land work was available in spring and autumn. Their daily wages were 1/- a day without food and 6d a day with food. During the other months some of them went to England for work.

### **Farming 1812**

#### **Crops**

Hay: Tramcocks were ranged on the headridge of the field. The hay was drawn in as soon as possible.

Spring wheat: One part of the crop was sewn late in March, the remainder late in April upon potato ground. The late spring sewing as very advantageous.

Different green crops occupied the soil during the winter.

When the scotch plough with two horses was introduced it could do as much work as 20 men.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Manure: The dung of the stables and farmyard. Some land was reclaimed with 40-50 barrels of lime to the acre. They ploughed up the lea in the summer, and worked down the sod by ploughing, harrowing and by a half-burning. The lime was then put upon the fallow and let die for the winter.

### **Animals**

Cattle: The main breeds of cattle were Longhorns, Shorthorns, Herefords and Devons. The Devons were regarded as oxen for work.

Sheep: The mountain ewes were crossed with Leicesters or South Downs, which produced a larger, fatter, later lamb. There was a big trade in the export of sheep mainly to Liverpool. In 1801 about six thousand were exported. That increased to over 100,000 thirty years later and trebled in the years of the famine.

Pigs: Berkshires and Leicesters were the main breed.

Horses were bred in the western counties, sold as foals to this area and then sold on again after a few years work. All farm work was done by horses.

### **Fairs**

The first patent for Saggart fair was given to Thomas Denn on November 27<sup>th</sup>, 1682. The patent stated that fairs could be held on the Wednesday after Trinity Sunday, at Michaelmas on September 28<sup>th</sup>, and the day after that, at feasts of St. Simon and St. Jude October 27<sup>th</sup> and the day after. Thursday was market day. In 1852 fairs were held on April 8<sup>th</sup>, October 10<sup>th</sup>, November 8<sup>th</sup> and Thursday after Trinity Sunday.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### Enclosure of Commons

In 1816 an inquiry began into the enclosing of the parish common lands. John Byrne, King's Counsel, of Merrion Square in Dublin and William Gerard Baggot of Castle Baggot were appointed Commissioners for dividing, allotting and enclosing the common. At least ten days before each meeting, notices of their meetings were put up on the wall of Saggart church (then a ruin) and inserted in the newspapers. The clerk to the commissioners could be paid up to a guinea a day. Each person claiming commonage rights had to submit that claim in writing. By 1818 the commons were divided, allotted and enclosed.

### Tolls

The tolls demanded at Saggart fairs were as follows:

		s.	d.
Oxen or cows	three years old	3	each
ditto	two years old	2	do.
Calves		1	do.
Lambs		.5	do.
Pigs		1	do.
Horses		6.5	do.
Tents	1	0	do.
Standings		4	do.
Friezes per score cards		6	do.
Timber per load		6	do.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### Naas Tolls

In 1812 The Corporation of Naas brought in the following tolls for persons going to Naas fair:

A horse      2d.      A sheep      1d.      A lamb      1d.

Full carts of turf were exempt from tolls.

Sheep came from west of the Shannon and cattle came from Cork, Kerry and Limerick to Naas fair.

### Farmers in 1871

The main farmers in 1871 were John Archbold, Greenogue (161 ac.), Patrick Connor, Collegelands (131 ac.), Philip Grierson, Baldonnel (750 ac.), James Kelly, Casltebagot (433 ac.), Sir Charles Kennedy, Johnstown (1447 ac.), Leonard Kilbell, Airfield (260 ac.), Peter R. Skerrett, Athgoe (969 ac.), John J. Verschoyle, Saggart (990 ac.), Richard Walsh, Kingswood (218 ac.)

Other farmers on that list were:

Brittas: Edward Dowling, Michael Dowling, Patrick Healy.

Brownsbarn: John Fitzsimons.

Carrigeen: Myles Hollywood.

Collegelands: Patrick Connor, John McDonnell.

Crocknadrinagh: Esther Boulger, Richard Doyle, Patrick Kelly, Mary Keogh, James Nolan.

Crookslings: Terence Devitt, William Gregory.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Glenaraneen: Margaret Dowling, Andrew, Catherine,  
Christopher Hanlon, James Healy, John Nolan.

Greenogue: James Carthy.

Raheen: Peter Quinn.

Rathcoole: Matthew Bermingham, James Murpy, Trustees of  
lands of Rathcoole church, James Sheil, John Walsh.

Redgap: Mary Greene, Christopher Hollywood, William Keogh,  
William Ryan, Patrick Walsh.

Slievethoul: John Connor, Henry Coyne, Laurence Dunne,  
Winifred Higgins, Michael and Patrick James, Catherine  
McLoughlin, Patrick Mulread.

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## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

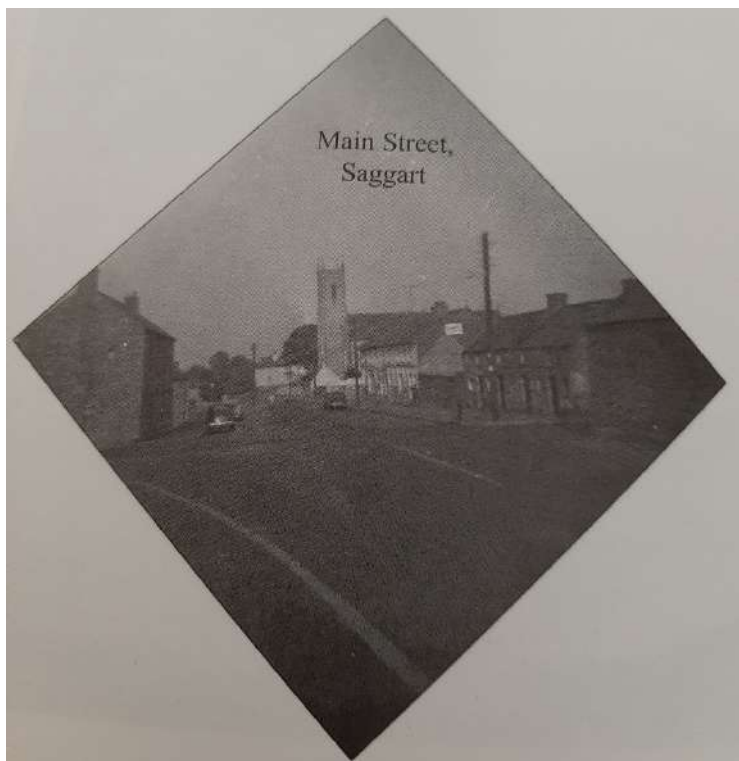


Greenogue Mill



Jo Jo Fitzgerald and friends at Main Street, Saggart.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



### Chapter XII

Swiftbrook paper mill closure in 1968 brought to an end a 200-year-old part of Saggart village life – a village alive with the crowds of workers making their way to and from the mill. They came on foot and by bicycle from as far away as Blessington to work a six-day week at the mill. The mill was a very important part of working and social life. The McDonnell family, who owned the mill for over a hundred years, were benefactors to the local church. The workers were involved in all local events and brought much trade to the businesses. Most families in the area had some contact with the mill. They experienced a feeling of loss when the mill closed as some families had worked at the mill for generations. Closure also signalled the end of paper manufacturing in Ireland.

#### **Seventeenth century**

Most paper was imported from France up to the early seventeenth century. Britain was at war with France and Spain, so the importation of goods became difficult. Johathan Swift found it impossible to ignore the poverty of the Irish people, which he claimed, was caused by the restrictions placed on Irish Trade by the English parliament. Swift was an advocate of the



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Irish manufacturing industry – Ireland had the materials needed for the manufacture of paper – so it should be made here. The new turnpike Dublin/Kilcullen had opened. Mill Road was just off the turnpike and that made Saggart more accessible.

Henry Joe McCracken, of 1798 fame, was the grandson of Francis Joy – the leading paper mill owner from Belfast. In 1745 his father, Robert, came to Dublin for the funeral of Dean Swift. He visited Mr. Slator and his famous paper mill at Clondalkin. In 1760 Thomas Slator rented eleven acres of land, from Dean Swift's estate, for the erection of a paper mill at Saggart. The mill was constructed from local stone. Tradition has it that part of the mill was originally a corn mill.

### **Swiftbrook**

Paper making was a very water intensive industry, so very elaborate and costly arrangements had to be made to secure a good and plentiful supply of water. Swiftbrook mill is at the river Camac. The Camac, as it winded its way, was called by the area through which it passed. The name of the mill was taken from the brook which came from Brittas, down through the well wooded Slade, and across lands owned by St. Patrick's Cathedral. Dean Johnathan Swift was Dean at the Cathedral. The name Swiftbrook came from these associations.

By careful engineering a mill race was constructed which carried water from a distance to the ponds. The mill race was probably cut about 1760. It was made to increase the waterpower of the Camac. Besides the sinking of the channel the work involved the making of a weir across the Camac, with provision of a sluice in the townland of Aghfarrell. The object of these was to secure a good supply of water for the dry season. At

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Glenaraneen, McDonnell had 64 acres of land where he made mill ponds with a small area of woodland. The reservoirs were deep, and they had to be banked at either end with great sloping stone embankments about thirty feet in height. Near the mill there were six small filtering ponds where the water was thoroughly cleaned and purified. The excellent colour of the white paper was due to the fact that the water used was so very clean and pure.

### Swiftbrook Paper Mills



Bridie Murphy, Madge Fitzgerald, Kitty McDermott, Ann Hudson, Marie Gray, Theresa Seary, Jean Reilly.

Back row: Peggy McDermott and Ann Murphy on Mick Kelly's motorbike.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Paddy Murphy and Miley Crofton were working at the mill race.

### **Paper Making**

The paper was made from rags. Bags were distributed to each house from the Belfast mills so that rags could be collected for the mill. There is no record of such a collection in this area. Early every morning a string of carts, heavily laden with paper, left the mills on their way to Dublin. The same carts appeared at the mill each evening laden with huge sacks filled with rags. Much of the material was off cuts from clothing factories. All loads going out and coming in were carefully checked at the weighing house.

The rags were sorted in the rag mill. The best linen rags alone were used. Esparto was also used to give strength and toughness to the paper. The rag house was a three-storeyed

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

building at the lower mill. The ground floor was used for the uncleaned rags – here the women sat at benches and special precautions were taken to prevent the rising of dust; the middle storey was used for sorting rags, and the upper loft for storing the clean rags. In the days when paper was made by hand the loft drying of the sheets was carried on in this building.

### **Joseph McDermott**

The bank of Ireland was founded in 1783. Over the next two decades the issue of paper money increased dramatically. In the early 1790's Joseph McDermott saw a sound business opportunity in the production of high-grade paper suitable for making bank notes. There was a good supply of labour and the pupils of Daniel Brady's school were enabled to take up suitable posts. When he considered all this the mill at Saggart began making paper for paper money. The mill was distinguished in the manufacture of very fine papers as one source put it, 'it was almost equal to the Dutch.' It manufactured most, if not all, of the paper used in the Irish government officers. The government contract was a valuable one.

### **Lower Mill**

The Lower Mill, the original one on Mill road, was refurbished by him in 1795. Before that a lot of the processes were hand done. Then the mill was provided with the most up-to-date machinery.

### **Upper Mill**

Nearly 60 years later, John, son of the founder, expanded the business by building the Upper Mill on Castle Road. He brought in new machinery including a new 50 feet in diameter water

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

powered mill wheel. It was made in Dublin by J. and R. Mallett. A 26-inch water main supplied the wheel with about 18 tonnes of water a minute. Crowds used to come from Dublin and elsewhere to look at it. The mill was mechanised – it incorporated new methods of energy-from-water driven wheels with new pressers and rollers for the paper production.

The method of drying was more elaborate in the new mill. The paper was passed on light open cylinders through a sort of enclosed corridor space, filled with heated air, projected through gratings from beneath. Furthermore, the paper, besides being glazed by addition of a 'size' in its initial stages, received a higher and more perfect finish by being placed and pressed between copper plates. It won prizes at the Dublin exhibition in 1855. 100 people were employed.

### **Saggart Village around 1849**

The McDonnell family lived in a house near the mill. It was a fashionable, long, thatched residence with pleasure grounds and vegetable gardens, and a good-sized lawn in front, bordered by fine trees, under which an avenue led to the front entrance.

Occupiers of McDonnell houses in Saggart village around 1849 were: John Murray, Christopher McCormick, Michael Cummins, Richard Dolan, Archibald Brackenbridge, John Tierney, Thomas Bentley, Francis Sweeney, Elizabeth Bentley, Mary Mack, Daniel Garbally, Archibald Lindley, John Cummins, Lucy Handcock, Daniel Pidgeon and John Nugent.

### **New Owner**

After John's death in 1859 the mills continued until they were bought in 1870 by John Girdwood Drury. They still traded

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

under the old name of Messrs J.M. McDonnell and Co. Ltd. The paper was of the highest quality under both the McDonnells and the Drurys. It won prizes in 1882 and a Liverpool in 1887.

The Drurys paid £5,000 for a Corliss steam-engine, with a large boiler to supply it. The 100-Kilowatt Belliss- Peebles steam set was run in parallel with a water wheel driven dynamo in the Lower Mill. After 1870 the 100 feet high chimney, 6-8 feet in diameter, could be seen for miles around billowing smoke high into the air. The calendar room had an Umpherston type machine. As time went on the machinery from the Lower Mill was transferred to the Upper Mill to reduce costs. Lighting was by a Hornsby suction gas engine.

### **More Paper Needed**

With the increase in literacy the demand for paper continued to grow. The proportion of people over 5 years old who claimed that they could read increased from 47% in 1841 to 90% in 1911. Letter writing was very common in the days before the widespread use of the telephone. Emigration was one of the main causes of the increased correspondence. All this correspondence created a need for stamps and that paper, too, was made at Saggart. The number of newspapers and magazines also increased. Paper for banking purposes continued to be made; the Irish Sweepstake tickets increased the demand for good quality paper. The principal lines were the best sort of ledger papers.

Many years later the mill acquired electricity for its machines and lighting. In 1905 a new beater house was erected. Both beaters and breakers were run by electric motors. John Kelly and Matthew Mulvey were two of the beater men. In the

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Aerial picture of Swiftbrook Mills, c. 1935.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

1930's 400 people worked there. The trademarks Ancient Irish Vellum and Erin were well known and respected. The mill was an integral part of Saggart life. It had its own forge, latch house, gas house and carpenter's shop.

### **Church Plaque**

A plaque in the porch of Saggart Church commemorated 'the deceased members of the McDonnells family who were largely concerned with the building of this church. They erected the Saggart paper mills towards the close of the eighteenth century and carried them on for nearly a hundred years. Other branches of the family owned and worked the paper mills at Templeogue, Tallaght and Clondalkin. This memorial was erected by the only surviving member of the Saggart family, Rev. Joseph McDonnell, S.J., November 1927.'

