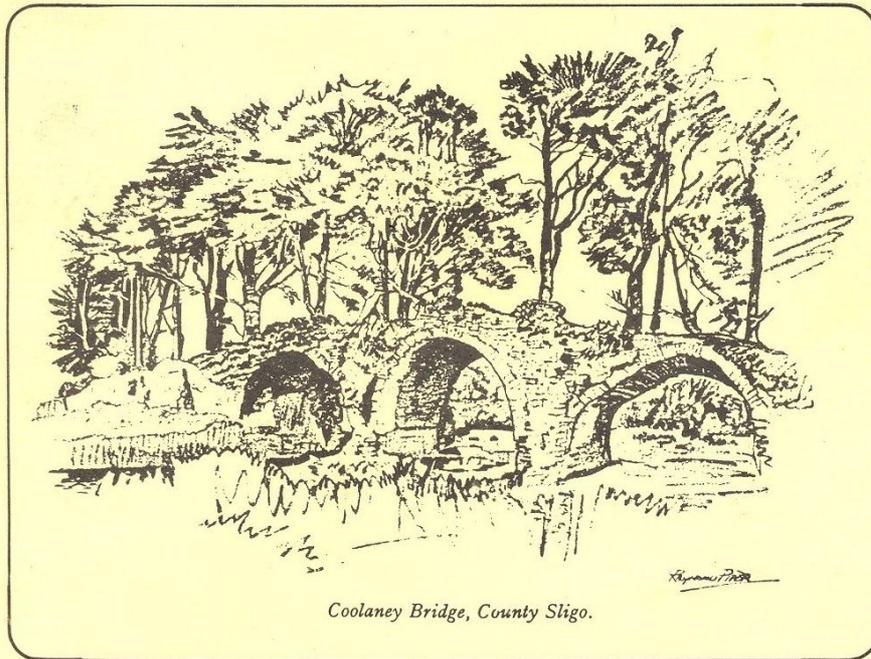


KILLORAN and COOLANEY

A LOCAL HISTORY

By

MICHAEL FARRY



Cover drawing of Coolaney Bridge by Raymond Piper, published in "*This is Ireland: Mayo, Sligo, Leitrim and Roscommon*" by Richard Hayward, published by Arthur Baker Ltd., London 1955.

To: Winifred, Fiona, Oisín, Sinéad and Aisling.

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*The Voice. The wind blows out of the gates of the day,
The wind blows over the lonely of heart,
And the lonely of heart is withered away.
While the faeries dance in a place apart,
Shaking their milk-white feet in a ring,
Tossing their milk-white arms in the air;
For they hear the wind laugh and murmur and sing
Of a land where even the old are fair,
And even the wise are merry of tongue;
But I heard a reed of Coolaney say,
'When the wind has laughed and murmured and sung
The lonely of heart is withered away!'*

from "**The Land of Heart's Desire**" (1894) by W.B. Yeats

"**The Collected Plays of W.B. Yeats**" - London Macmillan, 1966

More Recent Books by Michael Farry:

A Chronicle of Conflict; Sligo 1914-1921. (Trim, 1992)

(Out of print, an electronic version will be available later this year.)

The Aftermath of Revolution: Sligo 1921-23. (UCD Press, Dublin, 2000)

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The Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies and Dermot O'Hara for permission to use the

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I have also to thank my parents, brothers and sisters each of whom helped in various ways at various times. My wife, Winifred, was a constant source of help and encouragement and helped provide the necessary peace and quiet when Fiona, Oisín and Sinéad threatened disruption!

Finally, to all those others unnamed above who helped in any way, I offer my sincere thanks.

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FOREWORD

(1985 Edition)

This study of the history of my native parish began as a history project in St. Patrick's Training College in 1967. It continued over the next decade and a half, partly as a hobby and partly as an obsession. It has led me into many a dusty archive and to many a friendly fireside. Having all but exhausted the sources I decided the time had come to put some order on my research and to present the result as a book of local history.

I decided against the "bits and pieces" approach to local history writing and have tried to present a continuous narrative tracing the development of the parish from earliest times to the founding of the state. Scarcity of sources has meant, of course, that there are many gaps in this narrative.

While researching this work I have been constantly amazed at the amount of historical knowledge still preserved by the older people in the parish. Since the advent of television and the death of the "rambling house" this knowledge is not being passed on.

It is my wish that in collecting and publishing the local history of the parish I may be playing a small part in the preservation of knowledge which otherwise would be lost. I have tried to avoid giving offence to anyone living or dead and to this end have omitted some names in quotations. If, in spite of this, I have offended anyone, I apologise. I realise only too well the shortcomings of this study. I would be delighted to hear from anyone who wishes to correct or add to anything in this book.

Finally, I hope that this little book will help the people of Killoran parish to appreciate the rich heritage of their past and the deep historical roots which have left their marks on the present parish landscape.

Michael Farry,

Trim, Co. Meath.

30 October 1985

FOREWORD

2005 Edition

It is just twenty years since this local history of Killoran and Coolaney first appeared in print. It has been long unavailable and I often get requests for copies. I have decided to make it available as an E-book so that those anxious to obtain a copy may easily do so.

There was a nagging temptation to undertake a major revision and updating of the work but I have withstood this temptation! The major number of new sources which have become available since its publication ensure that such a revision would be lengthy and time consuming. Perhaps someone else might be enthused to undertake this work and especially add an account of the parish in the twentieth century.

I have therefore made only a few minor changes. I have corrected most of the many embarrassing misspellings and typographical errors in the original and standardised the spelling of some of the placenames. Otherwise this is merely the original work in a different format. I hope those who read it well consider its reissue worthwhile.

Michael Farry

Trim, Co. Meath.

20 January 2005

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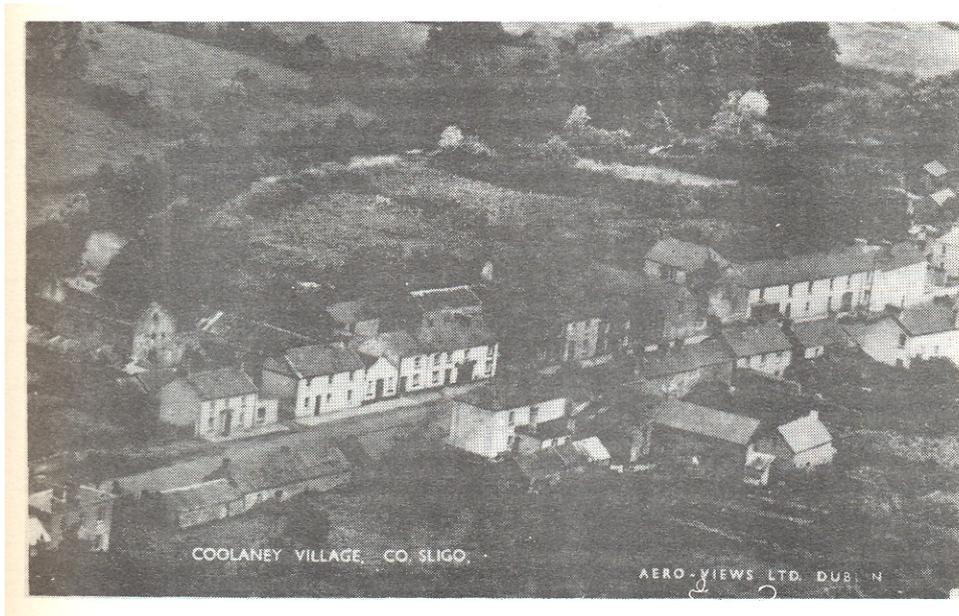
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An aerial photograph of the western end of Coolaney village published as a post card in the 1960s. The river is in the background and the remains of the mill are centre left.



A similar aerial view of Rockfield showing the church and the national school middle right. The small house opposite the church was the national school pre 1900. This house has been since demolished. At bottom left is the flat roofed parochial house and middle left is the previous parochial house.

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CHAPTER 1

THE PARISH OF KILLORAN

The parish of Killoran lies in the centre of County Sligo on the southern side of the Ox Mountains. Its area is nearly 14,000 statute acres but much of this is mountain and bog. It is part of the barony of Leyney, which stretches from Ballisodare south west to the Mayo border. Since the seventh century the parish, and indeed most of the barony, has belonged to the O'Hara family. This family over the years showed great skill in holding on to their lands in times of plantations and confiscations. They continued to own the land of over half the parish of Killoran until Land Purchase early in the twentieth century.

The parish gets its name from the church at Killoran in the south of the parish founded, it is said, by a virgin called Luathrenna, a member of the O'Hara family. After the Reformation this church was no longer used by the Catholics so no settlement grew up there. Instead a small village grew up around O'Hara's Castle at Coolaney where there was a crossing point on the Owenboy river leading to an important pass across the Ox Mountains by the Hungry Rock. The castle disappeared but the town remained and developed, chiefly because it was the main town on the O'Hara estate. A bridge was built across the river and was later replaced by a new smaller bridge. The old bridge can still be seen and now has trees growing on top of it. The trees add to the picturesqueness of the scene but will probably hasten the collapse of the bridge. Nowadays the parish is often called Coolaney parish.

Coolaney itself has no church, the Catholic Church is at Rockfield about a mile away. The Church of Ireland Church is at Rathbarran also within a mile of Coolaney.

Most of the people of the parish remained Catholic during the penal times but a large number of Church of Ireland tenants were introduced to the parish in the second half of the eighteenth century by O'Hara. Some of these helped establish the linen industry at Greenville. This collapsed early in the next century contributing to the general fall in living standards, which led to the great famine of 1846-49. This famine took a heavy toll on the parish. How many died we will never know but the

population fell by 1406 people between 1841 and 1851. Emigration, which had started before the famine, increased during the rest of the century and whole townlands, especially those on the mountainside, were almost denuded of people.

That same century saw power being slowly taken by the people from the landlords. Before the famine secret societies tried to protect the tenants. After the famine, especially after the founding of the Land League, open parish organisations did the same thing by boycotting and by naming offenders. As voting rights were extended and local government reformed, political power was taken by the people. Peter Cawley of Coolaney was a leading figure in local politics at this time. The tenants of Killoran were not badly treated in general by their landlords but the desire to own the land they farmed was strong and was finally satisfied in the early years of the twentieth century. In the war of independence the countrywide pattern of rejection of British rule was repeated in the parish though there were no great military engagements or victories there.

The National School system established in the parish soon after the famine replaced what was a widespread, if haphazard, system which included hedge schools and parochial schools. It helped raise the level of literacy in the parish which, no doubt, helped increase political awareness and a desire for self improvement reflected in the increase in emigration and the wresting of power and land from the landlords.

The railway came to the parish in the 1880's as a response to famine conditions. It, together with improved roads and transport, helped to open up the parish and bring a certain amount of prosperity to Coolaney.

"Killoran parish lies in the north-west of Leyney, and is a secluded district, being bounded both on the north and west by the Ox mountains, which rise here to about nine hundred feet above the level of the sea. The land is of various qualities, some in the neighbourhood of Coolaney and in the townland of Killoran being rich, some in other places of medium quality, and the residue either reclaimed bog or wild mountain, still in a state of nature".

Terence O'Rorke - "History of Sligo, town and county" Dublin, 1889.



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CHAPTER 2

PLACENAMES

KILLORAN:

This is the name of the parish and of two townlands Killoran North and Killoran South. "Kill" comes from the Irish "cill" meaning a church and in place names is usually followed by a saint's name. It seems that the saint in question is not St. Oran but a virgin named Luathreann who is mentioned in many old lists of Irish saints. Her feast day was the eight of June. It is said that St. Luathreann was a member of the O'Hara clann and that her father's name was Colman. The remains of the church of Killoran still exist in the townland of Killoran North.

COOLANEY:

Scholars have differed as to whether this name comes from the Irish Cúil Áine meaning Áine's Corner, or from Cúil Abhainne, the corner of the river. The evidence seems to suggest the former though what Áine is meant is not clear. The Sligo historian, Wood-Martin, recounts a tradition that the names Coolaney and Collooney came from two daughters of the McDonagh clan of Tirerril called Áine and Una. This seems no more than a fanciful tale, the name Collooney does not in fact derive from Una.

It seems probable that the Áine from whom Coolaney gets its name is the ancient Irish goddess Áine. Many Irish placenames include her name, Cnoc Áine in Limerick, Tobar Áine and Lios Áine in Derry. She was often connected with the old Celtic harvest festival of Lughnasa celebrated at the end of July and which still survives in those "patterns" held on the last Sunday of July. Beside Coolaney at Tullaghan hill a very famous Lughnasa pattern was held until the middle of the nineteenth century. This could indicate a cult of the goddess Áine in the area, which would be reflected in the name Coolaney.

Coolaney is mentioned in a number of Irish songs especially songs from Ulster of the type where the poet writes of traveling the country in search of his lost love.

One such song is Seachran Chairn tSiadhail which contains this:

"Bhí mé í Muine Mór is i gCaisleán Cába,
Í mBáile Uí Dhálaigh is í Lios na Sgíach;
Bhí mé í Muineachán is ar an Ghráinsigh
'S ag Droichead Chúil Áine le tuilleadh 's bliadhain.

I was in Moneymore and in Cape Castle (Co. Antrim) In
Ballygawley (Co. Tyrone) and in Lisnaskea,
I was in Monaghan and in Grange (Co. Sligo)
And at Coolaney bridge for more than a year.

A similar poem "Seabhac na Rabhan" has the following:

Níl clúid cnoc nó cearn ó Dhroichead Átha go Binn Eadair na long
Thart chugat go Cúl Áine is gach áit eile ar feadh na hÉireann,
Nár fhiafruigheas de gach aoin-neach gan chás ar tagadh in mo shiubhal,
An bhfaca sibh éinin beag beil-bhinn a scar le Seabhac na Rabhan.

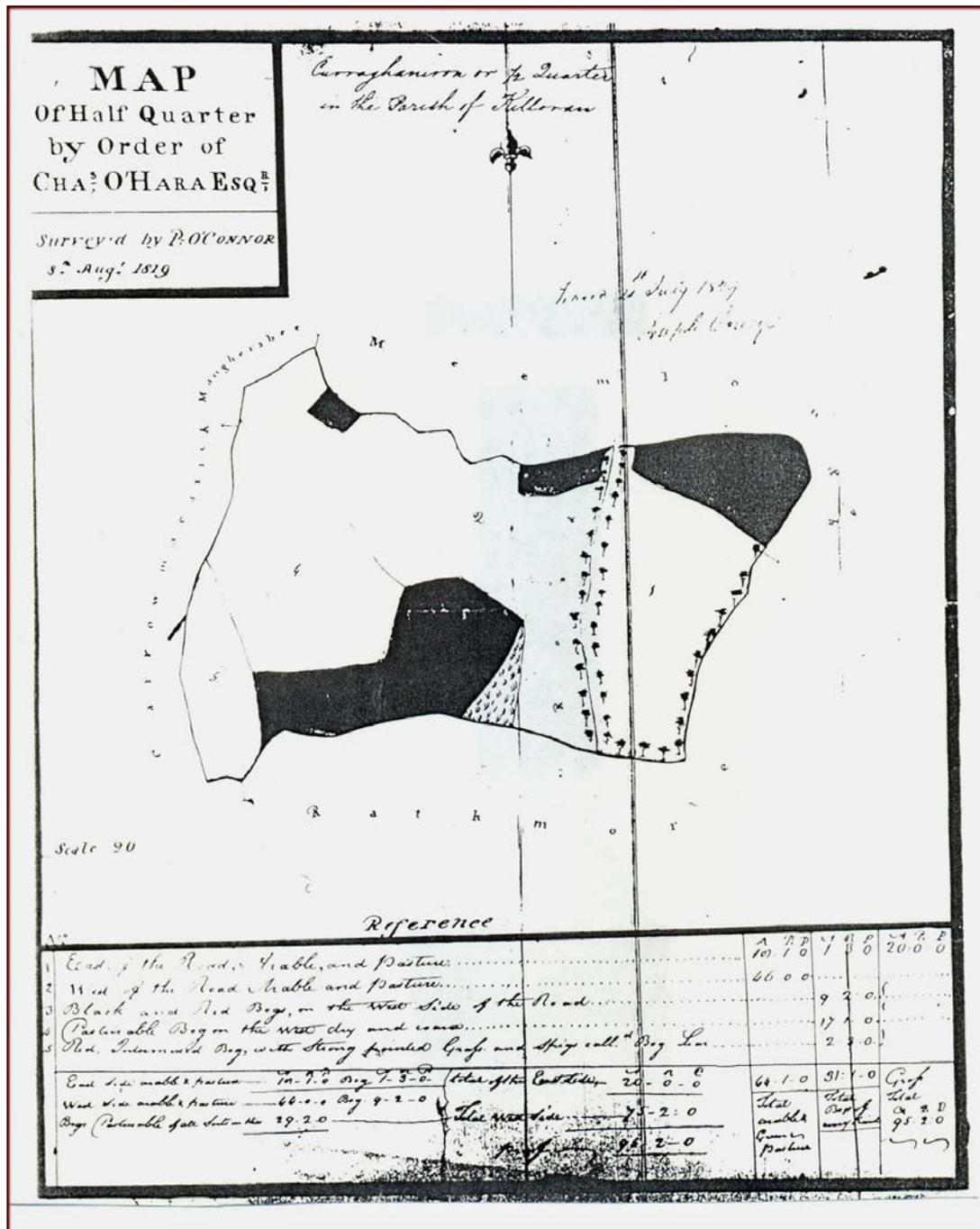
DOOMORE

The mountain just to the north of Coolaney town is called Doomore - Dumha Mór - The large mound. This refers to a large cairn of stones on its summit. The diameter of the cairn is about 50 ft. and its height 12 ft. There is a tradition that this mound contains the remains of Donall, a member of the O'Hara family, who was killed there while hunting. His hounds are said to have eaten his flesh. The mound is called "Laghta Dhónal na Guire" - the stone of Donall of the hounds - on a map dated 1716.

TOWNLANDS

The town land is the smallest administrative division in the country and became the basic division of the country in the seventeenth century. The townlands as we know them were fixed by the Ordnance Survey of the 1830's. The map for Country Sligo is dated 1836. This survey standardised the names of the town lands and in some

instances created new town lands and in other cases removed names, which were up to then regarded as townlands.



Map of Halfquarter townland dated 1819 showing to its north west a townland called Maugherabee, Machaire Buí = Yellow Plain. This no longer exists as a separate townland; it is now the northern part of Carrownacarrick.

In Killoran parish, Killoran townland was divided into North and South. Areas which appear as town lands in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century but are not included as such on the Ordnance Survey map include:

CARROWMULLIN - The mill quarter - now part of Carrownacarrick.

COILLTEBARRA - The top woods, now a farm in Carrownleam. At one time in the early 1800's this was called Trimgrove.

MAGHERABWEE - The yellow plain possibly named because of the yellow flower on the whins there. Occupied what is now the northern end of Carrownacarrick.

DRUMCON: The clean ridge - Now the southern part of Knockatotaun.

CARROWNATREENTA: The Quarter of the third - mentioned as one of the three quarters of Coolaney, Rathosey and Castlequarter were the other two.

Townlands as marked on the Ordnance Survey map are as follows with their acreage:

BALLINVALLY - Báile an Bhealaigh - Townland of the road	235-1-33
CABRAGH - Cabrach - bad land	1127-2-24
CAPPAGH - Ceapach - Tillage plot	556-1-18
CARHA - Carthá - Rock	1059-2-15
CARROWCLOONEEN - Cearthrú Cluainin - Quarter of the meadow	193-0-25
CARROWGAVNEEN - Ceathrú na Gaibhnin - Quarter of the Smith	685-1-31
CARROWNABANNY - Ceathrú na Bháinne - Quarter of the milk	801-3-17
CARROWNACARRICK - Ceathrú na Carraige - Quarter of the rock	460-2-35
CARROWNAGLERAGH - Ceathrú na gCléireach - Quarter of the Clergy	180-3-14
CARROWNACLEIGHA - Ceathrú na Cloiche - Quarter of the rock	178-3-29
CARROWNASKEAGH - Ceathrú na Sgeach - Quarter of the bushes	719-2-26
CARROWNATEEWAUN - Ceathrú na dtaobhán - Quarter of the sides of the sticks	122-2-8
CARROWNLEAM - Ceathrú an Leim - Quarter of the leap	242-2-9
CARROWNLOUGHAN - Ceathrú an Locháin - Quarter of the lake	510-1-18
COOLANEY - Cúil Áine - Anne's Corner	350-9-19
CREEVAUN - Craobh Bhán - White Branches	190-0-11

DEENODES - Díon Fhód - Sheltered sod	291-2-24
GORTAKEERAN - Gort a Chaorthainn - Field of Rowan trees	905-0-30
HALF QUARTER (Curraghaniron) Currach an Íarainn - Quarter of the Iron	166-0-18
KILLORAN NORTH - Cill Luaithrenn - Luaithrenn's Church	306-1-22
KILLORAN SOUTH	240-2-39
KNOCKADOO -Cnoc a Dúmha - Hill of the Mound	810-3-37
KNOCKATOTAUN - Cnoc a Tóiteain - Hill of the Burning	274-0-32
LISSALOUGH - Lios an Locha - Fort of the lake	151-0-39
MOYMLOUGH - Maidhin Locha - Lake of the Eruption	409-1-30
RATHBARRAN - Barran's fort	401-2-21
RATHMACTIERNAN - Mac Tiernan's fort	145-2-24
RATHMORE - Rath Mor - the Big Fort	368-3-32
RATHOSEY - Osey's fort	1010-3-23
SEEVNESS - Saoibh Inis - Bad land	674-2-20
SHANCOUGH - Sean Cuach - Old Hollow	220-2-20

Carrownacleigha is now normally known as Rockfield, its English translation. It seems probable that the change, which was gradually adopted and was not completed until well into the twentieth century, was connected with the establishment of the National School there. In all the Department of Education records since 1850 the school is referred to as Rockfield N.S., and the school's principal Matthew Doyle calls it Rockfield in a letter of October 1860. In November 1860 Richard Beere wrote "I think Rockfield School is near Coolaney. Perhaps our priest gave a new name to his school at Carrownacligh".

In 1842 the subdivisions of Killoran townland are given as follows: Killoneen, Cloonageever, Ballinlobane, Knocknagleer, Ballinlough and Newtown. Killoneen means Owen's church and is the site of an early church or monastery. Cloonageever - The meadow of McGiever or Mcivor. Ballinlobane - The townland of the mud. Knocknagleer - Cnoc na gCléir - the hill of the clergy, Finnegan's house in Knockadoo was once called "the priest's house" perhaps there is some connection.

Ballinlough - Báile an locha - town of the lake refers to Knockadoo lake.

RIVERS AND LAKES:

The river which flows through the parish is now usually called "the big river" but its proper name is Owenboy - Abhann Bui - the yellow river. On some old maps, one of 1716 for instance, it is called Owennalevy.

The river which flows along the southern border of Carrowclooneen and Rathbarran is called Shaelin Domhain - Seithlin Domhain - the deep drain. Another small stream which flows through Killoran townlands. Lissalough and Creevaun is called Soumia - Sughmaire - the swallow hole. In Creevaun this stream disappears underground to re-appear later in the same townland. A river which comes from the mountain to join the Owenboy is called Cloughar, Clochar - stoney river.

Mullagh lake lies between Carrowgavneen and Gortakeeran between 600 and 700 feet above sea level. Mullach is the Irish for summit and a visit to this beautiful lake will demonstrate the aptness of the name. Carrownaskeagh lake, Carrownabanny lakes, Knockadoo lake, Killoran North and South lakes are all named from the townlands in which they are situated. On the parish boundary in Carrownagleragh is Riskeen lake. Riskeen - Riascín - means the small marsh. Cartron lake lies between Deenodes and Killoran. Cartron refers to a measure of land so the name of the lake may be a survival of an old place name.

OTHER PLACENAMES:

BAILEANDONSA - Báile an Damhsa - the townland of the dancing, an area east of the road between Coolaney and the Collooney crossroads.

CARN - There are at least two places in the parish called by this name, one in Ballinvally to the west of the road and the other in Lissalough west of the Creevaun road. Carn refers to a cairn of stones which may be a prehistoric burial site.

CLOGAS - Cloch Glas - Limestone. An area in Rockfield townland which has a limestone quarry and a lime kiln.

CROCAVEEN - Cnoc a' Mhín - the smooth hill, one of the foothills of the Ox

Mountains in Seevenis.

CROCLEATHAN - Cnoc Leathan - the broad hill - another of those foothills.

CROCNAHORANN - Probably Cnoc na hEorna - the hill of the barley, an area in Carrownloughan.

DUNEEN - The little fort, along the river in Knockadoo near the stepping stones.

GLEANN - A valley, the area along the river in Carha and Carrownaskeagh.

MULLACHABAWN - The top of the Pasture, a hill in Knockatotaun.

MULLACHADOO - Mullach an Dúmha - the mound - the top of Knockadoo hill which has a mound.

SEAN BAI LE - The old town - an area in Carrowgavneen.

SHEEAUN - Siodhán - a fairy hill. A much quarried hill in Rathbarran townland.

SPINK - Spinnc - a cliff - a boggy mountainous area in Carrownaskeagh and Carrownabanny.

SRONCAOI RE - Sheep's nose, a hill in the eastern part of Carrowclooneen near the road said to be shaped like the said animal's nose.

Almost without exception the names already mentioned are based on Irish words and were obviously coined when Irish was the spoken language in the area. There are some placenames, which are more recent and are in English. These usually refer to individuals or families who had some connection with the place.

MOLLY MOFFAT'S - just outside Coolaney on the Rockfield road.

CATHERINE MULLEN'S - a fork in the road beside the railway line in the southern end of Knockadoo.

MEEHAN'S ALT - Alt means a cliff. This is beside Killoran North lake.

PETER CAWLEY'S BRAE - later known as the Doctor's Hill on the Rockfield road from Coolaney. Peter Cawley figures prominently in this history 1877-1917.

LITTLE ANTHONY'S - near the river in Carrownaskeagh. His surname was Lang.

KELLY'S HOLLOW - on the Carrownlean road from Coolaney near Banks' gate.

The man in question was Dr. Samuel Kelly who served Coolaney district in the middle of the nineteenth century.

THE KENNEL BRAE - the hill on the Creevaun road near the creamery. The occupants of Cultibar house had dog kennels there.

WHINNY HILL - the hill beside the old creamery in Carrowleam so called because of the whin bushes growing there.

MILLTOWN - there is a small collection of houses called Milltown in Killoran North. A mill for grinding corn was once situated nearby.

STIRABOUT HILL - in Rathosey. The story goes that a group of men were cutting turf there for the brickyard. They all got drunk one day and the woman who was bringing stirabout for their meal was so upset that she spilled the pot of stirabout.

SEERY'S HOLLOW - this is a low spot on the road in Carrownaskeagh on the way to the ladies' Brae.

THE BUFFER'S HILL - this is a hill at the southern end of Carrownaskeagh and Carrownabanny. There is a large rock called the Buffer's rock beside the Cloonacool to Coolaney road. The identity of this buffer seems to be lost forever.

LAVERY'S LANE - a lane in Ballinvally bears this name. No family of that name lives there now nor did they in 1858.

FOLKLORE EXPLANATION OF SOME KILLORAN PLACENAMES

These were collected in the 1930s and are preserved in the folklore archives in UCD in Dublin.

HOW ROCKFIELD GOT ITS NAME

"Long ago two giants were fighting on the top of Knocknashee, about four miles from Rockfield. One of these giants was fair, the other dark. After three days of fierce fighting the black giant put the fair one to flight. He fled towards the sea and in an effort to kill him before he reached it, the black giant hurled a huge rock after him and it came to the ground in this townland" - Told by Tom McCarrick.

HOW KNOCKADOO GOT ITS NAME

"There is a big hill at the side of Knockadoo called "Dubh". Long ago two men were hunting on it as it was a great place for game. In the evening a heavy mist fell all around and the two men got lost in the bottoms and could not make their way out. At last they saw a light in front of them and they went in its direction. But they never

reached it for they were found dead in the morning. The people buried them and built a great mound over them" - Told by Pat Taaffe.

HOW CREEVAUN GOT ITS NAME

"Long ago there lived an old man of whom the people were afraid because of his peculiar habits. He lived alone and never did any work on his small farm so people wondered how he existed. Sometimes he was missing for days and his neighbours thought that he must be away with the fairies. One morning, about seven o'clock, two men were on their way to the fair of Collooney and passed his house. They were surprised to see him in his garden, coat off, spade in hand, working hard. They were afraid to pass without speaking so the man nearest to him said "Fine morning". His companion added "God bless the work". He looked at them for a while and said slowly " Good luck or bad luck, I'm setting a few white-thorn shrubs to shelter the fairies, there will be a hundred on every 'Craobh-Bhán'." The two men on hearing this were not long in starting their journey. That is how Creevaun got its name and it is a peculiar fact that to this day there is scarcely any bush in this townland except for the white thorn" - Told by Dan Gallagher.

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CHAPTER 3

PRE-HISTORIC AND EARLY CHRISTIAN KILLORAN

WEDGE TOMBS:

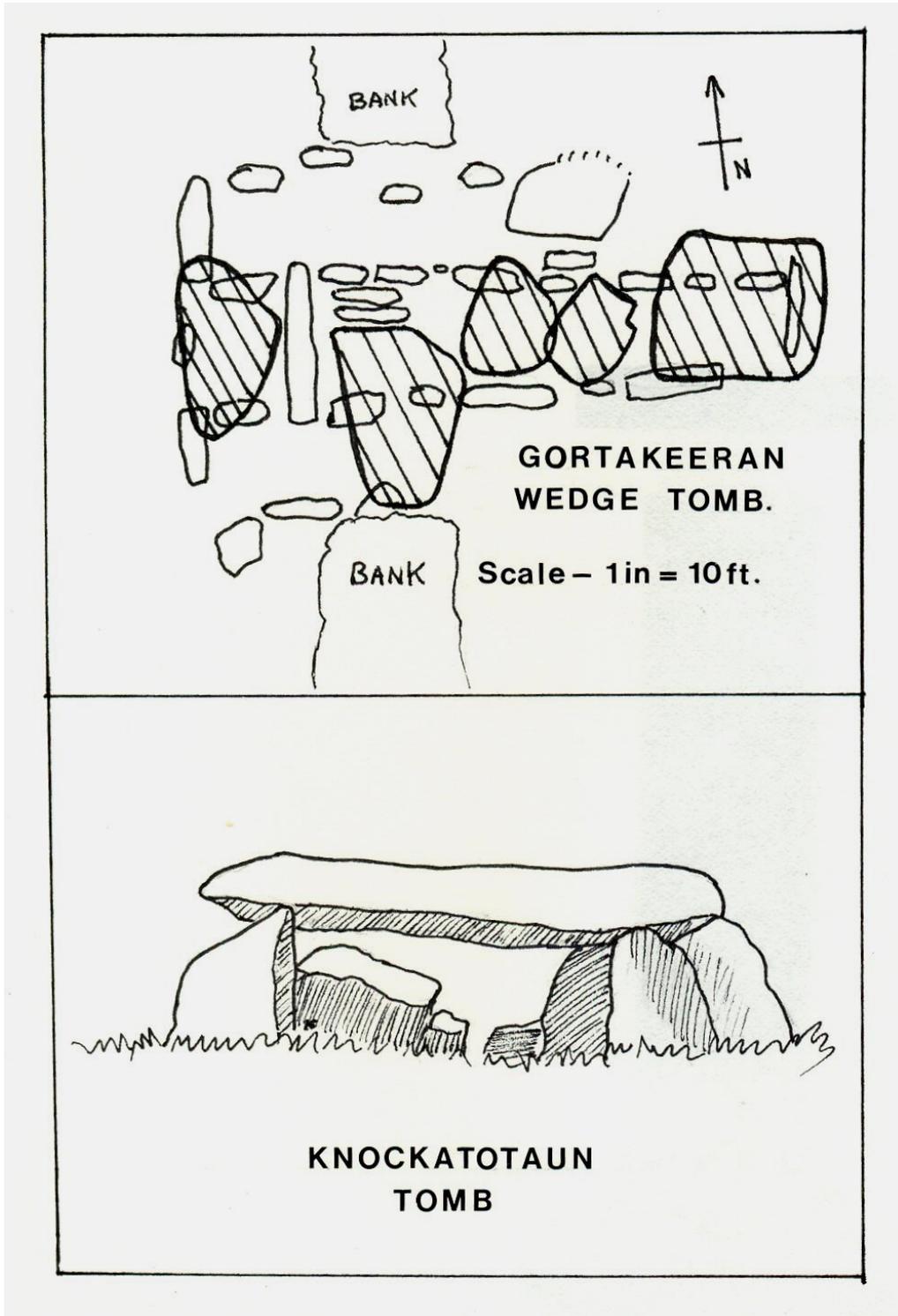
We do not know when what later became Killoran parish was first inhabited but people certainly lived there around 1,500 B.C. At that time early Bronze Age people settled the lower slopes of the Ox Mountains. They cleared the forests with stone and metal axes and raised cattle on the cleared land. They buried their dead in graves built of large stones which archaeologists call Wedge Graves.



Gortakeeran Wedge Tomb - West End.

A wedge grave is so named because it is wedge shaped, narrowing towards the back. It consists of a long burial chamber made of large stones on edge, roofed with flat slabs. There usually is a second wall outside the chamber and the whole tomb was originally covered with a mound of earth or gravel. There are between four and five hundred of these tombs in Ireland, especially in Cork and Kerry, in Clare, in Sligo and in the North. Archaeologists believe that the people who built these originally came from France, landed in the Cork Kerry area and spread up the west coast.