During the Second World War Mr. R. Horsburgh, manager of the mill had air raid shelters prepared. They were of a very high quality and fortunately they were never needed. In 1944 the directors of the mill presented a pennant for the Local Defence Force. Thomas Watkins was district leader of the Baldonnel district of the Local Defence Forces, 1940-46. The pennant was blessed in Harris' field by Rev. J.H. Daly C.C., Saggart. He was accompanied by Rev. L. Ryan, P.P. and Rev. S. Byrne C.C. Present were Rev. Mr. Shea, Rector; Hubbard Clarke, chairman of the mill and Felix Lennon, P.C. That evening a marquee dance was held with the Selma Follies and vocalist Johnny Keyes. The Atlantic Beach Band played for the rest of the week's dances.



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Thomas Watkins with the Local Defence Forces at Lucan.

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## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Castle Road ... Jane Fitzgerald with Mill chimney in background



Front row: Mary and Mike Murphy. Back row: Maggie, Paddy  
and Kitty Murphy

### Chapter XIII

Past pupils of the La Touche funded school were Francis and Maria Brady – probably grandchildren of Daniel Brady – thus continuing the family tradition in teaching. They were both employed as teachers at Saggart school when it opened on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 1829. The school was a stone built, white-washed building with a slanted roof. It had about 160 on roll. The patron of the school was Lord Cloncurry and the secretary to the committee was William Hanlon. The Protestant members of the committee were John Kennedy, Patten Smith and Mr. Morgan. The Catholics were John Connery, James McAllister, James Sheil, Thomas Byrne, John Browne, Mr. Fyans and Pat Sherwin. The Parish Priest, Rev. James Campbell was also on the committee. There was no resident Protestant clergyman.

Several Rathcoole names are among them – Kennedy from Johnstown House; Sheil from Rathcoole House – his son was to play a part subsequently in bringing the first National School to Rathcoole. There had been much discussion about bringing a Bill for a system of National Education. It would have to be a system that would be fair to all religious groups.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **National Schools**

In 1831 a Board for National Education was formed. It had complete control on schools erected or placed under its auspices. Its aim was to provide a system of education in which both Catholics and Protestants would be jointly involved. Clergy would give, at appropriate times, religious instruction to members of their own denomination. Schools and teachers already established were to be given the opportunity of being connected with the board.

### **Curriculum**

The basic curriculum was the 3 R's – Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. Other compulsory subjects were Geography, Agriculture and Bookkeeping. There were optional subjects – Latin, Greek, French, Philosophy and Algebra. Agriculture ceased to be a compulsory subject in 1900. A hundred years later in the late twentieth century the curriculum included Irish, English, Mathematics, Geography, History, Music, Art and Physical Education.

### **Results system**

Teachers were partly paid by what was known as the results system. The results system was recommended by the Powis Commission in 1872. Every pupil in a school who had attended on at least 100 days during the school year was examined individually by the inspector and awarded a 1 or 2 pass mark which ranged in value from 1/- for spellings to 5/- for agriculture. A lump sum called the result fee was paid to the teacher annually. The teachers were against the results system from the beginning – particularly as an average attendance of 70

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

was needed before an assistant could be appointed. Attendance at school was not compulsory until 1892.

### **Saggart National School**

Saggart school was the first school in the area to become a National School. Rev. Thomas Hayden, Vicar, and Rev. John Dunne P.P. were the local clergy. The aid granted by the Commissioners for the fitting up of school was £10/5/-. The amount of the local contribution towards building, fitting up and requisites was £5/3/9. The male teacher taught 96 males at a salary of £8 and a female teacher taught 65 females at a salary of £6 p.a. More than fifty years later in 1887 Saggart school was struck off the register and the teacher John Vickers was transferred to Rathcoole. The school reopened. The teachers lived in the upper part. Mr. and Mrs. Monks were the last teachers to live there. They moved out in the 1930's. A new school was built later and in 1973 two prefab classrooms were added.

### **Compulsory Education**

Under the Irish Education Act of 1892 education became compulsory for children between the ages of 6 and 14. However, pupils living more than 2 miles from the nearest school were not obliged to attend. An 11-year-old girl who could do 4<sup>th</sup> class work was not compelled to attend school any longer.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Saggart National School, 1910.

### 1909 Report

Here is an extract from Saggart school report ninety years ago.  
'Much attention is paid to the training of the intelligence of the

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

pupils. Singing may be somewhat softer in tone. The drill exercises may be carried out with greater precision. An additional blackboard, scale map of locality, and map of British Isles needed. The walls of the house need to be re-coloured. The desks provided for the pupils are not quite suitable. Some of the pupils may be more-tidy in person.' In 1905 the inspector was Napoleon Bonaparte Wyse.

### Teachers

*Principals:* - James Keane (1908 – 16), Edward L. Monks (1916 – 1960), Martin Walsh (1960 – 1981), Liam McDermott (1981 -)



Saggart National School.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

*Assistants:* - Mary Agnes Lynch, Helena Mulhare, Nora Murray, Mary Hughes, Kathleen Ryan, Brigid Nash, Mrs. Kathleen Monks, Margaret Kennedy, Elizabeth Mulhare, Annette Lawless (d. 1996), Thomas Duffy, Maire Ni Chionnaith, Eilis Ni Mhaoilchair, Maire Ui Mheachair, Sile Ui Bhainte, Noirin Ni Mhuiris, Seosamh O'Griffin, Tim and Anna McGillacuddy, Michael Francis, Sheila Broderick, Michael O'Koragain, Gearoid Mac Domhnaill, Risteard O'Croinin, Rosa Ni Chinnsealaigh, Michael O'Gallachoir, Maurice King, Stanlai Mac Domhnaill, Risteard I'Teimhneain, Conchuir O'Caisil, Treasa Ni Fhlionn, Nicola Flanagan, Mary McConnalogue (1965 – 1998) and Mary Morris.

### **Rathcoole National School**

In 1857 the postmaster's house in Rathcoole became vacant. It was a neat thatched cottage in good repair. It had an entrance gate leading into a well-planted garden. Thus it served as a residence and schoolhouse. It was decided to start a school there and place it under the National School Board. James Sheil of Sheil House was the main mover towards having a National School and he became the manager of the new school. Eliza Carroll, aged 18, was the first teacher. Julia Reilly and Margaret Carroll were the monitors. Between them they taught 141 pupils but the average attendance in 1861 was 37 pupils. Attendance at school was not compulsory at that time. The were joined a few years later by Annie O'Carroll who had taught at Lucan girls' school for 5 years. Rev. Thornhill (Vicar), Rev. Christopher Burke P.P., Rev. Moloney C.C. were the local clergy. The Catholic clergy funded the school at £7 p.a. The hedge school ceased in the late 1850's.



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Seventeen years after the postmaster's house came into use as a school it had fallen into disrepair. The National Schools Board issued a 12 months warning about the state of the school. On July 20<sup>th</sup>, 1874 it was struck off the Register of National Schools. It became a fee paying or hedge type school. It was taken under the Board again in August 1886.

### **Rathcoole School**

A site was got at the green. It was beside the main road and the forge. One of the trustees of the proposed school was John Jacob of Rathcoole. They got a grant of £306 from the Government. The total expenditure was £459. The wall around it cost £151/6/6.

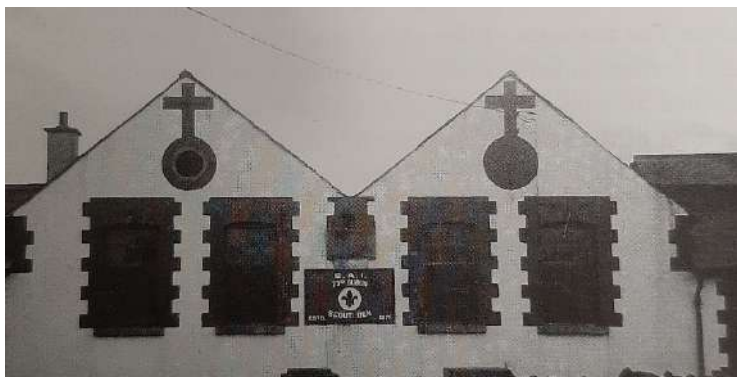
Rathcoole's first purpose built National School opened with a roll of 150 scholars – roughly the same number of pupils it had before being struck off the register. 15 pupils came from Saggart school, 3 from Newcastle school, 3 from Kill school and 28 were never at school before. The manager of the school was Rev. J.J. Hunt P.P. There was some correspondence about a deviation from the standard play for National Schools in that crosses had been formed in black bricks on the front of the school. They are still there. That building was in use as a school up to the 1970's. It later became, and remains, the Scout's Den.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Mr. and Mrs. Dowdall

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Old School, Rathcoole.



Holy Family National School, Rathcoole.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



**Rathcoole School c. 1944**

Back row: Tony Morton, Tom Coffey, Phyllis Jackson, Ann Tyndall, Lil Mansfield, Beatrice Commiskey, Theresa Kavanagh, Betty Cruise, Betty O'Boyle.

Middle row: Bud Fisher, Val Hollowed, John Joe Cruise, Shay Nolan, Dick Morton, John Purcell, Joe Tyndall, Mick Maguire, Jim Mullally, Eddie McGuirke.

Front row: David Mallin, Liam Murphy, Robert Sullivan, Frank Kavanagh, Barney Timmons, Jim Keogh, Kit Mullally.

### **1970's**

In the 1970's much building was done. First a three roomed school was built, then another three rooms were added. The school going population was increasing rapidly and soon the old school and the old library were in use as classrooms. The

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

technical school was reopened as a primary school and some prefab buildings were bought.

When Fr. Robert Walsh was Parish Priest in 1974 a major extension was begun. Early in 1975 a ten-classroom block was opened by Mr. Mark Clinton. That gave much needed space to the teachers and children. The local contribution for that was £12,600. Four classrooms at a cost to the parish of £17,000 were added in 1983. In the 1990's the front three-classroom block was demolished.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Denis O'Sullivan and the Holy Family National School hurling team.



Mrs. Kathleen Clarke with a Confirmation class.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Mrs. Freda Fogarty with a First Holy Communion class.

### **Teachers at Rathcoole National School**

The first principal was John Russell. He and his wife, Mary, who was first principal of the girls' school, needed somewhere to live. In 1887 a grant of £200 was got for the residence where the curate now lives. Both Russells retired due to ill health. He died age 25 years and is buried in Saggart. The new principal in the girls' school was Mary Doyle. She took over the residence as caretaker. She married a local farmer James Lennon of Crookshane on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1899. Daniel Hallissey was appointed principal of the boys' school and they took Rathcoole Schools into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His wife, Jane, taught at Newcastle. They lived in the residence for many years. The Lennon's daughter, Madeline, taught here. Two of her brothers were priests. Other teachers were Mrs. Mary Dowdall, who taught here from 1903 – 1952, and Mrs. Mary Archbold.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Daniel Hallissey was succeeded by Michael Cleary a native of Bansha, Co. Tipperary. He transferred to Newcastle school in 1932. The next principal was Kevin O'Byrne. His successor Sean McGillicuddy, the last teacher to live in the residence, died in September 1970 and was succeeded by Michael Conlan who was succeeded by Martin Hoban in 1996.

The other staff in 1998 were Mary Mullaney, Josephine Curran, Sheila Walsh, Derek Manning, Evelyn McNelis, Mary McKeon and Celine Jones. In 1978 Maeve Moloney was appointed as remedial teacher and on her retirement in 1995 she was succeeded by Kathleen Clarke. Other teachers who retired from the school were Aine Purcell and Bernard Ryan. Other teachers at the school were Time McGillicuddy, Freda O'Connor Fogarty, Pat Fitzgerald, Tony Lyons, Frances Martin, June Murray, Eileen McKeown, Bridie McNamara, Denis O'Sullivan, Laura Purcell, Paddy Quirke, John Reynolds, Pat Walsh, Teresa Finn, Philomena Burke, Maire Ni Ghallachoir and Kathleen Cullen.

### **Brittas School**

*Dear Sir,*

*I am glad to learn by your letter that the Rev. Mr. Barry P.P. Saggart has applied to have the National School at Brittas placed under the National Education Board. There was a great need of a school there. It has been of great use in the neighbourhood.*

Right Hon. H. Cogan, Tinode.

Cogan wrote to the inspector of schools, Mr. Newall, on November 25<sup>th</sup>, 1881. The new school at Brittas was welcome



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

because there were 26 families in the area, and they suffered great hardship to get an education.

### **School**

Fr. Michael Barry came to Saggart in 1876. He was approached by the people of Brittas about a National School for their area. In the summer of 1881, he agreed to rent the house beside the post office from Mrs. Dowling of the Brittas Inn. Esther Hamilton who had been a monitor at Clondalkin Convent, before going to Garristown in North Dublin, was appointed teacher at 5/- a week. This was a temporary arrangement while Fr. Barry sought salary funding from the Board.

In the two-room building, one room was used as a classroom and the other was Mrs. Hamilton's residence. When the inspector came, he considered the arrangement suitable, so long as she remained unmarried, because 'that room opened off the schoolroom.' He wrote that it was a well built two-roomed house beside the public road. Two months later the school was sanctioned pending some minor repairs – window pulleys to be repaired, clock, presses, worktable and some form of heating were needed, desks to be pierced for inkwells. The hours were 10 – 3 with a half hour set aside for religion. The teacher was paid by the National Education Board from November 1881.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Pupils Names and Ages in August 1881**

This is a list of pupils' names when the school opened and before it was taken under the Board.

15. Lizzie Hynes, Agnes Smyth.
14. Andrew Hanlon, Jane A. Healy, Deborah Hill.
13. Maggie Graham, Edward Healy, Lizzie Kerwin, Jane King, Maggie Leave, Mike Nolan, Kate Quinn, Marriane Smyth, Patsy Wright, William Wright.
12. Nonnie Crawley, Kate Dowling, Maggie Dowling, Maggie Hanlon, Peter Healy, Mary Hynes, Winnifred Mulread, Bridget Tysil.
11. Thomas Brien, James Hanlon, William Keegan, Bridget Kelly, Esther Smyth.
10. Maggie Blaney, Peter Burnett, Patrick Daly, Anne Dowling, Lizzie Healy, Mary Jane Healy, Michael Healy, Alice Hodgins, Anne Leavy, James Nolan, Mary Stafford.
9. Patrick Brien, Hugh Eustace, Ellen Hamilton, Patrick Hanlon, Ellen Healy, Thomas Healy, Michael King, Catherine Leavy, Peter Mansfield, Mary Mulread, Lizzie Murphy, Emily Smyth, Josephine Stafford, Thomas Weekes, Michael Whelan.
8. Kate Brady, Julia James, Sarah Dowling, Mary Fox, Annie Hanlon, Annie Hynes, John Healy, Anne Hodgins, John Hodgins, Joseph Mansfield, Patrick Nolan, Bridget Reilly.
7. Mary Blaney, John Brady, Mary Crawley, Bridget Hamill, Hugh Hanlon, John Hanlon, John Healy, Maggie Hill, Patrick Keegan, Catherine Kelly, Mary Keogh, Patsy Mulread, Mary Nolan, James Quigley, Richard Smyth, William Tysil, Mary Weekes.
6. Mary Brien, Edward Dowling, James Healy, Jane Healy, Edward Hynes, James Lynch, Ambrose Mullen, Maggie Quinn,

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Mary Tysil.

5. John Connor, Edward Graham, Bridget Hanlon, Agnes Healy, Mary Healy, Bridget Hill, John Keogh.

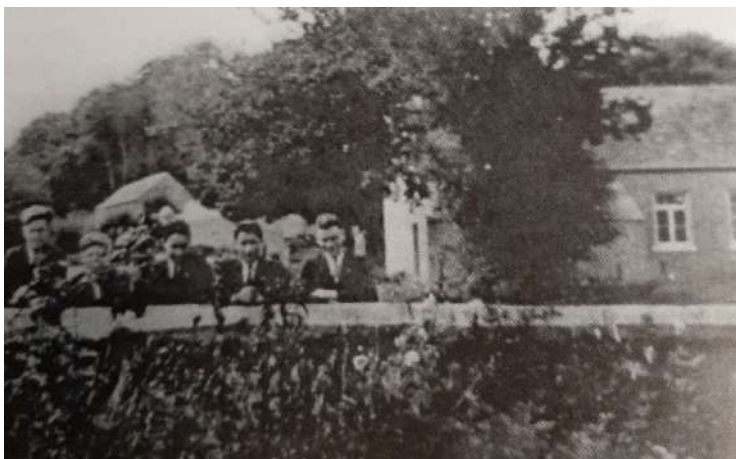
4. Kate Brien, Katie Blayney, Jane Hamilton, Maggie Healy, Maggie Keogh.

3. Hannie Healy, Patrick Hynes.



Pupils at Brittas National School (year unknown)

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



Young people at Brittas Bridge



Brittas School

Some of the pupils had already been to school. Nineteen boys and twenty-four girls came from Saggart school, seven boys from Kilbride school, five boys and three girls from Killeel school.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Teachers**

Miss Hamilton was succeeded by Mary Devoy (1887), M. Mullen (1888), Ellen O'Sullivan (1888). Monitor Mary F. O'Sullivan (1895). In 1998 the principal was John Keegan. Other teachers were Mary Drake, Valerie McHugh and Margaret Coughlan.

### **75 Years Later**

Mary Weekes, one of the first pupils in 1881, was present at the opening of the new school. The land was donated by Mrs. Julia O'Dowd of Brittas. The Archbishop of Dublin, Most Rev. Dr. McQuaid, blessed the new building. Mass was celebrated in one of the school rooms. Present at the opening were local clergy – Fr. B. Brady P.P., Fr. M. Fitzgerald C.C., Fr. Archdeacon C.C., Kevin Boland, Minister for Defence and Mark Clinton, Chairman Dublin Co. Council, who both lived in the parish, were there, together with the teachers, parents and pupils – many of whom were descended from the first pupils.

### **The Community School**

For many years those wishing to get a post primary education had to travel to Clondalkin and Naas and further afield. Then, with the increase in the number of students in the post primary age group, some parents worked towards having the school at Rathcoole. The Saggart/Rathcoole Community Council and the Newcastle and District Resident's Association set up a joint committee to look into the matter. Invitations to form a committee were issued to the parents' representatives and the Board of Management of the primary schools in Newcastle, Rathcoole and Saggart.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Committee**

Newcastle and District Resident's Association – John O'Reilly, Rita Murphy, Phil O'Leary, Joe O'Rourke, John Walsh.

Saggart/Rathcoole Community Council – Colm Massey, Michael Mullally, Jack Quinn.

Parents' Representatives on Boards of Management of National Schools.

Rathcoole – Marie Bergin, Jim Goss.

Saggart – Carmel Fitzgerald, Bridget O'Connor.

Newcastle – Phillipa Collins, Donal Murphy.

Scoil Chronain – Prionnsias O hAilin, Donal O'Riagain.

Jim Goss was secretary to the committee.

### **September 1981**

In September 1981 a coeducational community school, the Holy Family Community School at School Road, was opened. The trustees were the Holy Ghost Fathers, the Presentation Sisters, and the County Dublin Vocational Education Committee. The school was managed by the Board of Management which consisted of two teacher representatives, two parent representatives, and six nominees of the trustees. The principal was Thomas O'Seaghdha with John Walsh as vice principal. The school opened with 73 pupils in 3 classrooms. A second building was opened in 1985.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



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### **Curriculum**

The board recognised the importance of a curriculum that had breadth and balance and that developed the whole person. It consisted of Irish, English, French, German, Spanish, Maths, Accounting, Business Studies, History, Geography, Physics, Science, Engineering, Civic Social and Political Education, Art craft and design, Biology, Home Economics, Hotel Catering and Tourism, Materials Technology, Metalwork, Technical Graphics and Technology. Audio visual equipment, computer technology and a library supported all the subjects. The school had winners in the Young Scientist and Young Technologist competitions.

### **Students**

Students Council – Ten pupils from fifth year were elected democratically by their peers and co-ordinated by a teacher.

Religious Studies – A full time chaplain. About £9,000 was collected annually for the charity Concern.

Music – A junior choir and senior choir took part in carol services and competitions. Drama was well catered for.

Leisure and Recreation – An annual Sports Day in the third term. Sporting activities available were athletics, badminton, basketball, equestrian events, golf, hurling, outdoor pursuits, soccer and volleyball.

Students travelled to France, Germany, Holland, Italy, Russia, Spain and Switzerland.



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### Night School

The school was available on Tuesday nights for adult classes. Subjects studied included business methods, car maintenance, dressmaking, furniture restoration, gardening – there was something for everybody. Pat McEvoy was the Adult Education Officer.

### Teachers

Margaret Bennett, Paula Ui Bhaoill, Mary Brophy, Joan Collins, Pat Donoghue, Margaret Duane, Paula Dunne, Madeleine Fadden, Pat Fitzpatrick, Patricia Gallagher, Valerie Giles, Maureen Griffin, John Griffin, Ann Hackett, Mick Higgins, Charlie Hill, Brenda Kelly, Gerry Kiernan, Pat McEvoy, Gerry McKenna, Margaret Maher, Christy Morrin, Mary Moynihan, Margaret Norton, Maureen Nugent, Des O'Connor, Jim O'Donovan, James O'Hanlon, Lorcan O'Treasaigh, Marie Pierce, Caroline Prendergast, Shaun Purcell, Diarmaid Russell, Sr. Kathleen Russell, Ann Ryan, Jackie Smyth, Eamonn Walsh, John Walsh.

Sheila Collins was School Secretary until her retirement in 1988. Evelyn Murphy succeeded her.

### Sources:

National Archives. *Educational Documents for Brittas, Rathcoole and Saggart National Schools.*

### Chapter XIV

August bank holiday weekend 1996 will always be remembered as the weekend when Michelle Smith de Brun, the eldest daughter of Brian and Pat Smith of Greenogue Drive, arrived home to Rathcoole after winning three gold medals and one silver medal in swimming events at the Olympic Games in Atlanta. She represented Ireland at previous Olympic Games and very successfully at the European and World Championships. She was accorded a hero's welcome on her arrival in Dublin and all the way out to Rathcoole. She was the first Freeman of South Dublin County.

#### **Racing at Punchestown**

Punchestown was more than a race meeting – it was a countryside carnival to welcome the Spring. The first recorded race meeting was held in 1850 shortly after the Great Famine. For the people of this area the activity began on the Friday before the April race meeting, when the first carts began to rumble through the village bringing bookmakers stands, fuel, hawkers and their wares and tents out from the city. All through the weekend the trek continued. Punchestown was quite a journey travelling with a horse and cart from Dublin city. On

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

the first day of the races, long queues with the carriages of the entry and other horse drawn vehicles made their way up Woolpack Road.

The men dressed in brown suits with high cut lapels, gold watch chains across the waistcoat, brown boots and brown hard hats. The ladies in their long dresses, with skirts on the ground daintily help up with one hand, while the other grasped a parasol or umbrella, according to the weather. They had high bonnets with plenty of veiling and feathers on them. Well filled picnic baskets were carried by the servants. The trams from Terenure later carried many people out by the Embankment for a day in the fresh country air of PuncHESTOWN.

### **The Inns**

At Rathcoole the farriers replaced lost horseshoes, the saddlers repaired damaged harnesses, and hay and oats were sold for the animals. People from far off places – from the grasslands of Meath and Louth and from Dublin city came. Many of them met each other at Rathcoole, where they were well fed at the local hotel and inns, as they made the annual pilgrimage up to PuncHESTOWN. O'Carroll's Inn is now the Poitin Stil. The priest's house was built on the site of the Rathcoole Coaching Inn/Hotel at Coolamber corner in the 1940's.



### **Racecourse**

While the bands played and the three-card-trick men, the acrobats and the hawkers all drew crowds, the programme of races was held. The scene at the course was a carnival one. Hawkers sold sugar sticks at three a penny. Fruit drinks were made to order by tipping coloured powder into water. Meals were cooked on great open fires and the fowl, corned beef or bacon, cabbage and potatoes were ladled onto plates. Apples were dipped in toffee. A wonderful week free from work.

### **Royalty**

In 1865 the 23-year-old Edward, Prince of Wales, son of Queen Victoria, attended the races. He returned forty years later as King Edward VII, accompanied by Queen Alexandra. They were the first of the British royal family to visit the racecourse.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Evenings at Punchestown**

When the racing was over, the traffic jams of carts, carriages and plenty of bicycles of all kinds from Penny Farthings to long ones for four or six people, making their way back to the city and country were never forgotten. The country people from Brittas, Rathcoole and Saggart stayed on the course dancing and merry making for many hours and listening to the bands. Many matches were made, and marriages discussed at the races.

### **War Years**

The Leinster Leader of April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1944 related that people went to the race meeting by many different forms of transport. 'Many of those Punchestown devotees had set out at cockcrow, had cycled over thirty miles to the 'battle ground' and after cheering the winners, they faced the formidable return journey with light hearts and in most instances, lighter pockets. Every type of vehicle that could be imagined (and not a few that could not) had been pressed into service. Brakes, jaunters, wagonettes, four wheelers, traps and gigs of every make and shape, farm carts, and even the humble ass and cart, figured in the procession.

The farm cart (especially the one with balloon tyred wheels) was quite a popular mode of conveyance and not a few house parties – ladies in 'Punchestown modes' and their smartly groomed escorts – made the journey in such a vehicle, seated in comfort in well upholstered chairs.

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Relaxing at Rathcoole Bridge.

**1998**

In the late twentieth century the races continued. On Sunday April 26<sup>th</sup>, 1998 the new Parade Ring and Terrace Stand were opened for the first time. Generations of local families met for their annual reunion. The prize money for the three days racing was over half a million pounds, shared over 24 races.

### **Horse Racing**

The people of Brittas, Rathcoole and Saggart followed racing not only at the local racecourses but also farther afield. The Rathcoole Punchestown area is on the borders of Kildare – the home of the National Stud – and some of the finest stud farms in Ireland. By the mid 1950's a local jockey had ridden the best horse at Aintree Racecourse near Liverpool. Pat Taaffe, a son of the local trainer, Tom, won the Grand National on Quare

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Times in 1955. Three years later on the last Saturday in March 1958 a horse trained by Tom Taaffe – the eight-year-old Mr. What- won the Grand National. The horse was ridden by Arthur Freeman. Toss and Pat Taaffe also rode in the race. Scenes of jubilation greeted the Taaffes on their return to Rathcoole. Pat Taaffe won again on Gay Trip in 1970.

### **Arkle**

Pat went on to partner the greatest steeplechaser of all time. Four times (1964 – 65 – 66 – 68) he won the Gold Cup at Cheltenham – the first three times on Arkle and the last time on Fort Leney. In the mid 1970's, Captain Christy, trained by Pat, won the Gold Cup. Arkle was a great steeplechaser winning three Cheltenham Gold Cups, three Hennessy Gold Cups and an Irish Grand National. The top trainer tradition in the family continues at the end of the millennium. In the 1980's a film entitled 'Aintree – the Rathcoole Connectin' was made. It featured the horses and people of the locality who were part of Rathcoole's Aintree heritage. In 1998 it had its premiere at Muldowney's pub, Rathcoole. That year was the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Aintree Grand National.

### **Lottery**

In 1839 the Grand National was won by a horse name Lottery who also won cups at Doncaster, Preston and York. Lottery was called the horse of the century and was afterwards bought by Patrick Sheil of Rathcoole House as sire for his stud at Newtown near Celbridge. Lottery ended his days there.

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### **Point to Point**

The Hillside Harriers held point to point races at Baldonnell in the 1920's. In 1920 the Naas Harriers were founded. Later the South County Dublin Harriers Hunt Club held their point to point races at Jobstown. They met at Baldonnell, Blackchurch, Brittas, Cheeverstown, Newcastle, Rathcoole, Saggart and in more recent years at Naas Racecourse. The Kildare Hounds met at Blackchurch, Rathcoole and Saggart.

### **Gaelic Athletic Association**

The Cusack Stand at Croke Park is named after Michael Cusack of the Gaelic Athletic Association. He was born on September 20<sup>th</sup>, 1947 in the parish of Carron in the Burren area of Co. Clare. He trained as a teacher at Marlborough St. Training College and taught at Lough Cutra N.S. By the age of 24 he was the English and Maths teacher at St. Colman's College in Newry. From there he went to Kilkenny College, to Clongowes and to Blackrock College. He was a noted prize-winning athlete. He introduced athletics to the students. He organised a national athletic meeting in Dublin at Easter 1880. In 1881 and 1882 he was the Irish Champion weight thrower. In 1882 he founded the Dublin Athletic Club – open to all men. The Dublin hurling club was formed in 1882 and a year later the Metropolitan hurling club.

Cusack set up the Civil Service Academy – a school designed to help people to enter the Civil Service. Soon he had his Academy students playing in the Phoenix Park. On Easter Sunday 1883 the first properly organised hurling match in Dublin was played. Metropolitan beat Academy. On December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1883 the Metropolitan team took the train to Ballinasloe for a game on



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the fair green against Killimor. When Cusack saw the standard of play, he knew that a code of rules for hurling was needed.