There may originally have been at least seven wedge tombs in the parish area but there are definitely three, each in very good condition. One is in Gortakeeran townland. It faces west like most of these graves and cuts through a field wall in which some of its stones have been used. The inner chamber is in very good



condition and is about thirty feet long. Some traces of the outer wall are to be

seen at the north side. Some large roofing stones are still in position, one, eight feet by six feet. There is a small "portico" or porch at the western end. Two or three hundred yards down the hill is a group of large stones which may be the remains of another wedge tomb and at the southern end of the townland near the stepping stones a "giant's grave" is marked on the Ordnance Survey map. Nothing remains of this except a large flat standing stone.

There are two wedge graves in Cabragh townland. The western one, near O'Boyles, is marked by a sign at the roadside informing everyone that it is a national monument. This tomb is in very good condition. The eastern Cabragh tomb, in the field below where the lane meets the lower road, is also in good condition owing to the fact that some of its walls have been incorporated into field walls. This grave is about 35 feet long.



Cabragh Wedge Tomb

There is a grave in Knockadoo townland which probably is also a wedge tomb. It is in a field just across the road from the southern end of Bóthar Na Mine. If it is a wedge grave then what remains is the inner chamber about thirty feet long and facing west. Knockatotaun townland also has the remains of a prehistoric grave. It consists of a large flat stone resting on three supporting stones. It is also possible that this is the remains of a wedge grave.

Such tombs normally contain the remains of more than one person, possibly a whole family or important members of the tribe. They were in use over a long period of time and were re-opened for subsequent burials. In Ireland the dead were sometimes cremated before being buried in Wedge graves but this was not the case in one excavated in Moytirra, Co. Sligo where the remains of four adults and one child were found in a wedge grave.

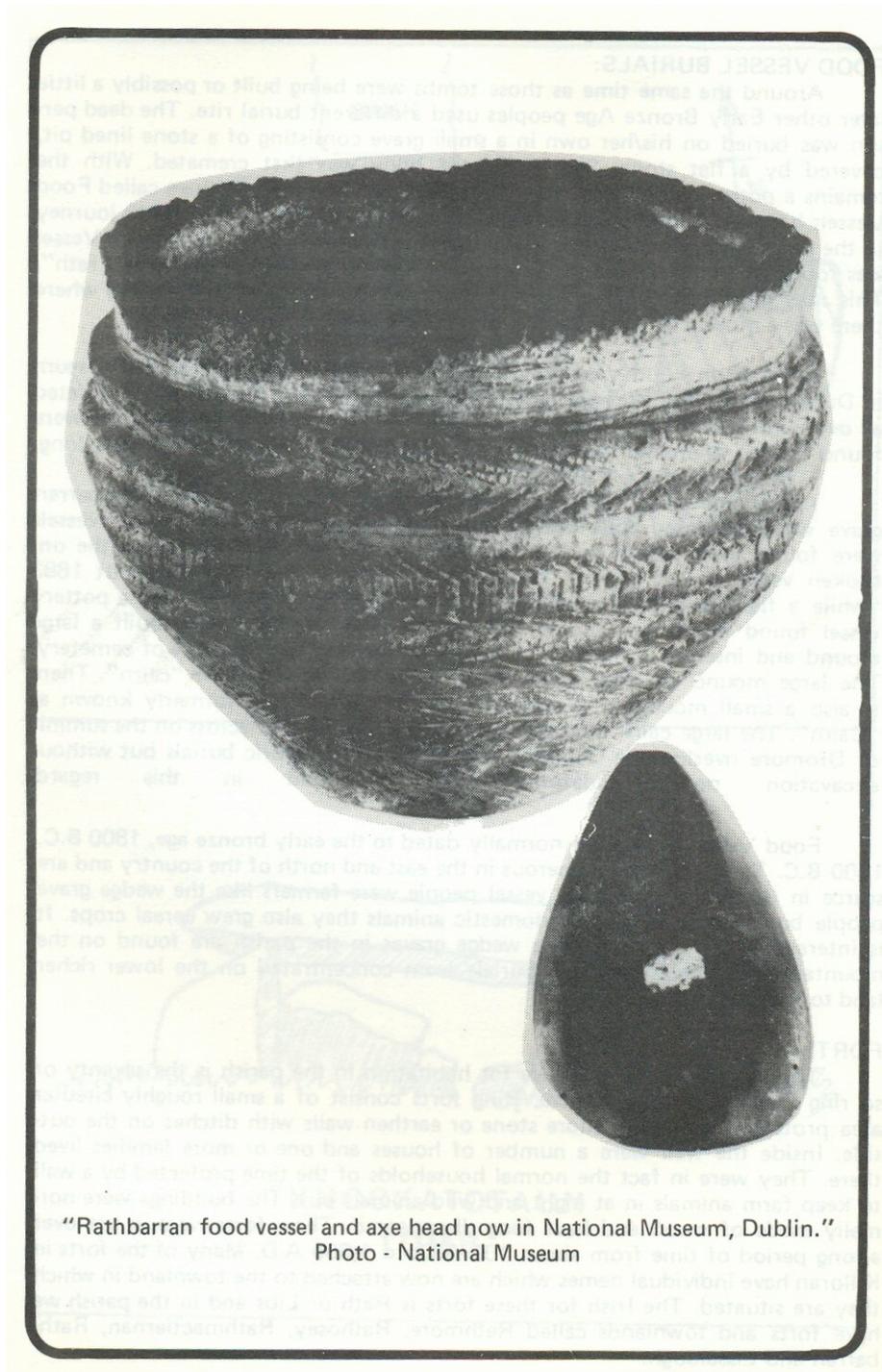
FOOD VESSEL BURIALS:

Around the same time as those tombs were being built or possibly a little later, other Early Bronze Age peoples used a different burial rite. The dead person was buried on his/her own in a small grave consisting of a stone lined pit, covered by a flat stone. Sometimes the body was first cremated. With the remains, a pottery vessel was often included in the grave. These were called Food Vessels because it is believed that they contained food for the deceased's journey to the next world. Sometime in the nineteenth century a grave containing a Food Vessel was found in the town land of Rathbarran "on the summit of an ancient rath". This may have been Rathbarran fort itself or more probably at Sheeaun where there was a mound or a low hill which was destroyed in the nineteenth century.

Rathbarran Food Vessel is now in the collection of the National Museum in Dublin. It is 4.5 inches high and 5.5 inches wide at the mouth. It is decorated all over with patterns of lines and is light gray in colour. With it in the grave were found human cremated remains and a stone axehead about four inches long.

About the year 1880, according to Wood-Martin, another Rathbarran grave was discovered, this one certainly on Sheeaun, and two pottery vessels were found, one unbroken but the other in bits. What happened to the unbroken vessel is not known. Another such grave was discovered about 1883 "while a field belonging to John Coleman was being ploughed" and a pottery vessel found inside was broken. Sometimes Food Vessel people built a large mound and inserted a number of graves in it using it as a kind of cemetery. The large mound on Knockadoo hill may be such

a mound or "cairn". There is also a small mound in Lissalough townland which was formerly known as "Cairn". The large cairn of stones and rocks about 55 feet across on the summit of Dromore overlooking Coolaney may contain prehistoric burials but without excavation nothing definite can be said in this regard.



Food Vessel burials are normally dated to the early Bronze Age, 1800 B.C. - 1500 B.C. They are more numerous in the east and north of the country and are

scarce in Connacht. The food vessel people were farmers like the wedge grave people but as well as keeping domestic animals they also grew cereal crops. It is interesting to note that while wedge graves in the parish are found on the mountain side, the food vessel burials seem concentrated on the lower richer land to the east of the parish.

FORTS:

The next evidence we have for habitation in the parish is the seventy or so ring forts which still survive. Ring forts consist of a small roughly circular area protected by one or more stone or earthen walls with ditches on the outside. Inside the wall were a number of houses and one or more families lived there. They were in fact the normal households of the time, protected by a wall to keep farm animals in at night and wild animals out. The buildings were normally made of wood and have long disappeared. These forts were in use over a long period of time from about 100 A.D. to 1,000 A.D. Many of the forts in Killoran have individual names, which are now attached to the townland in which they are situated. The Irish for these forts is Rath or Lios and in the parish we have forts and townlands called Rathmore, Rathosey, Rathmactiernan, Rathbarran and Lissalough.



Lissalough Ring Fort

Many ring forts have underground stone built rooms and passages called souterrains usually marked as caves on maps. These were used for storage, for living quarters and as refuges from attack. Many ring forts in the parish have souterrains but

most have been blocked up for reasons of safety. A fort in Knockadoo (entrance pictured right) has an elaborate souterrain consisting of a long inclined passage leading to two underground rooms. The rooms are built of stone, each is about five feet by six feet and five feet high. Each is roofed by large flat stones.



A cashel is a fort built of stone and is usually found on higher ground than ring forts. There is a cashel in the townland of Cabragh. Its internal diameter is about seventy feet and its stone wall is in a ruined condition. This cashel, still called "Cashel" locally, occupies a very prominent position situated as it is on a spur of the Ox Mountains and it seems to have had a defensive purpose. It possibly guarded the pass through the mountains. It is of interest to note that at the other end of the parish there is also a cashel. On Tullaghan hill just to the east of the parish there is an elaborate series of stone walls. It is possible that this guarded the important pass through the mountains by the Hungry Rock.

EARLY CHURCHES:

At the southern end of the townland of Gortakeeran not far from the stepping stones across the river is a small enclosed area called Killeen. Children who died before they were baptised were buried there. There is a tradition, mentioned by O'Rorke and still remembered by some locals, that a church was intended to be built there but one night the foundations were miraculously moved to Killoran townland where the church was then built. This is a common tradition in various parts of the country and is usually interpreted as indicating a change of church site.

The name Killeen means small church and it seems that one of the earliest Christian churches in the parish was built there. Another parishioner, the late John J. McDonagh, told the story of the moving foundations but these moved not from Killeen but from Killowneen. Killowneen is a large oval enclosure at the western end of Knockadoo townland. The enclosure is about 180 feet long and there are traces of

CHAPTER 4

TUBBER TULLAGHAN

Just outside the boundary of the parish to the east lies the hill of Tullaghan. It is a detached hill at the edge of the Ox Mountains, about two hundred feet above sea level, covered in rough grass and heather. There are three stone walls around the hill and it is possible that it once had a defensive purpose, guarding the gap through the mountains by the Hungry Rock.

The hill's main claim to fame, however, is its holy well, which lies on the south east side very close to the summit. The position of the well, so high on the hill, is noteworthy but in addition to this its water was said to rise and fall with the sea-tide on the other side of the mountains. Another story says that the water regularly changes from fresh to salt and back again. These supposed properties of this well were the reasons it was included in many lists of "Wonders of Ireland". In O'Flaherty's "Ogygia" the following verse describes the well:

"In Sligo's district on Mount Gam's high side
A fountain lies not washed by ocean's tide
Each circling day it different water brings
The fresh, the salt, from it alternate springs".

In the book of Ballymote compiled about the year 1391 we find the following - "The property of the well is that it fills and ebbs like the sea, though it is far from the sea". An old Irish poem about the Ox Mountains has the following verse about the well:

"Seal do lo 'ina saile searb glas, Seal aile 'na huisgi glan,
Co fuil 'na hingnad 'san Eri, Tibra indglan Slebe Gam".

"One part of the day it is salty, bitter and grey, another
while it is fresh water

So that it is a wonder in Ireland, the tarnished well of the Ox Mountains".

The well itself is about two feet in diameter, about eighteen inches deep with a rock bottom and is surrounded by a rough semi-circular dry stone wall about four feet high. One explanation for the fame of the well is set in the time of Saint Patrick. When he was on Croagh Patrick, the story goes, the saint was driving the devils into the sea. One of these, a female devil called Caerthanach the Fire Spitter, escaped and fled across the Ox Mountains poisoning all the wells with her breath. Saint Patrick pursued her and was naturally very thirsty by the time he reached Tullaghan. He miraculously caused a well to appear there and refreshed by it he overcame the devil and drove her from the country. A large rock on the hill is supposed to bear the marks of Saint Patrick's back and hand where he rested.

An older explanation of the origin of the well's supposed qualities is contained in a story telling how the Ox Mountains got their name. The mountains, Sliabh Gamh, got their name from a man called Gamh who was a servant of a mythical Irish king, Eremon. Gamh was involved in a quarrel on the mountains and in a fight his head was cut off. It was thrown into the well and from then its water was alternately fresh and salty.

Tullaghan hill was the site of a festival meeting on the last Sunday of July. This was one of the many Lughnasa festivals which were widespread in Ireland from pre Christian times. These festivals were originally harvest festivals in honour of the Celtic God Lugh but were taken over by Christianity and Saint Patrick was substituted for Lugh. These festivals were often held on hills or at wells, at Tullaghan the festival was held at a well on a hill.

Among the many traditions common to these sites all over the country are stories which say that the water from the wells is impossible to boil. Another common story is that two trout live in the well and if they are caught, cooked and eaten they re-appear the following day. Both these stories are told about Tullaghan well. Also common are

stories of great leaps near the festival site often resulting in foot or hoof marks. At the "Hungry Rock" near Tullaghan a stone in the centre of the road bore a mark which was said to be the track of Saint Patrick's horse's hoof made after a great leap from the nearby cliff. The stone was covered when the road was tarmacadamed. Carrownleam, the town land of the leap commemorates a great leap which may be connected. At the Hungry Rock there is a large flat stone onto which the passerby must throw a pebble to avoid dying of hunger. This tradition is common also at Lughnasa sites.

As already mentioned, Lughnasa festivals were dedicated to the Celtic goddess Áine and the name of the village near Tullaghan, Coolaney, Cúil Áine, may reflect a devotion to the goddess in the area. The pattern or festival at Tullaghan flourished until the eighteenth century when clerical opposition caused it to be moved to the strand on the Tireragh side of the mountain. It survived there until 1826 when a sudden terrible storm caused panic among the large crowd present. This storm was seen as a vindication of the clergy's opposition to the drunkenness common at the festival. The pattern was never revived but all the time Tubber Tullaghan remained a place of pious devotions and as late as 1938 "rounds" were being made at the well.

William Butler Yeats knew of this well and he used it in one of his plays about Cuchulain "At the Hawk's Well". The "Hawk's Rock" is a hill beside Tubber Tullaghan and Yeats combined the two in the play's title. In the work the well is usually dry but sometimes fills up for a short period with miraculous water which has the power to give eternal life to anyone who drinks it.

At Tullaghan we have a well has been regarded as sacred for at least two thousand years and which was the site of a harvest celebration down through the ages - firstly as a pagan Celtic festival probably in honour of the Goddess Áine and later as a Christian festival.

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*I call to the eye of the mind
A well long choked up and dry
And boughs long stripped by the wind,
And I call to the mind's eye
Pallor of an ivory face,
Its lofty dissolute air,
A man climbing up to a place
The salt sea wind has swept bare.*

*Night falls;
The mountain-side grows dark;
The withered leaves of the hazel
Half choke the dry bed of the well;
The guardian of the well is sitting
Upon the old grey stone at its side,
Worn out from raking its dry bed,
Worn out from gathering up the leaves.
Her heavy eyes
Know nothing, or but look upon stone
The wind that blows out of the sea
Turns over the heaped-up leaves at her side;
They rustle and diminish.*

From: "At the Hawk's Well" by W.B. Yeats

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CHAPTER 5

THE O'HARA FAMILY

The barony of Leyney takes its name from a tribe called the Luighne who seem to have occupied the area from very early times. Tradition has it that they came from Munster and got this land in Sligo as a reward for military service. Another branch of this Luighne tribe got land in County Meath where their name survives in the name of the barony of Lune. One of the principal families in the tribe of Luighne in Sligo was the O'Hara family (I hEadhra).

In the "Book of O'Hara", a collection of bardic poems compiled around 1597 in honour of the chieftain, Cormac O'Hara, their migration from the south and their settlement in Connacht are constantly referred to. According to these references the land in Sligo was given to the tribe by the king of Ireland, Cormac Mac Airt, in return for their help at the battle of Crionna in 248 AD. Tadhg son of Cian was the leader who led them from Munster.

The poets and genealogists who drew up the O'Hara family tree in the late sixteenth century wanted to give the family a royal origin so they traced the family line back to Oilill Olum, king of Munster, and invented an ancestor Luigh or Laoi to account for the name Luighne.

Two principal families emerged in this tribe of Luighne - the O'Haras and the O'Garas. The O'Haras took their name from Eaghra mentioned in the Annals of the Four Masters in 926 - "Eaghra, son of Poprigh, Lord of Leyney in Connacht, died." An entry for 931 reads "Domhnall son of Gadhra, Lord of Leyney, was killed". From that time until 1128 there are references to O'Garas (O Gadhra) as Lords of Leyney. In 1128 they record that Turlough O'Connor led an army into Leinster on which O'Gadhra, Lord of Leyney, was killed.

It seems that soon after this the O'Haras became the leading family in the area and are often mentioned in the annals as Lords of Leyney. The O'Garas moved to the extreme south of Leyney and eventually settled in Coolavin in south east Sligo.

When the dioceses were being organised in Ireland in the twelfth century Achonry was established as a diocesan centre at the Council of Kells 1152. The diocese of Achonry corresponded more or less with the territory ruled by the Luighne and in fact until the fifteenth century the diocese was normally called the diocese of Leyney.

The initial landings of the Normans in Ireland took place in 1169 but it was understandably some time before their influence reached Connacht. The O'Connors were the kings of Connacht at this time and the Norman William de Burgo tried to take advantage of a civil war between two O'Connors, Catha I Carrach and Cathal Crobderg. De Burgo supported Cathal Carrach. The lord of Leyney at this time was Conor Got (Irish for stammerer) O'Hara and he soon found himself involved in this warfare. De Burgo attacked east Connacht and took hostages from the chiefs including O'Hara. Cathal Crobderg fought back and Conor Got O'Hara joined him and helped him defeat Cathal Carrach in 1207.

The Norman English then recognised Cathal Crobderg king of Connacht. In 1210 King John visited Ireland and Cathal had to meet him and give him hostages as a guarantee of his loyalty. Conor Got O'Hara was one of the four hostages taken back to England by King John. They were allowed to return the following year.

When Cathal Crobderg died in 1224 internal wars between his son and his brothers gave the Normans another chance to take control. Again O'Hara found himself involved. Aodh O'Connor and his Norman allies followed their enemies into the territory of Leyney in 1225 and remained there for three days plundering it on every side. The Annals state "this thing was unfortunate for O'Hara who had to make peace after being plundered for the sake of the little that was left in Leyney." Conor Got O'Hara who had earlier been lord of Leyney died in 1231.

The Norman conquest of Connacht was achieved by 1235. Maurice Fitzgerald got most of County Sligo and built a castle at Sligo. The Normans were few in number so there was no great loss of land by the Gaelic chiefs especially the minor

ones like O'Hara. Nor was there a great change in the way of life of the people - they did not generally adopt the Norman ways of the foreigner, in fact the reverse occurred and the Normans became as the familiar phrase has it "more Irish than the Irish themselves".

The rest of the thirteenth century was very disturbed as native Irish and Norman clashed continuously and O'Haras were often involved as these extracts from the Annals show

1250 - Dermot O'Hara Lord of Leyney died while imprisoned by Fitzgerald.

1261 - Cathal O'Hara was killed by the English and five of the people of Leyney were also killed in the great church of Ballisodare.

Donnell O'Hara committed a depredation on the Berminghams in revenge for their having slain Cathal O'Hara.

1266 - Donnell O'Hara was killed by the English while he was in the act of burning Ardnaree.

1269 - Brian son of Donnell Dubh O'Hara killed by the English of Sligo.

1278 - Brian O Dowd and Art na gCapall O'Hara Lord of Leyney gave battle to the Berminghams in which the Berminghams were defeated.

In 1294 it is recorded that the Norman De Burgo attacked Leyney and plundered most of it but Donall O'Hara did not submit.

The early fourteenth century saw continuous warfare in Connacht as various combinations of native Irish and Norman fought. When Edward Bruce came to Ireland 1315-17 Felim O'Connor made an attempt to unite the Connacht Irish chiefs against the Normans. On August 10, 1316, a pitched battle was fought at Athenry, County Galway, between O'Connor and his Gaelic allies on the one hand and the Anglo-Normans led by William de Burgo. The foreigners won the battle and among those killed was Art O'Hara, Lord of Leyney.

The end of the fourteenth century saw the splitting of the O'Haras into two branches - the O'Hara Buí (Yellow), who held the eastern part of Leyney including

Killoran parish, and the O'Hara Reagh (Red) who held the western part. In 1420 we read of war between these two branches of the O'Haras. The western O'Hara attacked O'Hara Buí, killed some people and took much booty. O'Connor followed the raiders and when he caught up with them, asked them to return the booty. They refused and the annals say "by heavens it had been better for them to give them up for before long they gave them up and their heads as well". Peace was then made between the two O'Hara branches.

The O'Connors, once kings of Connacht, gradually declined in power and one branch occupied large areas of land around Sligo. These later took the title O'Connor Sligo and claimed overlordship over the O'Haras. O'Donnell from Donegal was extending his power into Connacht by this time also and claimed overlordship over north Connacht. In 1533 O'Hara refused to pay the taxes and tribute demanded by O'Donnell who then marched into Leyney and plundered O'Hara's territory "between the two rivers" (Owenmore and Owenbeg). In 1537 Manus O'Donnell was elected head of the family and in September he invaded Sligo and overran it including Leyney.

O'Hara's neighbours to the east in the barony of Corran were the McDonaghs and we read of two incidents during the first half of the sixteenth century involving these. In 1535, Muirchertach MacDonagh and his two sons were killed by O'Hara Sui at Moymlough after having been betrayed by their own people. Eight years later in 1543 the MacDonaghs allied with the MacSweeneyes attacked O'Hara Buí. O'Hara with the help of O'Connor Sligo repulsed the attack and killed many of the attackers.

John J. MacDonagh of Carrowclooneen told a story of these times involving the MacDonaghs and the O'Haras and curiously enough Moymlough Castle. According to the story Colleary lived in Moymlough Castle and married an O'Hara. MacDonagh was not invited to the wedding feast so he came in disguise and got only potatoes to eat. Some time later some soldiers from Moymlough Castle tried to capture a daughter of MacDonagh but they were attacked and killed by the MacDonaghs. MacDonagh himself ordered the dead to be beheaded and had the heads displayed on

his castle wall as a reminder of the Moymlough wedding feast. The Colleary family seem to have been important subchiefs in Leyney. In 1294 the Annals state that David Mac Gilla Earraith (usually Anglicised as Colleary) was killed by the sons of Donall Dubh O'Hara. In 1342 it is recorded that Simon son of Conor son of Simon MacGillaarraith "one of the chieftains of Leyney" died. It is possible that Moymlough Castle was the home of the Colleary subchiefs for a time but it seems certain that by the late sixteenth century a branch of the O'Haras owned it.

Moymlough Castle is an example of what are called Tower Houses, small castles originally built by the Normans but copied by the Irish. They generally date from about 1450 onwards and were the normal dwelling house of the important chiefs. Moymlough Castle seems to have been of simple rectangular plan, with walls of up to seven feet thick. The south wall had a stairs and the ground floor possibly had a vaulted roof. In 1585 a grant was made as follows "Sir Donell O'Connor in respect of his loyalty to the Queen shall have the castle of Moymlough". In 1633 the castle was described as being in ruins. A print of the castle in 1791 shows it much as it is today.



Moymlough Castle from an engraving by T. Cocking in 1791 entitled -
"Meemleek Castle, County Sligo"
Published in Grose's 'Antiquities of Ireland' (1794).

THE O'HARAS

CORMAC O'Hara of Coolaney d. 24 Oct. 1612
m. (1) Maire MacSweeney. (2) Catbleen O'Reilly. (3) Una Gallagher.

TADHG d. 5 Oct. 1616

CORMAC OG

TADHG (1612-1634)

KEAN d. 1675

m. (1) Anne Parsons (2) Rose Crofton

ADAM d. 1687

CHARLES d. 1703

KEAN

m. Eleanor Matthew

CHARLES

KEAN d. 1775

ADAM

(1705-1776)

m. Lady Mary Carmichael

CHARLES (1746-1822)

WILLIAM

m. Margaret Cookson

CHARLES KING (1785-1860)

*Gave estates to his nephew
 Charles William Cooper*

JANE FRANCES

(1783-1874)

*m. Arthur B. Cooper
 of Coopershill, Co. Sligo*

CHARLES WILLIAM (1817-1898)

*Assumed the surname O'Hara in 1860
 m. Anne Charlotte Streatfield*

CHARLES KEAN

(1860-1947)

*succeeded by his
 nephew*

FREDERICK WILLIAM (1875-1949)

Cultivar & Coopershill

m. Muriel Henn

DONAL FREDERICK

FRANCIS

KEAN

(1904-1977)

m. Elizabeth Linnel

DERMOT

ERRILL

MAEVE

(1938-

m. Frances Rosemary Fulcher

[m. = married: d. = died]

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- | | |
|---|--|
| 65. Ríoghthor le cách a gcinn trill
Cormac mhac Céin mheic Oilill;
téid ann a n-áitibh a hsean
do ráidhtibh Gall is Gaoidhiol. | 65. After a space Cormac, son of <i>Cian</i> , son of <i>Oilill</i> , is made king by the rest; he takes possession in place of his forefathers, by the voices of English and Gaels. |
| 66. Áitighthear críoch Luighni lais
idir thuaith uile is eaglois;
tír mhilis na bhfonnbhrat bhfionn
tilis Cormac go coitchiond. | 66. He settles the land of Leyney, both as regards laity and church; the fragrant country with its fair vestures of soil Cormac apportions generally. |
| 76. Críoch Luighne na learg ngairthe
fa bhréid sladtoch sároighthe,
tar ceand gach cogoidh dar chuir
gur thogoibh cheand dá chartoigh. | 76. Leyney's territory, of glowing slopes, lay neath a covering of thievery and rapine, until he - the greatest war he ever waged - re-established his charter. |
| 77. A-tá sí ó soin a-lle
'n-a haonchlár hsuaimhneach shídhe
gan ghoimh gan. fholuidh gan fhích
gan toil d' fhoghoil ná dh'eissíoth. | 77. From that time on she has been a restful, fairylike plain; without pain, without enmity, without wrath, without desire of plundering or conflict. |

from The Book of O'Hara, Poem II, by Tadhg Dall O hUiginn

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CHAPTER 6

CORMAC O'HARA OF COOLANEY

In the sixteenth century the English Government made new attempts to bring Connacht under its control. Occupiers of land under the Gaelic Irish system were granted English titles. In August 1578 Cormac O'Hara of Coolaney was granted the title of Chief of "the plain of Leyney otherwise known as O'Hara Buí's country". Brian O'Hara, Cormac's brother, was granted the title of deputy leader of the same area. This Cormac was head of the O'Hara family from about 1580 until his death in 1612. He is said to have lived in a castle just to the west of Coolaney town between the road and the river. All traces of this castle have now disappeared and there are traditions that its stones were used in the building of the mill and the old bridge.

It was in Cormac's honour that the manuscript book of poetry called "The Book of O'Hara" was compiled about the year 1597. The poems are long bardic pieces in Irish, in praise of various members of the O'Hara family, especially Cormac. Some of the poems are composed by the famous Tadhg Dall O'Higgins, including one of eighty-four verses tracing the O'Hara's family tree from the mythological Mil of Spain to Cormac. The O'Higgins were professional poets of Leyney and their patrons included the O'Connors as well as the O'Haras. The introduction to "The Book of O'Hara" praises Cormac of Coolaney thus:

"Cormac is the man for whom this book is written, a man of highest lineage, of noblest manners and ways, of most numerous kingly and princely qualities, a man most famous for noble and venturesome achievements, most lavish in buying wine and steeds and works of art. In all these ways Cormac Ó hEadhra excelled other chieftains of his age. He excelled too, in loving and caring for the poor and destitute for God's sake, and in aiding the subjects of the Lord".

It was during the lifetime of this Cormac that Leyney came under the control of the English Government. In 1585, the new Lord Deputy, Perrott, had all the chiefs of

Connacht sign the "Composition of Connacht". By this agreement the Irish chiefs agreed to pay a yearly rent to the English crown and to accept English laws and titles. Cormac O'Hara of Coolaney, chief of the O'Haras signed the composition as also did Owen O'Hara of Coolaney. O'Hara was allowed three quarters of land adjoining his castle at Coolaney free of tax.

This agreement did not of course guarantee that O'Hara would not lose any land. By 1590, there were two permanent English officials, the Escheator General and his deputy whose job it was to examine the landowners' titles to their property and take advantage of any loophole in the title to transfer the land to loyal Englishmen. In many cases these officials also took land for themselves.

John Crofton of London had arrived in Ireland in 1565 and worked in Connacht before he was appointed Escheator General in 1575. Richard Boyle later to become Earl of Cork, was appointed Crofton's deputy in 1590. These two acquired vast areas of land in Ireland including some in Killoran parish. John Crofton became owner of the townlands of Deenodes. Carrowlooneen, Carrownagleragh, Rathmactiernan and Lissalough and these stayed in the Crofton family until the late eighteenth century. Richard Boyle got the townlands of Carrownaskeagh, Carrownabanny, Cappagh, Carha and Knockatotaun. By 1633 the first two town lands were mortgaged to a Mr. Dodwell, a soldier in the English army, and they remained in the Dodwell family until the early twentieth century.

In the late sixteenth century Richard Bingham was president of Connacht and he did not hesitate to use force to settle problems. Brian O'Hara of Coolaney, mentioned above, and his nephew Donall were put to death in Galway in 1586. Bingham by his harsh treatment of the Irish caused a revolt, which was led by the Burkes. After the rebels took the castle and town of Sligo, Cormac O'Hara joined the revolt. The state papers record in 1594 that "O'Hara Boy, a principal man in Sligo has gone into rebellion". The introduction to the Book of O'Hara says "it is owing to his nobility that Cormac O'Hara left the Province in a war league to aid O'Neill and O'Donnell in defending his country against the English and to satisfy his soul and his conscience."

The struggle of the native Irish, led by O'Neill and O'Donnell, against the English is known as the Nine Years War. We do not know very much of Cormac's involvement in this war but he certainly helped O'Donnell defeat Sir John Norris in 1596. After the defeat of the Irish at the Battle of Kinsale, O'Hara had no option but to submit and he was pardoned in 1603.

Cormac realised that in spite of his pardon there was still a great danger that he would lose more of his land both because he was a Catholic and because he was native Irish. Before he died in 1612 he entrusted his lands to friends to hold for his son Tadhg who succeeded him. Tadhg, in turn, was wary of losing his land and with the help of a Galway lawyer, David Rothe, managed to get a re-grant of his lands from the king with the additional power to hold fairs, markets and courts.

Tadhg then followed his father's example and in 1616, just before he died, he vested his lands in trustees for the benefit of his family. Tadhg died at Coolaney on October 5th, 1616. There is a local tradition that Tadhg refused to become a Protestant but encouraged his sons Tadhg and Kean to do so to safeguard the family property. Both were minors when their father died and they were brought up as Protestants by the Court of Wards. Tadhg succeeded to the property and when he died in 1634 the O'Hara lands passed to Kean his brother. In 1625, Tadhg got a royal grant of his lands and a pardon for his father having vested his property in others. By this time it seems that the castle of Coolaney had been abandoned and the O'Haras were living at Annaghmore near Collooney.

This marked the end of a very disturbed period in land holding during which the O'Haras lost some of their property in the parish but managed to hold on to much of their land by legal expertise and a change of religion. This land remained in the hands of the O'Haras until the early part of the twentieth century

SOURCES:

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-1926.



CORMAC O'HARA

From a miniature in the possession of Dermot O'Hara, Annaghmore, Collooney. From "The Book of O'Hara" - Lambert McKenna (ed), Dublin 1951

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CHAPTER 7

KILLORAN PEOPLE c 1600

Lists of persons pardoned at the end of the sixteenth century include the following names from the parish of Killoran. These give us some idea of the important families in the area at the time. The spellings are as in the original.

Rorie O'Bozell, Coolaney; Shane McHugh McBrien, Coolaney;
Manus O'Chary, Coolaney; Donatus O'Clawne, Killoran; Henry O'Clawne, Killoran;
Connor O'Cloan, Killoran; Flan O'Cloan, Killoran; Moriertage O'Clowan, Killoran;
Cormock O'Clowan, Killoran; Teige O'Clowan, Killoran; Rurie O'Coman, Coolaney;
Melaghlin McGillepatrick O'Coman, Coolaney; Marrianus McConchaa, Coolaney;
Fergallus McConchaa, Coolaney; John McConchaa, Coolaney;
Farrall McEuchae, Coolaney; Mulrory McEnchae, Coolaney;
Shan McEnchae, Coolaney; William McEnchae, Coolaney;
Moriertagh Glasse McBrien McEnchae, Coolaney; Rory Leigh O'Doyn, Coolaney;
Dwaltagh McCarbry McDonagh, Coolaney; Edm. McGiliemarten, Killoran;
Melaghlin O'Glawin, Killoran; Conor Grana McGwyre, Coolaney;
Teige McGuieles, Killoran; Cormock O'Hara, Coolaney; Teige O'Hara, Coolaney;
Own O'Harie, Coolaney; Brien O'Harie, Coolaney; Mortgage Duff O'Harie, Coolaney;
Rorie O'Harie, Coolaney; Donell O'Harry, Coolaney; Ferrail O'Karie, Coolaney;
Cormuck O'Keavane, Killoran; Rory McLoghlen, Coolaney;
Dermot McDonell O'Mulkyle, Coolaney; Cahill O'Mynie, Coolaney;
Katherine Ny Reily, Coolaney; Thomas O'Suy, Coolaney;
Donough McSearnan, Knockadoo; Wm. Duffe McTeige Reoghe, Coolaney.