On November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1884 at Hayes' Hotel, Thurles, Co. Tipperary the first meeting took place of what became known as the Gaelic Athletic Association for the preservation and cultivation of national pastimes. Present in Thurles on that occasion was John Wyse Power the editor of the Leinster Leader. He became joint secretary of the new association. Early in 1885 Archbishop Croke of Cashel gave the G.A.A. his unqualified approval. The first Dublin club to be affiliated was Metropolitan. Clara, Co. Offaly was the first country club. The first football match under the new rules was at Callan, Co. Kilkenny. The first hurling match was at Tynagh, Co. Galway with 6,000 spectators. In 1885 a G.A.A. football match took place between teams from Naas and Sallins.

### **Saggart Teams**

In March 1888 a representative of Saggart Club Home Rulers attended the Dublin County Committee meeting. M. Ward captain and J. Crolly vice-captain of No. 1 team with J. Ward captain and J. Norton vice-captain of No. 2 team were appointed at the Saggart Annual General Meeting in February 1889. On the Sons of Erin team in 1900 were J. Smith, T. Regan, M. Connor, C. McDonnell, P. Cooney, M. Ward, Ryan, Byrne, H. Mullally, T. Crossdale, D. Smith (Captain), M. McLoughlin, T. Dunbar, Reilly, J. Byrne. C. Pitt was team secretary.

### **Four Clubs**

By the turn of the century there were four clubs operating in Saggart parish. They were Home Rulers at Saggart, Irish

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Harpers at Newcastle/Hazelhatch, Liberators at Brittas and Tom Steeles at Rathcoole. The St. Mary's Club came into being in 1906. Among its founder members were J.J. Sheil and Henry McDermott a papermaker at Swiftbrook Mills. In 1908 it won the junior league with captain John Byrne.

In 1913 the former city and suburban racecourse was purchased by the G.A.A. to become Croke Park. Saggart club ceased between 1910 and 1915. Rev. Val Burke, a curate at Saggart, and James Keane N.T. reorganised the club. Again St. Mary's won the junior league but two years later the club again ceased. Then some men from the four districts came together and formed the Sons of Erin, Rathcoole club. The club ceased after the Civil War.

### **Joseph Nolan**

Croke Park was the venue for the National Championships. Joseph Nolan of Rathcoole was the winner in the 100, and 400 yards county championship. In 1920, he won the 120 yards Leinster hurdle championship. Twenty-four-year-old Nolan was five foot nine inches tall and weighted eleven stone nine pounds.



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### **St. Mary's**

In March 1928 St. Mary's as we know it today began. The main movers behind the club were Rathcoole farmer Paddy Cullen, Thomas Watkins, Swiftbrook Mills clerk Pat Dunne, Saggart publican Kevin Jacob and papermaker Edward Quinn. The association between the mills and the club continued to be a strong one until the mills ceased in 1965.

In 1929 the club, captained by Paddy Cullen, was in the Junior League final for the third time. A year later it won. The following year they won the Intermediate League. Then Paddy Cullen, Josie Nolan, Jack and Pat Quinn, Pat Dunne, Jim Coffey and Kit Attley retired.

Notable players, with Mick Healy the captain, in winning the Loving Cup in 1934 were Paddy Bermingham, Paddy and Billy Kelly and Paddy O'Connor. Jim O'Hare, a farmer from Newcastle, was captain in 1936 – 7 when they won the Senior League Division Two. Bermingham, O'Connor, Peter O'Reilly and Gerry Fitzgerald were the stars. The Cusack stand at Croke Park was opened in August 1938 by Padraig MacNamee of Belfast, the first Ulster President of the Association.

In 1942 Paddy Bermingham, Caleb Crone, Gerry Fitzgerald, Paddy O'Connor and Peter O'Reilly beat Cavan and Galway to win Dublin's fifteenth All Ireland. Peter O'Reilly was their trainer. Sixteen years later, again with trainer Peter O'Reilly, the brothers Joe and John Timmons helped Dublin to another All Ireland victory. In 1963 Paschal Flynn, a grandson of Henry McDermott's, was goalkeeper for Dublin when they defeated Galway in the All Ireland Final. Other notable players down the years were P.J. Considine, Kevin Cooney, Terry Doolin, Brian

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Dowling, John Dowling, Paddy and John Fitzgerald, Ned Grainger, Eamonn Hall, Tommy Murphy (played for Laois senior team for 20 years). Liam Murray, Paddy Murray, Josie Nolan, Liam Quinn, Joe O'Reilly (he won 20 caps as an Irish international soccer player), Joe Rodgers, George Stewart and Gareth Weldon. Charlie Gavin played Rugby for Scotland. Con Martin's son, Mick, became an Irish international player. The teams played on ground leased from publican Andrew Wolohan.

### **St. Mary's Clubhouse**

In 1978 £12,000 was paid for a field for a new clubhouse. £300,000 was raised for a building which houses a large basketball court size gym that doubles as a function room. It opened in 1990.



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St. Mary's football team

### **Centenary of G.A.A.**

In 1984 a week-long programme of events to celebrate the centenary took place at Rathcoole and Saggart. The Four Corners Credit Union Perpetual Trophy for juniors, the Paddy Bermingham Perpetual Trophy for seniors, the Kevin Cooney Perpetual Trophy for minors 7-a-side, schools, ladies and veterans football matches were all played. A juvenile hurling and a camogie match were also played.

On Sunday June 3<sup>rd</sup> a pram and wheelbarrow derby took place over a 2.25-mile route from Saggart to Rathcoole village and home by the dual carriageway. Funds were raised for the senior citizens, boy scouts and autistic children.

### **Schoolboy Players in the Centenary Year 1984**

S. Bermingham, J. Callaghan, M. Callaghan, J. Clarke, C. Crone, C. Daly, R. Faulkner, J. Hennessy, S. Joyce, W. Kearney, B. Keogh, K. Lawlor, S. Lawlor, F. McCracken, D. McDermott, J.

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McGhee, A. McHale, B. Maher, D. Martin, G. Molloy, W. Moore, A. Moriarty, G. Quinn, P. Shanahan, D. Tansey, D. Tobin, A. Walsh, B. Williams, B. Allen, N. Byrne, G. Daly, J. Daly, N. Delaney, B. Donoghue, D. Griffin, C. Kehoe, J.J. Kelly, R. Kennedy, S. Lawlor, T. Lawlor, D. Leigh, S. McConalogue, R. Malone, W. Moore, S. Mulchay, P. O'Cathain, P. O'Maille, D. O'Neill, A. Noone, J. Redmond, C. Reilly, H. Vivash, B. Boggins, D. Byrne, L. Clarke, P. Crone, M. Daly, E. Delaney, G. Duffy, G. Flannery, J. Gilma, D. Kavanagh, M. Kilduff, D. Lawlor, B. McGee, M. McPherson, D. Malone, P. Moriarty, E. Mullally, B. Murry, P. Murray, M. Nolan, A. O'Connor, R. Penrose, N. Purcell, G. Redmond, C. Rudden, E. Smith, B. Walsh.

St. Mary's now holds a Street League during the summer to cater for the 5 – 10-year olds. About 150 players attend each summer.

### **Commercials Hurling Club**

They have a clubhouse at the junction of the Naas Road and the road to Newcastle.

### **Soccer**

In 1978 a group of Rathcoole parents and friends got together to start a football club for the young boys of the area. The club was well supported. Within a decade they had paid £40,000 for a field to the south of Forest Hills. A further £60,000 was spent on draining and levelling two pitches. The money for the purchase of the field and for the work done on it was raised entirely by the club. By the end of the 1980's the Park was opened. Frank

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Cox of Forest Hills, who was one of the main movers behind the club, will always be remembered by Frank Cox Park.

### **Golf Clubs**

In the 1980's the Johnstown Kennedy demesne was bought by a group of golfers and Beechpark Golf Club was established. In the 1990's Tassagard House and land became City West Hotel and Golf Club. Slade Valley Golf Club is set amid the most scenic area of south west Co. Dublin.

### **Motor Car and Bike Racing**

The whirr of engines could be heard all over the place when in the early 1920's motorcycle practice runs became a feature of the summer evenings. People hurried to catch a glimpse of the bikes flying past at speed. The crowds gathered to see the bikes attain speeds of up to 75 miles an hour. The area was ideal for the races as it had some first-class main roads, some winding sections which called for very skilful riding, some sharp corners that really tested brakes and acceleration. The bikes were mainly Rudge or Norton's, 350 c.c. and 500 c.c. The locals read about the bike races at the Phoenix Park and at the Isle of Man, but for them the thrill of seeing the bikes on their own roads was unforgettable. Riders from England came for the Leinster championships. In 1926 the Leinster Motor Cycle and Light Car Club was formed. One of its first directors was John Sheil of Hill View. aching car drives entered for the Leinster Trophy Race. Nowadays the bikes race near Blessington. The fancy dress motorcycle autocross took place at the Slade on each St. Stephen's Day.

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### **Bridge Club**

Rathcoole Bridge Club is in existence for the past twenty-five years.

### **Rathcoole Pipe Band**

Rathcoole has been associated with music for many years. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century it had a brass and reed band. In the 1920's the band practised at the Forsester's Hall. The Hall was raided by the military and the instruments seized. More than twenty years later a pipe band was started by local publican Anne Burn, her son Michael, John Hollowed and Sergeant J. Coffey of the Air Corps. Some of the descendants of the old brass and reed players were interested in playing music again. A committee was formed with Billy McGuirk, Tom Gahan, Pat Doolin and James Mallon. The first instructor was an Army piper, Sergeant Frank Somers.

### **1960's**

By the mid 1960's there were twenty-five members with James Mullally, Drum Major, Michael Connolly, Pipe Major, Patrick Critchely, Pipe Sergeant. The band secretary was Tony McDermott. The instructor was John Lally of Lucan. The drummers were Tony McDermott and Larry Smith side drums, J. McGuirk bass, Pat Weldon tenor. Among the pipers were Edward Roche and Dan Quinn. Later some girls joined the band.

The blue-jacketed, saffron-kilted pipers from Rathcoole were very successful at All Ireland championships. They brought the Leinster championships to Hayden's fields on several occasions. The band played for all the notable events in Rathcoole down



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through the years. In 1974, it piped Sir James Edward Kennedy, the last of the Kennedys at Johnstown House, to his final resting place. It is now over 50 years since the founding of the Rathcoole Pipe Band, and it has brought great dignity to functions in the village.



### **Drama**

Rathcoole had a tradition of entertainers and entertainment. Concerts in the Courthouse (Rathcoole Library) were a feature of the village. One such concert in the 1920's was in aid of Saggart church. The entertainers were Morgan Byrne, Tom Carthy, Mary Cullen, Edward Dowling, Denis Dunne, John Harvey, Lennie Love, Mr. MCDonagh, Linda Meade, John Meade, Maude Sheil and Kathy Vickers.

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### 1940's

During the Second World War the Rathcoole Local Defence Force with adjutant Edmund Sheil held a concert in the library. A four-act play called *The Damsel from Dublin* was presented by St. Mary's Dramatic Society with Fr. John Kingston C.C. and local teachers Sean McGillicuddy and Mrs. M. Dowdall. The players were Peter Brady, Paddy Connor, Dolly Fitzgerald, Molly McDermott, Christopher McDonnell, Jack Maher, Owen O'Toole and Lizzie Ward. Jim McCormack, Molly McDermott and Maud Sheil sang. Swiftbrook Mills provided the seating in the library. Paddy Reilly of Rathcoole travelled the world as an entertainer.

### 1970's

The tradition of entertainment continued. In 1975 the 'Rathcoole Players' known as the 'Kitcheners' began. When the Community Centre was built, they move to rooms there for their rehearsals. They staged popular dramas. In Spring 1998 their choice was *Da* by Hugh Leonard. The players were Peter Gaynor, Anne Hackett, Fintan Havelin, Michael McEnery, Siobhan McEnery, Brendan O'Reilly, Angela Tutty and Aidan Walsh.

## Chapter XV

Women have emerged as leaders in every century. In the early centuries of the millennium now ending the nuns at Calliaghstown monastery were independent-minded women who sought to lead a life in their later years independent of their families; many women, unmentioned in the history books, played very crucial and sometimes exasperating roles, as when their families security was at stake with land confiscations, transplantations to unknown places in the Wicklow hills or west of the Shannon; mothers who lost child after child from the lack of basic childcare, strong business women, like Mary Mercer, caring teachers like Ann Johnston and the members of voluntary, religious, social and cultural organisations.

### **The Nuns at Calliaghstown Monastery**

The monastery was called the Monastery of St. Mary del Hogges. It was founded by Diarmaid MacMurrough. A document from the twelfth century tells that 'the nuns were not of the younger sort but for elderlike persons, and for those who desired to live single lives again after the death of or separation from their husbands.'

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‘Alice O’Toole, near to the Archbishop of Dublin, in one nights time left her husband and conveyed all his wealth into this abbey, and it was not known for seven years’ time where she went of how she conveyed away his wealth’ until Laurence O’Toole’s death in 1178, when she attended his funeral. She was his sister, married to Diarmaid McMurrough, founder of the monastery. He had left her to marry another.

Margaret Gaydon was Abbess at the time of the Reformation. On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 1543 she surrendered to King Henry VIII 200 acres of land the property of the nuns at Calliaghstown.

### **Mary Mercer’s Will**

On August 18<sup>th</sup>, 1733 Mary Mercer made her last will. ‘In the name of God, Amen. I, Mary Mercer, of the City of Dublin, being in perfect sense and memory but uncertain of the time when it may please God to take me out of this troublesome world do make this my last Will and Testament in manner following.

Firstly, I bequeath my soul to Almighty God, hoping through the mercies and merits of my Lord Jesus Christ to partake in eternal happiness with Him, and my body to be laid in St. Mary’s Chapel, Christ Church, Dublin, and as to my worldly substance I give, leave and bequeath the same as follows: (then she discusses her money and land);

Three-thousand pounds is to be conveyed by her executors to purchase lands. The rents, issuing and profits of the said lands so to be purchased are to be used ‘for the clothing, dieting, maintaining and supporting of twenty-five poor girls and for their instruction in reading, writing and qualifying them to be

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put out apprentices and until such time as they shall be put out apprentices. And my well is, in my case there should be a surplus of the said rents over and above what my said Trustees shall judge proper for the maintenance and support of the said number of poor girls, that they the said Trustees shall employ and apply all such surplus rents for augmenting and increasing the number of such poor girls.'

### 1798

We remember Mrs. Fyans, as her neighbours tried to comfort her following the death of her husband, and Mrs. Molloy whose young son was also hanged. We remember, too, Mrs. Clinch of Rathcoole House, the mother of John Clinch, and his sisters, Kitty, Fanny and Alicia. Mrs. Rourke, the mother of Felix, who worried about him when she heard he was imprisoned at Naas Jail in 1798. When she heard about the insurrection in Dublin in the Summer of 1803, she was assured by her son Matthew that Felix had gone to visit Grimes' house near Saggart. What a terrible five-week period for her, and for his sister, as they learned of his arrest and awaited the inevitable outcome of his indictment for high treason. Then her son was brought back to Rathcoole to be hanged.

### 1790 Will

An interesting will from 1790 was witnessed by Daniel Dillon, Innkeeper, Rathcoole. James Connor, and employee of Mr. Clinch, left his estate of £30 to be divided equally between his siblings Bridget, Elinor and Edward, his uncle James Allen, Thomas Fyans, baker, Rathcoole; Rev. Mr. Barlow (for Masses and his attendance); his employer, Mr. Clinch. Before the

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decade was over the Fyans, the Clinchs, and Father Barlow's successor had been united in tragedy.

### **Devoy Sisters**

Mary Devoy and her sister taught at Brittas and Saggart National Schools. They lived in the upper part of Saggart school. They were sisters of John Devoy who was in charge of the Fenian infiltration of the British Army (1860's). He was exiled to America where he founded 'The Irish Nation' and the 'Gaelic American' papers which he edited until his death in 1928. He was the force behind the funding of many Irish projects until 1919.

### **The United Irishwomen**

County Meath born Horace Plunkett was educated at Eton and Oxford. In his mid-twenties he went to America where he worked for the Country Life Commission for Theodore Roosevelt. Roosevelt and his wife, Edith, had a cattle ranch in Dakota. They enjoyed the outdoor life. In 1899, Plunkett returned from America full of ideas about strengthening women's roles in society. Plunkett discussed how to adapt his ideas to this country with his cousins Emily, the poetess, and Mary Lawlor of Lyons House. The United Irishwomen's movement was founded in 1910.

The Rathcoole, Saggart, Newcastle Guild was set up in 1910 with the Hon. Mary Lawless as its first President. Miss Mary Frances Sheil was Hon. Sec. Lecturers came from Dublin to speak on various subjects, cookery, housekeeping, needlework, poultry keeping and butter making. Saggart had a weekly market for eggs and butter. With the coming of the First World War aid

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was added. The untimely death of the Hon, Mary brought the branch to an end.

### **Irish Countrywomen's Association**

Later, in 1935, the name changed to the Irish Countrywomen's Association, When the I.C.A. was founded Rathcoole had one of the first guilds. Meetings were held in the library. In 1942 the library was taken over by the Irish Red Cross and the Local Defence Force. For a second time the guild ceased. Presidents during that time had included Mrs. Mary Lennon, Mrs. Catherine Bergin, Miss Eileen Murray, Miss Kitty Hayden and Mrs. Winifred Sheil.

In 1967 Mrs. Una O'Brien, members of the old guild, and some of the new residents restarted the guild in the village and it has continued to the present day.

Sources:

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## Chapter XVI

Parish Association for Rathcoole, Saggart and Brittas was discussed during the Second World War. It formed and divided into sub-groups – each group being responsible for a particular aspect of village life.

With the building of the dual carriageway, which opened in 1968, new housing estates became home to many people. A new Catholic church and new schools were planned for Rathcoole; the Bank of Ireland and the Credit Union came. Until then the Catholic churches were at Saggart and Newcastle. St. Finian's hall in Newcastle was the parish hall.

People came from many areas to make new homes in Rathcoole village. They integrated with the older residents and they all had a common purpose, so Residents' Associations were formed. The Rathcoole and District Residents' Association became the umbrella body for the estates' associations.

### **Community Centre**

By 1968 the dual carriageway formed a definite physical boundary between Rathcoole/Saggart and Newcastle. With a potential large young population, the local Garda Sergeant, Jim

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

McKeever, foresaw the need to proceed with the erection of a recreation centre/hall for the south side of the carriageway. At a meeting he convened in the old library he was elected Chairman of a new committee known as the Community Centre Association. Fund raising began – raffles, sponsored walks and carnivals all helped but sites were getting very expensive. Ten years later the Community Centre, which had been discussed for thirty years, was opened.

### **The Community Council**

Newcastle became a separate parish in 1974. In the same year, at a public meeting at the old library, the Rathcoole and District Residents' Association and the Community Centre Association united to form the Saggart and Rathcoole Community Council under the Chairmanship of John Nolan of Crookshane. The primary objective of the new body was to promote community welfare. Throughout Dublin, community councils, the were non-sectarian and non-political were coming together The Community Council met with government departments about matters of local concern; with Dublin County Council and later with South Dublin County Council on matters such as amenity grants, housing developments, playing fields, public lighting, roads, etc, and with private individuals as the need arose.

### **Members**

The Chairmen of the Community Council in the last quarter of the century were John Nolan, Brian Mooney, Jack O'Brien, Catherine Quinn (who became a member of South Dublin Community Council). Paddy Gavin, Michael Harrington, Denis McHugh, Tom Foley and P.J. Reidy. The two General Secretaries were Tony Kearney and Joan Curran.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Other long-serving members were Kay Boyle, Paddy Bectin, Maurice Boland, Annie Brady, Michael Broderick, Margaret Brunkard, Irene Clark, Stephanie Donnelly, Keel Duggan, Michael Ganley, Ena Havelin, Ann Keegan, Pamela Keogh, Marian Kiernan, Vera McCormack, Denis McHugh, Esther McGuirk, Mary Sheil McNally, Celine Malone, Marie Moore, Michael Mullally, Paddy Murray, Tony Murray, Ml. O'Brien, Francina O'Neill, Harry O'Reilly, Carmel O'Riordan, Jack Quinn, Noel Quinn and Joe Ryan.

### **Saggart and Rathcoole Community Council Celebrates**

In 1999 the Saggart and Rathcoole Community Council celebrates 25 years since its formation. The council is a non-political, non-sectarian organisation. The primary objective of the Community Council (as stated in its constitution) was and is to promote the Community welfare.

### **South Dublin County Council**

South Dublin County's capital town is Tallaght. The population of South Dublin County is 200,000. The administrative offices are in Tallaght. The Council has a staff of 1,500. The Institute of Technology caters for 3,500 students. Tallaght hospital has 600 beds and a staff of 1,800 persons. Catherine Quinn of Beechwood Lawns is the current representative on South Dublin County Council.

### **County Councils**

1999 is the centenary of the formation of the County Councils. They gave people greater control over local affairs. A local man, John Sheil of Rathcoole House, was Chairman of Dublin County Council from 1931 – 34. He represented Dublin County

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Council at the Eucharistic Congress in Dublin in June 1932. The County Council was abolished during the Second World War and for a few years afterwards, i.e. 1940 – 48.

### **Celbridge Union**

Under the 1838 Poor Law Act, Ireland was divided into Unions. Celbridge, a market town with a hospital, became the centre of the Celbridge Union. Each Union had a workhouse under the control of its Board of Guardians. These guardians were elected. John Kennedy of Johnstown Kennedy was a member of the first Board of Guardians of Celbridge Union.

Over the past 1000 years leaders have emerged locally. The represented the people at local, national and European level. In the words of the Saggart Community Councils' Constitution they sought to promote Community welfare.

### **Parliamentary Representatives**

In 1957 the European Economic Community came into being under the terms of the Treaty of Rome. A key objective of the E.C. was to secure the economic benefits of free trade, through the creation of a common market providing for the unrestricted movement of goods, services, capital and labour. In 1973 Ireland joined the European Community. The European Parliament is directly elected by the adult people of each member state.

### **Mark Clinton**

In 1979 Mark Clinton was elected to the European parliament for the Leinster constituency. Mark was Estate and Works Manager at Peamount Hospital, Newcastle. He joined the Fine Gael party and from 1955 to 1973 he was an elected member of

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Dublin County Council. In 1961 he was elected to the Dail for Dublin County. Eight years later the county was divided, and he was elected to represent North County Dublin. He was Minister for Agriculture from 1973 – 77. By 1979 real incomes in agriculture had doubled compared with 1970.

### **European Parliament**

The European Parliament met in Strasbourg in France. Parliament was run by a bureau consisting of a President and 14 Vice Presidents elected by Members of the European Parliament from among their number. In 1987 Mark Clinton was elected a Vice President – a post he held until his retirement in 1989. During his time as Vice President the Single European Act, designed to harmonise member countries practices on an E.C. side basis, was agreed.

### **Council of Ministers**

The Council of Ministers is the main decision-making body of the Community. The Foreign Ministers of each of the states represents national interests. The Presidency of the Council of Ministers rotates, with each member state taking the chair for a period of six months. Council meetings are normally held in the country that currently holds the Presidency. Ireland held the Presidency from July to December 1996.

### **Mary Harney**

The Dail consists of 166 members elected by proportional representation. In 1998 Ms. Mary Harney of Newcastle, leader of the Progressive Democrat party, was Tanaiste (Deputy Prime Minister).

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### **Kevin Boland**

He was elected to the Dail in the general election in 1957. He was appointed Minister for Defence on his first day in the Dail.

### **Newcastle Borough**

Newcastle was a parliamentary borough for nearly 200 years. In 1613 King James I granted a charter to some small Irish towns to become boroughs with corporations. They were to have a portreeve or mayor and 12 free burgesses. Among the towns granted charters were Newcastle Lyons, Belfast and Londonderry. Newcastle borough sent two members to Parliament until the Act of Union was passed in 1800.

### **Members of Parliament**

- 1785 John La Touche; Thomas Whaley.
- 1783 David La Touche; John La Touche.
- 1776 Hon. John Butler; John Gamble.
- 1769 Hon. John Butler; William Stewart.
- 1761 Hon. John Butler; John Fitz Gibbon.
- 1735 Robert Sandford; Hon. John Butler.
- 1727 Robert Sandford; James Coghill.
- 1725 Charles Monck; Anthony Shepherd.
- 1715 Daniel Reading; Charles Monck.
- 1713 Daniel Reading; Edward Deane.
- 1703 Daniel Reading Snr; John South.
- 1695 John Tench; Thomas Pooley.
- 1692 Richard Morres; Daniel Reading.
- 1689 Thomas Arthur, (Colganstown); John Talbot (Belgard).
- 1661 Francis Peasley; Peter Wybrants.
- 1613 William Parsons; William Rolles.

### Chapter XVII

The O'Byrne family were the descendants of the local chieftains. When the Normans came, they were dispossessed. Parliament passed a law in 1611 under which the 'O' and 'Mac' were forbidden as they denoted chieftain connections. 'O' was the grandson of the chief and 'Mac' was the son.

#### **Garret Byrne**

In 1724 Garret Byrne had a manor house in Saggart. He had three sons – Edward (1739 – 1804), Mark and John. Mark married Mary Ann Rowe and through the marriage acquired the Matthew's family estate in Co. Kilkenny. Mark converted from Catholicism to Protestantism. Under the Penal Laws he could obtain the family lands by so doing. They had three sons, John, Thomas and Edward, and a daughter, Cecelia. In 1799 in his will Mark left his estate to Edward and following Edward's death eldest son Patrick Edward and it was he who sold the land to John Verschoyle in 1831.

#### **Edward Byrne**

Garret's eldest son, Edward, went to Dublin with his brother, John. Edward served his apprenticeship to O'Toole, a Dublin

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merchant. John married the daughter of a seedsman from Christ Church Place. Edward married Mary Devine. They had five sons and a daughter. The brothers became very wealthy distillers and sugar bakers. Edward bought Lord Allen's house, Mullinahack, at Stillorgan. He was regarded as the wealthiest merchant in Ireland and in 1792 it was claimed that he paid £80,000 annually to revenue.

### **Catholic Committee**

The Catholic Committee was founded in 1760 through the efforts of Charles O'Connor of Belanagare, Co. Roscommon, who was of the royal house of the last High King of Ireland. Catholics, like O'Connor, resented that they were barred from standing for election as Members of Parliament; from voting even for the Protestant Members of Parliament; from giving their children an education at the only university in Ireland, Trinity College. The Catholic Committee assured the King of their loyalty and sought some lessening of the Penal Laws. Some changes were made as regards education and land tenure.

The Penal Laws were not only concerned with land for Catholics. In 1782 a law was introduced for the better regulation of the education of Roman Catholics. A proposal was put forward for the education of Catholics at Trinity College. Edward Burke savagely attacked the proposal and expressed the hope that until institutions suitable for the purpose were established at home they would not be prohibited from availing of the cheap and effectual education in other countries. Ten years later, Maynooth College opened its doors.

The French Revolution in 1789 gave the Catholics courage to proceed with demands for new laws. They wanted all Irish



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people to be treated equally. The Parliament in Dublin refused to listen to them, so a delegate, John Keogh, was sent to the Parliament at Westminster. The Irish Parliament conceded the right of Catholics to be admitted to the Bar.

### **Convention of Irish Catholics**

Throughout the summer of 1792 preparations for the Convention of Irish Catholics went ahead. Wolfe Tone was the paid secretary to the committee. 300 Catholic delegates, elected from Roman Catholic committees, assembled from all over Ireland on December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1792 at the Tailor's Hall in Back Lane – it was called the Back Lane Parliament. It lasted for a week, under the chairmanship of Archbishop Troy, during which the agenda covered many of the problems Catholics endured.

### **Petition to King George III**

Edward Byrne was elected Chairman of the General Committee of the Catholics of Ireland. A petition to King George III was drafted. It was decided to go straight to the King, and not through his deputy, the viceroy. Five people were appointed to present the petition to the king. They were Edward Byrne, John E. Devereaux, Sir Thomas French, John Keogh and Christopher Dillon-Bellew. They travelled to London via Belfast. The delegates were well received by the king.

### **1793 Act**

As a result of the petition an Act was passed in 1793 which gave Catholics the right to vote on the same terms as Protestants; the limited right to carry arms; the right to be elected members of grand and petty juries; to have some army commissions, but not high commissions or high government positions, and to

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graduate from Trinity College. It did not grant the right to Catholics to be Members of Parliament. Following these concessions, the Dublin Parliament passed the Convention Act which forbade the summoning of any delegate body other than the Parliament.



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### **Saggart Cemetery**

A monument was erected in Saggart Cemetery. The inscription reads: 'Edward Byrne – Merchant Dublin. In 1793 he was chosen with four others to present a petition to our gracious Sovereign George the Third on behalf of the Roman Catholics of Ireland thro which many constitutional privileges were restored to the people in this country professing that ancient faith.' Another plaque to the family is within the church.

### **Den Family**

The Den family were one of the principal families of Saggart for hundreds of years until the early eighteenth century. They had about 900 acres in Boherboy, Saggart and generally to the north of the parish. The trustees of Dean Swift's will acquired the Den estate in Chancery from Philip's son, Thomas, in 1750.

### **Verschoyle Family**

Tassagard House, the home of the Verschoyle family, was a very imposing building. It was a beautiful manor house on Garter Lane – the road into Saggart village from the Naas Road. It was built in two periods – mid eighteenth century Georgian and the later block is Victorian. The house replaced an earlier castle. The house and adjoining land became a hotel and golf club. They were tastefully restored to their former glory. Some of the stones from the castle were used in the building of the stables and out-buildings. The gardens and woodlands about the house were retained.