KILLORAN PEOPLE - 1660-1670:

In 1622 a Hearth Money Act was passed according to which householders were taxed on the number of hearths in their houses. The amount to be paid was two shillings per hearth per year. To be liable for tax the house had to be valued at more than eight shillings per year so that poorer people were exempt from this tax. This list of taxpayers for the parish of Killoran was drawn up between 1660 and 1670.

CARHA: Hugh O'Dowell; Shane O'Dowell; Cormac O'Helly.
CARROWCLOONEEN: Miles Cluane; Mortgage Cluane.
CARROWNACARRICK: Patrick Shyell.
CARROWNAGLERAGH: Cormac O'Cluane; Donnagh O'Cluane; Rory O'Fenana.
CARROWNASKEAGH: Phellim O'Carrane; Shane O'Dogherty.
CARROWNLOUGHAN: Rory O'Flanura; Connor McGlanchy; Cahall McGonill;
Edmond McHugh; Oyne McLoughlen; Donnell Quissoge.
COOLANEY: Connor Fallon; John Patchett.
CREEVAUN: Edmond Boyle; Terlagh Duffe.
DEENODES: Donnagh O'Muligee; Brien O'Moran.
GORTAKEERAN: Terlagh Doogane; Donnell McHugh; Neale McHugh; Phelim
McHugh; Manus O'Moirea.
KNOCKADOO: Thomas McSharrey.
KNOCKATOTAUN: Richard Craven; Hugh O'Derricke.
MOYMLOUGH: Thomas Brinan; Iver Berne; Roger Hara.
RATHBARRAN: Owen O'Mullanfy; Teife Roirke.
RATHMACTIERNAN: Brian O'Feenane; Cahall McTanist.
SEEVNESS: Dermott McLaghlen; Owen McLaghlen; Shane McLaghlen.

This list of presumably the principal land occupiers of Killoran parish in the latter part of the seventeenth century shows that almost all of them were Irish. There was no concentration around Coolaney at that time.

The Teige Roirke of Rathbarran listed above would seem to be the same as the person mentioned in the following lease from the O'Hara Papers dated May 7, 1672. "Lease by Kean O'Hara of Coolaney to Terlagh O'Rourke of the quarter of Ravarrin (Rathbarran) for two years rent £8-10-0 with ½ barrell of wheat, a barrell of malt two fat muttons and twenty quarters of butter."

Another interesting lease from the same source is dated April 20, 1700. "Lease by Dame Rose Peyton of Dublin (Kean O'Hara's second wife) to Conor Galagher,

Owen Twolan (Toolan,) Bryan McTrenara, Terlagh Gallagher and Terlagh McRory of Gortakeerin yeomen, of the quarter of Gortakeeran for the life of the said Rose. Rent £11-10-0 per year with two fat unshorn muttons, 30 quarters of butter, 30 days work and 1½ barrells of malt".

One of the oldest gravestones in Killoran graveyard is that of Thomas and Philip Treaner. Philip died on July 26, 1714.

The O'Chary and McSearnan from the 1600 list are probably both forms of McSharrey, the family which held Knockadoo until the end of the seventeenth century and which later became anglicised to Foley, searrach being the Irish for foal.

O'Clumhain was a well-known north Connacht family in this period. They provided poets for the O'Hara family and two members of the family were bishops, Angus O'Clumhain, died 1264, was bishop of Achonry and Malachy O Clowan, died 1508 was bishop of Killala. The O'Clawnes, O'Cloans, O'Clowans and Cluanes from the lists probably belong to this O'Clumhain This name was later anglicised to Clifford and in 1795 a Thomas Clifford held land in Seevness. A Peter Clovane of Rathbarran 1817 may also belong to the same family as may Mary McClune from a 1796 parish list. It is also possible that this family name, which was very numerous in Killoran parish around 1600, afterwards became Coleman, a surname which later was very common in the parish.

McEnchae and McConchaa are forms of the surname Battelle, cath being the Irish for battle. This surname remained an important one in the parish until the end of the nineteenth century.

O'Doyn seems to be an old form of Dunne. A family of Dunne still lived in Coolaney at the end of the nineteenth century.

The Thomas O'Suy is probably a copyist's error for Thomas O'Sny which is the surname Snee, a name common in the parish through the centuries. Clemens Ua

Sniadaig was bishop of Achonry from c.1208 to 1219 while Cormac O Snighe was bishop of Achonry from 1522 to c.1547.

In the 1660-1670 list Brinan is probably Brennan, McTanish probably Tansey and O'Derricke equivalent to Derrig. O'Carrane may possibly be Keirns, Quissoge possibly Cusack and McGonnill is probably McConnell.

SOURCES:

Mac Lysaght, Edward - *Irish Families, Their Names, Arms and Origins*. Dublin 1957.

Mac Lysaght, Edward - *More Irish Families*. Dublin 1982.

Mac Lysaght, Edward - *Seventeenth Century Hearth Money Rolls with full transcript for Co. Sligo*. Dublin 1967.

National Library of Ireland. Reports on Private Collections No. 493. Annual Reports 11 - 25; Deputy Keeper; PROI Dublin.

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CHAPTER 8

SEVENTEENTH CENTURY KILLORAN

The following is an account of the parish of Killoran from 1633-36 reprinted in Wood-Martin's "History of Sligo". It lists the town lands owned by each landlord and in most cases gives a brief description of each. I have retained the spelling of the townlands as in the original and attempted to identify obscure names.

O'HARA.

CRIVAINÉ [Creevaun] Let free to one Rorey O'Malley during the life of the said Rorey and his wife. It is very good arable land and has good turf and three days mowing of good low meadow. It is good for sheep, it will graze forty cows and is worth £10 per annum.

REEVARIS [Rathbarran] Sett to Rorey O'Malley for £8 per annum without any duties, it is good arable land both for corn and sheep. It is some part heathy ground and has good turf. It has no shrubs for shelter. It will graze forty cows and is worth £10 per annum.

CARROWMACCARIGE [Carrownacarrick] Sett to undertenants for £8-8-0 per annum. It is good arable land and good for sheep. It has good turf and four days mowing of good low meadow. It will graze thirty cows and has neither wood, shelter nor mountain and is worth £6 per annum.

CURRAGHINERIN [Halfquarter] Sett to undertenants for £4-4-0 per annum. It is some part arable, somewhat boggy land. It is bleak, without shelter and mountain. It has two days mowing, will graze thirty cows and it is worth £5-5-0 per annum.

CAROWEGHTERAGHCULANY [Coolaney] Set to undertenants for £5-5-0 and the fourth sheaf per annum. Upon this quarter stands the castle of Coolaney O'Hara's house and also a mill upon the river by the said castle. Within the town of Coolaney the said O'Hara has a fair. It is very good arable land and good for sheep. It has good turf, no mowing, it will graze thirty cows so with the profit of the fair and the mill it may be worth £10 per annum.

CAROWOGHTERAGH and CAROWNACLIOHE [Rockfield] Set to undertenants for £4-4-0 out of each quarter per annum. They are very good arable

land and good for sheep and have neither wood, mountain nor shelter. They have good turf, no meadow. They will graze sixty-five cows and are worth very well £16-10-0 per annum.

CARROWNLEANE and SHANCOGH [Carrowneam and Shancough] Set to undertenants for £15-15-0. They are very good arable land both for corn and sheep, have neither wood, mountain nor shelter. They have good turf, three days mowing of good meadow, will graze eighty cows and are very well worth £19 per annum.

RATHOSSEY, SEAVNES and CARROWGANOY [Rathosey, Seevness and Carrowgavneen] The inheritance of O'Hara, but in the present possession of O'Gallagher's daughter for a dowry from old Cormac O'Hara, good arable land and has a great scope of mountain. The said widow sets the three quarters for £30 per annum. She receives out of two of them four fat muttoms, eight measures of butter, sixteen measures of meal, four barrells of malt and forty workmen. They have good turf and will graze one hundred cows and are very well worth £77-4-4 per annum.

KNOCKADUA [Knockadoo] and BALLINVALLY: The inheritance of Manus MacSharrey out of which he pays £4 per annum to O'Hara. These quarters are good arable land and have a great scope of mountain and good turf, a low mill upon a river that runs down from the mountain. They will graze one hundred cows and are worth £20 per annum with mill profit.

CAROWINCRIUR [?] and CAROWINLOGHAN [Carrowloughan]: Mortgaged to Patrick French for £200. It is part arable land and in the other somewhat heathy ground and the said Patrick French sets it to undertenants for £16 per annum.

O'CONNOR, SLIGO:

MOYMLEAGH [Moymough]: It is very good arable land, upon it is an old castle. It has good turf, eight days mowing, it will graze sixty cows and is worth £16 per annum.

LORD CORK, BOYLE:

CAROWNESKEHE [Carrownaskeagh] and CAROWNEBANY [Carrowabanny]

Mortgaged to Mr. Dodwell who sets them to undertenants for £16-16-0 per annum, four fat muttuns, eight measures of butter, sixteen measures of meal, four barrells of malt and forty workmen. They are good arable lands and have a great scope of mountain. They have good turf and wood and will graze eighty cows and are well worth £24 per annum.

CAROWMICCARN [Carha?] and CAPPAGH: Set to Thomas Ormsby by a lease of twelve years whereof three have expired and he lets it to undertenants I for £16-16.0 per annum. Cappagh is all wood and mountain. Carowmiccarn is good arable land and has a great scope of mountain. It will graze fifty cows and is worth £15-8-0 per annum.

THE CROFTON FAMILY:

KILLORIN [Killoran], DINOD [Deenodes], UCERIG [?],
CAROWNOGLERAGH [Carrownagleragh], RAMICKTERNAN
[Rathmactiernan], CLUNIN [Carrowclooneen], LISLOGHA [Lissalough],
CAROWINLORGAN [?] :

All these are the inheritance of John Crofton. Every quarter is set to undertenants for £9 per annum. All good arable land and have good turf in the mearings.

SIR ROGER JONES

RAHMORE [Rathmore]: In mortgage from John O'Hara in times past and Sir Roger sets it to undertakers for £13 per annum, four barrells of malt, three fat muttuns, four measures of butter, eight measures of meal. It is, very good arable land and good for sheep. It has good turf five days mowing, it will graze fifty cows and is worth £15-8-0 per annum.

It would appear from the above list that Coolaney was divided into two parts - Caroweghteragh = Ceathru Iochtair = The lower part and Carowoghteragh = Ceathru Uachtar = The Upper part. A map of 1716 shows Coolaney as having three "quarters", the Castlequarter, Carownetrinta and Rathosey. The latter was normally regarded as a townland in its own right. Treenta still survives as the name of part of modern Coolaney townland.

The 1633-36 account gives us a picture of the parish at the time. It was generally clear of woods except for the mountain townlands. Turf was cut all over the parish. The raising of sheep and cows was widespread as was the cutting of meadows for winter fodder. The growing of corn, presumably oats, was also very widespread and the mills mentioned at Coolaney and Knockadoo were used for grinding this corn into meal. Porridge was eaten as also was oaten bread. The mill at Ballinvally was a "low mill" ie a horizontal mill. This was a primitive type of mill where the wheel was set horizontally in contrast to the normal type of mill where the wheel is vertical. This Ballinvally mill survived until the nineteenth century and was then worked by the Bruin family. It is marked on the Ordnance Survey 1836 as a small stream which joins the "big river" beside the stepping stones in Ballinvally.

This picture of the parish is confirmed in an account of the barony of Leyney in the Civil Survey 1654-56:

"It is divided in two parts. the eastern part is called the country of Haraboy and the western part called the country of Harareagh. The eastern part of the barony is both pleasant and profitable for all sorts of grain and is more profitable than pleasant for albeit it lyett remote yet there is in it great store of mountain pasture with the convenience of woods, some within the barony but more upon the borders. . . . and also arable and meadow ground upon every quarter's proportion".

LANDOWNERS c 1650:

The Books of Survey and Distribution of the mid-seventeenth century show the owners of the land of Ireland at that time. The following extract for Killoran parish shows the owners of each townland at the time.

KEAN O'HARA: Carrowmullvyn, Carrownacarrick, Rathbarran, Curraniron, Coolaney, Carrownacleigh, Rathosey, Carrowgavneen, Gortakeeran, Shancough, Seevenis, Knockadoo, Carrownateeween.

RICHARD CROFTON: Carrowclooneen, Carrownagleragh, Deenodes, Rathmactiernan, Lissalough, Unkearne, Lissnafahy, Lurga.

O'CONNOR, SLIGO EARL OF CORK (Boyle): Moymlough, Cappagh,
Carha, Carrownaskeagh, Carrownabonny, Knockatotaun.

ROGER JONES: Rathmore.

This list confirms the picture of land owing we get from the already quoted account of Killoran parish 1633-36.

"Carrowmullvyn" owned by O'Hara could possibly be the townland of Carrownleam badly transcribed since Carrownleam does not appear elsewhere in the list and certainly was owned by O'Hara. It is also possible that it is the Carrowmullin, quarter of the mill, mentioned on maps of 1716 and 1785 and which seems to have corresponded to the southern half of what is now Carrownacarrick townland. The identity of the last three townlands owned by Crofton are unknown though there is a "Carn" in the townland of Lissalough which may be Unkearne, An Carn.

In the Cromwellian confiscations later in the century, Killoran parish escaped lightly. Moymlough and Carrownloughan townlands were granted to Sir Charles Coote, Lord Collooney and the townlands of Knockadoo and Ballinvally passed into the hands of the King family.

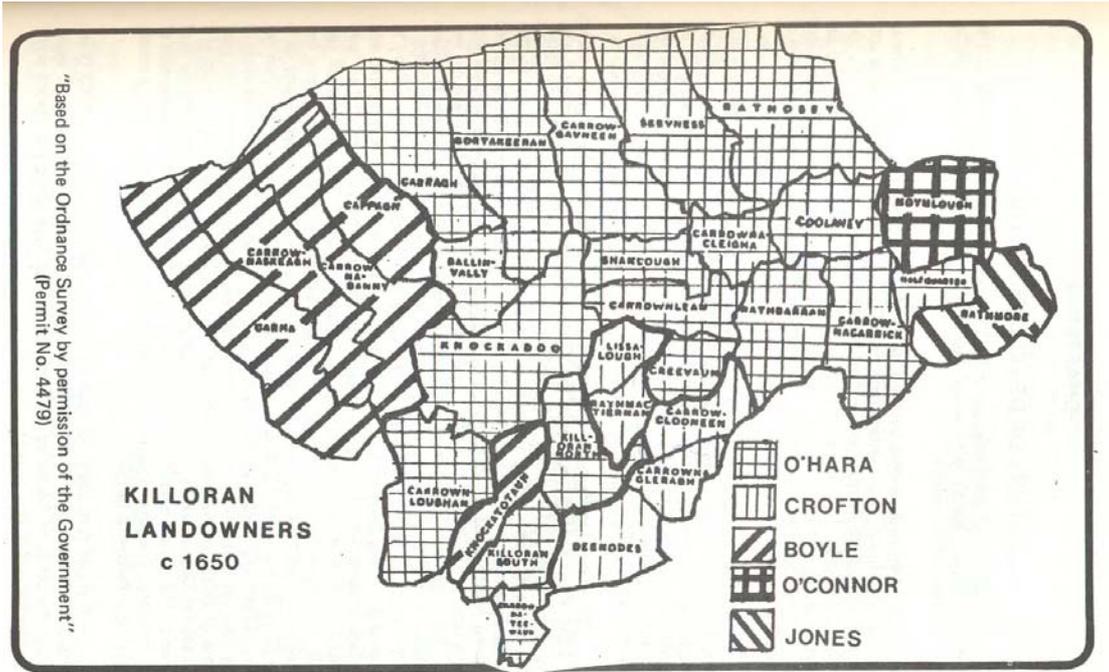
Later in the century the lands belonging to Boyle, Earl of Cork passed into the hands of other families, often those who earlier had leased these lands. Dodwell got Carrownabanny and Carrownaskeagh, Ormsby of Willowbrook, Co. Sligo, got Carha and Lord Tyrawley got Knockatotaun.

SOURCES:

Rentals of the Estates of Landed Proprietors of the County of Sligo in the years 1633-36 from Harleian MS 2048 - In Wood-Martin's History of Sligo Vol. 2.

Simington, Robert C.(ed) - *Civil Survey Vol. 10*. Dublin 1961.

Books of Survey and Distribution .- Co. Sligo - Public Records Office, Dublin.



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CHAPTER 9

A CENTURY OF DEVELOPMENT: 1700 - 1800

The period of great changes in land ownership was over by 1700 and the land of Killoran parish with some exceptions remained in the same families until the twentieth century.

The town lands owned by the Crofton family, Carrowclooneen, Rathmactiernan, Lissalough, Carrownagleragh and Deenodes stayed in their hands until the late eighteenth century when they passed to Rev. Henry Crofton who died without an heir. The property then passed to his sister, Catherine, who had married John Yeaden Lloyd of Croghan, Co. Roscommon in 1786. The Lloyd family held the property with the exception of Deenodes until the early years of the twentieth century.

Knockadoo and Ballinvally were owned by the King family. In 1713 they passed to Susanna King who was married to Robert Savage of Dublin and the Savage family owned these town lands together with Moymlough until the middle of the next century. The Irwin family of Tanrego came into possession of Carrownloughan some time early in the century and it remained that family's property until 1855.

The major landowners in the parish were, of course, the O'Hara family. In 1684 Kean O'Hara took over the O'Hara property in Co. Sligo and Dublin city. His father had married twice and this gave rise to numerous legal actions over the next twenty-five years as different relatives including a half brother pursued claims to the estate. Kean held on to the estate and in 1701 he married Eleanor Matthew of Thomastown, Co. Tipperary, a Catholic, who brought with her a dowry of £1,000. In spite of having such a large estate, Kean was not well off. The numerous lawsuits of the previous century had cost a lot and economic activity in the Sligo area was very limited.

Kean's son Charles O'Hara (1705 - 1776) wrote an account of Sligo in the early part of the eighteenth century. In it he said: "at the beginning of this century the

whole country was covered with cottage tenants, who having no foreign demands for the produce of their farms mostly paid their rents in kind, in duties and in work". The landlord got very little rent from his tenants and it has been estimated that O'Hara's total rent income around 1700 was no more than £100. Economic life began to pick up in the Sligo area around 1720. One reason for this was the growth of the linen industry. Charles O'Hara says that by the years 1717 and 1718 landlords began to sow flax seeds and tenants' wives were employed to spin the produce into yarn. Some of this yarn was woven into cloth for the tenant's own use but most of it was sold at linen markets in Sligo and Ballymote to merchants from the North of Ireland. The Linen Board was established in 1711 to help the development of the industry. The linen industry injected cash into what was previously a society based on subsistence farming.

Arrears of rent seem to have been a problem for Kean. In 1703 Oliver O'Hara of Meemlough wrote to Keane in Dublin that many tenants would plough the lands of Coolaney and Rathbarran but were afraid that Keane would seize the harvest in lieu of rent.

Kean was fond of drink, gambling and horse racing but he was also, as far as family finances would allow, an improving landlord. He spent quite an amount of time re-organising his estate having various townlands mapped and their boundaries fixed. He had a survey made in 1716 of part of his estate, which included maps of Coolaney, Rathbarran, Carrownleam, Creevaun, Carrownacarrick and Curraghaniron (Halfquarter). These show very little detail and are mainly concerned with fixing the borders of the townlands. In 1720 Kean completed the building of a new family mansion, Nymphsfield, at Annaghmore near Collooney.

Kean was succeeded by Charles O'Hara (1705 - 1776) and under him family fortunes rose. He married Lady Mary Carmichael, daughter of an English earl, and sister of a future Archbishop of Dublin. Charles was a Member of Parliament though not for Sligo. He had to find seats in Offaly and in Armagh. He was friendly with the noted orator and statesman, Edmund Burke. Horse racing was his great interest; he

owned a string of racehorses and spent a large part of the year away from his Sligo estate following the fortunes of the turf. In spite of this he did try to improve his estate. In the second half of the century he helped establish the linen industry on his estate. He brought weavers and bleachers from the north of Ireland and gave them farms around Coolaney. He had a bleach mill and a bleach green built near Coolaney. This area became known as Greenville because of the bleach green and the road by this land is still called "The Green Road". A Mr. Cope is mentioned as the first manager of the Greenville linen establishment in the middle of the century.

Charles continued the work of Kean in mapping and fixing the boundaries of townlands presumably as a prelude to leasing those areas. There are maps dated 1769 for Shancough, Carrowgavneen and Carrownacleigha (Rockfield), 1766 for Killoran, 1767 for Rathosey, 1770 for Shancough and Carrownlean, 1772 for Carrownacleigha and 1776 for Rathbarran. The years 1760 to 1780 saw a large number of new leases being entered into. A feature of these leases was the introduction of outsiders especially to the townlands around Coolaney. These were Protestants from the north of Ireland and some at least had connections with the attempt to establish the linen industry in the parish.

In November 1767 Thomas Armstrong leased over 170 acres in Coolaney townland including the corn mill in Coolaney and the bleach mill at Greenville for a yearly rent of just under £100. Edward Black leased ten acres in Carrownlean for £6-14-6 in November 1776 and in May 1779 he leased seven acres in Coolaney for £5-7-4. Hugh Marques leased a plot in Coolaney in November 1767, six acres in Rathosey in May 1768 for £3 and in November 1777 he leased seven acres and a house in Carrownlean for £5-7-1. In November 1775 John Kerrigan leased forty acres in Rockfield for £42. George Stokes leased Curraghaniron (Halfquarter) in November 1773 for £29-8-0. John and Joseph Davies (probably Davis) leased just over fifty acres in Rathbarran in May 1772 for £26.

More outlying townlands seem generally to have been leased to local occupiers. In May 1777 nine acres in Carrowgavneen were leased to Matt and Pat McGowan for

£9. Twelve acres in Seevness were let in May 1778 for £4 to James Finlay, and two acres to Thomas Mackey for £2. In 1780 James Tigue and Company leased sixteen acres of arable land and a large scope of mountain in Seevness for £15. Michael Durcan leased twenty-seven acres in Gortakeeran for £18 in 1776.

Very little of these townlands were actually let on leases, most of the occupiers were presumably tenants from year to year. As can be seen from the leases mentioned above the rate for land leasing around 1770 was generally around £1 per acre. This rate fluctuated over the following years. Leases granted in the years just after 1780 show a drop in land value. George Jackson leased six acres in Rathbarran in May 1781 for £2-7-9. Leases of Rathosey in May 1784 show a similar drop - Matthew Gilgan leased 50 acres for £11, Edward Simpson 65 acres for £11, John Bolton 33 acres for £11 and Robert Barber 38 acres for £12.

The Napoleonic wars at the end of the century caused a rise in land prices. Albert Blest leased fifteen acres in Coolaney, which included Greenville, in May 1803 for £125. Creevaun was let in May 1808 to various groups of tenants for a total yearly rent of just over £160. In 1805 Pat Gorman leased 8 acres of Shancough for a yearly rent of £13-13-0. In spite of their increased income from these leases the O'Haras were still in financial difficulty. In 1769 Charles O'Hara raised £14,000 by mortgaging much of his property in Sligo to an English M.P., George Grenville. Three years later an extra £5,000 was obtained and in 1782 Charles O'Hara jnr. raised another £2,000. In 1792 £33,000 was raised by a tontine on Coolaney and forty-five townlands in County Sligo. A tontine is a loan given by a number of people who each get in return an annuity for the rest of their lives.

Charles O'Hara jnr. succeeded his father in 1776. He was educated at Oxford and later studied law. He was very active in politics but the Sligo seats were held by the Cooper and Wynne families and Charles had to purchase a seat in Dungannon, Co. Tyrone for £1,000. He became very involved in the Volunteer movement and at the general election of 1783 O'Hara contested the Sligo seat and headed the poll. Joshua Cooper, a sitting M.P., lost his seat. In the 1790 election O'Hara allied himself with

Joshua Cooper and they both won seats defeating the powerful Wynne family. Charles remained M.P. for over thirty years. He was in favour of Catholic Emancipation and opposed the Act of Union.

Charles' success in elections was partly due to the increase in the number of leases granted by him in the latter half of the eighteenth century. A lease was a necessary voting qualification at the time and Catholics did not get the vote until 1793, when the relevant penal law was abolished. The penal laws were enacted in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century. They discriminated against Catholics and other non Church of Ireland members for the purpose of keeping them politically, economically and educationally second-class citizens. For most of the century Catholics could not vote or hold a lease on land of over 31 years. Penal laws against the Catholic religion and its clergy were seldom rigorously enforced.

By an act of 1704 each parish was allowed to have one registered parish priest who had to have two reliable sureties as to his conduct. For the parish of Killoran Fr. Richard Cloane (Coleman) aged fifty, then living in Carrowclooneen, was the parish priest. He had been ordained in 1678 and his sureties were Francis King jnr., presumably one of the King family who owned Knockadoo and Ballinvally, and Thomas Jones of Rathmore. Fr. Teig Davy, a native of Coolaney was parish priest of Kilshalvey in Co. Roscommon at the same time. In 1714 a Sligo Grand Jury report said: "the Papists are so numerous in this country (county) that without an army there is no good to be done". In a report of 1731 Killoran is stated "to have no settled priest, no Mass house and no Popish school". It also said that Mass was usually said in private houses. It was also common, especially in summer, to say Mass in some sheltered spot out of doors. Between the walls of Rathbarran fort there is a large rock traditionally regarded as a Penal Mass rock. This would be a good sheltered spot for Mass in the days when Catholics were too poor to be able to build a Church.

In 1744 Fr. Henry Prendergast is mentioned as parish priest of Killoran and later in the same century Fathers O'Gara and Dillon occupied the same position. Some time in the middle of the century a small thatched chapel was built on the O'Hara

estate at Rockfield beside what was then the main road through the parish from east to west. The introduction of the new Church of Ireland tenants meant an increase in the Protestant population of the parish in the second half of the century. This led to a demand for a place of worship. At the time of the Reformation the church at Killoran was taken by the Church of Ireland and was used as a place of worship. Owing to lack of numbers it fell into disuse and by the early seventeenth century Protestants in Killoran parish worshipped at Collooney. Bishop Henry Downes, Bishop of Killala and Achonry in correspondence with Kean O'Hara, 1717 – 1720, mentions that the "mother church" at Collooney of the united parishes of Killoran, Kilvernet and Ballisodare needed repair.

In 1766 a petition of the parishioners of the united parish of Killoran and Kilvernet asked that a church be built in the parish. This was agreed to and Charles O'Hara granted an acre of land at Rathbarran "for and in consideration of the promotion of religion and the service of God and in consideration of his good will towards the inhabitants of the said parish," as is stated in the lease granted to churchwardens Philip Percival and Thomas Armstrong and their successors for ever. Witnesses to the lease were Peter McCormick and Thomas Church. The Church cost £921 to build. The first Vicar of this new church was the Rev. Josiah Hern, who however did not reside in the parish for some time. Surveys of 1809 and 1813 report him as not being resident. In 1809 he stated that he was preparing to build a glebe house. This was still not built in 1813 but was built soon afterwards at a cost of £924.

The prosperity of the area was increasing during this century partly due to the development of the linen industry. The population was also increasing and this led to a decrease in the average size of holding. In 1776 an English visitor, Arthur Young, reported that the Sligo area was going back from pasture to tillage and that most farms were very small. The food of the poor, he said, was potatoes, milk and herrings with oaten bread in summer. The growing of oats was still important in the parish.

Coolaney corn mill, mentioned in 1633, was often referred to during the century. In 1722 an account mentions a payment of 9/4d for thatching Coolaney mill. A map

of 1716 shows Coolaney mill more or less where the mill building now stands but the small tributary of the Owenboy coming down from Leyney is called the "mill race". Perhaps the mill used the water of this stream rather than that of the big river. On a map of 1772, another corn mill is marked at the eastern end of Rockfield townland beside the road from Rathbarran to Coolaney near where Leyney school later stood. This mill survived into the next century and is marked on the 1836 Ordnance Survey Map. The horizontal mill in Ballinvally townland was also in use during this century.

Many of the people of the parish still practiced the holding of land in common where a number of families held an area between them. In August 1762 Charles O'Hara wrote to Edmund Burke, "I went yesterday to divide a very large mountain farm among its inhabitants. With great difficulty I divided the lot into four villages for 'twas an innovation: but I told them they must be modernised". Many of the townland maps drawn for O'Hara at this time were concerned with these subdivisions. On 22nd September 1777 Richard McFaden, Michael Durcan, Phelim Murren and Thomas Church agreed to the division of Seevness. In 1795 Carrowgavneen was divided but some of the divisions were still held in common by more than one farmer. These were the five divisions made: Connel Murrin and Co.; James Flanagan and Co.; James Murrin; Bryan Murrin's division now Harans; McGowans division and Co. As late as 1808 when Creevane was being let there were five divisions made and each was let to a group of two to four tenants.

It seems that the people did not generally live in isolated single dwellings but in groups of houses. The town land maps of this time do not generally show houses but a map of Carrowgavneen dated 1760 shows two groups of houses labelled "cabins" in the south of the town land. One group has five and the other has six houses. A map of Shancough of the same year shows a group of four houses along the road.

This century saw the development of roads in the area. By 1790 the following roads were in existence: The Cloonacool to Coolaney road through Rockfield; The Templehouse to Coolaney road through Rathbarran; Coolaney to Collooney; Coolaney to Sligo via the Hungry Rock; A road from Templehouse across the south

of the parish through Killoran townland; The "Green Road" from Coolaney to Annaghmore; A road from Rockfield through Creevaun to Killoran. A map of 1770 mentions "roads to be". These were a road from the Templehouse - Coolaney road to meet the Rockfield - Killoran road at Lissalough and a road from Rathbarran church through Carrownlean to meet the new road. These seem to have been built by 1776. Coolaney "old" bridge, built the previous century, was the only bridge in the parish and no roads are marked in the parish area north of the river.

The town of Coolaney benefited from the general prosperity of the century. The corn mill in the town and the linen establishment nearby meant it was a centre of business. The fairs and courts held there contributed to its growth. It was the only town on the O'Hara estate and so got special attention from the landlord. A free holders list of about 1800 contains fifty-six names and over half are from these townlands: Coolaney 16; Rathbarran 8 and Rathosey 6. By contrast the Hearth Money Rolls of 1664 lists only four people from the same townlands from a list of forty-one.

The eighteenth century saw a large influx of outsiders who were Protestants and who were given large farms generally of the better land around Coolaney. The natives were left in the poorer areas and often had no leases but held their land from year to year. As the population grew the farms were subdivided and poorer land on the mountainside was cultivated.

In 1798, the "Year of the French", Charles O'Hara and a detachment of his Leyney cavalry saw action against the foreigners. They were sent to Tubbercurry as the French approached. As they entered the village they shot a man named McGuire for wearing a green neck cloth and when the French advance guard reached Tubbercurry O'Hara attacked them. Three of the cavalry were killed and a number taken prisoner. O'Hara retreated to Sligo. The French marched towards Sligo just skirting the parish to the south and at Collooney won the battle of Carrownagcat. At Ballinamuck, Co. Longford, the French and Irish were defeated.

Anyone who remained loyal during the invasion and who had suffered damage could apply to the government for compensation. The following is a list of those granted compensation from Killoran parish:

James Armstrong, Rathosey	£7-11-4
John Armstrong, Rathosey	£6-0-3
John Thompson, Killoran	£7-5-0
Thomas Church, Coolaney	£22-10-3
Elizabeth Ormsby, Coolaney	£62-8-8
Henry Atkinson, Cabragh	£9-16-5½
William Atkinson, Cabragh	£22-12-4
John Atkinson, Cabragh	£9-0-0
Thomas McCarrick, Coolaney	£3-0-0

It would appear from this that there was quite a lot of trouble in the parish at the time, natives no doubt using the opportunity to strike back at some of the newcomers who had been given land in the parish.

SOURCES:

O'Hara Papers in National Library, Dublin.

No. 1923 incl. Rental of Estate c1775.

Survey of O'Hara's Estate 1716

Estate Plans and drawings 1740-1850

No. 2733: Electors List c1800

No. 2169 Voters List c1790

No. 3136 Freeholders List c1800

No. 20280 Letters to Charles O'Hara 1775-1821

No. 20397 Townlands in Co. Sligo with Proprietors names c1773

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CHAPTER 10

KILLORAN LEASEHOLDERS 1764 – 1817

The following is a list of some leaseholders and tenants on the O'Hara estate in Killoran parish 1764 - 1817 with the date of the leaseholder's earliest mention in the O'Hara records.