From about the year of the Act of Union (1800) the Verschoyles were the land agents of the St. Patrick's Hospital estate. John Verschoyle was the younger brother of James, Dean of St.

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Patrick's Cathedral and afterwards Bishop of Killala. In 1831 he acquired the Byrne estate at Saggart. By 1870 John J. Verschoyle had 1,000 acres of land which he rented out to his tenants. He died in 1891 and his wife Catherine Helen died in 1901. His daughter Lily married Rev. S.D. Campbell Dean of Clonmacnoise and Rector of Athlone. A window in the Rathcoole Church of Ireland was dedicated to their memory.

Catherine Helen Foster Verschoyle was the grandniece of John Foster, the last Speaker of the Irish House of Commons (1785 – 1800). Her cousin was Vere Foster, who organised teachers into a professional association which eventually became the Irish National Teacher's Organisation (I.N.T.O.). He was better known as the man who designed and marketed the famous headline writing books for schools.

In the 1831 census Saggart had 11 male household servants and 42 female servants.

### **1891 Census**

In the 1891 census for Celbridge Union, the following employees were recorded:

327	Agricultural labourers	
194	Female indoor servants	
140	Woollen cloth manufacture	
58	Domestic coachmen	
55	Building tradesmen	55 Engaged in paper manufacture
50	Clothes makers	
32	Canal men	
31	Male indoor servants	
26	Hotel and innkeepers	

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22	Railwaymen	
20	Shepherds	
16	Blacksmiths and forge keepers	
14	Roads men	Teachers
11	Farm Bailiffs	Grocers
10	Corn millers	
6	Weavers	
5	Students	
4	Bakers	Saddle makers
3	Doctors	
2	Butchers	Midwives
1	Candlemaker	Coachmaker
	Cutler	Millwright
	Solicitor	

### **Kennedys of Johnstown House**

John Kennedy was born in 1785. His grandmother was Eleanor Fagan of Feltrim whose family name appears as landowners in Rathcoole in the previous century. John Kennedy married twice and had five sons. He was created a baronet in 1836.

A window in Rathcoole Church of Ireland was dedicated to his memory by his daughter Anna Maria Langrishe 'To the glory of God and in honour of Sir John Kennedy, Bart. died A.D. 1848.'

He was succeeded by his son Sir Charles Edward Bayly Kennedy. He married Lady Augusta Perry. His paternal grandmother was Sarah Bayly of Gowran, Co. Kilkenny. The next baronet was Sir John Charles Kennedy. He married Maude Macauley Higginson in 1879. He became a Justice of the Peace for Dublin, magistrate of the Rathcoole Petty Sessions and High Sheriff of Co. Waterford. During his time as magistrate, Rathcoole Courthouse was built in 1914. In 1900 his estate was 1,447 statute acres. He died in 1923.

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The fourth baronet was John Ralph Bayly Kennedy. An Army man and stockbroker, he was succeeded by his brother, James Edward – a farmer and one of the top breeders of Hereford cattle. He died in June 1974. It was the end of an era that stretched back over 200 years. The baronet was succeeded by his cousin.

Johnstown House was a handsome residence, with a tastefully diagnosed and well cultivate demesne of 200 acres. The wonderful Rococo ceiling from the residence was installed by the Eastern Health Board at Dr. Steven's Hospital when it was converted into the headquarters of the Eastern Health Board. Beechpark Golf Club now own the upper and lower lawn.

### **Some Local Places**

#### **Broadfield**

The are where Tootenhill, Crockshane, Carrigeen, Windmill Hill and Keating's Park are now.

#### **Broadmore Common**

The part of Rathcoole townland behind Rathcoole Park, Beechwood Lawns and Coolamber. In 1816 the government appointed a commission for enclosing and allotting commons. Robert La Touche, a member of the well-known Dublin banking family, bought the land for £500 from the commissioners. When La Touche bought the land, he let it to Laurence Clinch. Twelve years earlier the La Touche family bought the former House of Commons on College Green for £40,000. It is now the Bank of Ireland.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Calliaghstown**

The Irish word cailleach means an old woman, so the townland probably gets its name from the women's monastery that was there some hundreds of years prior to the Reformation in the sixteenth century.

### **Carrigeen**

Carraig is the Irish word for rock.

### **Church Lane**

People went up to the Commons through the lane. The lane went up along by the eastern fence of the cemetery. After Clinch got the land, he wanted to close the lane. John Kennedy and Laurence Clinch got permission from the Grand Jury to stop up 'that part of the old road from Rathcoole to Rathmore by the commons of Broadmore lying between the street of Rathcoole and commons of Broadmore.' The land was closed in 1821. In 1829 John Kennedy had the wall built around the cemetery. Church lane went around at the back of Coolamber to meet up with the road at the beginning of Greenogue Drive. A short piece of it is still there.

### **Hillview**

Hillview House was on the Newcastle road with lands to the old Naas Road. Hillview estate is on the part between the old Naas Road and the new Naas Road.

### **Crookshane – Crooksling – Crookaunadreenagh**

Crook means the same as cnoc, which is the Irish word for hill.

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### **Garter Lane**

The road from Saggart to the Royal Garter Stable on the Naas Road.

**Gutheridge** was the name give to that part of the Naas Road where it joined the road into Saggart.

**Greenogue** – Green is the Irish word for gravel. Ogue is the Viking word for hill. Greenogue – the gravel hill. A quarry was recorded there in Griffith's Valuation.

### **Rathcoole House**

It is on the site of an old manor house. James Clinch, or one of his sons, commissioned an architect to design a new house in the manner of the early Georgian townhouses about 1750. It was a three-storey building. It had two main rooms in the basement – a kitchen and a milling room. On the hall floor was an 18-foot square hall opening into two fine reception rooms. These could be opened into one huge room for parties. The den or family room was on the same floor. Upstairs there were five bedrooms. The Clinch family lived there for eighty years and then the Sheil family lived in it for about one hundred and thirty years. Florrie Sheil was the last member of the family to resided there.

### **Kilteel Road**

A new road was built between 1816 and 1821 from the Woolpack road fork to the entrance of Johnstown House – now the entrance to Beechpark Golf Club.



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### **Mill Road**

The corn mill was upstream from the present bridge, which was built in 1819. The mill was mentioned in a lease dating from 1670. It may have been built in the twenty years previous to that as there is no mention of it in the Down Survey in 1654.

### **Stoney Lane**

Brick Lane was the name of a short road which gave a second entrance from the village to Broadmoor Commons. It is where the Stoney Lane houses are now. The lane was also known as Fyan's Lane because Fyan's licensed premises were where the Village Inn is now. Stoney Lane possibly got its name from a local landowner, Andrew Stoney. The field between Church Lane and Brick Lane was called the Butheyes or Butties. It is now Coolamber and Greenogue Drive. The fields for bleaching linen were here.

### **The Green**

Rathcoole had a patent for holding fairs on the Green on April 23<sup>rd</sup>, June 18<sup>th</sup>, October 9<sup>th</sup>, but no fairs have been held there for 200 years.

**Woolpack Road** was part of what is now called Killeel Road; at the fork it continued up over Windmill Hill. Holloway Lane was the name of the road near St. Patrick's Crescent, which went between the Naas Road and Wookpack Road. It joined the Woolpack Road at a bridge over a stream. It is now a cul-de-sac. Further up the Woolpack Road at the Community School a road goes left by St. Anne's Crescent. This was called Green Bater or Green Lane probably because it led down to the fair green. It is now known as Lennon's Hill. The Lennons had land

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in Rathcoole for 250 years. Whitehouse Lane, on the right of Woolpack Road, goes down to the Naas Road. Blackchurch Lane further west, links both roads again.

### Chapter XVIII

The tithe was a tax paid by parishioners for the support of the clergy. It was paid by persons of all religions but only Protestant clergy benefited. King James II, in 1688, decided that the clergy of each religion could get the tithes of their own parishioners. When King James II left Ireland, the tithe collectors continued the collection of tithes in return for a percentage of the money collected. They made every effort to collect it and the frustration of the people increased – because only Protestant clergy benefited.

The tithe was based on the price of corn. In 1827 wheat was £1/18/8 a barrel and oats were 15/2d a barrel. The tithes were estimated at £310. Dean Ponsonby, as Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral, was entitled to £60 and Rev. Thomas Hayden of Rathcoole and Calliaghstown got £250. Rev. Henry Richard Dawson, of St. Patrick's Cathedral got £110 from Saggart tithes. The tithes were fixed for 21 years from 1827.

The Tithes Commissioner for Rathcoole was Ignatious Moore of Newcastle and Randal McDonnell of Galway was the Saggart Commissioner. Moore owned more than £1,000 worth of property. In the summer of 1827, the commissioners made a list

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

of people who had to pay tithes. Moore swore that his list was properly assessed, before solicitor James Clinch, at Rathcoole, on September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1830.

A determination not to pay tithes began in 1830. in 1838 a law was passed so that the person renting the land did not have to pay tithes. It was payable only by the head landlord. The people of Brittas, Rathcool and Saggart paid the money to the Parish Priest. Eleven years later Saggart Parish Church was opened. It replaced an old chapel beside it.

### **Tithe Payers 1827**

#### **Rathcoole Parish**

James Allen, Thomas Archbold, Henry Arabin, Mary Bermingham, Miles Bermingham, Pat Bermingham, Widow Broe, John Brady, Patrick Brady, Terrence Brady, Widow Brangan, Richard Brien, John Browne, Frederick Boran, Patrick Bolger, John Byrne, Thomas Byrne, Pat Callaghan, Edward Cavanagh, Laurence Clinch, Pat Commons, John Connell, Richard Connor, Andrew Conway, Thomas Conway – Coyne, Edward Daly, Peter Daly, Isaac Degincourt, William Delany, George Dillon, Laurence Dillon, Michael Dillon, John Dowdale, Andrew Dowdan, Durby Dowd, John Doyle, Pat Doyle, Edward Duff, Andrew Dunne, Michael Dunne, John Ennis, George Eustace, Patrick Eustace, - Findly, Michael Flanagan, Thomas Flanagan, Michael Foran, - Fox, Thomas Fyans, Widow Gerarty, Thomas Green, Philip Grey, Joseph Hill, Thomas Horan, Richard Harricks, Thomas Hart, William Hart, Maurice Hickey, Thomas Hollywood, Michael Hollywood, Patrick Hollywood, Peter Johnston, John Kelly, Henry Kenny, John Keogh, Miles Keogh, Robert La Touche, Peter Locke, John

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

McAllister, Mrs. Mahon, Eliza Mansfield, William Mansfield, Henry Minchers, Widow Murphy, Timothy Ryan, Bartle Senior, James Sinnot, William Spellman, Edward Stacy, Pat Summers, Blydon Sweeny, George Talbot, James Taylor, Widow Tight, John Toole, Matthew Toole, Andrew Walsh, James Walsh, James Ward, Simon Ward, - Watson, - Weeks, Widow Whelan, Matthew Williams, William Williams.

### **Tithe Payers 1831**

#### **Saggart**

John, Peter & William Askins, Michael Bergin, Michael, Robert & John Browne, Widow Broe, Hugh & Francis Brady, James Blany, Patrick & John Byrne, Laurence Byrne, Peter Brady, - Burnet, Widow Beacon, John Crevin, Widow James Callahan – Cannon, Christopher Cullen, Lord Castlecoote, Widow Carroll, Pat Colvan, - Conlan, William Connell, Michael Crawly, Widow, Michael & P. Connor, - Clarke, Thomas Coyle, Widow, Michael, Peter & Timothy Cavanagh, Widow Daly, - Dawson, Thomas Dillon, Michael & J. Devans, John Dunne, Andrew Dowd, Michael & William Dungan, - Dalton, Andrew Devitt, William Doyle, Widow Dungan, Edward Dowling, William Devany, James Donough, Widow Thomas & Michael Doyle, William & Widow Ennis, - Eustace, Charles Ebbs, Edward Flood, Thomas Flood, - Flinn, John Fitzpatrick, Patrick Farrell, Michael Fair, James & Charles Fitzsimons, John Gannon, Joseph Graham, John Golding, Robert Gough, - Gibney, John Green, Thomas, Owen & William Hanlon, Robert Harris, Neil Henry, John Heffernan, Nicholas & William Hamilton, - Hodgens, Peter Humphrys, Bryan Jordan, John Kearns, John Keegan, John Killiam, Widow, Denis, John,

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Laurence & Peter Kelly, - Kenny, Pat Kirwan, Miles Keogh, John King, John Kennedy, Andrew Levy, P.S. Lee, James Linen, Lord Kilwarden, John Lahy, Widow Loughlin, Kitty & Martin Lyons,- Malony, Widow Mulligan, Laurence, James & John Mahon, Matthew McGrath, James McArdle, John McDonnell, John Masterson, Peter McCann, John McKeon, Widow Moore, - Moran, Ann Matthews, Bartle, George & William Murphy, John Meegan, John, Daniel & Darby Mulread, William Murray, Widow & James Nelson, Widow, Charles and John Newson, Widow Norton, - Nowlan – Prendergast, Jane & Kitty Pender, James Pierce, William Paisly, - Quinn, Peter Quinn, James Reilly, Peter Rourke, James, Laurence, Mary, William & Edward Rochford, - Sennet, Edward Stubbs, Robert Steward, James Sheil, (Coolmine House), Widow Sherlock, John Smith, Patrick Sullivan, Widow & Christopher Tyrell, Edward Tisdle, William Tierne, Laurence Thornton, David Townly, Neil Thomas, - Walsh, James Wade, Widow Wogan, Patrick, Thomas & John Watson, Francis & Michael Waters.

### **Griffith Valuation**

Sir Richard Griffiths was born at Sallins in 1784. As an engineer he was appointed Commissioner for the General Survey and Valuation of Rateable Property.

### **Houses about 1850**

Badger Hill – Thomas P. Morgan, Thomas Doyle.

Ballymakelly – John Ennis, Earl of Milltown steward Thomas Carre (150 acres), James Kelly.

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Boherboy – John Fitzpatrick, John Coghlan, John Butterfield, Jane Kelly, William Browne, John Browne, Michael Kirwan, John Stoney, Bryan Cunningham, John Nowlan, Jane Hanlon, Thomas Tyrell, John Harrington, Christopher Cullen, John Mahon, William Hanlon, James McGrath, John Coghlan, John Keon, Andrew Moore, John Ennis.