CARROWCLOONEEN		William Lee	1796
CARROWNACARRICK		Charles Anderson	1788
John Anderson	1785	Joseph McKimm	1786
John Workman	1786	James Donohoe	1796
Bartholomew Wallace	1785	John Middleton	1816
Pat Henry	1785	David McCormick	1785
CARROWNACLEIGHA		William Davis	1781
Patrick Gorman	1795	Hugh Kerrigan	1796
John Kerrigan	1775	Terence Sterling	1795
Daniel Gibson	1781	John Price	1810
John Kelly	1817	William Cunningham	1775
George Hillard	1772	Thomas Mackey	1775
Thomas Church	1781		
CARROWGAVNEEN		Hugh Boey	1795
Michael Boey	1795	Terence Haran	1796
John Murin	1795	James Murran	1795
James Flanagan	1795	Daniel Murreen	1811
John Nicholson	1816	David Henry	1817
Darby Flanigan	1775	Matt McGowan	1777
Connil Murrin	1795	Conor Flanagan	1800
James Henry	1800		
CARROWNATEEWAUN		James Jackson	1788
Thomas Thompson	1795		
CARROWNLOUGHAN		John Bolton	1779
Moses Farrell	1779	James Foy	1796
John McHugh	1796	Pat Finan	1810
CARROWNLEAM		John Brinkman	1778
Edward Black	1776	Stephen Burke	1786
Samuel Henderson	1779	Hugh Markes	1777
Peter McCormick	1796	Daniel O'Hara	1796

Charles O'Connor	1796	James Stewart	1796
James Thompson	1776	Connel Gallagher	1800
Hugh Gallagher	1800	John Lanny	1811
James O'Hara	1784	William Golden	1776
CREEVAUN		Philip Clairby	1810
Pat Curly	1808	Francis Carty	1815
Bryan Carty	1805	Henry Cullen	1808
John Gallagher	1810	Daniel Gallagher	1815
William Hart	1808	Mark Henry	1808
William Murreen	1815	Pat Murrey	1815
Francis O'Hara	1815	Augustine O'Hara	1815
Matthew Snee	1808	John Snee	1808
Bartholomew Wynne	1808	Dominick Wynne	1808
Thomas Trumble	1753	James McDermott	1808
Pat Brennan	1808	M. Redican	1808
COOLANEY		David Armstrong	1783
Thomas Armstrong	1767	James Bleakly	1778
John Church	1782	Richard Davis	1774
Thomas Davis	1780	William Davis	1782
James Gleany	1782	Daniel Gibson	1782
Francis Lipsett	1783	Thomas Mackay	1779
Joseph Murdagh	1783	John Murdagh	1768
Peter McCormick	1783	Thomas Masterson	1764
Samuel Price	1782	James Henry	1796
Phelim Murran	1796	John McCauley	1796
Christopher Campbell	1811	Thomas Cunningham	1815
Peter Derig	1813	Andrew Dyer	1817
Joseph Ferral	1817	Cormick McManus	1816
John Neavin	1817	Charles O'Connor	1811
Edward Black	1779		
DEENODES		Francis Waldron	1789
KILLORAN		Robert Grier	1772
David Thompson	1771	James Kilbride	1796
John Kilbride	1796	Matthew Kilbride	1796
Terence McDonagh	1796	Pat Runiane	1796
Lawrence Gallagher	1814	Owen Gallagher	1814
Michael McDonagh	1772	Robert McKim	1773

Terence McBryan	1771	Dominic Snee	1771
Thomas Quigly	1801	P. Gorman	1801
Michael Brett	1801	Patrick Gallagher	1814
James Gallagher	1814	James Feighin	1815
Peter Feighin	1815	Pat Gorman	1817
Conner McBryan	1810	Pat Snee	1817
GORTAKEERAN		Francis McHugh	1795
Cormick McManus	1796	John McManus	1772
Laughlan McHugh	1777	Pat Mullen	1817
Michael Durcan	1776		
HALFOUARTER		George Stokes	1773
KNOCKATOTAUN		Edmund Henry	1796
Martin Henry	1796	Davey Henry	1796
Patrick Henry	1796		
LISSALOUGH		O'Hara Sterling	1786
Patrick Coleman	1796	William Gallagher	1796
Thomas Healy	1796	Pat McDonagh	1796
John Mulloony	1796	Patrick Towlan	1796
William McCormick	1758		
MOYMLOUGH		Bryan Mullen	1796
Owen McNulty	1796	Terency McNulty	1796
George Ormsby	1796	James Ormsby	1796
Philip Lilies	1811		
RATHBARRAN		James Allen	1784
John Davis	1772	Joseph Davis	1772
George Jackson	1781	Neal Lavary	1782
James Price	1788	Richard Davis	1785
Samuel Price	1781	Peter Clovane	1817
Meredith Lavary	1815	Pat McCarrick	1817
John Cunningham	1803	Thady Davy	1803
RATHOSEY		James Simpson	1791
John Bolton	1784	Mathew Carthy	1786
Archibald Armstrong	1764	James Armstrong	1778
John Armstrong	1778	William Barber	1786
James Barber	1786	Robert Barber	1784
Edward Simpson	1784	Henry Armstrong	1795
James Glenny	1781	Henry Glancey	1815

Mathew Giligan	1784	Robert Middleton	1817
John Bleakly	1768		
RATHMACTIERNAN		James Coleman	1796
Edward McCarrick	1796	Peter McCarrick	1796
Bartholomew Rice	1796	John Ross	1796
Bryan McCarrick	1811		
RATHMORE		David Lillies	1783
SEEVNESS		Pat McFadden	1817
Pat McGloen	1817	John Mulligan	1817
Owen McDonough	1817	Thomas Mackey	1777
James Finlay	1778	Thomas Clifford	1795
Thady Kilduff	1796	Phelim Leonard	1796
Thomas Mulligan	1796	Roger O'Hara	1796
James Tighe	1780	Darby Tighe	1810
Michael O'Hara	1815		
SHANCOUGH		Connel Culkin	1775
Pat O'Hara	1815	James O'Dowd	1816
Michael McGloin	1801	Neal Nevin	1817
Thomas Lynchaghan	1801	John Lynchaghan	1801
Daviel Murren	1815	Maxwell Gibbons	1817
John Henry	1815	Michael Cunane	1771
Thomas Burke	1775	Pat Linchechan	1772
Pat Gorman	1805	Edward Brennan	1805
James Ingram	1771	George Lawson	1771
George Ferguson	1771	John Lawson	1770
Joseph Murtagh	1770		

KILLORAN FLAX GROWERS 1796

The following is a list of persons from Killoran parish who in 1796 were granted premiums for growing flax. No townland is given in the list. Where a name is followed by the letter "L" that name is also found in the previous list of leaseholders 1764 - 1817.

William Alexander	James Allen L	James Armstrong L
Robert Barber L	Hugh Beoy L	Michael Beoy L
Patrick Calery	Michael Callery	Bartholomew Cawley

Francis Carty L	Thomas Church L	Bartholomew Clarke
Thomas Clifford L	Daniel Cluane	Patrick Cluane
Henry Cullen L	Augustine Durkan	Michael Durkan L
Bridget Finan	Patrick Finan L	Peter Finan
James Finlay L	Daniel Finn	James Foy L
John Gallagher L	Michael Goolding	Murtagh Gorman
William Hannon	Terence Haran L	Peter Healy
Edmond Henry L	Bartholomew Henry	Paul Higgins
James Jackson L	John Keregan L	Thomas Lahy
William Lee L	Richard Leheny	Robert Lynch
James McAnulty	Patrick McAvan	Patrick McCarrack
Bryan McCarrick L	Peter McCarrick L	Patrick McCarrick L
Mary McClune	Patrick McFadden L	Laughlin McHugh L
Michael McHugh	Mary McKeon	Joseph McKim L
Peter McLoughlin	John McManus L	Phelim McManus
James McNulty	Hugh McSharry	Patrick Masterson
Michael Meenane	Matthew Mooney	James Moony
James Mordagh	Darby Mullanny	Terence Mullen
Bryan Mullin L	John Mullowny L	Connel Murran L
James Murran L	John Murran	John Nearon
Charles O'Connor L	Terence O'Donnell	Bryan O'Hara
George Ormsby L	James Redecan	Matthew Rock
Patrick Roonean	Michael Smyth	Andrew Snee
David Thompson L	John Thompson	Meredith Thompson
Thomas Thompson L	Patrick Toolen L	

SOURCES:

Trustees of Linen and Hemen Manufacturers - A list of person to whom Premiums for sowing flax-seed in the year 1796 have been adjudged by the Trustees of the Linen Manufacturers - County of Sligo.

O'Hara Papers - National Library, Dublin - Nos. 2169, 1923; 2733;

A Survey of Carrowinleam in County of Sligo surveyed and laid out for the following persons by order of Charles O'Hara, Esq.			
	Acres	Roods	Perches
Hugh Marquis - arable and pasture	12	0	7
James Thompson - arable	7	2	0
Swampy bottom capable of being made good ground by a small expense in draining	0	2	2
	8	0	2
William Golden arable	5	2	4
Moor and lower bottom	4	2	1
	10	0	5
Edward Black - arable and pasture	10	0	2
TOTAL PLANTATION MEASURE	40	0	20

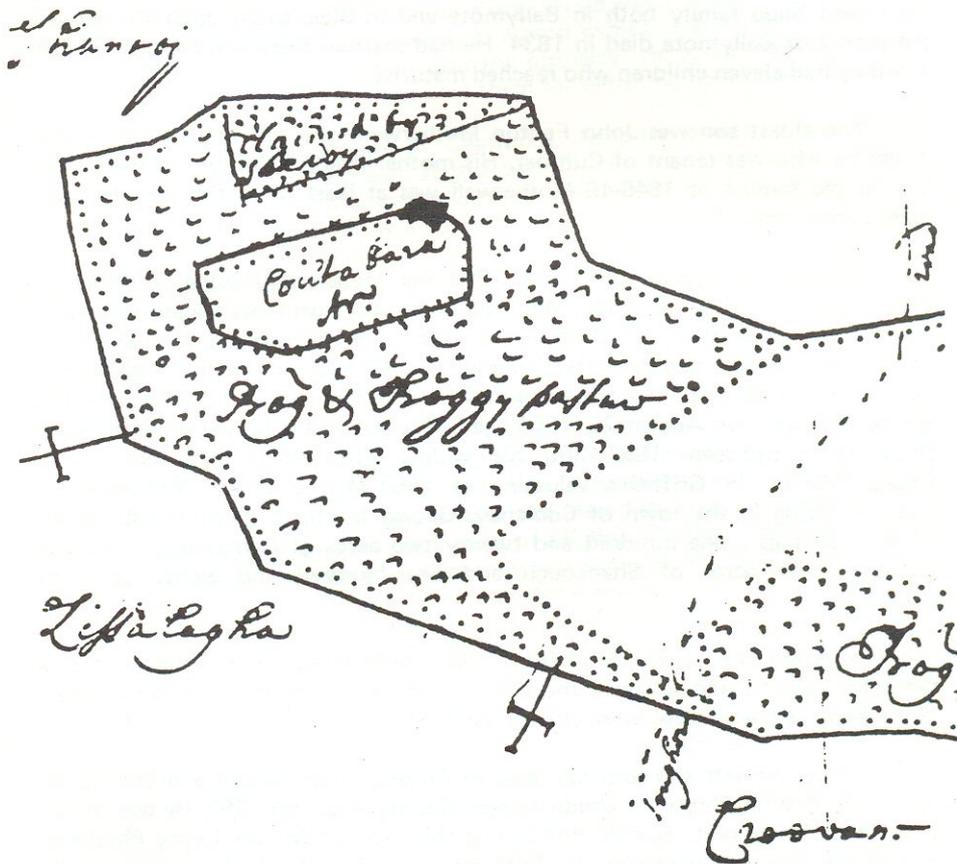
*Surveyed in November 1776 by William Masterson
[O'Hara Papers N.L.I., P. 1923]*

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CHAPTER 11

CULTIBAR

Cultibar is an area of Carrownleam, which in the past was often regarded as a separate townland. Cultibar is shown on maps of the O'Hara estate dated 1716, 1760 and 1770. It was always treated as a special farm and was let on very long leases, sometimes for three lives, unlike other parts of the estate which were let at will or on short leases. The tenant was usually a Protestant.



Part of a map dated 1716 of Carrownleam and Rathbarran showing Cultibar - "Coilta Bara" - described as "Ar" (arable) at the western end of the townland. The townlands of Lisalough, Creevane and Shancough are also named. The road from Rockfield to Killoran is also shown.

In May 1784 James O'Hara is given as tenant of Cultibar for his life at the yearly rent of £4.4.0. James died on St. Patrick's Day 1789 aged 94 years and is buried in

Court Abbey graveyard. His son Daniel O'Hara was next tenant of Cultibar. These O'Haras were not related to the landlord O'Haras. At this time Trimgrove was often used as an alternative name for Cultibar.

Daniel O'Hara's son, James Arthur, was a colourful character. He joined the British Army and served in Spain during the Peninsular War. He got into trouble there and found himself imprisoned, probably for debt. In 1812 his father wrote to Charles O'Hara MP asking him to help James Arthur by sending him £25, a very large sum of money in those days. In 1819 his brother Roger was in London trying to get the help of the Spanish ambassador to trace James Arthur in Spain. James Arthur eventually did get home and took over the farm at Cultibar, his father Daniel having died on May 30, 1818.

James Arthur O'Hara's troubles were by no means over and we next find him lodged in Sligo gaol in November 1828 because of his debts. His many long rambling letters from gaol continually complain of ill treatment and these complaints led to an inquiry. This inquiry found that there was no basis to his allegations of ill treatment.

Eventually a settlement was arrived at between the landlord O'Hara, James Arthur O'Hara and John Motherwell, who was a sheriff at the time. The settlement involved James Arthur getting an annuity of £50 while Motherwell leased Cultibar from Charles K. O'Hara. As well as Cultibar he leased a small portion of Carrownlean and of Shancough and about three hundred acres of Seevness mountain. For all this he paid a rent of £75 per year. This lease is dated 10 March 1832.

James Arthur O'Hara left Cultibar but continued to write to Charles O'Hara and to his agent, often asking for money to help him out of further financial difficulties. He sold his annuity for ready cash and in the early 1840 we find him in Dublin. In July 1843 he writes from the headquarters of the Loyal National Repeal Association, Daniel O'Connell's organisation, that he had been "emancipated by O'Connell from the House of Bondage in James Street and employed usefully". In 1845 he was

thanking O'Hara's agent for money which enabled him to leave the James' Street workhouse "where I once again had been driven by dire necessity". This is the last we hear of James Arthur O'Hara who seems to have had a continual problem as regards management of money.

The Motherwell family, who were next tenants of Cultibar, was a very prominent Sligo family, both in Ballymote and in Sligo town. John Motherwell, the sheriff of Ballymote, died in 1834. He had married Elizabeth Fenton in 1786 and they had eleven children who reached maturity.

The eldest son was John Fenton Motherwell who became a solicitor and it was he who was tenant of Cultibar. His mother lived in Cultibar in the 1830s. During the famine of 1846-49 Motherwell was at least for a time on the local relief committee.

Between the years 1848 and 1853 the Motherwells sublet Cultibar to William Fetherston of Carrick, Mullingar, who was agent over some estates in County Sligo, including the Ormsby Gore estate in Kilmactigue. In 1853 John Fenton Motherwell had his lease renewed by O'Hara and in the negotiations he claimed to have spent a lot of money on Cultibar House. This John Fenton Motherwell died on August 26, 1854 aged 49 years and is buried in Rathbarran churchyard. Between 1857-1860 his widow Elizabeth sublet Cultibar to George Martin. In Griffith's valuation of 1858 Mrs. Elizabeth Motherwell is given as living in the town of Coolaney. George Martin is given as sub tenant of her holdings, one hundred and twenty two acres of Carrownleam including Cultibar, nine acres of Shancough and one hundred and eighty acres of Seevness.

In 1863 Elizabeth Motherwell was negotiating with O'Hara for a reduction in rent and in 1864 she left Ireland for Australia where her mother-in-law and brothers-in-law were already established.

Before she left she sold her lease of Cultibar, Carrownleam and Shancough to Randle Peyton Phibbs of Union Lodge, County Sligo for £350. He was to pay £16.2.4

per year rent. Randle Phibbs was third son of William Henry Phibbs of Heathfield near Ballinacarrow. In 1876 Robert Alexander Geddes came to the parish as Church of Ireland curate. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Randle Phibbs in 1877 and lived at Cultibar with his father-in-law. Robert Alexander Geddes died on September 17, 1882 and his widow Elizabeth Frances Geddes stayed on in Cultibar. The Phibbs-Geddes family held the property until about 1907. Then Fredrick William O'Hara took over the Cultibar property and renovated the house. He acted as agent for the O'Hara estate.

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20336 Letters and papers of James Arthur O'Hara 20308 Letters to C.K. O'Hara 1807-1834

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Griffiths Valuation 1858 County Sligo P.R.O.I.

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CHAPTER 12

1800 –1846

Charles O'Hara M.P. died in 1822 and he was succeeded by his son Charles King O'Hara born 1785. Charles King never contested the parliamentary seat which had been held by his father. Archdeacon O'Rourke in his History of Sligo praises the landlord: "Mr. Charles King O'Hara was in many ways a model landlord and under him improvements of a most extensive and generally of a permanent kind were carried out all over the property. He encouraged the tenants to carry out these themselves and paid them for bettering their condition".

John Patrick Somers of Chaffpool, Achonry owned the townlands of Cappagh and Knockatotaun at this period. He was a well-to-do Catholic and was educated at Harrow. In the General Election of 1837 he was elected liberal M.P. for Sligo Borough as a supporter of Daniel O'Connell. His election was contested on the grounds that he had overvalued his holding of Cappagh. He had claimed that Cappagh was let to nineteen tenants at a rent of £310 per year. Local landowners Meredith Thompson and John Crofton Dodwell gave evidence that Cappagh was worth between £140 and £150 a year. In spite of this Somers held his seat and represented Sligo Borough until 1852. He died in 1862 aged 61 years.

The land in the parish belonging to the Savage family, Cabragh, Knockadoo, Ballinvally and Moymlough eventually passed to Rev. Robert Savage who died unmarried in 1841. The estate was auctioned on 23rd and 24th September 1842 at the Gresham Hotel, Dublin and Meredith Thompson bought the house and lands of Knockadoo for a total of £8,360. Charles Thompson, his brother, bought the townlands of Ballinvally and Cabragh for £5,100. The Thompsons had been tenants of Savage for some time and also held land in south-east Sligo between Riverstown and Boyle. In 1796 Meredith Thompson of Killoran parish is mentioned and in 1817 he was on the parish relief committee. In 1824 he was living in Knockadoo House and in 1834 he was a church warden of Rathbarran Church. This Meredith Thompson died in June 1837 and his sons Charles and Meredith were the purchasers of

Knockadoo, Ballinvally and Cabragh in 1842. These sons had married sisters, daughters of the McDermott Roe of Alderford House, Ballyfarnon near Boyle, Co. Roscommon. Meredith married Kate Peyton McDermott Roe on 3rd December 1840 and Charles married Cecilia McDermott Roe on 3rd June 1841.

Charles King O'Hara replying in 1835 to the Commissioners of inquiry into the condition of the poorer classes in Ireland wrote: "While the population increased, the means of employment decreased, a great deal more ground has been brought into cultivation and a much greater quantity of potatoes produced; after a good crop food is plentiful and cheap, and the poor generally are not disposed to work; after a failure of crop distress is terrible, and they will work for any wages and neglect their own holdings".

There was a serious potato shortage all over the country in 1816 and 1817. Killoran parish did not escape. In December 1816 Meredith Thompson wrote to O'Hara saying that the potato crop was half the normal and that those potatoes harvested were not very good. A third of the corn crop was also lost. A meeting of County Sligo gentlemen was held on 28th December to decide what course of action should be taken. It was decided to obtain funds by subscription to assist the poor. A relief committee for the united parish of Killoran and Kilvarnet was set up in January 1817. It included Mr. O'Hara and Meredith Thompson, Rev. Mr. Hern and Rev. Mr. Stack, Church of Ireland, Rathbarran and Father Daniel O'Connor, P.P. Rockfield. Albert Blest, then a tenant of Greenville farm was also on the committee. They collected subscriptions and wrote to absentee landlords. Edward Dodwell of Mousley, England, wrote promising help and Lord Lorton of Rockingham, Boyle, landlord of Deenodes sent a subscription in March 1817. Meal was purchased and sold at reduced rates to help relieve distress. At least £200 was spent in the Coolaney area.

Part of the cause of the distress and lower living standards was the decline in the linen trade after 1820. At the turn of the century Sligo County was an important flax-growing and linen manufacturing area. The Greenville bleach green and linen mill

was thriving at this time. John Maiben of Sligo held the lease of Greenville after Thomas Armstrong who seems to have emigrated to the U.S.A. sometime in the 1790's. John Maiben had been a linen merchant in Dublin from 1783 to 1794 when he and his brother Richard moved to Sligo. Soon afterwards he acquired the lease of Greenville and when the lease expired in 1803 he was anxious to have it renewed. O'Hara the landlord refused saying that he had considerable objections to Maiben as a tenant. There was quite an amount of interest in the lease and Albert Blest of Sligo was one of the applicants. When he raised his bid from £100 per year to £135 he was granted the lease. He also leased two other farms beside Greenville, one for £41 per annum and the other for £2-10-0.

Albert Blest was in fact brother-in-law of John Maiben, having married his daughter Anne in 1780. Blest was born in Sligo in 1755, the son of an English officer. He had spent some time at Greenville in his youth when his parents had sent him there hoping it would mend his wild and reckless ways. After spending some time there in the charge of Mr. Cope, the manager, Blest returned to Sligo and became friendly with Andrew Maiben. Together they established an Independent Dissenter Church in Sligo and Albert married Maiben's daughter. In 1803 Blest returned to Greenville as tenant and spent some time there as manager of the bleach mill. Later he left Greenville in the charge of his son Andrew and he returned to Sligo. He became principal agent for the London Hibernian Society whose aim was the spread of religious knowledge especially through the reading of the scriptures. He established over 140 schools in County Sligo and adjoining counties including one at Greenville where the teacher was for a time the famous Thady Connellan from Templeboy.

The town of Coolaney, O'Hara's estate town, saw many improvements during this time. In 1817 a dispensary was established in Coolaney. Money was provided by private subscriptions and by an equal grant by the Grand Jury. The Grand Jury was the body responsible for county administration and was made up of the leading landowners in the county including the O'Haras and the Dodwells. A dispensary committee, whose treasurer was Charles O'Hara, ran the dispensary which, in the

years 1825-29, spent about £130 per year on relieving sickness and treated about 900 people per year. The doctor at this time for the Coolaney area was Dr. Henry Irwin who was based in Sligo. Major O'Hara built a new dispensary in Coolaney in 1834 and after Dr. Irwin's death in 1836 a resident doctor took up duty in Coolaney. This may have been Dr. Samuel Kelly who was Coolaney doctor during the famine years.

By 1820 the linen trade had begun to decline. O'Hara reported in 1822 that "the decline of the linen manufacture with the failure for two years of the flax crop created much distress among the land holders" In late 1825 Albert Blest decided to give up his lease of Greenville and he surrendered it in March 1826 mentioning "very serious losses already sustained". O'Hara may have had some difficulty letting Greenville again and it was not finally let until December 1827. Henry Burrows leased seventy acres at Greenville for £140 per annum. This was considerably less than Blest had been paying. We don't know if Greenville bleach mill was worked after this but by 1836 it was disused and marked as such on the Ordnance Survey Map of that year. In the 1821 census 791 people in Killoran parish were returned as being chiefly employed in "trade manufacture or handcraft" presumably the linen trade, while in 1831 only 88 people were so returned, a measure of the trade's decline.

In 1832 O'Hara was instrumental in the setting up of the first post office in Coolaney. This was a receiving office under Collooney and O'Hara guaranteed it against loss. Over the three years 1833 - 35 the post office made a total loss of £3-14-0 which O'Hara paid.

Major O'Hara, in 1835, reported that the population of the parish had greatly increased since 1815. The available census figures however seem to suggest that the population had reached its peak by 1821 and that there was very little increase between then and the famine years. In 1821 the population of the parish was given as 3,765, in 1831 a marginal drop was recorded, the population then being 3,699. On the eve of the famine in 1841 it had risen slightly to 4,044. The earlier censuses, especially 1821, are regarded as having seriously underestimated the true population. If so then the picture in Killoran is of a steady population for these years.

Some tenants had emigrated to escape the growing poverty. About 220 men, women and children had emigrated from Killoran and Kilvarnet in the three years 1831 - 1833 to Canada or the U.S.A., reported Major O'Hara, and many more would go if they had the means.

The vast majority of the farms in the area were less than 25 acres. Most tenants held their land at will, that is they had no lease and could be evicted at any time. This is in marked contrast to the earlier period 1760 - 1800 when leases were very common. In the united parishes of Killoran and Kilvarnet Major O'Hara estimated that there were in 1835 about 500 labourers, 200 of whom were cottagers holding no land, the other 300 holding small portions of land. The labourers lived on what they could earn when employed and on what they could grow on their little plots or on plots taken as conacre. O'Hara estimated that at best a labourer could earn £6 in a year. Rent for his cabin and plot of land could be up to £3 a year. He estimated that it would cost £4 to £5 to keep a labourer in food for a year. There was no safety margin and when distress struck the labourers were the first to suffer. The bulk of the poorer people lived on potatoes and milk and sometimes herrings. This reliance on potatoes meant that any shortage in the potato crop brought on distress and hunger.

In spite of the falling living standards the countryside was looking better. "The general appearance of the country and of the people has improved," reported O'Hara, "there are fewer mendicants and the dress of the poor looks smarter though not so substantial as formerly': One of the reasons for the improved appearance was the work of O'Hara on his estate, draining, fencing, making roads and planting trees. The efforts of the people to bring more land into cultivation to grow more potatoes also contributed to the improved appearance.

In October 1819 there was a mention of "a Dublin gentleman" who was to collect rents on the O'Hara's estate. This was Richard Beere of Monkstown, Dublin and Littleton, Co. Tipperary who served O'Hara from 1820 to 1867. He spent quite an amount of time in the Coolaney area organising improvements on the estate. In

March 1827 Beere advised O'Hara that as farms fell out of lease, they should be taken up and the farms divided and drained. These improved farms should be let to "good tenants". Later in 1827 he reported that he was organising the planting of trees, draining on the mountain and making ditches. He inquired if O'Hara had settled the estate boundary on the mountainside. "I should like to have that side of the mountain enclosed", he said.

While he always put the good of the estate first he was generally sympathetic in his dealings with the tenants. In 1829 he wrote to O'Hara, "I think a poor man finds it quite enough to pay by right without adding expense, yet I must at all times speak wicked to frighten your rights from some of these good gentlemen". In 1835 he complained about the "many improvements I should like to make but no funds". "My business next Summer to build a few houses on the estate one within the last enclosure I made on the Seevness mountain and then place a Protestant there". The amount of rent received at Coolaney from the O'Hara tenants December 1819 to February 1820 was £1,848 and August 1820 to November 1820 was £2,260. Comparable figures for 1827 - 1828, were £2,971 and £2,358. Income from O'Hara's Sligo estate was therefore over £5,000 per year. He also had property in Dublin city and possibly some in Antrim. In 1803 Charles O'Hara had claimed an income of £3,700 from his estate.

The debts incurred in the previous century still imposed a financial strain on the estate and there were difficulties with arrears. In 1833 Beere mentioned the possibility of the Creevaun tenants, who were in arrears, working off their arrears improving the townland of Halfquarter. He was hoping to get possession of Halfquarter because its tenant, Thomas Stokes, was himself in arrears and in fact was sent to debtors' prison in 1835 for arrears.

In 1836 the existing police bodies in Ireland were absorbed into a new body, the Irish Constabulary, later called the R.I.C., Royal Irish Constabulary. Sometime between 1836 and 1839 O'Hara had a police barracks built in Coolaney and it was normally occupied by at least five policemen. O'Hara was paid nine pounds per year

in rent. A courthouse was built in Coolaney by O'Hara in or around 1835 and petty sessions were held there on the second Wednesday of each month. Local landowners acted as magistrates of the court. These normally included O'Hara himself, Thompson of Knockadoo and Dodwell of Carrownabonny. Clerk of the court was James Smith of Coolaney and process server was James Little of Rockfield.

During this period the administration of the law was in the hands of the Protestant landowners and the common people usually resorted to cruder methods to right real or imagined wrongs. Secret societies were common throughout the land and Killoran was no exception. These societies had many names, Rockites and Ribbonmen were names used in Killoran. They directed their attacks against landlords and also against tenants who did not show solidarity with tenants in trouble.

£20
Reward.

I HEREBY Offer a REWARD of

TWENTY POUNDS

To any Person who shall, within Six Months from the date hereof, give me such information as may enable me to discover and bring to Justice the Person or Persons who were concerned in writing or posting a Rockite Notice on the house of *Patrick M'Loughlin*, of *Knockadoo*, in the Co. *Sligo*, on the night of the 2nd instant, threatening him or any other person who may pay a Fine for, or interfere with *John M'Hughes'* portion of said Lands.

THOMAS STEWART,
Sub-Inspector,

Tubbercurry, 10th February, 1840.

(*Outrage Papers: Sligo 1840: 1195: State Paper Office*)

In the townland of Lissalough a woman named Bidy Jinks was evicted for non-payment of rent in 1838. Manus Snee rented the house and farm and because of this became a target for the "Rockites". On the nights of 7th November two of his stacks of turf were scattered and on the night of 29th November a gang of five men, some armed, entered his house and made him swear not to have anything to do with the house and land. They left a threatening notice to this effect and fired a shot outside as they left. When Snee showed the note to the parish priest he burned it and told Snee not to tell anyone. Manus Snee later reported the incident to the police and a reward of £20 was offered for information. On the night of 30th December 1839 a threatening notice was posted on the door of Joseph Meredith, bailiff to Meredith Thompson of Knockadoo. "My name is Capt. Fareplay", the notice said. The police report said of Joseph Meredith: "he served some tenants with notices to quit and is obnoxious to the people".

In September 1837 James Dodwell, landlord of Carrowabonny and Carrownaskeagh, had corn and potatoes taken from some tenants in lieu of rent owed. Michael Noon, a herdsman employed by Dodwell, and some others were in the house with the corn and potatoes when a group of people arrived and smashed in the doors. Shots were fired by the crowd and some of the people in the house were beaten. The crowd was looking for pistols and was told they were in Cawley's house across the river so they went there, smashed in the door and took the pistols. In April of the following year James Dodwell's ploughs and harrows were stolen from his land in Cappagh and seed oats were scattered in his barn. A tenant of his was boycotted and a herdsman was ordered not to work for him. This was as a result of Dodwell having taken land into his own use which formerly had been let as con acre.

In October 1838 Mrs. Motherwell of Cultibar had oats seized from a tenant names Gannon living near Rathbarran. Two keepers were put in charge of the seized oats and they were attacked by about forty men armed with guns and pitchforks. The crowd disarmed and imprisoned the keepers and carried off the corn.

On 2nd February 1840 a notice was posted on the door of Patrick McLoughlin

Knockadoo warning him and others against interfering with John McHugh's land in Knockadoo. The notice was signed by "Capt. Duggan".

£20
REWARD.

I HEREBY Offer a REWARD of
TWENTY POUNDS

To any Person who shall, within Six Months from the date hereof, give me such information as may enable me to discover and bring to justice all or any of the Armed Party, who, on the Night of the 29th of last Month, entered *Manus Snee's House*, at *Lissalough*, in the Parish of *Killoran*, and County of *Sligo*, administered an unlawful Oath to him, left a threatening Notice in the House, and fired a Shot.

T. L. RAYMOND,
Chief Constable.

TUBBERCERRY, 14th November, 1838.

(Outrage Papers: Sligo 1838: 26/198: State Paper Office)

On the night of the September fair in Coolaney 1826 a large crowd collected in the street and a Protestant, John Hall who was also a yeoman, was assaulted. The police came and took John Hall and one of those who assaulted him into the barracks. The mob attacked the barracks with stones and the police fired blanks to disperse them. When this failed they fired live ammunition and wounded two of the crowd,

McNulty and McDonagh, after which the mob dispersed. There was another disturbance at the September fair in Coolaney 1831 which resulted in a gun being taken from a policeman by a crowd. The parish priest, Fr. Matt Healy, appealed to his flock to return the gun and it was left in his stable that night. The parish priest wrote to O'Hara about the matter.

By the 1830's the government realised that it would have to take some concerted action to deal with the problem of Irish poverty. Its answer was the Irish Poor Law of 1838. This established a centralised system based on the workhouse. These workhouses were to be administered by special Boards of Guardians. Some of the Guardians were ex-officers, normally landlords and each area in the union also elected guardians. Coolaney area was in Sligo Union and it elected two guardians. The first poor law elections for Sligo union were held in 1839 and there were three candidates for Coolaney area, Thomas Smith of Coolaney and Henry Burrows of Greenville both Protestants, and a Catholic named McDonagh. The first two were elected polling 817 and 778 votes respectively while McDonagh got only 69 votes. Smith and Burrows represented Coolaney area until the famine years at least and were usually not opposed at elections. Major O'Hara was chairman of Sligo Board of Guardians. Sligo workhouse was opened on 17th December 1841 and in the year ended March 1843, 709 were admitted. A poor law rate was collected for the upkeep of the workhouse; half was paid by the landlord, half by the tenants.

The night of Sunday January 6th, 1839 was "the night of the big wind" when most of the country was devastated by a fierce storm. Sligo was also badly hit and the Sligo Journal reported "In the town of Coolaney almost every house was unroofed, six or seven entirely felled to the ground".

The Church of Ireland vicar for most of the half century was Joseph Verschoyle senior who succeeded Josiah Hern in 1818. The glebe house had been built in 1811 but the vicar did not live there and in fact did not reside in the parish until 1835. Joseph Verschoyle's uncle, James Verschoyle, was Bishop of Killala and Achonry 1810 - 1834 and his half brother was Hamilton Verschoyle the evangelical Bishop of

Kilmore. Joseph was also vicar of Ballynakeery parish near Ballina and seems to have lived there. Curates lived in Rathbarran glebe house and looked after the parish.