Brownsbarn – Matthew Callaghan, James Callaghan, Michael Callaghan, Richard Walsh, James Pierce, Thomas Conway, John Fitzsimons, John Gibney, Nicholas Ward, Michael Fitzgerald, Esther Kelly, Elizabeth Reilly, William Armstrong, Rose Fitzpatrick, Richard Walsh, Laurence Rice, Francis Mulligan, Michael Mulligan, John Gibney, George Hamilton, James Tierney, Thomas Byrne, Lawrence Byrne, William Dungan, Thomas Dillon, Thomas Dungan, Margaret Philips, Patrick Mulligan, John Craven, Richard Walsh occupied Royal Garter Stables and Land, Thomas Gibney, James Ward, Edward Ward, Esther Kearns, Christopher Flood.

Calliaghstown Lower – Sir John Kennedy (194 acres), Daniel Murphy.

Calliaghstown Upper – Patrick Synnott, Robert Lee, Michael Croak, Patrick Clarke, James Malone, James Patterson, Thomas Cleary.

Carrigeen – Michael Price, Patrick Hollywood, Dorothea Stacey.

Coldwinter Commons – No houses.

Collegeland – Thomas Roe, John Conor, J. Norton, Joseph Moore (Steward), John Cullen, Richard McCann, Thomas Connor (Corn mill), Patrick Daly.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Commons – Joseph Moore (Steward), Maurice Hickey, Mary Ward, Thomas Murphy, William Bermingham, Richard Talbot, James Mooney, James Bermingham, John Brady, Martin McLoughlin, Daniel Brady, James Flynn, Mary Ward, John Mooney, Jane Johnston, Patrick McLoughlin, Bridget Murphy.

Cooldown Commons – William Hewson.

Coolmine – Steward's house for Sir John Kennedy, Patrick Watson, John Watson, Elizabeth Kelly, Charles Ebbs, Sir John Kennedy, John Doyle.

Crookaunadreenagh – Bridget Broe, Patrick Boulger, Thomas Keogh, Patrick Mulread, Michael Lynch, Patrick Scully, Bartholemew Hammond, Michael Lynch, James Mansfield, Patrick Kelly, Daniel Hollywood, Laurence Hollywood, Patrick Coyne, James Murphy, Thomas Murphy, Patrick Eustace, William Nowlan, Thomas Kelly, William Mansfield, Patrick Kelly, John Connell.

Crooksling – Patrick Farrell, Mary Colvin, John Ennis, Margaret Devany, Catherine Devine, James Casey, Michael Murphy, Bridget Ennis, James Byrne, John McKeon, John Jordan, Bridget Jordan, Charlotte Quinn, John Keegan, James McArdle, John McKeon, Patrick Flynn, James Byrne, Mary Conlon, John Magan, John King, Henry Murray, Mary Dowd, William Askins, William Hanlon, Patrick Connor, Bernard Leary, Thomas Moran, Thomas Lee, Thomas Power, Steward's house for J.J. Verschoyle, Constabulary Barracks, Michael Kinsella, Matthew Golding, John Shea, Ellen Behan, Jane Daly, Thomas Durham, Bernard Healy, William Gregory, Mary Maxwell, Elizabeth Maxwell, John McKeon, Julia Burnett.



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Crockshane – Peter Murphy, Edward Mullally, Daniel Mulvey, Bridget McEntee, Daniel Dillon, Michael Dillon, John Murphy, James Toole, John Kelly, Owen Tight, Patrick Murphy, Robert Talbot, Thomas Ward, Michael Toole, John Toole, Garrett Dowdall, Margaret Timmons.

Farmers Vale – Henry Williams

Fortunestown – Patrick Kirwan, Timothy Kavanagh, Christopher Newson, John Newson, Edward Mahon, Peter Kavanagh, Thomas Kavanagh, John Green, Patrick Hughes, Myles Keogh.

Glebe – Felix Lennon

Greenogue – Thomas Archbold (Corn mill), Thomas Byrne, (Limekiln and Quarry)

Glenaraneen – Edward Delany, William Whatley, Andrew Devitt, Edward Kelly, Mill ponds – John McDonnell, Judith Reilly, John Lyons, Margaret McGrath, John Walsh, Jane Mulread, Thomas Wright, John Dwyer, Edward Dowling, Rose King, Edward Tysdall, Lawrence Farrell, Esther Farrell, Eleanor Nolan, Peter Quinn. John Crawley, Catherine Hanlon, Daniel Mulread, William Tierney, Edward Hynes.

Johnstown – Sir John Kennedy (316 acres), John Golding (Gate lodge), James Marsh (Gate lodge), Patrick Ennis (Forge).

Keating's Park – Thomas Byrne, Edward Mullally, Matthew Mulvey, John Connolly, Patrick Gray.

Lugg – Peter Humphrey, William Dungan, Edward Smith, Bridget Grimes, Daniel Dawson, Lawrence Prendergast,

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Terence Downey, Patrick Walsh, Jane Canning, Catherine Prendergast, Ralph Jordan, Henry Purdon, Peter Hayden, Henry Love, Charles Devine.

Moneenalion Commons, Lower – John Arabin, John Kane, William Loughlin, John O'Hara, James Paisley, James Rochford, Anne Paisley, Patrick Rochford, Lawrence Rochford, John Ryan, Edward Eustace, Lawrence Browne, William Tierney, John Molomey, Mary and Ellen Kelly, Thomas and John Kelly, Michael Nelson, Peter Bradley, Elizabeth Askins, John Gibney, William Hamilton.

Moneenalion Commons, Upper – James Tierney.

Moneyatta Commons – Fair green, National School house, Bridget Coghlan, Joseph Murphy, Francis Brady, William Ryan, Martin Ennis.

Newtown, Lower – James Walsh, Sir John Kennedy, James Toole.

Newtown, Upper – James Nowlan, Graveyard, Mary Connell, Thomas Connor, Joseph Connor.

Raheen – Thomas Brien, John Hill, Eliza Hill, Thomas Hill, Edward Delaney, Andrew Levy, Patrick Kennedy, Jane Kelly, James Lee, John Connor, John Blayney, Thomas Mulread, Mary Tyrrell, Mary Harris, James Murray, Thomas Murray, James Fox, Hugh Cusack, Edward Hynes, James Kearney, James Blayney, Bridget Reilly, Patrick Mulread, John Kelly sen., John Kelly.

Rathcoole – William Spellman, Patrick Dillon, Gilbert Kearns, James Reilly, John Eustace, Jane Johnston, Christopher Dowdall,

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Rose Dillon, Francis Coghlan, Catherine Doody, William Galbraith, John Daly, Edward Dunne, William McAllister, Christopher Bryan, William Flanagan, Thomas Coogan, Lawrence Coffee, Thomas Dunne, Thomas Killeen, Patrick McEvoy, James McLoughlin, Edward Carty, Mary Carroll, John Hughes, Mary Hart, James Byrne, Elizabeth Flynn, Ellen Hyley, William McDowell, Richard Baston, Mary Flanagan, Michael McLoughlin, Patrick Hollywood, Edward Carty, John Dooley, Patrick Murrin, John McCann, Dr. Martin O'Kelly, John Perry, Samuel Armstrong, Bartholemew Senior, James Brady, Catherine Matthews, William H. Bourne, John Geraghty, Matthew Geraghty, Robert Walsh, Thomas Connolly, Matthew Connolly, James Ward, Peter Dillon, Mary Ennis, William Rourke, Mary McLoughlin, Maurice Dillon, Christopher Smyth, Catherine Murphy (Pound), Edward Mullally, James Dillon, John Curran, Maurice Murphy, Thomas Brady, Matthew Cullen, Honoria Murphy, Charles Senior, Thomas Senior, Edward Spear, James Fitzpatrick, Thomas Fyan, Patrick Ennis, Thomas Byrne, James Farrell, Dominic Connor, Margaret McAllister, John Connor, Richard Kelly, Rev. Thomas Hayden (Glebe), James Sheil.

Rathcreedan – William Somers, William Kilbee, Mary Anne McDonnell (Cornmill), James Murrin.

Redgap – Thomas Byrne, Lawrence Murphy, John Kelly, Thomas Green, James Walsh, Rollo Tomassi, Myles Hollywood, John Dunne, John Hume, Thomas Gorman, Patrick Gorman, Maurice Dunne, Elizabeth Bermingham, Michael Dunne, Elizabeth Mansfield, Mary Dowdall, William Keogh, Timothy Ryan, Patrick Doyle, Andrew Devin.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Saggart – Patrick Askin, Michael Askin, William Askin, John J. Verschoyle, John Bittles, John Dunne, Edward Hornidge – steward's house Governors St. Patrick's Hospital, John McDonnell, John Mc Donnell – Paper mills, John Murray, Christopher McCormick, Michael Cummins, Richard Dolan, Archibald Brackenbridge, John Tierny, Thomas Bentley, Francis Sweeney, Elizabeth Bentley, Mary Mack, Daniel Garbally, Edward Glennon, Archibald Linley, John Cummins, Lucy Handcock, Daniel Pidgeon, John Nugent, Anne Masterson, Mary Murphy, Michael Lloyd.

Saggart Village – Watch house and Graveyard, Michael Dungan, Richard Murray, James Mansfield, Jahn Thornley, Peter McCann, John Moran, Daniel Golding, Michael Golding, Anne Masterson, John Brady, Morgan Byrne, Anne Dunne, Daniel Minchers, John McCann, Mary Waters, Michael Bergin, Mary Smyth, Jane Norton, Judith Martin, Catherine Stanley, Rose Wallace, Edward McMahon, Joseph Moran, Lucy Sullivan, Rev. John Dunne, Roman Catholic Chapel, Site of new Roman Catholic Chapel in progress of building.

Slade – No house.

Slievethoul – Patrick Byrne, Thomas Kelly, John Doyle, James Stafford, William Stafford, Lawrence Nowlan, Patrick Nowlan, Michael Kennhy, Thomas Mulread, Michael Kenny, Michael Timmins, James Synnott, Peter Flaherty, Catherine McLoughlin, Michael Higgins, Patrick Farrell, Edward Quinn, Owen Quinn, Michael James, John Timmins, Patrick James, Christopher Bryan, Lawrence McLoughlin, Hugh Brady, Henry Coyne, William Brady, John Connor, Mary Rourke, Myles Connor, John Brady, Thomas Weekes.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Tootenhill – William Fallon, Michael Ledwich, Michael Ryan, Cornelius Wilson, Rose Smyth, Patrick Carroll, Lawrence Toomey, Patrick Kilroy, Emily Kane, Mrs. Harriet Wilson, Mary Duff, John Branagan, John Quinn, Thomas Monaghan, John Smith, Michael Mullally.

Rathcoole Parish		Houses				
	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	
Badgerhill	2	2	1	1	1	
Ballynakelly	2	2	3	1	2	
Calliaghst. L.	2	2	2	3	3	
Calliaghst. U.	5	5	10	5	6	
Carrigeen	3	3	3	4	4	
Collegeland	9	9	9	3	4	
Commons	18	17	18	12	12	
Crockaunadr.	21	16	18	18	15	
Crockshane	19	17	15	13	12	
Farmersvale	1	1	1	1	1	
Glebe	1	0	0	0	0	
Greenogue	8	3	3	5	4	
Johnstown	4	3	4	4	4	
Keating's Park	6	5	4	5	5	
Rathcoole	22	31		6	20	
Rathcreedan	6	5	4	2	2	
Redgap	17	14	17	11	11	
Sladmore	0	2	1	1	1	
Slievethoul	34	23	16	14	10	
Tootenhill	12	10	7	7	7	
Westmanstown	2	1	1	1	1	
Rathcoole town	63	55	102	79	66	
<b>Parish total</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>191</b>	

1871 - Rathcoole town included Rathcoole.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

<b>Population</b>					
	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Badgerhill	12	12	5	4	4
Ballynakelly	10	11	13	8	9
Calliaghst. L.	14	12	11	18	7
Calliaghst. U.	38	32	43	27	26
Carrigeen	28	23	23	27	21
Collegeland	42	51	62	15	11
Commons	61	71	81	58	42
Crockaunadr.	99	78	80	72	48
Crockshane	93	63	62	58	37
Farmersvale	9	5	7	12	9
Glebe	3	0	0	0	0
Greenogue	40	11	18	27	21
Johnstown	21	19	30	27	26
Keating's Park	29	32	22	24	24
Rathcoole	108	130		26	63
Rathcreedan	35	29	22	10	4
Rathcoole Town	380	337	459	344	276
<b>Parish Total</b>	<b>1,356</b>	<b>1,139</b>	<b>1,124</b>	<b>929</b>	<b>764</b>
<b>Saggart Parish</b>					
	<b>Houses</b>				
	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Boherboy	18	16	14	14	15
Brownsbarn	34	25	21	18	18
Coldwater Com.	0	0	1	1	1
Cooldown Com.	0	2	1	0	0
Coolmine	6	6	3	2	2
Crooksling	35	27	21	21	22
Fortunestown	10	8	8	7	7
Glenaraneen	21	16	14	12	14

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Lugg	13	12	9	8	7
Moneenal. C. L.	22	14	14	10	11
Moneenal. C. U.	0	0	0	0	0
Moneyatta Com.	6	4	3	3	3
Newtown, Lower	1	1	1	1	1
Newtown, U.	5	5	5	6	5
Raheen	23	15	15	14	13
Saggart	34	35	29	30	23
Slade	10	11	11	10	10
Saggart Town	32	23	26	24	30
<b>Parish total</b>	<b>270</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>182</b>
<b>Population</b>					
Boherboy	99	87	65	54	41
Brownsbarn	170	122	111	120	83
Coldwater Com.	0	0	0	2	2
Cooldown Com.	0	7	3	0	0
Coolmine	26	31	15	10	8
Crooksling	194	149	115	87	88
Fortunestown	56	46	44	36	25
Glenaraneen	139	110	92	74	76
Lugg	58	39	31	33	23
Moneenal. C. L.	104	58	58	32	34
Moneenal. C. U.	0	0	0	0	0
Moneyatta Com.	32	22	22	12	10
Newtown, Lower	6	3	2	9	10
Newtown, U.	24	32	32	38	34
Raheen	143	87	90	73	64
Saggart	146	146	155	114	73
Slade	53	68	63	48	45
Saggart Town	158	108	108	111	154
<b>Parish Total</b>	<b>1,408</b>	<b>1,115</b>	<b>1,006</b>	<b>853</b>	<b>770</b>

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### **Slater's directory 1894**

#### **Rathcoole**

Post and Money Order, telegraph office and savings bank.

Postmistress Sophie Senior

Letters arrive 10.20 a.m. and despatched 4.15 p.m.

Magistrates – Rathcoole and Saggart

Sir John C. Kennedy Bart., Alexander Graydon Esq., John D.

Drury, D. O'Carroll, Richard Walsh, E.B. Nelly.

Church of Ireland minister – Rev. George Thomas Houston  
Barton.

National schoolteachers – D. Hallissey, Mary Doyle.

Dispensary medical officer and registrar Dr. J.P. O'Riordan

Private Resident Rev. Barton                      Sir J.C.B. Kennedy J.P.

John McCann, Keating's Park                      Dr. O'Riordan

James Sheil, Rathcoole House                      Edward Spier

#### **Commercial**

Andrew Carroll : Spirit dealer

William Fyans : Grocer and Spirit dealer

William Fyans jnr. : Carpenter

Patrick Hayden : Butcher

John Jacobs : Grocer and Ironmonger

Michael McLoughlin : Taor

Sophie Senior : Grocer and Spirit dealer

Patrick Cullen

#### **Farmers**

James Harvey, Sophia Senior, Edward Sheil, John Walsh



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

### 1901 Census

Occupiers : Ml. Coughlan, Chris Whelan, Peter Crossdale, Bridget Ryan, Ed. Senior (Shop), Thomas Fry (Public house), Cath. Hill, Jas. Timmons, Ed. Lawlor, Jas. Leonard, Jas. Lennon, Mary Fyans (Public house), Jas. Brennan, Patrick Dunne, J. Jacob, Julia Fitzpatrick, Jas. Whitethorn, Mary Walsh (Public house), Myles McGrath, W.F.L. Shea, J. Stacey, Ml. Moran, Cath. McDermott, M. Morrin, Wm. Bermingham, Thos. Reilly, P. Hayden (Shop), Jas. Mullally, Mgt. Coogan, Mgt. Stuart, Thos. Kerins, Ed. Byrne, Mary Byrne, Annette Sheil, Peter McDonnell, Cath. Keogh, Kelly, Ed. Byrne (Lodging house), Wm. Senior (Lodging house), Ml. Flanagan, Mrs. McAllister, Ed. Foley and P. Halloran (Police Barracks).

### Thomas directory 1953

Rathcoole consists of one street, about a quarter of a mile in length, chiefly of small houses, irregularly built. The only public building is the Church of Ireland church, a neat plain edifice. It has a dispensary.

### Rathcoole 1953

P. Bennett. Peter Byrne, P.C. Keating's Park, Mrs. Burns (vintner), Col. J. V.V. Campbell. M.E. Carroll, R. Chambers (farmer), Civic Guard Barracks, J.S. Clarke, James Cowley, Miss Crinion, Greeogue, Mrs. DeLacey, Keating's Park, C. Dowdall, P. Doyle and P. Kilroy, (wine and spirit merchant), B. Duffy, E.J. Dunne, Inniscara, A. Fitzgerald, Michael Fyans (vintner), Thomas Fyans, Patrick Gallagher, Grange Mills Ltd, Sean Murray, Greenouge Flour Mills, Thomas Harty, J. Hayden, James Hayden, victualler, Richard Humphreys, J. Kennedy,

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

Patrick Keogh, Wm. Keogh, J. Kennedy, Sir R.B. Kennedy, James Kirwan, Rathcreedan and Haddington Rd., M.C. Lawler, L. McAneney, J. Mc.Donald, M. Morgan, J. Murray, grocer, S. Murray, Greenogue, J.F. Murray, K. O'Byrne, Patrick O'Carroll, vintner, A. Purcell, W. Quinn, Rathcoole sub post office and telephone and telegraph office, Jane Murphy, sun post mistress, Rathcoole Church – Rev. W.L.F. Shea, Rectory, John Sheil, solicitor, Hillview, Miss Shel, Rathcoole House, William Stafford P.C., Mrs. M. Stewart, T.J. Taffe.

### **Saggart 1953**

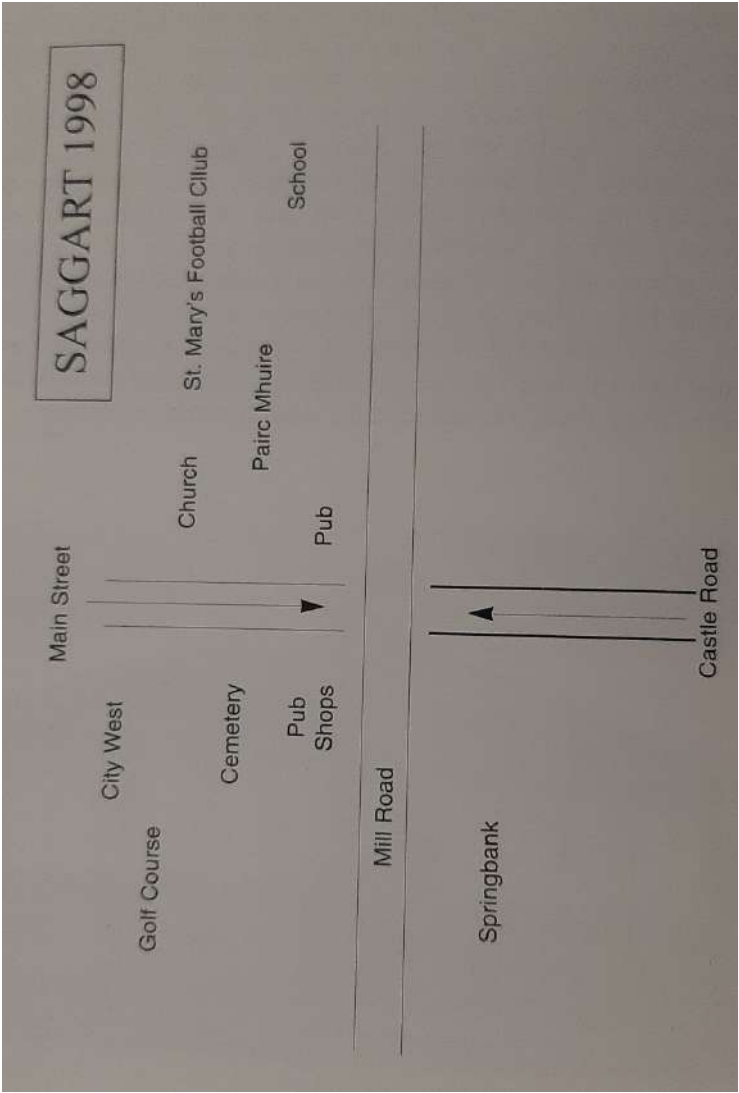
A. Burnett, M. Byrne, general stores, P.Carney, Mr. Childs, Corballis farmer, Mrs. Considine, Mrs. K. Cagney, Landscape, E.R. Carter, Boherboy, Mrs. Catherine Dillon, Glenaraneen, Rev. Fr. Doyle C.C., Joseph Duffy, Millbridge, Mr. Horsburgh, Paper Mills, Mrs. Mary Jacob, grocer, Andrew Kennedy, vintner, The Embankment, Mrs.Kinmouth, Glenaraneen, Mrs. J. McDermott, Corballis, Mrs. Murphy, vintner, Mr. and Mrs. Monks, National School, Miss A. Newsome, Fortuneston, Mrs. N. Nowlan, Brownsbarn, Thomas O'Brien, general stores, Rodgers, Hamilton Fortunestown House, Saggart/ Rathcoole Roman Catholic Church Rev. John Larkin P.P., J. Berthistle sub post master, Swiftbrook Paper Mills, Lt. Col. John Verschoyle Campbell, Tassagart House, Walter Walsh, Kingswood, Thomas Watkins, sand contractor, Boherboy.

## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

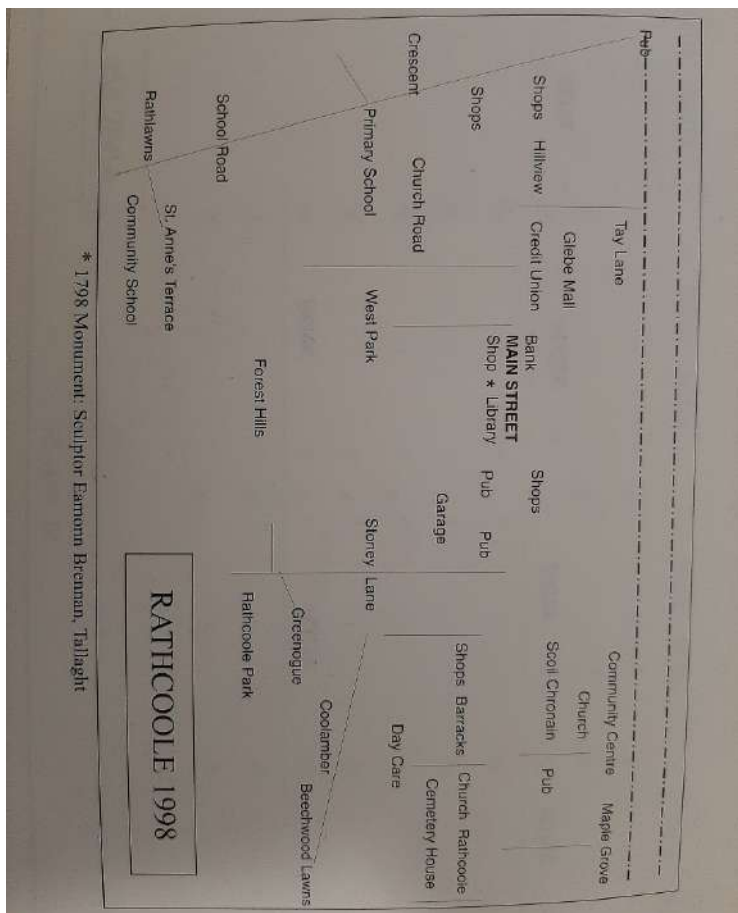


The Four Districts Credit Union at Rathcoole was built in the 1990's.

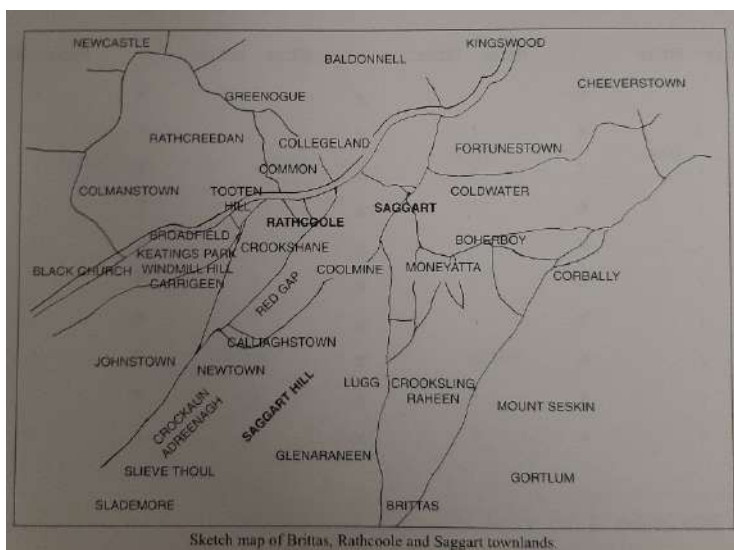
A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES

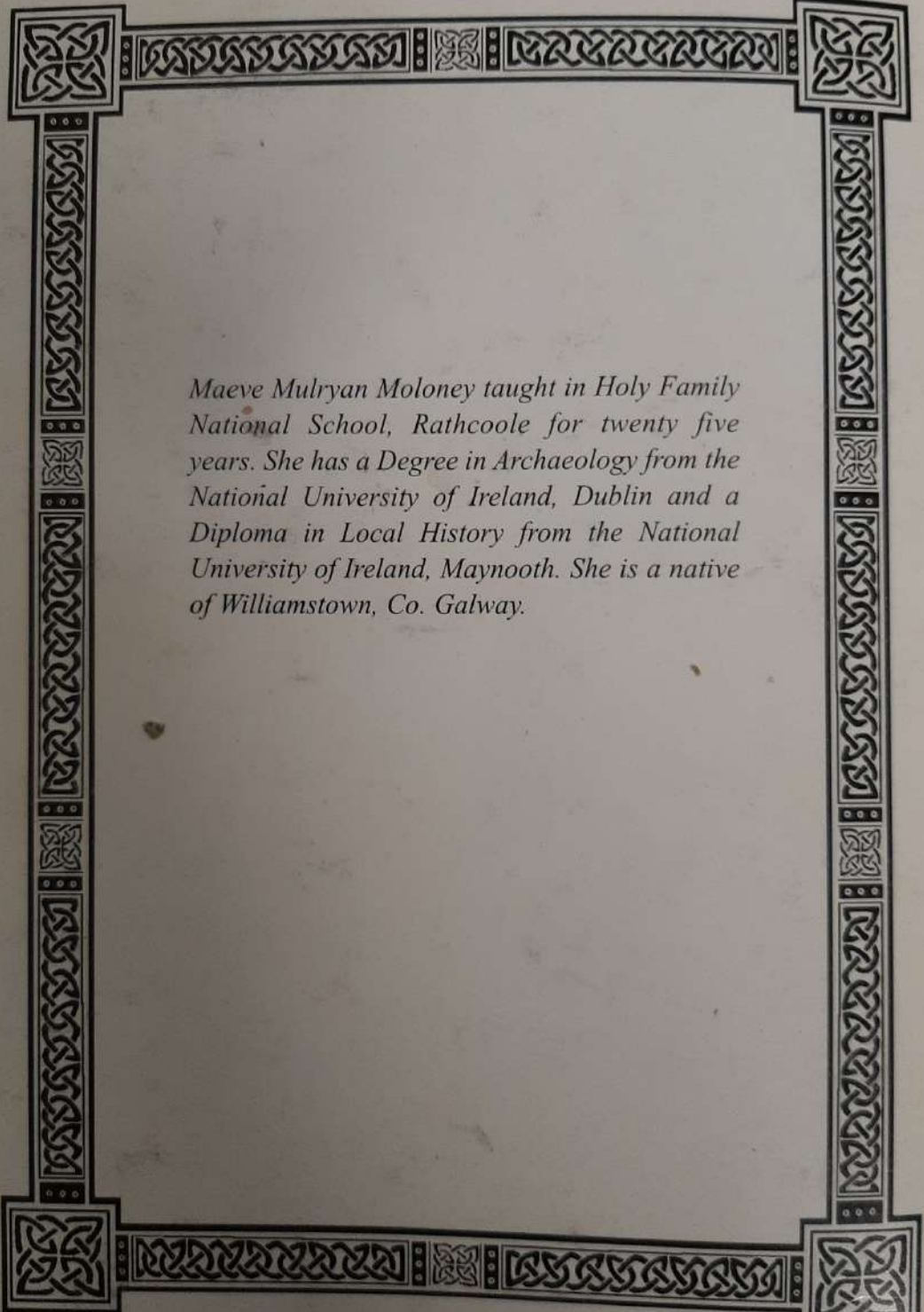


## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES



## A HISTORY OF SAGGART AND RATHCOOLE PARISHES





*Maeve Mulryan Moloney taught in Holy Family National School, Rathcoole for twenty five years. She has a Degree in Archaeology from the National University of Ireland, Dublin and a Diploma in Local History from the National University of Ireland, Maynooth. She is a native of Williamstown, Co. Galway.*