Rev. John Stack was a curate in the early years of the century as was Rev. Robert Chambers to whom the following memorial tablet was erected in Rathbarran Church: "To the memory of the Rev. Robert Chambers late curate of our union this tablet is inscribed in grateful testimony of his zealous and pious services and as a tribute to his virtues by his affectionate parishioners 1810". Rev. George Trulock served the parish in the early 1830's. In 1835 Rev. Joseph Verschoyle was living in the parish as was his curate Rev. Arthur Knox Huston. This may have had something to do with the fact that his uncle, the bishop had died in 1834 and Killala and Achonry had been united with Tuam under Archbishop Power Le Poer Trench who was anxious that clergy should live in their parishes. The parish clerk in 1835 was Nicholas Mackey and the churchwardens were Thomas Martin and Meredith Thompson. Rathbarran church had been enlarged in 1828-29 with the help of a loan of £460 from the Board of First Fruits.

In 1808 Fr. Daniel O'Connor took over as Catholic parish priest of Killoran parish from Fr. Anthony McDonagh. Fr. Matthew Healy was next occupying the position from 1825 to 1847 when he died. He was succeeded by Fr. Paul Henery. A new Catholic Church was built on the site of the old thatched chapel at Rockfield in 1827. O'Hara donated at least £100 towards the cost of building the church.

Limekilns were very common at this time. There are about eighty in the parish marked on the Ordnance, Survey map dated 1836. These presumably were small structures where farmers burned limestone to produce lime for their land. The remains of a more substantial structure can be seen today on Phibbs land at Rockfield. In a letter of 1829 Beere told O'Hara: "Be so good as to point out for Bourke where he will build the kiln". This could refer to above limekiln since Burkes were the occupiers of this farm before Phibbs married into the place. Also on the 1836 Ordnance Survey map "brick kilns" are marked at Tullaghan just outside the parish to the east and a big brick-making establishment seems to have existed there

all through the century. In July 1838 there is a mention of a person ordering 20,000 bricks at Coolaney, presumably from the works at Tullaghan. There is or was a field near Rathbarran Church called "The Brick Field" where bricks were once made on a smaller scale.

The 1836 map shows two groups of mill buildings in the west of the parish one in Carha and one in Carrownaskeagh. The Carha buildings just north of the Rockfield Cloonacool road at the parish boundary consisted of a corn mill, a corn kiln and a tuck mill which was used in woollen manufacture. The Carrownaskeagh group, a corn kiln, a corn mill and a cloth mill lay between Carrownaskeagh Lake and the river. This group is also marked on Larkin's 1819 map of Sligo as is the Ballinvally mill mentioned in the previous century. The Rockfield corn mill (at Leyney) is also shown on both maps. On Larkin's 1819 map Coolaney mill is shown on the small river, which flows into the "big river" just west of the town. I have already mentioned that this stream was called "the millrace" on an eighteenth century map.

There is a correspondence, dated 1839-1840, regarding "Coolaney Mills". This mentions a mill in Coolaney once leased by Thomas Armstrong but which went into disuse sometime after 1838 when Burrows built a new mill at Coolaney. "A new corn mill four storeys high, 56 ft. long" was advertised as being for rent by Henry Burrows in 1838 and this would seem to be the mill whose ruins are now to be seen in Coolaney town. It is possible that the older mill was on the smaller river marked on Larkin's map.

In 1837 there were four holders of retail spirit licenses in Coolaney town, Ballymote had thirteen and Tubbercurry seventeen. In 1835 O'Hara had reported that there were ten licensed public houses in the united parishes of Killoran and Kilvarnet and many unlicensed ones; "the plenty and cheapness of whiskey have had the worse effect" he said.

The early part of the nineteenth century saw a growth in the demand for education in the parish as in the whole country. By 1812 the Government was

considering a centralised state system of education but instead provided a subsidy for the Kildare Place Society, which had been set up in 1811. It began as an undenominational society committed to the education of the Irish masses but by the mid twenties it was accused of proselytising and the government grants were withdrawn. In 1826 schools at Carha and Carrownacarrick were connected with the Kildare Place Society. Meredith Thompson was the patron of the Carha school, which had 58 scholars, and Rev. John Stack curate of Rathbarran was patron of the Carrownacarrick school, which had one hundred and six pupils. We have already mentioned the activities of Albert Blest with the London Hibernian Society - a Protestant Missionary organisation. He started a school at Greenville, Coolaney around 1820.

A government survey of 1824 shows that nine schools were in operation in the parish at that time. Generally these were schools set up by untrained teachers in their own homes who charged school fees. These were what were known as "Hedge Schools". Some schools got assistance from the Baptist Society or the London Hibernian Society. Some were parochial schools, Protestant or Catholic and got assistance from the parish. In Moymlough a pay school was taught by Morgan Finn, a Catholic, in his own home. He got £8-10-0 from the Baptist Society and fifteen shillings from his pupils. About forty-five children attended.

John Battelle, a Catholic, had a pay school in Ballinvally teaching about fifty pupils. He received £11 per year from the Baptist Society. Peter Gilgan, a Catholic, held a school in Carha mill and in Carrownacarrick Andrew Lunney, another Catholic, held a pay school in a cabin teaching about sixty children. In Coolaney Peter Ross, a Catholic, held a pay school in a cabin getting £8 per year and teaching about twenty pupils. At Cultibar John Tanzy, a Catholic, ran a free school in a cabin teaching over forty children. Elizabeth Davis, a Protestant, ran a free school in Coolaney in a cabin. She received £6 per year and taught about forty children the majority of which were Protestant. This may have been a Church of Ireland parochial school.

Another school in Coolaney that run by John Gibson, a Protestant, was certainly a parochial school. He held this free school in his own house and taught sixty to seventy pupils the majority of whom were Protestant. His income was £16 per annum. He was still parochial teacher in 1835.

In Rockfield a Catholic parochial school was held in the chapel. This was a pay school, though deserving cases were taught free of charge. The teacher was James Minan and his income was £6 per year. The landlord, Charles O'Hara subscribed £1 to this James Minan schoolmaster in 1831 and may have regularly supported him. This parochial school stayed in operation until the famine of 1847. From 1830 the teacher lived in Coolaney in a house, one room of which was the schoolhouse. The Ordnance Survey map of 1836 shows a schoolhouse in Knockadoo where Loobey's house later stood.

In 1831 the Government set up the National Board of Education to establish National Schools in Ireland. The Church of Ireland in general opposed the system and in 1839 the Church Education Society was set up as an independent Church of Ireland system. There was also some Catholic opposition to the National Schools, which were claimed to be anti-Catholic and anti-national. Dr. McHale, Archbishop of Tuam from 1834 was especially hostile and this slowed the establishment of schools in the west. After a referral to Rome each bishop was given the right to decide for his own diocese.

In the eighteen forties attempts were made to establish National Schools in Killoran parish but these were hampered by lack of local funds and the inability to obtain the lease of suitable properties. The first application came from the parish priest Fr. Paul Henery who in May 1845 applied to have two schools recognised as National Schools, the Coolaney parochial school and a school in Deenodes, which he had helped establish in 1844. The Deenodes schoolhouse was a thatched house built by twenty-one year old teacher Richard McCauley. Seventy children usually attended this school, it was claimed. James Minan then aged 42 was still the teacher in Coolaney school. Both schools were recognised as National Schools in August 1845

and the teachers were paid salary, £8 per year, and grants of books were made. Neither school survived for long.

On February 1st, 1847, Richard McCauley, the teacher in Deenodes resigned. The parish priest, Fr. Patrick Hurst, attempted to re-open the school with J. Healy as teacher in Healy's house but on inspection the Board of Education decided to strike the school off the list of National Schools. In February 1847, the Coolaney schoolteacher James Minan also resigned and in August of that year an Inspector reported that the school was still closed and that the house was being used as a meal depot. Coolaney National School was then struck off the list.

The parish priest Fr. Patrick Hurst made another attempt to establish national schools in the parish in 1848. He applied to the Board for grants for building two schools, one at Coolaney where Charles O'Hara had offered a site at nominal rent and one at Cabragh where the landlord Charles Thompson had likewise offered a site at nominal rent and a lease for ever. Grants were approved by the Board for building both schools provided one third of the cost could be raised locally.

The schools were each intended to cater for about one hundred pupils. Neither school was built, no local funds could be collected for the Cabragh school and the manager could not get a suitable lease for the Coolaney school.

In the Summer Assizes of 1833 there was an estimate of £415-7-5 to build a new bridge at Coolaney over the Owenboy. At the same time a new road by the Hungry Rock was built east of the old road by that route. Some traces of the old road still remain higher up the mountain.

The period 1800 to 1845 then was a period of rising population and falling living standards for the majority of the people. Attempts were being made by the State to improve conditions, dispensaries, schools, workhouses were being provided to better the lot of the poorer classes. The reliance on potatoes as the main, and sometimes the only, food of the poor was especially dangerous and the lessons of partial failures of

the crop, in 1816/17 and other times were not learned. The years 1845-1850 saw a complete failure of the potato crop and the state improvements of the previous half century were to be tested and found totally inadequate.

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CHAPTER 13

THE GREAT FAMINE

In the autumn of 1845 a potato disease, blight, reached Ireland. By late autumn it had spread to seventeen counties. In the Sligo Champion of September 20th the blight is first mentioned and its issue of October 25th reported: 'It is with the deepest regret we find ourselves compelled to confirm the rumour of the failure of the potato crop in this county. . . , a decay in the chief, we may say the only article of food of the peasant.'

At the end of October some Sligo landlords met to consider the best means to remedy the effects of the failure of the crop. At a meeting of the Board of Guardians of Sligo workhouse on November 11th, 1845, the chairman, Major O'Hara described the position of the potato crop in the Coolaney area as very unfavourable "No one can say his crop is safe", He reported that at least half the crop in the area was lost. By the end of the month he was reporting a great increase in the disease in the Coolaney area and in early December he warned of great distress unless some relief was given but cautioned also against expecting too much from the landlords.

The Champion reported in January 1846 that Leyney was without potatoes and that Major O'Hara and others were acting liberally and humanely. By March there was "an abundance of distress" in Leyney. The price of potatoes at the markets had reached twice the previous year's price and even at that it was very difficult to get them.

The Government answer to the problem was twofold - relief schemes were set up to provide employment for the people and food depots were set up, usually of Indian meal, to supply food if local traders were unable to do so. Indian meal arrived at the depot in Sligo town in March '46 but it was at least May before any of it was put on sale. Public works were started, especially the building of roads, In January 1846 O'Hara was planning a road which would pass through Carha, Carrownloughan, Knockadoo and Lissalough. He expected the Board of Works to pay the full cost of

the road. O'Hara also seems to have increased the numbers employed on his estate during the summer. In August '46 it was reported in the Sligo Journal that for the previous six months more than three hundred men were employed daily by him and that he had made liberal provision of oatmeal for them.

The famine of 1845-'46 was not total, some potatoes were saved and some were planted in the spring of 1846, Everything depended on this crop, By August 1st the Champion reported blight in the crop and a week later O'Hara said "Last year was a season of plenty compared to what the present is likely to turn out",

The Government still placed it reliance on public works and in September £12,000 was granted for relief works in the Barony of Leyney. These works were slow to start and in the meantime fever, brought about by unsanitary conditions and aggravated by the famine, were rampant. The workhouse in Sligo, containing 1,227 inmates, was full by early November and it was closed. Emigration was also on the increase, between October and December 1846 over three thousand had emigrated to America from Sligo. To make matters worse the winter of 1846/47 was very severe.

January 1847 opened to reports of the alarming spread of fever and many deaths from starvation in County Sligo. On January 31st, at an inquest at Carrownaskea, Killoran Parish, on Peggy Keon the verdict was "that she came to her death by extreme poverty, distress and starvation". The coroner was Meredith Thompson of Knockadoo. On February 21st an inquest in Creevaun on Pat Fallon decided that he had died of starvation. A similar verdict was returned on John Masterson of Killoran on February 24th. After March 1847, because of the number of deaths, inquests were not held on people who died of starvation or fever if they were known to the police. Local tradition still remembers others who died during the famine, Johnny McGowan was found dead along a ditch and in Ballinvally, Roger O'Connor and his family all died and were buried on Carn Hill in that townland.

The government in late 1846 encouraged the setting up of local relief committees which were to draw up lists of those needing relief as well as to try to raise

subscriptions to aid the poor. By October a relief committee had been formed in Coolaney. The chairman was C.W. Cooper, the treasurer Meredith Thompson, Knockadoo, and the secretary Dr. Samuel Kelly, Coolaney. Other members were the clergy, including Archdeacon Verschoyle of Rathbarran and Fr. Patrick Hurst P.P. Killoran. Local landowners James Simpson, Thomas Smith David Lillis and Thomas McManus were also on the committee.

By February 1847 the Coolaney committee had raised £176 in subscriptions, including Charles K. O'Hara's subscription of £100 and £30 from Archdeacon Verschoyle. These funds were used in buying a limited quantity of food which was sold to the people below the market price. Hugh O'Hara, (no relation of the landlord) was in charge of selling the meal and Indian corn. In the previous October Charles K. O'Hara had gone to Liverpool and had purchased a cargo of Indian corn.

The crisis grew worse in early 1847 and on February 1st Archdeacon Verschoyle wrote as deputy chairman of the Coolaney committee to the Society of Friends' Relief Committee in Dublin. He implored their help to establish a soup kitchen in the town of Coolaney. He was sent a form, which he completed and returned. In it he set out the state of the Coolaney area. Nine-tenth of the people needed public relief. The potatoes were all gone. Only a small number of men were working in ordinary employment earning 10d a day in summer and 8d in winter. Two from each family were allowed on the public works but their earnings were not enough to provide food for their families. People were neglecting their own land to look for employment on the public works. There were many cases of dysentery and fever in the parish.

The Society of Friends promised £30 as a donation towards setting up a soup kitchen in Coolaney. By April 1847 this form of relief was in operation. There were two boilers, each holding one hundred gallons of stirabout, which was distributed free daily to the most needy. Hugh O'Hara was in charge of giving out the food. The boilers were situated in the field behind what was until recently the Post Office.

The Government had decided at the end of 1846 to wind up the relief works and

to put in their place a scheme of direct outdoor relief in soup kitchens. By May 1847 the relief works had ceased in Killoran Parish and Arthur Knox Huston, curate of Rathbarran, reported in a letter to the Society of Friends, that about 2,500 people needed relief in the parish. Total population of the parish in 1841 was 4,044. Huston's appeal for help was answered by a grant of four sacks of meal and half a ton of rice. Verschoyle at this time asked the Society for a supply of food for his Scripture School pupils, two third of whom he stated were Catholic. His request however, was refused. "We cannot make a grant to a school which is evidently sectarian", they wrote but they stressed that they had nothing personal against him.

In April 1847 Meredith Thompson of Knockadoo wrote to the Society of Friends looking for relief for the Knockadoo area comprising the six townlands at the Western end of the parish. The public works were then stopped and their replacements, the soup kitchens, were not yet in operation. He was sent a form which his wife, Kate P. Thompson, completed. From then it was her who communicated with the Society - her husband's various duties often took him elsewhere. She reported that she was trying to get a soup boiler because the poor of her area had to walk to Coolaney every day for food at the boiler there and after waiting all day often returned with two or three quarts to a starving family. She calculated that in the six townlands in the west of the parish with which she was concerned there were at least seven hundred persons who needed relief. There was some fever and a great deal of dysentery.

The Society of Friends granted her half a ton of rice to distribute cooked to the sick and destitute as well as ten bags of biscuits. She wrote to thank them on May 19th. By then she had a boiler and reported that she had three boilings a day but still could not supply all. "We never were in a more alarming state than at this present moment, the public works stopped, all thrown on public relief and that not such as will sustain nature".

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Dated this 28th day of April 1847.

(Signed,
 X Name Kate P. Thompson
 Address Phonthead
 Post Town Coolaney

ADDITIONAL OBSERVATIONS.

As the distribution of this grant falls within my line of duty more than my husband's, I have signed this paper that I may be able to address your society ----- when his various duties takes him elsewhere. I would have impress on your benevolent society the utter distress in this mountain district; subsisting on nettles and watercress, when mixed with gruel, such is deemed a luxury! I am trying to get a soup boiler here, for after our people walk from the mountains to Coolaney, 4 and 5 miles, stand there perhaps all day waiting for their turn; they return with from 2 to 3 quarts weak and exhausted to a starving family, they look more like spectres clothed in rags than human beings.

Part of the Society of Friends application form for famine relief completed and signed by Kate P Thompson. "As the distribution of this grant falls within my line of duty more than my husband's, I have signed this paper that I may be able to address your society ----- when his various duties takes him elsewhere. I would have impress on your benevolent society the utter distress in this mountain district; subsisting on nettles and watercress when mixed with gruel, such is deemed a luxury! I am trying to get a soup boiler here, for after our people walk from the mountains to Coolaney, 4 and 5 miles, stand there perhaps all day waiting for their turn; they return with from 2 to 3 quarts weak and exhausted to a starving family, they look more like spectres clothed in rags than human beings".

Kate P. Thompson continued her great work among the poor of Knockadoo and surrounding town lands and the records of the Society of Friends show the amount of food they entrusted to her during that terrible summer of "black '47".

- May 14th: ½ ton of rice and 10 bags of biscuits.
- June 15th: ½ ton of rice and 5 bags of biscuits.
- July 9th: ½ ton of rice and 1 cwt. of sage.

Sept. 17th: ¼ ton of rice and 3 bags of biscuits.

Nov. 9th: ¼ ton of Indian meal and 2 bags of biscuits.

Dec. 28th: ½ ton of Indian meal, ¼ ton of rice and 2 bags of biscuits.

By June 1847 Kate P. Thompson estimated that there was hardly a house in her area in which there was not one or two sick with fever or dysentery. Of the population of 1,100 in the area, not one, she said, could provide one meal for themselves and were dependent on the one pound of porridge from her soup kitchen. As well as obtaining food, Kate Thompson also got cloth from the Society of Friends and from the British Ladies Clothing Association. She organised some of the local women to make clothes from this cloth and also to knit some items. These they sold.

Meanwhile in the Eastern part of the parish O'Hara was doing his best to have his tenants looked after. After the applications of Archdeacon Verschoyle and A.K. Huston in early 1845 there were no more petitions to the Society of Friends Relief Committee and unlike the other part of the parish no food aid was received from that Committee after May '47. O'Hara seems to have relied on his own exertions. In May '47 his agent Richard Beere wrote that he hoped to bring forty to fifty tons of corn to Coolaney to be ground locally. He hoped to be able to give out six ton weekly until 1st September.

Many of the tenants were thinking about leaving. "The fact is the tenants only want the means to leave the country altogether", Beere reported in May. Some tenants from Gortakeeran had left and in such cases it was O'Hara's policy to knock down the vacant house at once to prevent it being occupied by other poor people. The following is a letter written to O'Hara on Mary 28th 1847:

"The petition of X X of Carrowgaveen humbly showeth that he is a man that has ten in family and the support of them will soon destroy him these awful times unless he gets a sending some of them to America he can at least spare three of them and will send them to America if your honour gives any reasonable assistance - by so doing they will hereafter send petitioner some relief that will enable him to pay your honour the rent as usual - if you do not

assist me we will in a short time be very desolate and all become paupers".

We do not know the result of this appeal. The Sligo Champion reported that between January and May 1847 over three thousand emigrated from Sligo port.

By the summer of 1847 things had improved. The potatoes promised an excellent crop even though not many had been planted. No blight struck and in the autumn and early winter of '47 potatoes were reasonably plentiful. At the end of September the chairman of the Coolaney relief committee wrote to the paper saying that the committee was being disbanded because of "The bountiful harvest with which we are now blessed".

The Government had been encouraging local committees to establish temporary fever hospitals and one was set up in Coolaney some time in the autumn of 1847. This hospital was situated at Simpson's house just across the river from Coolaney town. Its warder was Thomas Church. On September 14th there were 39 in the hospital, this rose to 50 by September 28th and to 60 on October 19th. The number of inmates stayed around this number until February 1848 when it began to drop. By April the number was below 20. The number of deaths in the Coolaney hospital was surprisingly small - three in October '47, four in November, none in December, nine in January '48, seven in February and four in April, a total of twenty seven. A letter to the Sligo Journal of December 1847 praised O'Hara for his generosity in distributing clothes, coats, trousers, petticoats and blankets to more than two hundred families on his estate and in supplying them with bread, beef and mutton.

The spring of 1848 was again a hard time, the small potato crop of the previous year was gone and disease and hunger were again prevalent. The Sligo Champion stated in January: "The condition of the poor in Sligo and neighbourhood is truly frightful", in February: "The misery which the people are now enduring beggars all description," and in March: "Many deaths will take place from absolute want." The potato crop planted in spring 1848 was vital. By the end of July blight was reported and at the end of August Kate Thompson wrote: "I lament to say that the renewed

appearance of that disease in the potato crop is beyond all doubt."

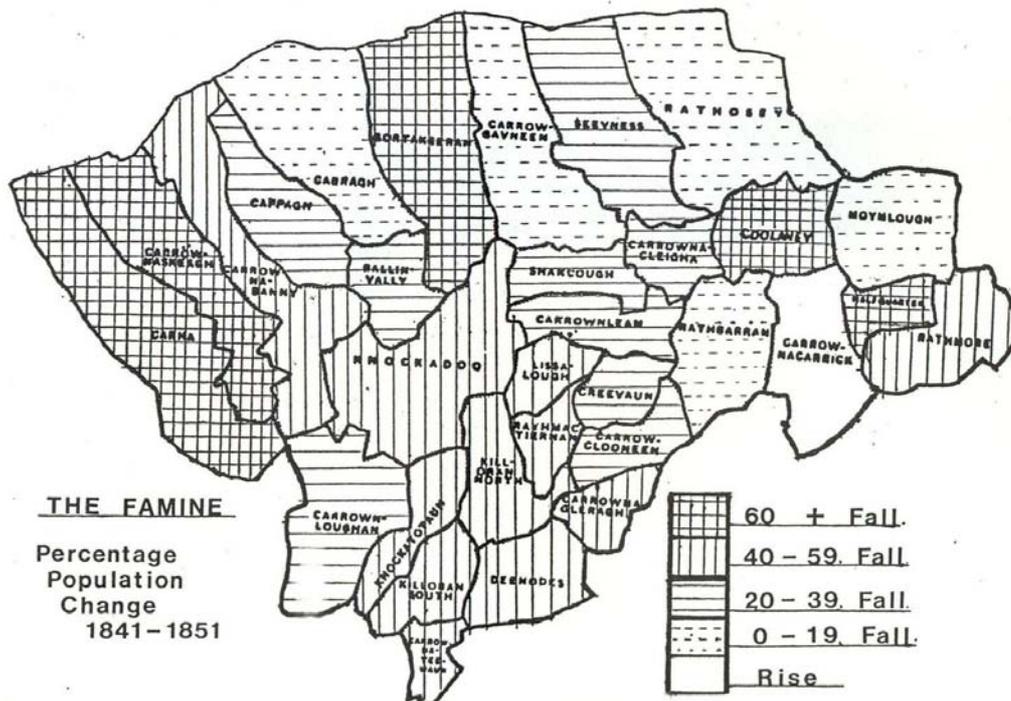
The winter of '48 and the spring of '49 saw a renewal of the terrible famine conditions. Kate Thompson was continuing her work among the poor in the west of the parish. She continued to receive grants of food from the Society of Friends. On February 17th 1848, she was granted half a ton of Indian meal, a quarter ton of rye meal, a quarter ton of rice and three bags of biscuits. Similar grants were made in April, June, July and September. She also continued to receive cloth, which she had made up and sold. She also was granted turnip seed and she calculated that about fifty acres of turnips were sown in April 1848. In June she reported difficulty in selling the clothes because: "Those that wanted them and would buy were obliged to put all their resources to buy seed. "

Coolaney area was in Sligo Poor Law Union and the workhouse was in Sligo town. The workhouses were deliberately designed to be unattractive to the poor and so it was only as a last resort that they entered it. The workhouse in Sligo was built to contain 1,200 inmates and in 1847 additional sheds had to be built to accommodate 70 more. By April 1848 it had been again extended and then held 1700 poor. Outdoor relief was being given to paupers who did not enter the workhouse. In February 1848 there were 59 from Coolaney electoral area in Sligo workhouse and this number stayed more or less constant until September. The number then climbed steadily reaching one hundred in November and in December 1848 there were 137 from Coolaney area in Sligo workhouse. The number dropped again in July - August 1849 but again climbed during the winter of '49-'50. The numbers on outdoor relief at Sligo workhouse reached peaks of six hundred in the summer of 1848 and again in the summer of 1849.

By 1849 the worst ravages of the great famine were over. The Sligo Journal reported in April that immense tracts of potatoes were planted unusually early and that the crop was good. Blight did reappear in late September but less than one third of the crop was affected. Landlords now began to feel the full effects of the famine. Rents had not been paid in many cases since 1847 and rates were very high to pay for

public works and relief. The rates for Coolaney area had risen from five pence pre famine to nearly three shillings in late 1848, a sevenfold rise.

In June 1849 Beere wrote to the General Relief Committee for all Ireland asking for some help for the estate. He claimed to be nearly out of funds having paid nearly £1,300 poor rates and was then faced with paying other rates, county cess, labour rate and poor rates again. The O'Hara estate had been subject to a "Tontine" some years before. A tontine is a loan given by a group of people who each get in return an annuity for the rest of their lives. Beere wrote to these people in July 1849 stating the position the estate was then in. Thirteen replied, either sending a subscription to help or agreeing to forego their annuity for that year. In February O'Hara gave his tenants a reduction of five shillings in the pound in rent.



The great famine was finally over but it had left its mark on the parish as it had on the whole country. "Bóthar na Mine" - the road of the meal, is the name of a road in the townland of Knockadoo which commemorates the place where Kate Thompson's soup kitchen doled out stirabout to the starving people. The roads which were started as relief works during the famine were generally left unfinished when the Government had these works closed during the first half of 1847. We find in 1865

that a road "partly made during the relief works" from Rathbarran to Killoran through the townland of Killoran North to the burial ground was being finished. The following year we read of money being provided "for completing a new road through Carrownleam and Shancough connecting the old and new roads from Coolaney to Cloonacool near Knockadoo. It was partly formed, fenced and soled during the relief works of 1847 but requires to be entirely stoned and two gullies built".

The main effect of the famine on the parish was of course to dramatically reduce the population. If we compare the census figures of 1841 with those of 1851 we can see the extent of the population drop. This does not take into account the fact that the population was still increasing up to 1846. The population of the parish dropped from 4,044 in 1841 to 2,638, a drop of 37%. The drop was due of course to deaths from starvation and disease but also to emigration. The percentage population drop from the whole of Connacht was 28% and the population of Co. Sligo dropped in the same period by 29%, so Killoran Parish's drop was very large. Some Killoran town lands recorded enormous population decline, Carrownaskeagh fell by 80% and Gortakeeran by 65%. On the other hand the population of Carrownacarrick actually rose by 15% and Rathbarran's population remained the same. In the six town lands at the west of the parish in which Kate Thompson was active the drop was 46%. The number of houses also dropped dramatically between 1841 and 1851 from 748 to 464, a drop of 38%.

COOLANEY FEVER HOSPITAL 1847 –1848

(From reports in Sligo Newspapers)

1847	No of inmates	Admitted	Discharged/ Cured	Died	Remaining
Sept 14 th	39	6	10	0	35
Sept. 21st	35	17	2	0	50
Sept. 28th	50	18	16	0	52
Oct. 5th	52	13	2	0	63
Oct. 12th	63	12	13	2	60

Oct. 19th	60	16	8	1	67
Oct. 26th	67	8	12	0	63
Nov. 2nd	63	6	8	1	60
Nov. 9th	60	10	7	1	62
Nov. 16th	62	6	8	0	60
Nov. 23rd	60				62
Nov. 30th	62	6	8	2	58
Dec. 7th	58				57
Dec. 21st	57	5	2	0	60
Dec. 28th	60	4	16	0	48
1848					
Jan. 4th	48	16	3	2	59
Jan. 11th	59	5	7	2	55
Jan. 18th	55	5	4	1	55
Jan. 25th	55	9	8	4	52
Feb. 1st	52	0	10	1	41
Feb. 8th	41	0	3	1	37
Feb. 15th	37	22	10	2	47
Feb. 22nd	47				46
Feb. 29th	46	11	5	3	48
Mar. 7th	49				
April 11th	16	0	1	2	13
April 19th	13	8	3	2	16
April 25th	16	0	3	0	13
May 2nd	13	0	3	0	10
May 9th	10	0	4	0	6
May 16th	6	6	6	0	0

SOURCES:

Sligo Journal and Sligo Champion, 1843 - 1850.

Poor Law Commissioners - Annual Reports.

Society of Friends Relief Papers, P.R.O.I., Dublin.

O'Hara Manuscripts, National Library, Dublin.

Census of Ireland, 1841 & 1851.

Parliamentary Papers: 1846 Vol. 37

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CHAPTER 14

1850 - 1877

The years after the great famine were years of declining population. The rise in the average age of marriage and the growth of emigration, both results of the famine, were the main causes of this decline. The population of Killoran parish fell. In 1851 it was 2,638; in 1861 - 2,494; in 1871 - 2,208 and in 1881 - 2,092. In percentage terms this represents a fall of 5% between 1851 and 1861, 11% between 1861 and 1871 and 5% between 1871 and 1881. The corresponding figures for County Sligo were 3% fall between 1851 and 1861, 7% fall between 1861 and 1871 and 3% fall between 1871 and 1881. The parish then suffered more than the rest of the county from emigration during this period.

Within this general pattern however individual townlands show specific variations. Ten townlands actually showed a population increase between 1851 and 1861. These included all the mountainside townlands on the west of the parish, Carha, Carrownaskeagh, Cappagh, Gortakeeran, and Carrowgavneen, all except Carrownabanny, which fell by 40%. These increases in population probably show a recovery after the famine, especially in areas where emigration had not yet become common. In almost all of these mountain townlands population dropped between 1861 and 1871.

Killoran parish Catholic marriage records survive for this period and they seem to reflect the same pattern as the population figures i.e. the biggest population drop was between 1861 and 1871. Between 1851 and 1861 there were 128 marriages in the parish church, between 1861 and 1871 there were 90 and between 1871 and 1881 there were 82. The population of the village of Coolaney was also falling during these years and the pattern is the same. In 1851 there were 326 persons in the village, in 1861 - 297 a fall of 9%. Between 1861 and 1871 the fall was 19.5% to 239. In 1881, 221 people lived in Coolaney, a fall of 7.5%.

In 1850 Sligo Poor Law Union was divided and a new Union was created with its workhouse at Tubbercurry. Killoran parish was included in this union. There were

common were farms in the 15 to 30 acre group.

The full figures were:

Electoral Area	0-5 acres	5-15 acres	15-30 acres	30-50 acres	50 acres +
Coolaney	6%	43%	24%	15%	11%
Carrownaskeagh	13%	45%	19%	13%	9%

What sort of houses did the people live in at the time? The census of 1861 reports that there were 457 houses in the parish including 55 in Coolaney village. Houses were divided into four classes.

1. Mud cabins consisting of one room.
2. A better mud cabin consisting of two to four rooms.
3. A good farm house or house in a small street in a town having five to nine rooms.
4. Any house having more rooms.

The numbers for the parish were:

	Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4	Total
Killoran Parish	3	104	234	61	402
Coolaney Village	9	30	16	0	55

The standard of housing in the parish was quite high then – nearly three quarters of the houses were good farmhouses with five or more rooms. In Coolaney village, however, the situation was different - less than one third of its houses had more than five rooms and were generally classified as "cabins". Sixty-three families lived in the fifty-five houses in the village while in the rest of the parish one family to one house was the rule.

Many of the landlords in the parish lost rents during the famine and some found themselves in serious financial difficulties. This was a widespread problem in the Country and the Government set up the Commissioners of Incumbered Estates to

help in the sale of estates whose owners were bankrupt. Carrownloughan townland had been owned by the Irwin family of Tanrego. Rev. John Lewis Irwin was the owner at this time and because of financial difficulties Carrownloughan was sold by the Commissioners of Incumbered Estates in April 1855. The new owner was John Lougheed of Rockbrook, Dromore West, Co. Sligo who paid £5,500 for the 512 statute acres.

Patrick Somers of Chaffpool had owned Cappagh townland and 165 acres of Knockatotaun townland. The Commissioners had to sell both in 1853. Jeremiah Dunne of Dublin bought them, paying £1,525 for Cappagh and £1,700 for the part of Knockatotaun. Dunne, in turn, soon found himself in financial difficulties and the properties once again came into the hands of the Commissioners. They sold Cappagh in 1857 for £1550 to Denis Dolan of Boyle, Co. Roscommon. Peter O'Connor of Cairnsfort, Co. Sligo, bought the Knockatotaun property. The other part of Knockatotaun, 106 acres at the northern end of the townland was held by the Armstrong family of Chaffpool and remained in their hands until land purchase in the twentieth century.

Charles Thompson, who had owned the townlands of Ballinvally and Cabragh since 1844, died without an heir on 25th September 1856 and his lands passed to his niece and nephew, Elizabeth and William. They had to sell these townlands soon afterwards. Hugh Hyacinth McDermott, a relation of Charles Thompson's wife, bought Ballinvally in 1867 for £3,520. Thomas Hitchcock Williams, merchant, of Sligo town bought the townland of Cabragh about the same time.

Charles King O'Hara died in 1860 having no heir and he willed his estate to his nephew Charles William Cooper (1817 - 1898) of Coopershill. Charles William Cooper was son of Arthur Brooke Cooper who married Jane Francis O'Hara, sister of Charles King O'Hara. A condition of the handing over of the estate was that Cooper take the surname O'Hara which he duly did by royal licence. Charles William O'Hara was the landlord of the greater part of Killoran parish for most of the second half of the nineteenth century. He was a Conservative member of parliament for County

Sligo from 1859 until the election of 1865 which he did not contest, the seat went to Edward Henry Cooper. Presumably the seat was regarded as a Cooper seat so that when Charles William changed his name the seat reverted to a Cooper.

Richard Beere of Monkstown continued his work as agent for the O'Hara estate and spent much time in the Coolaney area looking after the landlord's interests and advising him on improving the estate. In February 1852 Beere reported that he had organised a lot of work on the estate that winter mostly on the tenants' own farms. In 1863 he advised the landlord to have a forge built in Coolaney as there was no blacksmith in the village. He advised in 1865 that a sewer was badly needed in Coolaney saying that the houses could never be made comfortable until it was made.

Henry Burrows who had the lease of Greenville farm and also of the mill in Coolaney died sometime after 1860 and his property passed to Lewis and Anne Burrows. They sold their interest in the property in 1864. William Conboy of Co. Leitrim took the farm at Greenville and the mill at Coolaney passed into the hands of the Doyle family who came from Bunninadden. In 1878 the Doyles added a sawmill to the corn mill already operating there.

In 1858 the corn and tuck mill at Ballinvally was in the possession of James Bruin, and the corn and tuck mills in Carha were held by Patrick Reilly. Tuck mills were engaged in the production of woolens.

The brickyard in Tullaghan was still in operation at this time and it was owned by the Simpson family. There is a mention in 1858 of Mr. Simpson's brickyard and in Griffith's Valuation of the same year James Simpson was the lessee of the brickyard and 379 acres of land in Tullaghan town land. Around this time Simpsons bought the house and farm just across the river from Coolaney from the Church family. That house had been used as a fever hospital during the famine.

Hardship again reached crisis proportion in the years 1860 - 62 when potato yields once again fell drastically. Fr. Luke Hannon, the parish priest of Killoran

applied to the Society of Friends Relief Committee in Dublin at the end of April and again at the end of June 1862. Each time he was granted £10 towards famine relief. He applied again in July 1863 and was granted £10. In August he was granted a further £8.14.8. In the spring of 1862 he asked for a meeting with the landlord Charles W. O'Hara. At that meeting he stressed the hardship under which some of O'Hara's tenants were labouring. O'Hara asked him to draw up a list of those of his tenants in the parish who needed help and send the list to Mr. Phillips, O'Hara's agent in Coolaney. Presumably O'Hara offered some relief to those tenants.

In April 1862 Richard Beere wrote to Charles W. O'Hara - "You will get a good supply of petitions. No doubt that many are in distress, provision was made for all that require seed, oats and potatoes". By January 1863 Beere was advising O'Hara that something should be done for some of the large tenants who were finding it hard to pay the rent. He suggested that they pay half the rent due in March and the other half in July. "We have a bad time before us but we had as bad in the famine years", Beere said. In February 1865 Beere reported to O'Hara that the Coolaney men were badly off for work so he set one man from each house to work leveling a cut away bog at Seevness. He also advised that the road from Rathbarran towards Killoran graveyard started during the famine, be completed. Richard Beere had to resign in 1867 on his doctors' advice thus ending an almost fifty years relationship with the Coolaney area.

The O'Haras regularly gave out blankets and clothes to the needy tenants on their estate and in the early 1870's Anne Charlotte O'Hara looked after this' clothing list". This is an example of the kind of petition she received, the spelling is as in the original:

"Coolaney, February 1871.

This very humble pitisian of the Widow X begs to state to your ladyship that i am all of the family that is living and has nothing in this world to support or clothe me only what Mr. O'Hara's honner allows one sixpence a week. i am naked and starving and i am ashamed to go to beg and would not live to go to the workhouse. But if the Major lived would not be starving he new all my family they wer all

independent tenants but now I am alone and have no one to look to me. I hope your ladyship will look after me. May the Lord bless your ladyship and all your family long to live in Annaghmore".

Coolaney dispensary committee was in charge of the running of the dispensary area and its members included O'Hara who was chairman and Cooper of Cooper's Hill both landlords, as well as some local members elected by Tubbercurry Board of Guardians. One of their duties was the appointing of doctors. Dr. Samuel Kelly was Coolaney area doctor until 1861. Dr. Owen McManus next held the position until 1864. Dr. Rowland Blennerhasset succeeded him and held the post until 1878.

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In the O'Hara Papers in the National Library there is a copy of a letter dated 3rd April 1849 from C.W. Cooper (later Charles William O'Hara) to Samuel Kelly, Coolaney doctor. He advises the doctor "that you resign and retire from Coolaney as you cannot possibly expect to practise in it with a chance of success". He refers to "a report prejudicial to your moral character", as being the reason for this and a mention of "the unfortunate female" throws more light on the doctor's alleged offence. Cooper mentions in the letter that his uncle Charles King O'Hara is in agreement and in a letter of 30th March 1849 Richard Beere (to O'Hara) says: "I am willing to lend my name to the removal of Kelly". Surprisingly this move to oust Dr. Kelly failed, for what reason we do not know. He remained Coolaney doctor until 1861. Between October 1852 and January 1853 he was in correspondence with both Beere and O'Hara about a house in Coolaney which he had just bought.

In 1846 Dr. Rowland Blennerhasset was elected Coolaney doctor and in

February of that year John Loughheed, landlord of Carrowloughin wrote to O'Hara apologising for the fact that his tenant John McHugh a member of Coolaney Dispensary Committee did not vote as O'Hara wished at the election. "I should have been there myself but I was so confident of him that I did not once think that my presence was necessary", Loughheed wrote "I think that there must have been some priestly influence at work in it". Fr. Luke Hannon was Killoran parish priest at the time and he was alleged to have organised the people in favour of the Liberal candidate O'Connor at the 1868 General Election.

As we have already seen no National School had been established in the parish before the Famine years. In 1850 the parish priest, Fr. Patrick Hurst, established a school beside the chapel at Rockfield. This school was recognised as a National School on August 22nd 1850 and is still in operation one hundred and thirty five years later. The original site was just opposite the chapel and had a teachers' residence at the western end of the building. The headmaster from 1850 to 1891 was Matthew Doyle who had been educated at a hedge school himself and was born in 1830.

In October 1860 Matthew Doyle wrote to Charles W. O'Hara asking him for help towards "boarding the school" by which he meant putting in floorboards. Up to then the school had an earthen floor and Doyle said: "the floor is in so damp a state that it is scarcely possible to have the children well". The total estimated cost of the job was £9.

In 1872 the Commissioners for National Education wrote to the school manager, Fr. Patrick Lowry, asking him either to have extensive repairs done to the existing school or a new school built and threatening that if he did not comply the teachers' salary would be discontinued. Fr. Lowry wrote to the landlord, Charles W. O'Hara asking him for the lease of a site for a new school. O'Hara agreed and granted a lease for 31 years. The Commissioners regarded this lease as too short and were prepared to pay only a small fraction of the cost of a new school. Fr. Lowry asked O'Hara for a longer lease so that the grant would be larger but he refused and plans to build a new

school were dropped.

✓
Rockfield National School
Cadolan, Oct 31st 1860
Dear Sir,
I humbly request to bring
under your notice the accom-
panying letter from Vene Foster
You will perceive by it that,
that benevolent man has con-
sented to contribute £6.10.^s
towards boarding this school
The total expense however is
estimated at about £9.
and with a view to procure
additional funds I have
taken the liberty of soliciting
your aid towards the above
purpose, hoping that, as the
pupils educated here are
with scarcely an exception

Letter dated October 31 1860, from Matthew Doyle, principal Rockfield NS to Charles W. Cooper,
soon to become O'Hara, asking for financial assistance to put in floor boards in the school.

[O'Hara Papers Ms 20346. N.L.I.]

the children of your tenants.
I shall not in their behalf
apply in vain. One of
the Board's Officers Mr. Hohen-
ty is at present examining
the school and will if
necessary state that the
floor is in so damp a state
that it is scarcely possible
to have the children well
May I request you to ~~send~~
return the Mr. Forsters letter
as it is valuable to me

I am Sir

Your very humbly
Matthew Doyle

Chas. W. Cooper Esq. M.P.

In 1853 Cappagh National School came into operation and Hugh Healy was one of its first principals. In 1868 a new school was built at Cappagh beside the old one on a site granted by landlord Denis Dolan. The lease was a long one, for three lives, and the school was vested in trustees. It cost a little over £300 to build. No teacher stayed very long as principal in Cappagh perhaps because of its remoteness. John Coleman was principal 1869-1870, followed by W. Durcan 1870, B. Murray 1870-

1872, J. Redican from 1872 until his death in 1879, and Joseph O'Donnell 1879-1881.

Killoran National School was established in 1862 and Arthur Quinn was its first principal. He remained there until his death in 1899. An inspector observed in February 1865 "The floor should be brushed out each evening and the walls whitewashed early in spring. That portion of the roof over the room in which needlework is taught is still in bad repair, it should be thatched".

The Church of Ireland maintained their opposition to the National School System throughout the nineteenth century and they established the Church Education Society to organise their own parish schools. There were two such schools in Killoran parish one in Coolaney village situated at the western end of the village. The other was in the townland of Creevaun on the back road from Rathbarran church. It was often called Rinn School. Archdeacon Verschoyle of Rathbarran was mentioned in 1850 as being completely opposed to the National School system.

The number of children on the rolls of these schools was very large. In 1863 for instance Rockfield had 235, Cappagh 142 and Killoran 172. The attendance was usually only a fraction of this since there was no compulsory attendance and children were very often kept at home for long periods to help on the farm. The average attendance in 1863 was: Rockfield 72, Cappagh 44 and Killoran 52.

In 1868 a survey of actual attendance on a particular day, June 25th, was made and these were the figures for Killoran parish. Rockfield had 59 present, Cappagh 41, Killoran 81, Coolaney Church of Ireland 36 and Creevaun 33. It is of interest to note that in all these schools, except Cappagh, there was some overlapping of religions. Rockfield attendance on that day in 1868 included twenty Church of Ireland members while Killoran numbers included eight, three Catholics were in attendance at Creevaun and ten at Coolaney.

The census returns for 1861 give an idea of the educational standards of the

people of Killoran at the time. Of those of five years and over 839 said they could read and write, 496 could read only and 854 could neither read or write. This represents a percentage of 38% who could read and write and 39% who could do neither.

Fr. Patrick Hurst who had been parish priest of Killoran during the Famine died in 1861 and was succeeded by Fr. Luke Hannon who helped during the partial famines of the early 1860's. Fr. Hannon was succeeded in June 1869 by Fr. Patrick Lowry who on July 3rd wrote to Charles W. O'Hara asking him to receive him as tenant for the house and lands normally held by the parish priest in Coolaney. O'Hara replied, presenting his compliments and stating that he had no objection to him as a tenant. From then until he became parish priest of Achonry, in 1878, Fr. Lowry was in frequent communication with the landlord. On January 12, 1871 he wrote thanking O'Hara for his invitation to "amusements at Annaghmore" but regretting that he could not attend because of a previous "engagement of importance". "It would afford me much pleasure indeed to witness this further evidence of the kindly interest you take in the happiness of your tenants and workmen", Fr. Lowry wrote.

On November 21st, 1871 Fr. Lowry wrote to the landlord saying that he had heard that he was to be summoned for coursing in Rathmore. He denied the charge saying that his hound had chased a hare in Moymlough while he was on clerical work there. "Situated as I am in this place - which I wish I never saw - in the very remotest corner of my diocese, away from friends, with no society and not a great deal to do, life would be a burden without some amusement or recreation. This is why I keep a hound", Fr. Lowry wrote. Charles W. O'Hara was very much against coursing, i.e. hunting hares or rabbits, and tenants never had the right to hunt on their lands.

The Church of Ireland Vicar of the united parishes of Killoran and Kilvarnet until his death in 1862 at the age of 82 was Archdeacon Joseph Verschoyle. The years 1820 to 1870 were the years of the "Protestant Crusade", a militant attempt to convert Catholics and to revive the Church of Ireland according to Evangelical values. This movement was supported by Bishop Plunkett of Tuam, Killala and Achonry 1839 -

67. In 1862 he appointed Rev. Hamilton Townsend to succeed Archdeacon Verschoyle in Rathbarran. He was a native of Co. Down and was educated at Trinity College. He had close contacts with the evangelical wing of the Church of Ireland and his obituary stated: "He was well known both in Ireland and England as a champion of Protestantism, a pulpit orator and an attractive platform speaker". In 1875 the archdeacon in the course of a letter referred to being tired of traveling - "I believe I am as well known on the line now as a guard or engine driver".

Archdeacon Townsend seems to have introduced Thomas Crump as teacher and scripture reader to the parish in the early 1860's. He came from or possibly was trained in Clifden, which was at that time a base for Protestant evangelical missionary activity. Crump taught in Creevaun school and also held Sunday schools in the Courthouse, Coolaney and the church. His daughter was in 1889 mistress of Coolaney Church of Ireland school. Thomas Crump was still remembered up to a few years ago as a person who looked down on Catholics. One person remembered that whenever he met a Catholic with a donkey he said "Good day to you both!".

Archbishop Plunkett died in 1867 and his successor Charles Broderick Bernard did not carry on his evangelical policy. In 1870 the new Bishop wrote to O'Hara asking what arrangements were made for service in the absence of Archdeacon Townsend who had gone to London on a deputation for the Irish Society without informing the Bishop. There is no evidence that the landlord took any particular interest in Archdeacon Townsend's policy or indeed ever became very close to him. Townsend's only son, Rev. Charles Ussher Townsend died tragically at Rathbarran in 1883 and he himself died in 1895. Both are buried in Rathbarran churchyard.

The attempt at missionary work among the Catholic population made no impact in the parish as indeed it made little impact in the country generally. From 1861 to 1891 the Church of Ireland population of Killoran parish dropped from 431 to 207. Stated as percentages of the parish population this represents a fall from 17.2% of the total population in 1861 to 11.6% in 1891. At least one Church of Ireland family turned Catholic during this period - the Lipsetts of Rockfield. William Lipsett

married a Catholic and it is said that on his deathbed he became Catholic himself.

Sometime during this period probably before 1870 two families in the parish became Plymouth Brethren, a religious group which originated in these islands around 1820. These were the Simpson and Allen families. Both families had long association with the parish. The earliest mention of an Allen in Killoran is James Allen who leased 15 acres of Rathbarran in May 1784 for £10-17-9 per year and the family has lived in that town land ever since. Edward Simpson rented 65 acres of Rathosey in May 1784 and James Simpson rented 10 acres of the same townland in May 1791, but they probably lived at Tullaghan until the family bought a farm just across the river from Coolaney some time after the famine. Sometime around 1890 James Allen built a Plymouth Brethren meeting house in Coolaney. The building still exists but is no longer used as a meeting house.

The census of 1861 returns five Baptists in the parish. Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of 1837 mentions a Baptist meeting house in Coolaney and there is a mention of a Rev. G.C. Moore, Baptist Minister at Coolaney. In the 1871 census nineteen people in the parish described themselves as "others" i.e. neither Catholic or Church of Ireland. Presumably these were mainly Plymouth Brethren. The same number of "others" was returned in 1881 and in 1891 the number of "others" was fourteen.

In the years after the famine Sligo County constituency elected two members to the Westminster Parliament. These two members were usually conservatives, members of Sligo's landed families. Since 1829 voting rights were severely restricted - only those with a £2 freehold could vote. This was changed in 1860, from then tenants of property of the rateable valuation of £12 or upwards had a vote. This would have given the vote to about one hundred persons in Killoran parish at this time.

There were strong pressures from the landlord on those voters to vote as he wished because there was no secret ballot at the time - the voter had to publicly

declare for whom he wished to vote. There were other pressures on voters however. Martin Battelle, a Coolaney shop owner, wrote to Charles W. O'Hara after the Sligo County election of 1852 apologising for the fact that he voted against his landlord's wishes for the Independent Liberal Candidate Richard Swift who was elected. Battelle gave as his excuse the fact that he had been told that the country people would not buy at his shop if he did not vote as they wished. He promised, however, to vote as O'Hara wished him to in future.

Richard Swift lost his seat in the 1857 General Election and the two seats were taken by the Gore Booths and the Coopers who held them until the 1868 General Election when a strong candidate, Denis Maurice O'Connor, stood as a Liberal against them. Cooper was a brother of Charles W. O'Hara the landlord, (who had changed his name in 1860) and O'Hara tried to use his influence with his tenants against the Liberal candidate. The Killoran parish priest Luke Hannon seems to have organised the people in favour of O'Connor. O'Hara's agent applied to the resident magistrate in Ballymote for a military escort for his Conservative voters to Sligo. Thirty-four cavalry and thirty foot soldiers were sent from Ballymote on November 27th 1868. They escorted nine voters from Templehouse but when they arrived at Coolaney they found no voters there.

Instead they found an organised crowd, which they estimated at between two and three hundred men, armed with sticks and wearing green badges. The crowd was under the control of the parish priest and offered no opposition to the soldiers. It was during this election campaign that three men from Killoran parish, Andy Snee, Knockadoo; Pat Gallagher, Creevaun and Tommy Diamond, Carrownloughan were arrested and spent three weeks in Sligo jail. Their crime seems to have been using undue influence on those in Killoran who had votes. During their time in jail Tommy Diamond died and foul play by the authorities was suspected though never proven.

Some of O'Hara's tenants voted for Cooper as he had asked them and Michael Cawley of Coolaney "drove for Cooper against O'Connor", as he later said. As a result of helping the Conservative candidate Cawley claimed that the parish priest had him

boycotted and he had to emigrate to the United States. From there he wrote to O'Hara in 1873 asking to be taken back as a tenant of his old holding where his mother still lived. In the event the Liberal O'Connor won the election obtaining 1671 votes, Gore Booth was also elected with 1208 votes. Cooper got 1129 votes.

This election marked the real end of the political power of the Conservative landlords in Sligo county. At the General Election of 1874 O'Connor declared himself a Home Ruler and he and Gore Booth were returned unopposed. At the next contested General Election, that of 1880, two Home Rulers were elected, O'Connor again and Thomas Sexton.

There are very few reports of land trouble during these years. On the night of March 4th 1865 three heifers belonging to Peter Henry had their tails cut off. Henry had taken grazing land from Meredith Thompson. A previous tenant had left the land owing £40 rent and later asked to get his holding back. When Thompson refused, notices were put up threatening that anyone who took land would suffer. Henry was punished in the way we have seen for taking the land. He was later awarded £5-10-0 to compensate him and the money was levied off the rates of the parish of Killoran.

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CHAPTER 15

GRIFFITH'S VALUATION 1858

This was an attempt to assess the value of lands and holdings in Ireland for the purpose of charging rates. The survey contains the name of each occupier in every townland and the following are the occupiers of land in Killoran parish at that time:

BALLINVALLY: John Healy, James Bruin, Patrick Foley, Terence Gallagher, Charles Thompson, John McManus.

CARHA: Joshua Cooper, Martin Rooneen jun, Martin Rooneen sen, Patrick Collery, Philip Taylor, Patrick Reilly, William Coulter, Catherine Henry, Peter Rudigan, Patrick Bradley jun, Patrick Bradley sen, John Heron, Patrick Connelly, Matthew Redican.

CARROWNASKEAGH: James C. Dodwell,

CABRAGH: Dominick O'Connor, Owen McGlinsk, Martin Carthy, John Mulvany, Matthew McNulty, Hugh Benson, James Toolan, Patrick Tobin, Michael Boyle, Michael Peyton, Charles Peyton, James O'Connor, Bryan Finan, John Lynch, Ellen Connor, Patrick Finan, Charles Thompson, John O'Connor.

CARROWNACLEIGHA: James Gorman. Owen Naven. James Little. Catherine Lindsay, John Kelly, James Smith, James Cauley, Joseph Davis, John O'Hara, Thomas Kerrigan, John Kerrigan, Major Chas. O'Hara, John Bohannon, Daniel Derrig.

CARROWNLEAM: William Lindsay, Thomas Burke, William Gallagher, Thomas Davis, George Martin, Major Chas. O'Hara, Catherine Lindsay, Bridget Thompson, Thaddeus Culkien.

SHANCOUGH: Michael Bohey, William Cavanagh, Thomas Kivlahan, John Guinn,

Henry Burrowes, Thomas Levingstone, George O'Connor, Rev. Patrick Hurst, James O'Hara, George Martin, William Gallagher, Thomas Burke, Henry Cullen, Thomas Lepsey, Major Chas. O'Hara, James Gorman, Patrick McLoughlin.

CAPPAGH: Margaret Finan, Michael Finan, Michael O'Donnell, Patrick McGuinness, Thomas Gallagher, James O'Donnell, Andrew Mullaghton, James McHugh jun, John O'Donnell, James McHugh sen, John McHugh, James Haran, Thaddeus Bruen, Michael McHugh, Cecelia Haran, Daniel O'Connor.

CARROWNABANNY: James C. Dodwell, Thomas Cawley, Daniel O'Connor, Neal Gallagher, Daniel Gallagher.

KNOCKADOO: Thomas Mannion, Bartley Kilbride, John McCue, James McLoughlin, John McLoughlin, John Luby, James Coleman, Roger O'Connor, Edmond Connelly, Patrick Foley, Hugh Foley, Edward Mullen, Patrick Gilligan, Peter Mullen, Thomas Henry, Patrick Henry, Peter Mullen, John Finnegan, Richard Burke, Honoria Foley, James Gallagher, John Flynn, Meredith Thompson, Peter M. Brien.

CREEVAUN: Thady Cuilkien, Patrick Rudigan, Bryan McDonogh, James O'Hara, Thomas Hart, James Wynne, John Henry, Daniel Gallagher, John Morrow, James Snee, Francis Geraghty, Major Chas. O'Hara, John Collery, James Morrow.

RATHBARRAN: Samuel Kelly, Anne Davy jun, Anne Davy sen, James Smith, Thomas Johnston, Thomas Davis, Thomas Levingston, John Allen, Patrick Kane, Bridget Coleman, Peter Coleman, Anthony Killoran, George Navan, Mary McCarrick, Anne McCarrick, Brien McCarrick, James McCarrick, Peter Coleman, Bryan McCarrick, Ven. Archd. Verschoyle, Major Chas. O'Hara, Michael M. Kerrin, Henry Burrowes.

SEEVNESS: John Cunningham, Patrick Masterson, John Murrin, Peter McFadden, Roger O'Hara, James Lang, Daniel O'Hara, Bryan Nangle, James Finlay, Elizabeth

Leonard, John Leonard, William Lang, Patrick Leonard, James Simpson.

CARROWGAVNEEN John Murrin, John Nicholson, Michael McNulty, Michael Hanan, Peter Bohey sen, Michael McGlown, Bryan Nangle, Michael Murrin, Bryan Bohey, John Horan, William Nicholson, Thomas Church, Patrick McGowan, Bryan Flanagan, Hugh Bohey, Thomas Nicholson, Peter Murrin, John McManus, Peter Bohey jun, James Morrow.

COOLANEY: James Black, Edmond Price, Michael Dunne, Thomas Middleton, Henry Burrowes, Rose Campbell, James Smith, Patrick Wynne, Philip Murphy, John S. Philips, Patrick McCarrick, James Cauly, Elizabeth Motherwell, John McCarrick, John McManus, Anne Davy, James McCarrick, John Hastings, Patrick McCarrick, Anne McCarrick, James Davis, Major Chas. O'Hara, Thady Dwyer.

TOWN OF COOLANEY: William Quigley, John O'Donnell, James Murrin, Elizabeth Motherwell, Michael Sweeny, William O'Carroll, Johnston Morrison, Margaret Davy, Catherine McSweeny, Major Chas. O'Hara, John McCarrick, Thomas O'Donnell, Thomas Conroy, Michael Collery, James Cowley, Charles O'Connor, Rev. George Garrett, John Kerrigan, Martin Battle, John Smith, D. and J. McDonald, Bartholomew O'Hara, George Murtagh, Andrew Lindsay, John O'Rorke, Sarah Benson, Anne Meredith, Michael McDermott, Ellen Hastings, Samuel Kelly, John S. Philips James Smith Patrick Wynne Dominick Killeen Margaret Jones John Morrow, John Tansy, Thomas Kivlahan, Michael Finan, John Davis, Sarah Kearns, John McManus, Terence Maguire, Robert Middleton, Peter Gallagher, James Monaghan, William Davis, Thomas Midleton, Paul Murrin, Richard Kimmett, Hugh O'Hara, John Kivlahan, Patrick Doyle, Jane Crawford.

GORTAKEERAN: Abraham Lawson, John McManus, Michael O'Hara, Bridget Haran, Bridget Duncan, James Gorman, Thomas Lynch, James McManus, John Levingston, Peter McCue, John Murrin, Michael McCue, Peter Gallagher, Patrick Farney, Bartholomew Preston, Martin Gallagher, Ellen Connell, Ellen McLoughlin, Major Chas. O'Hara.

RATHOSEY: Bailly Gilligan, Bryan O'Rourke, John Gilligan, William Barber, Humphrey Barber, Peter Derrig, John McDonogh, Hugh Higgins, Patrick Egan, Henry Morrow, Thomas Hardigan, Bryan Cassidy, James Simpson, James Smith, Samuel Kelly, Richard Middleton, Anne Glenny, James Glenny, Thaddeus O'Connor, James Armstrong, Thomas Armstrong, David Armstrong, Martin Battelle, Major Chas. O'Hara, Mary McLoughlin, John S. Phillips, Rev. George Garrett.

HALFQUARTER or CURRAGHANIRON: Susanna Stokes, Thomas Stokes.

RATHMORE: Richard G. Brinkly, James Kavanagh, Thomas McCormack, Thomas McKeon, Nicholas Mackey.

CARROWNACARRICK: Michael Davy, James Davy, Henry Burrowes, John Dyer, Michael Dyer, John Stokes, Joseph M. Kerin, John Middleton, Thomas Clarke, Thomas Cregg, Major Chas. O'Hara, Cornelius Davy, Peter Morrow.

MOYMLOUGH: David Lilly, James Lilly, John Gorman, John Gallagher, George Brett, James McNulty snr, James McNulty jun, Henry Burrows.

CARROWNATEEWAUN: Terence Cunningham, John Gooldan, Martin Cunningham, John Martin.

LISSALOUGH: Elizabeth Motherwell, William Kearney, Mary Coleman, James Coleman, Michael Henry, Patrick McDonough, Henry Ross, Patrick McDonough, Luke Carty, Patrick Toolan, Patrick Roonan, Hugh Rourke, Thady Davy.

CARROWCLOONEEN: Michael Armstrong, James Conlan, Mary Henry, Daniel Clarke, Owen Lee, Patrick Carty.

CARROWNLOUGHAN: Meredith Thompson, Thomas Dimond, Daniel Finan, John McHugh, Catherine Gorman, Patrick McHugh, Anne Gallagher, George Shaw,

John Loughheed.

RATHMACTIERNAN: Patrick Toolin, Henry Ross, Luke Carty, Patrick Carty, Hugh Rourke, Michael Coleman, Owen Coleman, John Meehan.

KILLORAN NORTH: Catherine Hunt, Thomas Hunt, Daniel Snee, James Hunt, Terence McDonagh, Peter Henry, James Devanny, Major Chas. O'Hara, John Meehan, Patrick Alcock, John Hunt, Michael Snee, James Snee Michael Snee.

CARROWNAGLERAGH: Bryan Carty, Michael Coleman, William Frizell, Samuel Kelly, Patrick Carty.

DEENODES: James Darrunt, Richard McCauly, Patrick Leonard, James McGettick, Daniel Thompson, Marcus Keenan, David Thompson, Martin McClean, Patrick Armstrong, John Finan, Robert Little, Bartholomew Henry, Robert Little.

KNOCKATOTAUN: John Henry, Peter Henry jun, Peter Henry sen, Catherine Henry, Martin Henry, Michael Owens, James Duke.

KILLORAN SOUTH: William Sproule, David Thompson, James Mullarkey, Thomas Henry.

SOURCE:

The General Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland - County of Sligo (Dublin 1858).

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CHAPTER 16

1877 - 1890

The years 1877-1880 were years of famine caused once again by poor potato crops, this time allied with poor oats crops and a fall in agricultural prices. The distress hit the parish in late 1879. The parish priest, P .J. McDonald, wrote to O'Hara about the plight of his tenants: "the tenants have assured me that they are not able to pay their rents owing to the circumstances that we are all aware of - the recession of bad harvests, low prices for cattle, want of labour and the general depression of the times. They are grateful, of course, for the reduction of rent you have kindly promised but very few of them can avail themselves of it because they have not the rent to pay. They implore still a larger reduction."

He suggested that O'Hara try to provide some type of employment for the labouring classes to tide them over the hard times. O'Hara in his reply stressed that he had at all times tried to do his best for his tenants and that he would assist as best he could those affected by the distress. He stressed however that: "the estate is not altogether in my hands".

By the end of December 1879 O'Hara had granted a reduction of 15% in rent to his tenants and had employed large numbers of them on making a road to the mountain bog, a road which was badly needed, according to "a friend of the poor" who wrote a letter praising O'Hara to the Freeman's Journal in December 1879. "His memory will be held in benediction," said the writer.

A relief committee was operating in Coolaney at this time; Fr. McDonald, the parish priest, and Hamilton Townsend, the Church of Ireland Archdeacon, were both on the committee. In February 1880 Fr. McDonald acknowledged two donations of £10 received from the Bishop of Achonry, Most Rev. Dr. McCormack for the relief of distress. The Mansion House Relief Committee sent £50. Later in the spring of 1880 the bishop sent two tons of seed potatoes and a third donation of £10.

A letter to the Sligo Champion in May 1880 complained that the tenants of the Lloyd estate in the south of the parish were in a particularly bad state. A letter was sent to the landlord, an absentee, but no acknowledgement was received and no help seems to have been given. In June 1880 food and clothes were distributed in the town of Coolaney and in January 1881 relief works were in progress in the town. These seem to have consisted of the digging of drains and there were complaints that the payment, sixpence per day, was totally inadequate.

This famine of 1877-1880 was one of the causes of the founding of the Land League in 1879. Land League meetings were held in Tubbercurry and Dromore West in October 1879 and in Gurteen in November of that year. Sometime during 1880 a land league branch was formed in Killoran, Pat Conlon was president and Peter Cawley secretary in January 1881. From then until 1918 Cawley was very active in local politics and became well known all over Sligo. He lived in Coolaney and had a farm near where the graveyard is situated in Rockfield townland. The hill on the Rockfield road at the Dispensary was once known as "Peter Cawley's brae".

On the first of January 1881 a huge Land League meeting was held in Skreen. A contingent from Killoran attended with their pipe and drum band. Soon afterwards this following song was written by a local to commemorate the event:

Leyney Boys

Cheer up my boys with heart and hand and think of New Year's Day
When we raised the flag of freedom and our banners bright and gay,
As we marched to Skreen and wore the green we cheered on every brae,
Saying its freedom to old Ireland on a happy New Year's Day.

As we marched down the Ladies Brae we viewed Tireragh's shore
And the ships out on the ocean came rowing to the shore
They assembled there in thousands from Sligo and Knocknarea
But the pride of all Tireragh were the Leyney boys that day.

May the shamrock wave on Allen's grave that is in Manchester laid;
Likewise Larkin and O'Brien that are sleeping in their graves.
The British crown we will tumble down and tyrants well make run
With our rifles yet we'll revenge the day the Manchester boys were hung.

United then we will burst the chains for Erin's liberty;
We will write brave Emmet's epitaph, old Ireland must be free,
We will write o'er the grave of this hero brave who died for Ireland's cause
For he longed to see dear Ireland free under good old Fenian laws.

One Sunday in late September 1881 the Killoran pipe and drum band were on their way home from a Land League meeting at Corhownagh chapel when they were fired on or at least shots were discharged in the vicinity. This happened near Coney as the band and supporters crossed the mountains. A report in the Sligo Champion blamed "the Lugawarry Orangemen" for the incident.

There are few reports of any trouble in Killoran parish at this time but a warning notice was posted in September 1880 referring to James Dodwell, landlord of Carrownabanny and Carrownaskeagh. "I give notice to the public not to take any of James Dodwell's meadow or if they do Rory of the Hills who always warns before he kills will come to visit him some day before long if any man is found so mean as to cut or save the meadow. If they do let them mark the consequence hereafter. I came twenty miles to put up this notice. Signed: Rory of the Hills."

The Land League had been succeeded by a new organisation, The Irish National League, in October 1882. The aims of the League were national self-government, land law reform, extension of the vote and local self-government. A large meeting was held in Coolaney on Sunday, 27 April 1884, to set up a parish branch of the Irish National League. Peter Cawley was chairman of the meeting. A large force of police arrived and some took notes of the proceedings.

The Irish National League branch in Killoran operated as a court over land cases. Its judgments were supported in most cases by boycotting those who disagreed. It supported tenants in their disputes with landlords and it boycotted anyone who took a farm from which a tenant had been evicted. Anyone who had anything to do with such a "grabber" was named and had to apologise to an I.N.L. meeting before he was released from boycott. For instance these resolutions were passed at the Killoran I.N.L. meeting of Sunday, 6 September 1885: (1) "That we condemn in the strongest manner the action of X in taking the grass and meadow of an evicted farm. (2) That we condemn as a land grabber Mr. X who treacherously and traitorously grabbed the farm from which Miss Kate Mullen was evicted. (3) That we hold no communications with such parties."

Kate or Catherine Mullen, a widow was evicted for non-payment of rent from her holding on the Knockadoo estate in November 1881. That estate had just been purchased by the Heather family. Her holding was just over four acres and her rent was £3 per year. In early March 1885 she appeared at Coolaney Petty Sessions Court charged with having broken the lock and illegally reentered her house. The case was adjourned. As we have seen above a neighbour was boycotted when he took the farm. Catherine Mullen never got her house back, She was later committed to the asylum and died in March 1907.

Captain Meredith Thompson, a nephew of Meredith who died in 1855, had been landlord of Knockadoo. He was a magistrate and also sat on the County Grand Jury. He married Frances Agnes Keogh of Geevagh, County Sligo, in 1870 and died suddenly in 1880 survived by his wife and two children, Meredith and Cornelius. The whole Thompson estate including the Knockadoo property was sold by public auction on Friday, 9 May 1884. The Heather family bought Knockadoo.

George Abraham Heather was a Church of Ireland clergyman and had been secretary of the Church Missionary Society for Ireland 1863-63 and had held positions in Dugort, Achill and Ballysadare. He was dean of Achonry from 1895 to 1905. He also owned land in Galway.

In spite of the continued hardship of these years 1880-1890 and of the number of tenants who were in arrears the Mullen eviction is one of the very few recorded in the parish at the time. In September 1885 a local farmer was condemned by Killoran I.N.L. branch for "taking meadow from the land from which Dr. Roe was evicted". Dr. Roe was the Coolaney dispensary doctor.

In May 1886 a Coolaney man was stated to have given up a "grabbed farm" at Rathosey and after he wrote to the local I.N.L. branch stating that, he was reinstated as a member. In July of the same year the branch condemned a man from Carha for "taking the farm from which John Treanon was evicted" and ordered that there be no communication with the "grabber" until he surrendered the farm. Treanon is probably a misprint but for what name I am unsure.

This dispute was still going on a year later and probably the farm was never given up. Boycotting, as in the Mullen case, did not always work, in spite of the fact that all the details, including the names of those involved, were published in the Sligo Champion.

The Electoral Areas were still the same as those established after the famine. Killoran parish was in the Tubbercurry Poor Law Union and there were three electoral areas wholly or partly in the parish, Coolaney, Cartron and Carrownaskeagh. John Battelle, described as a Liberal, defeated Randal Phibbs of Cultibar in the Coolaney area Poor Law election of 1880 and was not challenged in 1881 or 1882.

For the election of 1883 Peter Cawley was selected as the Nationalist candidate and his opponent was William Golden of Rathbarran who was regarded as representing the landlord interest. Cawley won by 97 votes to 54. In the election of 1884 Cawley was opposed by Charles McKenzie, clerk of Coolaney Petty Sessions Court, and a landlord nominee. Cawley was defeated by thirty votes. This defeat caused a lot of bitterness often expressed in letters to newspapers alleging the buying

of votes and complaining of Nationalists (by which they meant Catholics) voting for McKenzie.

John Gorman of Carrownloughan was elected District Councillor for Cartron electoral district in 1881 beginning a career as elected representative that was to continue until his death in 1913. Denis Dolan, landlord of Cappagh, represented the Carrownaskeagh district at this time. In the Poor Law elections of 1886 P.J. Henry was elected unopposed in the Coolaney district. At the election of the officers at the Tubbercurry Board of Guardians the nationalists won their first victory. Nicholas Devine, Tubbercurry nationalist, was elected chairman defeating Captain Armstrong who had been the Conservative chairman for the previous twenty years. John Gorman, Carrownloughan, was elected deputy vice chairman.

The Irish party now controlled the Board of Guardians as they did the County Sligo parliamentary seats. The General Election of 1885 was fought on new electoral boundaries. County Sligo was divided into Sligo North and Sligo South. Killoran parish was in North Sligo and the Nationalist candidate, Peter McDonald, won a landslide victory over the Unionist candidate, Colonel Ffolliott, by 5216 votes to 712.

Agricultural prices fell sharply in 1885-6 signaling the start of a long recession in agriculture which lasted into the next century. In October 1885, O'Hara's tenants held a meeting in Coolaney and asked the landlord to reduce his rents on account of the depression in agricultural prices. O'Hara's reply was to give a 15% reduction or a half year's rent if paid at once. Things were made worse in 1890 when blight again struck and potatoes were very scarce. In August the Tubbercurry Board of Guardians passed this resolution "that we regret to be obliged to pronounce the potato crop in this union decidedly the worse since '47 and almost a total failure . . . that supply of food from this year's harvest will be exhausted in most families before Christmas and want and famine will follow unless public works are opened". It specifically proposed a railway line from Collooney to Claremorris, which would pass through the union and give much needed employment.

The campaign to have this railway line approved continued in the autumn of 1890 - a deputation met Chief Secretary Balfour in October and meetings were held in Tubbercurry late October and Coolaney in early November. The Coolaney meeting was attended by the Mayor of Sligo and Tubbercurry Board of Guardian chairman. C.K. O'Hara took the chair. Resolutions were passed stressing the condition of the people of the area. The government agreed to sanction the railway and the first sod was cut on the 29 December 1890 at Tubbercurry and by January most of the land between there and Collooney was purchased.

Work started soon after and continued until August 1891 when it was suspended owing to a dispute between the company the Waterford and Limerick Railway Company and the treasury.

The potato crop had again failed in 1891 and so the loss of employment caused further hardship. At this time the fencing had been completed and so had the formation of levels but very little of the masonry work was done. There were many appeals from local bodies to restart the works and they finally did in May 1893 when between 700 and 800 men were employed. A labourer's weekly wage was about 13/-. Rail-laying started in the middle of 1894 from the Collooney end and by November the track was completed and the station houses and bridges were nearly built. The Collooney to Claremorris railway line was officially opened on 1 October 1895. The station for Coolaney was called Leyney because of the similarity of the names Collooney and Coolaney.

The parish population fell dramatically between 1881 and 1891, from 2092 in 1881 to 1783 in 1891 a fall of 14.8% the worst fall for any ten years since 1841-5. The mountainside town lands especially bore the brunt of this fall - Carha's population fell from 88 to 45, Carrownaskeagh's from 24 to 6 and Cappagh's from 109 to 87. The population of Coolaney village fell from 221 to 194, a fall of over 12%. The depression of the decade encouraged emigration especially to the United States.

SOURCES

Sligo Champion

Sligo Chronicle

Census of Ireland 1881, 1891

Walker, Brian M. (ed) - *Parliamentary Election Results in Ireland 1801-1922*. Dublin
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Nos 20350 Letters to C.W. O'Hara 1873-75

20351 Letters to C.W. O'Hara 1876-78

Thompson Documents M 7126 PROI Dublin

McDonagh Manuscripts Sligo Library

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CHAPTER 17

KNOCKADOO TENANTS 1884

The following is a list of tenants of Knockadoo townland in 1884 when Thompson's estate was sold. It shows also the amount of land held by each tenant and the yearly rent paid by each. The rents had been fixed by the Land Commission in 1883.

Tenant (n) = Not in Griffith's Valuation	Holding			Yearly Rent
	Acres	Roods	Perches	£. s. d.
Martin Kennedy (n)	151	2	0	150. 0. 0
John Healy (n)	11	1	2	5. 0. 0
James Meehan (n)	1	0	6	1. 0. 0
Richard Burke	14	2	6	8. 5. 0
John Finnegan	34	0	19	22. 2. 6
Catherine Mullen	4	1	30	3. 0. 0
Patrick Finnegan	15	0	30	9. 10. 0
Laurence Looby	24	0	23	13. 0. 0
Michael Carr (n)	8	2	14	6. 0. 0
John McCann (n)	28	2	3	13. 10. 0
David Henry	22	2	12	12. 13. 6
Patrick Mullin	19	0	19	10. 15. 0
John Nicholson (n)	24	3	0	10. 6. 0
John Henry	27	2	18	20. 0. 0
Hugh Foley	26	0	37	13. 10. 0
Patrick Foley	17	3	23	9. 0. 0
James Cregg (n)	19	1	19	11. 16. 0
Roger O'Connor	12	3	35	9. 0. 0
Daniel & Thomas Coleman	13	2	2	6. 0. 0
Michael Farry (n)	39	1	2	35. 0. 0
James McGuinness (n)	8	1	16	4. 0. 0
John Lynch (n)	24	1	35	19. 0. 0
Michael Bowey (n)	11	1	33	7. 10. 0
John McHugh	20	0	26	18. 0. 0
James McLoughlin	17	1	2	15. 0. 0
Michael McBryan	17	3	28	12. 15. 0
Michael Taaffe (n)	19	2	24	18. 0. 0
John Flynn	1	3	24	3. 0. 0
Catherine King (n)	0	0	10	0. 1. 0

SOURCE

Thompson Documents M 7126 PROI

A comparison with the list of occupiers for Knockadoo in Griffith's Valuation of 1858 is interesting. In 1858 there were twenty-five holdings, in 1884 there were twenty-nine. A look at the census figures shows that the population of Knockadoo in 1861 was 151 and in 1881 was 171. Many of the names on the later list do not appear

on the earlier one these have (n) after their names. The reason for this increase is that whereas in 1858 the landlord Meredith Thompson held 360 acres himself, he held only 170 acres in 1884. Financial pressure seems to have induced him to let more of the land and this led to the introduction of new tenants. John Flynn was a blacksmith and this may account for his high rent.

LLOYD'S TENANTS 1886:

A list of the tenants of the townland owned by Owen Lloyd in 1886 with the yearly rents, fixed in 1881. The areas of some holdings are not available.

Townland/Tenant	Holding			Yearly Rent £. s. d
	Acres	Roods	Perches	
CARROWCLOONEEN				
Mrs. C. Lee	43	3	2	28. 0. 0
John Hunt				19 0. 0
Rose Snee	29	0	0	19 0. 0
Patrick McDonagh	35	1	30	16. 10. 0
John Conlon	18	2	25	13. 0. 0
Michael Armstrong				12.10. 0
Owen Dooney	19	3	10	11. 0. 0
CARROWNAGLERAGH				
Owen Dooney	28	0	5	11. 10. 0
James Collery	53	0	20	31. 0. 0
Pat Frizzle				16. 0. 0
Bryan Carty				37.7.6
Michael Coleman	25	2	30	17. 0. 0
RATHMACTIERNAN				
Michael Coleman				21. 0. 0
Mary O'Rorke	55	2	10	37. 10. 0
Bridget Meehan				15. 15. 0
John Henry	9	0	0	5. 10. 0
Pat Collery				7. 0. 0
Bryan Carty (jun)				4. 10. 0
Pat Ross				6. 10. 0
LISSALOUGH				
Randel Phibbs	20	1	27	15. 0. 0
Pat Ross				4. 15. 0

Thomas Coleman	15	0	37	10. 0. 0
Daniel Coleman	17	2	4	11. 10. 0
Michael Davey	22	2	35	15. 10. 0
Patrick Henry	2	3	23	2.10. 0
George McDonagh	8	0	25	5. 0. 0
Pat Toolan	18	1	20	11. 0. 0
John Rooney	13	1	21	8. 0. 0
Patrick Carty	21	1	22	13. 10. 0

The comparison with the names for 1858 shows very few changes of families. The population figures show little drop for the period 1861-1881, Carrowclooneen fell from 43 to 42, Carrownagleragh 21 to 20, Rathmactiernan 30 to 27 and Lissalough 53 to 37.

SOURCE

National Library Dublin Ms 13140: Papers of J.C. McDonagh

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CHAPTER 18

1890 - 1914 POLITICS

In November 1890 the O'Shea divorce case made public Parnell's affair with Katherine O'Shea. The Sligo Champion said in an editorial on 22 November: "His (Parnell's) personal conduct is his own affair" and the Tubbercurry Board of Guardians passed resolution saying: "we express undiminished confidence in Mr. Parnell and renew our allegiance to him". This confidence did not last long. In January 1891 the same body unanimously expunged the November resolution from the minute book. A by election took place in North Sligo on 2 April 1891 because of the death of the sitting member. Bernard Collery of Sligo was the Anti-Parnellite candidate and Valentine Dillon of Dublin was the Parnellite candidate. Among those who proposed Collery was Thomas Henry, Knockatotaun and among his seconders was Patrick McCarrick, Coolaney.

Almost all those active in Killoran politics supported the anti-Parnellite candidate including Peter Cawley and the Parish Priest Fr. McDonald. This was a vital election for Parnell. The Bishops of Achonry and Elphin were strongly opposed to him but the Bishop of Killala refused to condemn him. When the result was announced the anti-Parnellite Bernard Collery won by a small majority 3261 to 2493. There were 593 on the register at Coolaney and of these 392 voted.

When the news of the victory reached Coolaney a large crowd collected and a torch light procession was formed. The houses in the village were all illuminated, the Sligo Champion reported, with the exception of those of Michael Coleman and James McCarrick. Michael Coleman, owner of a large business premises in the town was one of the few in the parish who supported Parnell and he clashed with a curate, Fr. Phil Mulligan, who was a very active anti-Parnellite campaigner.

Peter Cawley had been the elected guardian for the Coolaney area since 1889 and in 1891 at a Board of Guardians meeting he proposed that Michael Coleman be struck off the Committee of Management of the Coolaney Dispensary. This was done

and he was replaced by Michael Collery, Coolaney.

In 1893 Michael Coleman described by the Sligo Champion as "a politician of very advanced Parnellite views" stood against Peter Cawley at the Coolaney district election. After a bitter campaign Coleman was elected. A letter to the local paper alleged that the conservatives of the area voted with Coleman against Cawley and that this was the real reason for Cawley's defeat: "The Orange party of Coolaney and its neighbourhood had many old scores to settle with Peter Cawley. He was a thorn in their side and nothing could be more natural than their desire to get rid of him at any cost".

The bitter election had a sequel in May at Coolaney Petty Sessions Court when Michael Coleman, Henry Coleman and others were summonsed for having committed assaults on Peter Cawley while the voting papers were being collected. Michael Coleman brought a cross charge of assault against Peter Cawley. The case against the Colemans was dismissed as was the charge against Cawley. One of Coleman's supporters was fined 10/- with costs In November 1893 the rivalry took another turn, Peter Cawley wrote to the Local Government Board in Dublin complaining that the local relieving officer had neglected his duty had claimed excessive expenses and was in collusion with Michael Coleman. The relieving officer defended himself, denied all the charges and pointed out that Cawley himself had been a candidate for the post of relieving officer a number of times. Michael Coleman was elected unopposed each year 1894-1898.

In 1899 we again find local echoes of the Parnellite split. Henry Coleman of Coolaney and Peter Hunt of Killoran were expelled from Killoran United Irish League branch for supporting a Parnellite candidate who defeated a candidate of the League in the Cartron division. Both were re-admitted to the League branch after having apologised. It is interesting to note that Michael Coleman, jnr, later a leading figure in the parish IRA company was a son of Parnellite Michael Coleman and Joe Hunt, later secretary of the parish Sinn Féin club, was nephew of the Peter Hunt mentioned above.

The centenary of the 1798 rising was celebrated in 1898 and this helped to renew interest in Nationalist politics and organisation. Killoran was well represented at the many meetings and demonstrations held to commemorate the rebellion. A large parish meeting on Sunday 10 April 1898 established a branch of the Irish National Federation the current Nationalist organisation. Its officers were: President - Rev. T.H. Quinn, C.C.; Vice President - John Gorman P.L.G.; Treasurer - John Quinn; Secretary - Peter Cawley; Assistant Secretary - Michael McHugh. A collection was taken up on 17 July for the erection of a monument to the men of 1798. The collection for Killoran parish came to £13.9.6, which was one of the best parish totals in the county.

At the laying of the foundation stone of the Carrownagat memorial near Collooney on Sunday 4 September Killoran pipe and drum band was present with a large contingent from the parish. The band had a new banner; on a green background in gold lettering was "Remember '98," "God save Ireland", "United Killoran" with clasped hands and a likeness of Robert Emmet.

A new Nationalist organisation, the United Irish League, had been founded in January 1898 and in December of that year the existing Nationalist organisation in Killoran re-organised itself as a branch of the U.I.L. In 1900 the split in the Irish party was healed, John Redmond became the leader of the united party and the U.I. L. became its constituency organisation. Killoran U.I.L. branch survived until early 1916.

Its secretary in 1901 was Michael McHugh Coolaney, auctioneer, valuer and surveyor. He had represented most of the tenants of the parish in their applications to the Land Court to have fair rents fixed. In 1902 he was appointed deputy Surveyor for the County on the proposal of Peter Cawley. His successor as secretary of Killoran U.I.L. was Patrick Gallagher of Creevaun who held the position until the demise of the organisation. Michael Gallagher of Gortakeeran was assistant secretary from 1904 until his sudden death at the age of 37 in October 1906. The president of

the branch was either the parish priest or his curate. The main concern of the branch was land - it advised the tenants on purchasing their holdings and it tried to put pressure on the holders of large grazing farms to sell these to small farmers. It opposed the taking of conacre. A branch report for December 1909 said: "Surely if people have conacre to let they do not require it for their own use and therefore can sell it to the Congested Districts Board for distribution among those who are thirsting for land on the bleak mountain side and elsewhere in the parish". It made very little progress in this, people still took conacre and no large grazing farm was divided.

There were some cases of boycotting in this period. In August 1898 a local blacksmith apologised to the branch for shoeing a boycotted man's donkey and in September a Coolaney merchant apologised for dealing with the 'unclean'.

In November and December 1906 a boycotting case ended with apologies to the branch in November and December. The local U.I.L. also acted as a court deciding local disputes especially about land. In February 1902 William Gorman and an employee came to the branch to have a dispute settled. The decision of the branch was accepted by both parties.

The Local Government Act of 1898 abolished the Grand Jury system of county government and established County Councils in its place. For Sligo County Council elections most of Killoran parish was in the Ballisodare electoral area, which included Ballisodare, Collooney and Dromard. At a meeting in the courthouse in Coolaney on 6 January 1899 Peter Cawley was selected as the Nationalist candidate for the Ballisodare area. Cawley pledged himself to fight for "the land for the people" by compulsory sale, a Catholic University and eventually Home Rule.

His opponent was none other than his landlord C.K. O'Hara of Annaghmore. A Sligo Champion editorial said: "As to Captain O'Hara, he is we believe what is generally called 'a decent chap'. He rides like a Red Indian and plays polo like a Marmeluke; but he does not know what it is to work for his living like his sturdy opponent Peter Cawley." The election, held early in April 1899, resulted in an easy

victory for Cawley by 484 votes to 176 votes.

The Owenmore electoral area for Sligo County Council included the Cartron area in the south of the parish and Pat McHugh of Carrownloughan, Coolaney, was a Nationalist candidate in this area. He was elected with 383 votes. Tubbercurry Rural District Council was set up to discharge duties formerly the care of Tubbercurry Board of Guardians. The three electoral areas in the parish, Coolaney, Carrownaskeagh and Cartron remained the same but now each returned two District Councillors. Elections were held every three years and very often there was no contest as the Nationalist candidates were returned unopposed.

In the Carrownaskeagh area Michael Dolan, landlord of Cappagh and John Quinn, farmer, Carha were councillors from the first election of 1899 to 1914. James Cregg opposed them in 1905 but was defeated. James Henry, shopkeeper Knockadoo, and Dan Toolan, farmer, Cabragh were the candidates. Quinn and Henry were elected.

The Coolaney area was represented by Dominick Gilhawley, shopkeeper, Coolaney and Cornelius Henry, farmer, Carrownacarrick, from 1899 to 1908. Gilhawley died in 1908 and Pat Lynch was elected in his place. Pat Lynch himself died in 1911 and Hugh O'Rourke, farmer, Gortakeeran was co-opted in his place. In the 1914 election Michael McCarrick, shopkeeper Coolaney, stood for election against Hugh O'Rourke and the other councilor, Cornelius Henry. In a three cornered fight O'Rourke lost.

The Cartron area was represented by John Gorman, Carrownloughan, from 1899 until his death in March 1913. Marron from Carrowmore was the other councillor in 1899. Pat Henry was elected in 1902. John Lee, farmer, Carrowclooneen was elected in 1905 and held the seat until 1920.

In 1901 Mr. William Fenton, solicitor to Sligo County Council, brought an action against P.A. McHugh, Nationalist MP and proprietor of the Sligo Champion.

Peter Cawley proposed a resolution at the Tubbercurry Board of Guardians criticising Fenton who then brought an action against Cawley. The trial was held in Belfast and the jury found against Cawley and awarded £300 damages against him. He refused to pay the damages and efforts at a settlement during 1901 failed and on 11 January 1902 he was declared a bankrupt. His land in Rockfield and Coolaney, totalling 25 acres, and his house in Coolaney were put up for sale in July 1903 but the only bidder was Fenton himself who bid £80. Fenton applied for an ejectment order against Cawley at Ballymote Quarter Sessions in January 1905. Cawley's defence was that his wife had a life interest in his property and that Fenton's case was invalid. Fenton's application was dismissed as was his appeal to Sligo Assizes in March 1906. There was great rejoicing in Coolaney when Cawley's victory became known.

In 1911 the three year elections to the County Council were due and Peter Cawley was again selected unopposed as the U.I.L. candidate for the Ballisodare division. In his speech he said: "As a matter of fact I am getting blue moulded for a fight with a Tory or a factionist". His wish was granted and Michael Gallagher of Kilnamanagh, Collooney, offered himself as a candidate. He denied that he was in direct opposition to the U.I.L. and said he was an uncompromising nationalist. The election was bitter. Meetings were held throughout the division. At Dromard on Sunday 28 May rival meetings almost led to a clash and police had to keep the crowds separated. Cawley pointed to his record of opposition to landlordism. At a meeting in Coolaney Cawley said: "If he (Gallagher) gets 50 votes out of 808, I'll be greatly disappointed." In the event Cawley won by 413 votes to 223. There was great rejoicing in Coolaney when the victory was announced and an effigy of Gallagher was thrown into the river. In the next County Council elections in 1914 Cawley was returned unopposed.

In 1914 the National Volunteers were being organised to land weight to the demand for Home Rule. At a meeting in Keash on 3 May to form Volunteers Peter Cawley said: "We are uniting for one great common object - the freedom of our country and the object of the formation of a national army is to support and strengthen the hand of those who are at present fighting the battle of Ireland on the

floor of the House of Commons." Tubbercurry volunteers were formed on May 17, Collooney 21 June and on August 2 a corps was formed for Coolaney.

The first instruction in drill was held on 9 August. The instructor was Tommy Young, an Englishman who was manager of the brick factory at Tullaghan. He had had experience in the Territorial Army. The Home Rule Bill was passed on 25 May and when the result became known in Coolaney there were great celebrations and the pipe and drum band turned out. The outbreak of the first World War caused the postponement of Home Rule and by the end of the War in 1918 the situation in Ireland had changed completely.

SOURCES

Sligo Champion 1890-1914

Lyons, F.S.L. - *Charles Stewart Parnell*. London 1977-78

KILLORAN UNITED IRISH LEAGUE COMMITTEE FOR 1901

Rockfield - James Naven;	Carrowgavneen - Thomas Haran;
Seevness Bryan O'Hara;	Rathosey - Thomas McCarrick;
Meemlough - Thomas McNulty;	Carrownacarrick - Michael Henry;
Rathbarran - James Kearins;	Coolaney - Peter Cawley;
Creevaun - Pat Gallagher;	Carrowclooneen - Jim Lee;
Rathmactiernan - Andrew Meehan;	Lissalough - Thomas Coleman;
Knockadoo East - James Cregg;	Knockadoo West - James Henry;
Killoran - John Hunt;	Deenodes - Edward O'Brien;
Carha - John Quinn;	Carrownloughan - Michael McHugh;
Cappagh - James Gallagher;	Carrownabanny - James McCarrick;
Gortakeeran - Michael Gallagher;	Ballinvalley - Matthew Foley;
Knockatotaun - Pat Henry;	Shancough - Michael Davey.

[Sligo Champion - 19th January, 1901]

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CHAPTER 19

THE LAND QUESTION SOLVED? 1881 - 1914

The Land Act of 1881 had made a great difference to the landlord - tenant relationship. The Act established a Land Court which fixed fair rents - normally rents were reduced. Rents were fixed soon after 1881 and again around the year 1900. The reductions in rents were a reflection of the continuing agricultural depression rather than rack-renting by the landlords. Examples from the Lloyd estate in Killoran are - Luke O'Rorke farmed fifty-five statute acres in Rathmactiernan and paid rent of £40 per annum before 1881. In 1881 the Land Court reduced his rent to £37.10.0 and in 1898 it again reduced it, this time to £30.6.0.

In Lissalough, George McDonagh held eight acres. He paid £6 per year in rent before 1881 it was then reduced to £5 and in 1998 it was reduced to £3.8.0. The average reduction for the Lloyd' estate in 1898 was 23.5%, a reduction in rents of almost a quarter.

These reductions did not satisfy the tenants, however, they still sought the ownership of the land they farmed. In 1903 the Wyndam Land Act was passed which provided more money to help tenants buy their farms from the landlords. Over the following few years the ownership of the land of Killoran passed from the landlords to the tenants.

Charles William O'Hara of Coopershill and Annaghmore died in 1898 and was succeeded by his son Charles Kean O'Hara the eldest of a family of fourteen. On the occasion of his coming of age in 1881 there had been great celebrations on the estate and the Killoran pipe and drum band led a torchlight parade of O'Hara tenants in Coolaney. A letter to a local newspaper at the time stated: "nowhere in Ireland does such unity, peace and harmony exist between landlord and tenant as that existing between the Lord of Annaghmore and the tenantry of his extensive estates". While this may be exaggerated there is no doubt that over the years O'Hara's tenants were generally well treated and there are few reports of any agrarian trouble or evictions

on the estate during the nineteenth century. In spite of the good will towards the landlord he was heavily defeated by the Nationalist candidate Lynch in the County Sligo by election of 1883 and by Peter Cawley in the County Council elections of 1899.

Negotiations to purchase the O'Hara estate began in 1903. A deputation of tenants met him in November to ask him to sell. He wrote in reply:

“Personally I have no desire to sever the connection which has existed for over 1700 years between my family and the tenants on this estate. At the same time if it is the unanimous wish of my tenantry I will only part with my property which has always been acknowledged as a very low rented estate on the following terms - tenants whose rents have been fixed since 1896 to purchase so that their installments to the Land Commission would be 10% below their present rents”.

He also insisted on keeping game and sporting rights to the estate. The tenants refused to buy on these conditions and negotiations broke down. In 1905 there was an exchange of letters between tenants' representatives and the landlord but no agreement was reached. Towards the end of 1908 meetings of tenants were again held and a deputation met Major O'Hara and offered him terms which would mean that tenants' yearly repayments of the land Commission loan would be 25% less than their rents at that time. They also proposed that he keep the game rights for his lifetime but that they would be transferred to the new owners on his death.

O'Hara accepted but there was then some uncertainty about the tenants' acceptance. Killoran U.I.L. branch advised tenants not to accept and O'Hara issued a letter clarifying the situation to his tenants. Most tenants appear to have accepted O'Hara's offer and signed purchase agreements in November and December 1908.

ANNAGHMORE,
COLLOONEY,
COUNTY SLIGO,
October 22, 1908.

DEAR SIR,

As I hear some of my tenants are unaware of the concessions given by me at the request of a deputation from a meeting held on Monday, 12th, I think it may help them in deciding whether they wish to sign their purchase agreements at once, or not, if I set the terms as amended fully before them, and I think everyone must admit that I have made a most liberal offer.

In my first letter to you I stated: Second term tenants, or tenants whose rents were fixed since August, 1896, to buy on such terms as will give them a reduction of 5s. in the £. First term tenants, or tenants whose rents were fixed prior to 1896, to buy on such terms as would give them a reduction of 7s. in the £. Non-judicial tenants to get a reduction of 8s. in the £. Existing bogs in certain townlands to be vested in trustees for the benefit of the tenants—for which I charge them nothing—sporting rights to be reserved to me during my life, and then to be vested in the tenants.

On signing a purchase agreement, tenants to pay interest at 3½ per cent. on purchase money in lieu of the year's rent due May last, which is now payable, thus giving them the same advantage as if the sale had taken place last year.

Where there are any arrears due up to May, 1907, one year (or half-a-year as the case may be) to be added to the purchase money, the remainder forgiven. At the request of the deputation representing the tenants, I made the following concessions—i.e., To allow them the half-year's rent due November 1, 1908, and also gave an undertaking not to sub-let the sporting rights.

On the return of the members of the deputation I was informed that my terms had been accepted by the majority of those attending the meeting, and the deputation expressed themselves satisfied. I immediately took steps to have agreements drawn up on these terms, and maps made, at considerable expense.

On Monday last I was asked to attend another meeting, to have terms further discussed. This I was unable to do, as I could not re-open negotiations or give any further concessions; and a good many tenants have already expressed their willingness to purchase on above terms. It must be understood that in the event of the Bonus being reduced, before the signing of the purchase agreement, any reduction in the Bonus must be added to the purchase money.

As the purchase agreements for the greater part of the Estate are now ready for signature, I have, at any rate, done my part to try and meet your wishes, and it rests with yourselves whether you choose to avail yourself of the offer or not, as the Bonus may be reduced after 1st November.

Yours faithfully,

C. K. O'HARA.

Letter from Charles K. O'Hara in 1908 clarifying his offer of land purchase.

Most of his tenants accepted this offer.

The following is an example from O'Hara's estate. James Livingstone was a tenant of a farm of about 21 statute acres in Gortakeeran. Before 1881 his yearly rent was £15. He applied to the land Court to have his rent fixed and it was reduced to £10.10.0. His rent was again reduced by the Court in 1905, this time to £9.10.0. In

1908 he bought his 21 acre farm from O'Hara for £219 which he borrowed from the land Commission. He repaid this loan by paying £7.2.4 per year, which in effect was a 25% reduction on what he had been previously paying in rent.

Malby Crofton Dodwell owned the townlands of Carrownabanny and Carrownaskeagh. He had a large residence built for himself in Carrownaskeagh which he called Glanmore House. He regularly cycled to and from Dublin and was very interested in innovation. He established a company called "Peat Products of Ireland" and set up a factory at Killowneen bog to produce a type of turf briquette. The turf was dug and then loaded into wagons, which traveled on rails carrying the turf to the drying machine. A steam engine provided heat and power for drying the turf as it passed through pipes. The dried turf was carted to Leyney station and sent by railway from there all over the country. This factory was in production at the turn of the century but Dodwell got into financial difficulties and the company was declared bankrupt in 1904 on the petition of William John Vance and the twenty-seven acres owned by the company sold. It is said that Dodwell was planning to bring electricity to his estate by building a dam on the river at Spink and installing a generator. These plans came to nothing however as he found his financial difficulties increasing and in November 1907 the part of Carrownaskeagh and Carrownabanny occupied by him were offered for sale. The Congested Districts Board bought the land and divided the better land into farms of between 25 and 35 acres.

Glanmore House, Dodwell's residence was reduced in size to that of a normal farmhouse and houses were built on the other new farms. In 1914 and 1915 four families from Congested Districts were sold farms on what was the Dodwell estate, Connollys from Moylough and Dohertys from Swinford got farms in Carrownaskeagh. There was no local opposition to the introduction of outsiders. What happened Malby Crofton Dodwell subsequently is uncertain. His wife Ester Maria had died aged twenty-nine in January 1910.

The King Harmon estate owned by the family' who lived in Rockingham near Boyle (now Boyle Forest Park) was one of the first to be sold under the 1903 act.

Deenodes townland in Killoran parish was part of this estate and it was sold early in 1905 through the Land Commission. The terms agreed meant a reduction of 5/6d in the pound, for example, Pat McDonagh held 24 acres in Deenodes for which he paid £15 rent. After the sale his yearly installments to the Land Commission would be £10.17.6.

William Loughed, Dromore West, owned Carrownloughan townland and he agreed to sell it to the Land Commission, who sold it to the occupying tenants in early 1906. By 1908 half of the tenants in Carha owned by Bryan Cooper had bought their farms and the others followed suit soon afterwards.

The Heather estate in Knockadoo had been sold to the tenants by the end of 1906 though they still held the house and farm. George Abraham Heather died in 1907 and his eldest son Captain Dawson Dean ran the farm. An article in the Sligo Champion of June 13, 1908 reported a visit to Knockadoo House and farm where Captain Heather operated a stud farm. Captain Heather and the groom, Luke McDonagh, showed the reporter around and he was suitably impressed with "farming on a large scale". He saw pig and cattle rearing and "breeding fowl by means of the best modern incubator". There were excellent flocks of ducklings and geese. The stud farm regularly advertised the services of their sire horses in the Sligo Champion. Capt. Heather married in 1923 and died at Knockadoo on 11 November 1927.

The tenants on the Lloyd estate made an offer to buy their farms in November 1903 but this offer was rejected by the landlord, Henry Crofton Lloyd, an absentee. It was revealed then that in fact the estate was already in the Land Court because of the owner's bankruptcy. Mr. Robinson of Sligo was the agent for the landlord. In October 1904 John Hunt of Carrowclooneen on Lloyd's estate was evicted for non-payment of rent arrears. He owed two years rent. In July of that year the local bailiff had written to the agent: "I am sure if he (Hunt) is evicted the land will be left derelict. Hunt is in bad health and has no crop on the land to support him". After negotiations with agent Robinson, Hunt was allowed back into his house on 27 November and this was the occasion of a great celebration with Killoran pipe and drum band and a large crowd

in attendance.

Cawley in a speech pointed out the significance of the occasion: "Men of Killoran, we come here today to celebrate a victory over landlordism. The magnitude of this victory cannot very well be measured by the standard of the present. We should look to the past and try to realise what would have been the fate of John Hunt and his wife were they evicted forty years ago. Landlordism was then as some of you know, omnipotent in the land, the skulking grabber would have been at hand and the fate of John Hunt and his wife would have been talked of by a few sympathetic neighbours with bated breath and whispering humbleness. Today, thanks to the heroes of the land war we defy all the efforts of landlordism to ever again dislodge him from his old home. Its day is gone never more to return."

In January 1906 the judge in the Land Court, Judge Ross, announced his decision as to what price the tenants would pay for their farms on the Lloyd estate. The terms were similar to those offered and accepted on other estates and most of the tenants accepted and bought their farms.

By 1912 almost all of the landlords in the parish had sold to the tenants. One of the exceptions was Michael Dolan, Cappagh. Early in 1912 his tenants approached him with a view to purchasing their farms but he refused. The tenants then decided to withhold rents until he agreed to sell. In October 1912 Dolan brought seven of his tenants before Ballymote Quarter Sessions and sued them for arrears of rent. He won his case but the Killoran branch of the U.I.L. supported the tenants and very soon afterwards Dolan had to bow to the inevitable and sell the land to the tenants.

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Sligo Champion 1881-1912

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CHAPTER 20

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL 1880 - 1920

Coolaney was a thriving business town and boasted many fine shops and public houses at this time. There is a mention of a grocer called Rutledge in Coolaney in 1846 but there is no information as to where the premises were. In the 1850s Battelle's was a thriving public house and grocery.

Martin Battelle was the owner at that time and he also had the post office. He died in 1877 and was succeeded by John Battelle. In March 1888 he offered his premises for sale - drapery, grocery and provisions, spirit licence and post office. John Phillips from Collooney seems to have bought the premises and some time between 1894 and 1898 he sold it to Dominick Gilhawley a native of Skreen. Gilhawley was elected district councillor for the Coolaney area in 1899. In 1902 he married Marion Lipsett, daughter of William Lipsett of Rockfield. On Christmas Eve 1904 part of his premises was destroyed by fire. Later in the same year he re-married, his first wife having died some time previously. He himself died on 2 January 1908 aged 38. He had no children and his business was sold to Gerry O'Grady and has remained in that family since.

In the 1890s Maria Foley had a public house in Coolaney and in 1911 the licence was transferred to James McGuinness. This would be what is now the "Happy Landing".

The pub at the west end of the village belonged in the nineteenth century to the O'Hara's of Coolaney, no relations of the landlord. John Joe O'Hara was the owner in the 1890s, his father Hugh owned it before him and his grandfather Heber had been in charge of distributing food in Coolaney during the famine years. Margaret Jones owned a pub in Coolaney in 1894 and this is probably what later was Craig's pub. In 1903 a licence was transferred from William Craig to Margaret J. Craig.

James McCarrick owned a pub in Coolaney in 1884. His wife died aged 28 in

1887 leaving three small children and he himself died in 1898 aged 47. Michael McCarrick then ran the business in what was later Sproule's shop.

The largest business establishment in Coolaney was Michael Coleman's grocery and drapery in the centre of the town. This was established some time after 1857. Michael senior represented the Coolaney area on the Tubbercurry Board of Guardians in the 1890s. He supported Parnell at the time of the split and incurred the wrath of the local clergy. Michael junior was very active in the volunteers during the War of Independence. The business started to decline during the early years of the twentieth century probably partly due to political involvement. Another reason was the growth of the business of James Henry Merchant of Knockadoo at this time.

A list of Coolaney commercial establishments and tradesmen of 1894 is as follows:

Grocers:	John & Michael Coleman John O'Hara
Publicans:	Marian Foley James McCarrick Margaret Jones John Phillips
Blacksmiths:	John Caldwell Thomas Durkin John & James Flynn
Carpenters:	John Collery Michael Durkin
Baker:	Hugh Conlon
Dressmakers:	Margaret Finan Catherine Kerrigan Catherine Murtagh
Tailor:	Henry Hennigan
Miller:	Thomas Doyle
Postmaster:	John Hall

The G.A.A. was founded in 1884 and the first Sligo county championships were held in 1888. No team from Killoran parish took part. There is a tradition in the parish of clubs being formed in Coolaney and in Killoran in 1887 and a challenge match being played between them, which was won by Coolaney. The second Sligo county final, that of 1889 was played at O'Hara's field Coolaney, beside the railway behind the town. Curry beat Sooley.

A club was formed in Killoran in 1890 and Messrs. McCarrick and Masterson were delegates to the county board. Killoran was drawn against Highwood in the 1891 championship but failed to turn up and lost the game. Killoran did not take part in the championships of 1892 or 1893 but there are mentions of challenge games between Coolaney Sarsfields and Tubbercurry in October 1893. In the first, played in O'Hara's field Coolaney, the home team won ten points to no score. The second played a fortnight later "at the base of Knocknashee" was also won by Coolaney, two points to one.

There was a general falling off in the activities of the G.A.A. in Sligo over the next ten years and there is no other mention of a Coolaney team until 1904.

The Sligo Champion carried a long report of a challenge game between Coolaney and Corhownagh Wanderers at Coolaney in March 1904. The visitors scored the only point of the game to win. Coolaney players mentioned were D. McDermott, D. Johnston, Mullarkey, Davey and T. Murphy. Coolaney Club entered in either the junior or senior County Championships most years between 1909 and 1916 and again in 1920 with no notable success.

In the early years of the century the Coolaney G.A.A. club in conjunction with Wanderers Cycling and Athletic club from Sligo town ran an annual sports meeting in McKenzie's field beside the station at Coolaney. There was usually a large programme of cycling and athletic events and the prizes normally went to athletes from outside the parish. There were some confined events usually in 1910 the results of a parish two mile cycle race was: 1st: Middleton Carrownacarrick, 2nd: G. Simpson

Carrownacarrick, 3rd: Lipsett Coolaney.

Coolaney team seems to have lapsed for some years and was reformed in 1909 under the name of Coolaney Celtic. They played Sligo Wanderers in McKenzie's field Coolaney in March 1909 and were beaten 3-10 to 1-3. "Moore, Hunt, Farry and Gilgan were conspicuous" for the Coolaney team, said the Champion report.

Another annual sporting occasion was the point to point races held over the Claragh course just to the south of the parish organised by the Landlord, O'Hara.

The petty sessions court was still being held on the second Wednesday of each month in Coolaney courthouse. Landlords O'Hara, Dodwell and Thompson were among the magistrates as well as an official resident magistrate. John McManus, Coolaney, was a magistrate for some time around 1900 and in 1906 Dr. Arthur Hunt was appointed a magistrate. In the same year, Michael Coleman, merchant, Coolaney, was appointed magistrate on the recommendation of P.A. McHugh, Sligo Nationalist MP. Michael Coleman was the man who had clashed with Peter Cawley at the time of the Parnell split and it is a measure of the changed political climate to find him a magistrate beside Charles O'Hara.

The clerk of the court from the period of the famine until 1850 was James Smith of Coolaney, Heber O'Hara occupied the post from 1851 to 1860 and was succeeded by John Smith who served until 1875. Mathew Moreton was clerk from 1876 to 1881 and he was succeeded by Charles P. McKenzie who rented a farm at Greenville and stayed in the parish until about 1920.

Coolaney dispensary was run by a dispensary committee whose chairman was Charles O'Hara and whose members were selected by Tubbercurry Board of Guardians. The expenditure for Coolaney Dispensary District for the half year ended 28 September 1892 was £82.16.2 and for the half year ended 28 September 1894 £94.8.5. Expenditure for the half year ended 31 March 1906 was £96.11.3. The rent of dispensary was £10 and the doctor's salary £100 per year. The dispensary

committee appointed the doctor and he resided normally in Coolaney. Dr. Rowland Blennerhasset was Coolaney doctor until 1878. Dr. St. George F. Roe was doctor from then until his death in 1888. Dr. Brennan from Tubbercurry was elected to the position but resigned later the same year.

In November 1888 Coolaney Committee met to elect a doctor. Present were Colonel Cooper, Charles W. O'Hara, J. Armstrong, William Corrigan, Michael Coleman Rathmactiernan, Francis Scanlan, Bryan Carty Rockfield, John Gorman, Thomas Henry Knockatotaun, M. Collery, M. Marren and secretary Thomas Hunt from Cashel. The parish priest and curate, Frs. McDonald and Larry also attended. There were two candidates, Drs. McMunn and Hunt. Colonel Cooper proposed McMunn and he was seconded by Charles O'Hara. Nobody else voted for McMunn and Dr. Arthur Hunt was appointed. The landlords had lost their power on the dispensary committee as they had in so many areas of life by that time.

As has already been stated bricks had been made at Tullaghan just east of the parish throughout most of the nineteenth century. In 1906 a larger establishment was built there, the ruins of which are still to be seen. Allison Sims brother of Alex Sims Collooney businessman was behind the venture. A company called "The West of Ireland Brick and Tile Company" was set up in 1907 and production commenced in September.

Things went well for a while and a number of Coolaney people were employed making bricks and tiles. However by 1910 the company had run into difficulties and production ceased for some time. It restarted in 1911 but by winter, staff were being laid off as there was stock of hundreds of thousands of bricks with sales of only two to three thousand a week.

'Many thousands of pounds had been lost over the works', the chairman reported. The brickyard never proved a commercial success and Sims later sold it to Coolaney merchant, Michael Coleman. He employed Tommy Young from England as manager but they failed to establish the brickworks on a sound footing. There

seemed to be a problem with either the clay or the firing and many consignments of brick were returned to the yard. The failure of the brickyard contributed to the collapse of Coleman's business.

What must have been one of the first traffic accidents in the parish involving a motor car occurred on 4 May 1910. Robert Barber was driving his horse and cart into Coolaney when he was met by a motor car belonging to Newsome and Sons Ltd., Quay St., Sligo. The horse took fright and threw Robert Barber who sued the car owners and claimed £50 damages for his injuries sustained in the fall. The driver of the car, Mr. B. Loughheed, was on his way to Sligo and stated in court that his highest speed had been 15mph. The judge ruled in favour of the car driver.

In 1878 Fr. Lowry, PP of Killoran became parish priest of Achonry and was succeeded by Fr. P.J. MacDonald. He was parish priest until 1904 and during these years of the growth of the power of the Nationalists at local level he took little part in politics. He did however attend the anti-Parnellite selection convention for the North Sligo by-election in 1891 as did most of the area's Catholic clergy including the Bishops of Elphin and Achonry, Apart from that he left such affairs to his curates who were generally presidents of the local nationalist organisation. Fr. Philip Mulligan, CC was very active at the 1891 by-election on the anti-Parnell side. Fr. Thomas H. Quinn, CC was president of Killoran branch of the Irish National Federation from 1898 and was a secretary of the '98 memorial committee for County Sligo. Fr. Quinn was moved to Tourlestrane in 1901 and another curate, Fr. Humphrey, a native of Limerick, took over as president of Killoran United Irish League. He left the parish in 1902 and was succeeded by Fr. J. Boland.

The parish priest Fr. P.J. MacDonald retired in 1904 because of failing health and he was succeeded by Fr. Dan Gallagher. He became president of Killoran U.I.L. and was involved in the negotiations for the sale of the landlords' estates to the tenants in the following years. He undertook the restoration of Rockfield Chapel and this work was almost completed when he died suddenly of typhoid fever in April 1910. He was buried in the chapel and was succeeded by Fr. Matt Devine. Rockfield

restored church was dedicated by Most Rev. P. Morrisroe, D.D., Bishop of Achonry, on Sunday May 19, 1912. Fr. Matt Devine PP took little direct part in the political events of the next ten years. He supported the anti-conscription campaign in 1918 but refused to let Killoran Sinn Féin club meet in the old school at Rockfield in which the current nationalist organisation in the parish usually met.

In the Church of Ireland parish of Killoran and Kilvarnet Rev. Hamilton Townsend, who died in 1895, was succeeded by Rev. Robert John Noyes who served as vicar until 1904. He was succeeded by Rev. Thomas Allen who was vicar until his accidental death in 1927.

A new school was built at Rockfield in 1902 beside the old school. Clarence of Ballisodare was the contractor and James Jordan and sons from Clogas were the stone masons. At this time Roger Nerney was the principal at Rockfield. He had been teaching in Cappagh N.S. He built the house later owned by John Banks and lived there. He died in 1924 and Mr. Keoghan succeeded him. He left in 1926 and Kevin Devine became principal and remained until 1943. Then Mrs. Nora McGuinness became principal.

The old one-roomed thatched school in Killoran was still in use but was in a bad condition. An inspector reporting in 1903 said: "The school is a very poor one. It is musty and ill-smelling and the floor of the school is lower than the surface of the ground behind the school which is little better than a swamp. A new school is badly needed". A new two-roomed slated school was built to replace the old school in 1909. The principal teacher at this time was Thomas F. O'Hara.

The Church of Ireland maintained their opposition to the National School system throughout the nineteenth century and had two schools in the parish. Coolaney school was under the Church Education Society and Creevaun school (Rinn school) was connected with the Irish Church Missions. Creevaun school, in which Thomas Crump taught, ceased to operate sometime at the end of the century and on 2 March 1897 Coolaney school became a National School. Inspectors reported that the schoolhouse

was in very bad condition. George Irwin and James A. Clarke were teachers at the time. A new school was built south of the station house along the Coolaney-Templehouse road. It cost £335 to build and was opened in October 1901. It replaced Coolaney Church of Ireland school and was known as Leyney school.

The fall in the population of the parish from 1881 to 1891 of 14.8% continued for the period 1891-1901 when the population fell from 1783 to 1558, a fall of 12.6%. The rate of population fall continued to slow down. In 1911 the population of the parish was 1479, which represented a fall of 5% since 1901.

The population of Coolaney town fell from 194 in 1891 to 154 in 1901, a fall of over 20%. Between 1901 and 1911 the village's population actually rose to 172 an 11.5% rise. The next census was taken in 1926 and by then the population of Coolaney electoral area had fallen by 11% and that of Cartron by almost 3%. The population of Carrownaskeagh electoral area however showed a marginal rise which may be due to the new families introduced to what had been the Dodwell estate in 1914 and 1915.

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KILLORAN PARISH NATIONAL SCHOOLS: DECEMBER 1862

ROCKFIELD N.S.:

Matthew Doyle - Headmaster. Rose Derrig - Workmistress.

Kate Corbett – Monitor. Thomas Cawley - Monitor.

CAPPAGH N.S.:

Hugh Healy – Headmaster. Anne Healy - Workmistress.

KILLORAN N.S.:

Arthur Quinn - Headmaster Bridget Skeahan – Workmistress

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CHAPTER 21

1915 - 1923

The Irish Parliamentary Party, so long supreme in Irish Politics, came under threat from the new Republican movement in the years after 1914. Peter Cawley, the old Land Leaguer and staunch supporter of the party, recognised the coming challenge and at a meeting in Coolaney in August 1915 attacked the Sinn Féiners: "We are not going to let the cranks or soreheads upset the work of the past thirty five years. What party are we going to support? Mr. Redmond or the soreheads? Mr. Redmond and his party have proved themselves the friends of Ireland and the friends of the Irish people."

In 1916 the Geoghegan family came to Leyney station house from Tipperary. The father was stationmaster and three sons, Paul, Jack and Tom, together with two daughters, helped organise republicanism in the parish. In June 1917 a Sinn Féin meeting was held at the Creamery in Killoran and a parish club formed. About sixty men joined the club and Joe Hunt of Killoran, a stonemason and building contractor, was the secretary. The club held an "aeridheacht" or féis consisting of Irish dances, songs and recitations at Carrownloughan on September 30th, 1917.

The question of land again raised its head at this time. The Sinn Féin club tried to unite the people who were taking conacre from the large farmers so that they would be able to reduce the rent. This was only partly successful, some people broke ranks and paid the higher rent.

In 1918 the threat of conscription hung over the country and delegates from the parish attended anti-conscription meetings in Ballymote, Tubbercurry and Ballaghaderreen. The Parish Priest of Killoran, Fr. Matt Devine was very much anti-conscription and in April 1918 he led an anti-conscription march through the parish. About two hundred men with many women and children gathered at Killoran and marched four deep with Fr. Matt leading in his sidecar. When they came to the house of a well-known British sympathiser Fr. Matt halted the march and played reels and

jigs on his flute while the marchers danced on the road. When the march reached Coolaney Fr. Matt gave a speech in which he said that he would ensure that any British soldier who came into the parish to enforce conscription would "bite the dust". This anti-conscription movement brought many new members into the Sinn Féin club but when the threat passed they drifted out again. It was at this time also that the long time secretary of the United Irish League in the parish, Pat Gallagher of Creevaun, threw in his lot with the new order and joined the Sinn Féin club.

At this time the Volunteers, later to be known as the I.R.A., were being organised and a parish company was formed. Mike Coleman, son of Michael Coleman, merchant, Coolaney, was captain of the company and other active members were: Tom and Willie Conlon, Jim Lee, Jack and Paul Geoghegan, Mick McDermott, Pat Bradley and Tom Rooney. Two outsiders working in Henry's Pub Coolaney, Ned Cumiskey and Jim Searson, also played a big part in the affairs of the parish company. All private guns in the parish were collected by the Volunteers. These were generally shotguns. Some revolvers and a few rifles were later held by the company.

Eamon Hayes of Co. Clare visited the parish to help organise the Volunteers. He was put in touch with the Dohertys of Carrownabanny by a cousin of theirs in Swinford and they gave him the names of Jim Durkan, blacksmith, Coolaney, Jim Searson of Henry's Pub, Coolaney and the Conlons of Coolaney. Hayes' cover was that of selling insurance and very soon afterwards Willie Conlon of Coolaney appeared as an insurance salesman for the same company. Killoran Sinn Féin club canvassed every townland for the Sinn Féin candidate John Clancy in the 1918 General Election and he defeated the sitting nationalist Thomas Scanlon by a 2 to 1 majority. Tom Rooney was president of Killoran Sinn Féin club in 1918 and John McNulty in 1919. A dance was held in the Market House, Coolaney, in aid of the Killoran Volunteers on March 8th 1918 and another dance was held in November in Patrick McCarrick's house. At this time Frank O'Beirne, Collooney and Frank Carty, Ballinacarrow were active in the organising and training of the parish company of the Volunteers.



Jim Lee, Carrowclooneen, in Volunteer uniform.

A branch of Cumann na mBan was operating in the parish about this time. Among those who were active in it were Brigid Gallagher, Margaret K Conlon, Kathleen, Annie and Nora Lee, the Geoghegan sisters and Winnie Connolly.

Towards the end of 1919 the R.I.C evacuated Coolaney police barracks, which stood where the Garda barracks now stands, and the Volunteers decided to burn it to prevent it being re-occupied. Joe Hunt and Tom Mullarkey were in charge of the burning and an attempt was made to prevent the adjoining market house from being burned by cutting the roof. Martin Dan Gallagher was given this job and was lucky to escape being burned himself when the barracks was prematurely set alight. This burning took place on May 24, 1920.

At the end of May 1920 County Council elections were held. Peter Cawley again stood for election but finished last with an ignominious total of 129 votes. Sinn Féin candidates swept the boards and among those elected to the Tubbercurry Rural District Council was Joe Hunt, Killoran Sinn Féin secretary. Frank Carty, then in Sligo jail, was elected chairman of this council, which then passed the following resolution: "That this Council of the elected representatives of the District Council hereby acknowledges the authority of Dáil Éireann as the duly elected government of the Irish people and undertakes to give effect to all decrees duly promulgated by the said Dáil Éireann." This was part of the general slippage of control away from the British authorities.

Another aspect of this slippage was the setting up of Sinn Féin courts in each parish. On July 7, 1920, at a conference held in the Town Hall, Sligo, parish arbitrators were appointed for these courts. Patrick McGuinness, Peter Henry and Joe Hunt were appointed to Killoran parish court and Michael McDermott was appointed clerk of the court. Also connected with the court were John McNulty, Dan Cunningham and John McDonagh who later became clerk of the court.

At first these were merely arbitration courts to settle land disputes and were not illegal. Soon afterwards Dáil Éireann revised these courts and made attendance compulsory when summonsed. The local volunteers acted as Republican police delivering summons and enforcing judgments. The courts were now illegal and had to be held in different locations around the parish to avoid detection. There seems to have been an increase in petty crime in the area since the R.I.C. had left the village and the Republican courts helped to stamp this out. One problem they faced was that of sentencing. Since they had no jails they had to use some novel punishments. A man from another parish was convicted of burglary by Killoran court and as a sentence he was blindfolded and a revolver discharged past each ear. He was told that if he was seen in the parish again he would be shot. Another man, in a fervour of patriotism decided that he was going to "burn out" every Protestant in the parish and actually did burn some hay. He was convicted by the Republican court and sentenced

to work for eighteen months at Lee's, Carrowclooneen, so that an eye could be kept on him.

In July 1920, an accident occurred in the parish, which caused some excitement. Gerard Hunt, son of the local doctor, was toying with a revolver in Henry's Pub, Coolaney, when the gun went off injuring Pat Davy, an egg dealer from Ballymote. That night the parish company of the I.R.A. "arrested" Hunt and some witnesses to the incident. A court was held and both the injured man and the man responsible signed undertakings that they would not seek compensation from or appear before an English court in connection with the affair. Meanwhile the British forces had heard about the incident and came to investigate. When they could not find Hunt they threatened to shoot Ned Cumiskey but they eventually had to leave empty handed.

Frank Carty from Ballinacarrow had been imprisoned in Sligo jail and plans were made to release him. On the evening of June 26, 1920 he was rescued by the Volunteers. Men from many parts of the county were involved including Jim Lee of Killoran parish. He and a Ballisodare man named Benson took charge of Carty on the outskirts of Sligo town and their task was to get him into hiding on the mountains. Ballisodare bridge was blocked by the British forces but Benson took Carty under the falls on the river, by passing the bridge. Lee took them to Lang's house in Carrownaskeagh . "Little Anthony's" as it is called where Carty remained for some time. Frank Beirne, Harry Brehony Alex McCabe and others also spent some time on the run on the mountainside.

Joe Hunt and Patrick Coleman, District Councillors, were arrested in July 1920 because of the support of the District Council for Dáil Éireann. When Hunt was being arrested his house was searched and a revolver found. He was sentenced to two months in jail.

By September 1920 the anti-Catholic pogrom was in full swing in Belfast and in retaliation goods from Belfast were blacked. A train carrying goods from Belfast was stopped at the iron bridge east of Coolaney and the Belfast goods thrown into the

river. Later, trains were stopped on two occasions at Leyney station and goods from Belfast destroyed by burning wagons.

On September 15, 1920, Coolaney courthouse was set on fire by the I.R.A. and destroyed. A laundry which had not been used for a considerable period and which adjoined the courthouse was also destroyed. The property was owned by Major O'Hara of Annaghmore. About twenty Volunteers from the parish raided Cultibar House, residence of Fred O'Hara, in September 1920. Ned Cumiskey was the leader and they were armed with revolvers, rifles and shotguns. Fred O'Hara was away at the time and the caretaker, a local man, was tied up. The haul of firearms was not as large as expected, only a shotgun, a rifle and some cartridges were found. During the last weekend of September, houses in and around Coolaney were searched by British forces. Some rifles were discovered in a hay barn which belonged to Michael Coleman, Coolaney. The Colemans, Michael senior and junior, were arrested and taken to Sligo prison. Michael junior, was, of course, a member of the I.R.A. Michael senior, who had supported Parnell after the split, was later appointed a magistrate but resigned in protest after the death of Thomas Ashe on hunger strike.

The Gallaghers of Creevaun were suspected of involvement in the Cultibar raid because they worked there and two policemen assisted by about a dozen soldiers raided their house and farm. Pat Gallagher, the former UIL secretary, had hidden his shotgun rather than give it up when the police called to collect all arms earlier. The soldiers found the shotgun and Pat Gallagher and his son, Martin Dan, were taken to Sligo. They were held for two days in the Barracks and were then held for twelve days in the jail. They were then released without any charge being preferred against them. When they returned home about twenty neighbours assembled and helped them to bring in the hay and oats. Later, Fred O'Hara was awarded £190 for damages to his residence during the raid at Sligo Quarter Sessions Court.

Sometime towards the end of 1920 an ambush was prepared to disarm five policemen who it was learned were to travel from Collooney to Coolaney fair on bicycles. Their arms, uniforms and bicycles were to be taken. Frank Carty was in

charge of the ambush, which was laid near Tullaghan. About twenty men, most of them local, took part and each was armed with a rifle or revolver. Orders were not to shoot unless the police opened fire. The police never came. By 1921 the situation in Killoran parish was similar to that in other areas in the country. The police had gone and their barracks was destroyed. The court did not function, the courthouse was burned and the republican courts had taken their place. The elected representatives were Sinn Féin members and the people largely supported Sinn Féin.

The land question was not always kept in the background during these years. The demand for letting in conacre of some of the large grazing farms at reasonable rates was supported by the Volunteers. A group of Volunteers approached a local landowner and insisted that part of his farm be let to locals at a low rent.

On July 11, 1921, the truce came into operation and hostilities ceased on a national scale. The Anglo-Irish Treaty was signed on December 7, 1921. At the end of June 1922, a civil war flared up between those who supported the Treaty, the Free Staters and those who opposed the Treaty, the Republicans. In County Sligo, Frank Carty, Frank O'Beirne and Harry Brehony took the Republican side, Alex McCabe T.D. the Free State side. Most of the active members of the LR.A. in Killoran parish took the Republican side in the civil war.

Collooney town was occupied by Republican forces including Jim Lee, Mike Coleman and Harry Brehony. Jim Lee was Adjutant of the 2nd Battalion, and Brehony was Vice Commandant. Later he was promoted to Vice Brigadier of the 4th Brigade, 3rd Western Division.

On July 13, 1922 Republicans ambushed a party of Free State troops at Dooney Rock on the shore of Lough Gill killing three soldiers. Lee and Brehony were involved in the ambush. Two days later, July 15, the battle of Collooney was fought. General Sean McEoin came from Athlone with a Free State troop train and besieged the town. The Killoran men were in Collooney barracks and they had to evacuate this and take refuge in the Protestant Church. Eventually they had to surrender, partly

because of scarcity of ammunition. The prisoners were taken to Athlone detention centre. Harry Brehony had escaped from Collooney but was captured soon afterwards and taken to Athlone. He soon escaped from there. The Killoran men, Lee and Coleman, were among a group of prisoners transferred to Galway after some trouble in Athlone. After more trouble there they were transferred to the Curragh Camp where they remained until December 1923 when most of the internees were released. They took part in a number of hunger strikes, the longest one of sixteen days to obtain concessions.



Sligo town was evacuated by the Republicans on July 13, 1922 and on July 28, Alex McCabe took Tubbercurry. Ballina was taken on September 12. The Republicans were still in some force in the Sligo area, often taking refuge on the mountainside. Frank Carty, Harry Brehony and Paul Geoghegan were among their leaders. Many skirmishes took place including one near Rathbarran Church. Free State troops were on their way from Sligo to Ballinacarrow to engage some Republican troops. The Republicans advanced towards Coolaney meaning to ambush the Free Staters at Leyney Station but instead the two groups blundered into each other near the church. A short engagement took place and both parties withdrew with no injuries.

Sometime in autumn 1922 the Republicans took out some rails from the railway track at Shancough and forced a railway employee to remove a rail from the track at Knockadoo. In November an attempt was made to repair the line at Shancough by an inspector from Sligo and the local railway gang. Shots were fired from the woods nearby by Carty's men and the attempt was quickly abandoned. On Wednesday, November 15, a special train with a large force of Free State troops armed with rifles and a machine gun came from Sligo and repairs were carried out on the line as far as Tubbercurry.

Paul Geoghegan from the Station House, Coolaney was very active in the Republican cause all over the County. He was one of a party, which included Frank Beirne, Benson from Ballisodare, Doherty from Sligo and Brennan, which ran into a Free State patrol on the main Sligo/Ballina road in the parish of Dromard on September 8, 1922. The Republicans took to the fields but Paul Geoghegan was shot dead. The others in the Republican group crossed the mountains and slept that night in two houses in Carrownabanny. The next day, Sunday, Paul Geoghegan's remains were buried in Killoran graveyard and his comrades formed a firing party at the graveside. On November 22, 1922 his remains were re-interred in the Republican plot, Sligo cemetery.

Harry Brehony frequented the Ox Mountains in the Coolaney area after his escape from Athlone. On a fair day, February 18, 1923 he came into Coolaney after having attended Mass at Rockfield. He slept upstairs in Henry's pub in the town. It seems that Free State soldiers were informed that Brehony was in Coolaney and some lorry loads of soldiers arrived in the town under the command of Captain Jack McCann. There are different versions of what actually happened but they agree on the fact that Brehony was shot dead as he tried to escape by jumping out the upstairs window onto a shed roof. He was either shot by a soldier on the street who spotted him or by a soldier who had been searching the upstairs rooms. Harry Brehony was buried in the Republican plot in Sligo cemetery. He was a very well liked soldier, admired for his dedication and courage and the sense of loss is well portrayed in the song written at the time by Kathleen Lee (Mrs. Mullen.)

Free State soldiers were stationed in Coolaney for some time after this, some in the Station House and others in two houses in the town. On May 24, 1923 the Republican leadership issued a ceasefire order and the resistance to the Free State ceased.

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CONVERSATIONS WITH:

John J. McDonagh

Martin Dan Gallagher.

Sean Lee.

Charles Doherty.

John Harte

Thomas Harrington.

Patrick. Morrin.

Willie Frizzell

Katherine Mullen (nee Lee)

In Memoriam

HARRY BREHONY, Shot in Coolaney, 16th February, 1923.

It was on a Friday evening, As sank the sun to rest,
One of our brave young Irishmen The noblest and the best
Was done to death by armed bands, Whose motto seems to be,
"Shoot down each true Republican Who fights for liberty."

Beloved by all who knew his worth, Kind, generous, bold, and brave,
The life of all his comrades true, He now lies in the grave.
But while his soul's in Heaven above, Why should we weep and sigh?
No coward was he, or no knave, Or ne'er afraid to die.

Shame on the man whose volley slew That brave undaunted man,
Whose mercy oft extended was To England's "Black and Tan."
For kind was he to enemies And merciful to all;
His murder must, and surely will, To Heaven for vengeance call.

But may this thought bring comfort To his mother's aching heart,
"That his soul was pure and stainless When he from this earth did part."
He has died for Ireland's honour, He has died for Ireland's fame;
We will ne'er forget dear Harry, For we love his very name.

And now he lies in hallowed soil Amongst his comrades brave,
Who sleep in death within that plot Denied to hireling slave.
But though his face and laughing eyes On earth no more we'll see,
We hope to meet him in the realms Of blessed Eternity.

KATHLEEN LEE.

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Appendix One

KILLORAN PARISH POPULATION BY TOWN LAND 1841-1911

Townland	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
Ballinvally	81	52	48	49	49	40	36	36
Cabragh	127	106	113	90	85	72	62	47
Cappagh	139	104	136	134	109	87	64	45
Carha	182	70	84	78	88	45	44	60
Carrowclooneen	48	33	43	48	42	25	28	27
Carrowgavneen	142	121	140	113	119	108	102	80
Carrow nabanny	101	60	36	59	46	31	38	21
Carrownacarrick	96	115	115	92	75	57	50	47
Carrow nagleragh	52	31	21	14	20	13	15	21
Carrow naskeagh	84	18	20	30	24	6	6	13
Carrow natewaun	51	31	13	12	20	26	25	11
Carrow nleam	101	66	52	35	23	25	23	26
Carrow nloughan	92	67	72	77	73	63	59	51
Coolaney (Rural)	200	70	59	46	41	43	43	48
Creevaun	135	89	72	69	61	64	53	41
Deenodes	138	80	59	52	64	62	23	30
Gortakeeran	225	76	96	84	83	93	76	55
Halfquarter	56	23	27	6	6	5	5	8
Killoran Nt.	96	53	48	76	87	63	53	45
Killoran St.	42	24	47	23	35	21	18	28
Knockadoo	288	168	151	130	171	144	124	107
Knockatotaun	61	37	31	32	14	19	21	19
Lissalough	124	58	53	47	37	51	44	25
Moynlough	159	116	100	88	74	49	47	78
Rathbarran	162	161	164	148	118	97	76	74
Rathmactiernan	110	51	30	36	27	34	15	27
Rathmore	30	15	14	14	11	10	12	8
Rathosey	202	167	152	117	94	94	96	100
Rockfield	89	170	62	39	38	31	37	32
Seevness	123	85	75	74	74	65	65	63
Shancough	128	95	74	57	63	56	44	34
Coolaney Town	380	326	297	239	221	194	164	172
Parish Total	4044	2638	2494	2208	2092	1783	1558	1479

Appendix Two

LOCAL CURES

The following are some of the old cures used in the parish of Killoran, which were collected by the Folklore Commission in the 1930's.

MEASLES: Boil nettle-roots and give the soup to the sick person.

MUMPS: Put a donkey's halter on the sick person and lead them to a spring to drink.

WARTS: (1) Take a piece of bacon from the neighbour's house without his knowledge and bury it in the manure pit to rot. As soon as it rotted the warts disappeared. (2) Wash the warts seven times in water in which potatoes have been boiled. (3) Get water from a hollow in a stone and make the sign of the cross three times with it on the warts. In three days the warts will have disappeared.

(4) Rub a black snail on the warts and then hang the snail on a whitethorn bush to wither. As the snail withered away so did the warts.

(5) Boil a white rabbit in hare's blood and give the soup to a ferret. As soon as the ferret drank the soup the warts disappeared.

RING-WORM: (1) A seventh son had the cure for this.

(2) Boil laurel leaves and rub these on the affected parts and in nine days the person was healed.

WHOOPIING COUGH: (1) Put the afflicted person three times under an asses foal that has never been ridden. Give him some of the asses milk to drink.

(2) If a person meets a man riding on a white horse and asks for a cure for the whooping cough then whatever the rider recommends is usually effective.

(3) If the sick person eats some food left over by a ferret then he will be cured.

(4) Boil mountain sage with water and sugar. Take it three times a day when cold.

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