



Cumann Oidhreachtá Éanach Dhuín

Annaghdown Heritage Society

FREE

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FÁILTE

Cuirimid fáilte roimh chách chuig an eagrán seo den nuachtlitir. The first six months of 2021 have continued to prove challenging for us all. However, we believe that brighter days are coming. While the need for social distancing has prevented members of the Heritage Society from meeting in person, some significant positive outcomes of such restrictions have included the opportunity for people from many parts of the world, with diverse interests to meet on-line, exchange ideas and renew or make new acquaintances. Hopefully, these interactions will continue when regular events resume.

We've had four online presentations since Christmas, most of which were co-hosted with Donaghpatrick-Kilcoona Heritage Society. In January, Brendan McGowan from the Galway Museum spoke on 'The War of Independence in Galway: The Kilroe Ambush and Crown Force Reprisals'. He also gave a presentation in April entitled 'Headford's Louis D'Arcy, 'The Michael Collins of the West''. In March, Dr Yvonne McDermott from GMT Castlebar spoke on 'The Franciscans in the West'. Most recently, in June, our Secretary Irene McGoldrick gave a presentation entitled 'The Mills of Drumgriffin and Cregg'. All presentations concluded with lively discussion by participants from across the world. Irene's audience included several members of the Mills and Millers of Ireland Society who invited participants to their own upcoming on-line presentation in July. Her talk is available on our YouTube channel.

Members of the Society continue to progress several projects of local community heritage. Some are nearing completion while others are ongoing. Our Townlands project has been recently completed and details of the final few townlands have been posted on our webpage, as have several other articles of interest.

Work on the transcription of headstones for Annaghdown Abbey and Corrandulla Cemetery is completed, while the survey of Annaghdown Old Cemetery is ongoing. A map of the graves in Corrandulla Cemetery is near completion, and a booklet of inscriptions will be published soon. It is hoped that the headstone data will be added to that already compiled by Galway County Council.

This issue of our newsletter has reverted to the traditional format of four pages and focusses on the Mills of Drumgriffin and Cregg by Irene McGoldrick. We would encourage all to put pen to paper (or perhaps, press the keys on a laptop) and contribute to future editions.

One hundred years ago, Ireland faced an uncertain future. People were full of hope for better times but also endured



Figure 1. The three mills on the Cregg River, in the townlands of Auclogheen and Drumgriffin, shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map (c. 1838). Note the several divides in the river, with a stream supplying wheels on each side of the present mill building.

many hardships and setbacks. The same could be said of Ireland today in these Covid times. We have spent some of our time in the past six months looking back a hundred years. One wonders what people will think of our present challenges when they look back a hundred years in 2121!

THE MILLS OF CREGG AND DRUMGRIFFIN

Irene McGoldrick

We are all familiar with the beautiful imposing Cregg Mill building, a landmark in our parish, which has been carefully maintained and occupied up to the present day. However, at one time, this was just one of three mills in a milling complex on the Cregg River, demonstrating a rich history in milling in this area spanning at least the last four centuries. The building we call 'Cregg Mill' today was originally known as Drumgriffin Mill, with the original Cregg Mill across the river in Auclogheen on the Cregg Estate, and the Auclogheen Mill across the road.

Milling in Annaghdown Parish is first recorded in the

Books of Survey and Distribution, where Andrew Kirwan is listed in 1641 as the proprietor of a 'Grist Mill & Tucking Mill under one Rooofe' in Craigebulline Cooley (now Cregg townland). There are only 15 mills listed in Co. Galway in this period with most described as 'Mill' or 'Little Mill'. There is only one other grist mill recorded in the county, and only three corn mills. Grist mills ground cereals into flour and tuck mills were a step in the process of woollen cloth making.

Subsequent to the Cromwellian transplantation, the land held by Andrew Kirwan was granted to John Briggs. Briggs was associated with a Cromwellian soldier, Thomas Sadlier, Governor of Galway in 1650, who was granted lands including Carraghy and Slievefin neighbouring Cregg, as well as Jordan's Island on the River Corrib in Galway City, which John O'Donovan describes as being associated with an Anabaptist community since Cromwellian times.

It is unclear how the Kirwans, as Catholics, managed to retain their interest in Cregg. The Registry of Deeds records begin in 1708 so it is possible that whatever transactions took place pre-dated this or simply weren't recorded. Regardless, the Kirwans remained as landlords of Cregg until the mid 1820's. Richard Kirwan, second son of Martin Kirwan and Mary French, came into possession of Cregg on the death of his elder brother Patrick, a celebrated swordsman, who was killed in a duel outside a coffee shop in Dublin in 1755. At the time, Richard was a Jesuit novice in Poitiers, France and he struggled with the idea of leaving his studies and taking up the responsibilities of managing an estate. In the end, he left the novitiate to take over the estate. While he did spend time in Cregg, he resided with the family of his wife, Anne Blake, in Menlo, and subsequent to her death, spent time in London before settling in Cavendish Row in Dublin.

In 1768, Richard granted Knockdoe to his brother Andrew, with the proviso 'further that he and they shall grind his and their corn and Mill his and their cloth at the Mill of Cregg aforesaid upon the like penalty of five shillings ster for every grinding or piece of cloth he or they shall grind at any other Mill.'

The Registry of Deeds records are complex and difficult to navigate, and not all deeds were recorded. The next mention of Cregg Mills is a 1789 deed in which Richard Kirwan leased 'the Corn and Tuck Mill of Cregg with the Mill Plott water course, and the piece of Reclaimed Bogg called Moneen Mearg with the Mill Plott on one Side and the large Drain Cutt on one side on the Ash Grove opposite the Gardens of Cregg on the other side together with an acre of Ground in Auhclogen in as full and ample a manner as the same was formerly Held by the late Walter Burke of Cregg aforesaid deced. Yearly rent £31 for 41 years.'

In the same year, Paul Gannon, a Miller from Galway city, mortgaged one moiety or half of Drumgriffin Mill with Ross Maguire of Allied Bank (along with other properties in Galway City) for a period of twenty seven months for consideration of £326-12-0. Auclogheen Mill is not referred to in either deed but as the Townland of Carranriagh was listed with Andrew Kirwan as proprietor, it is likely that it was leased by the Burkes at this time, if it was in existence.

Moving on to the Drumgriffin Mill, the Journal of the



Figure 2. Cregg Mill in 2020. Photo: Cian Brassil

House of Commons lists Drumgriffin Mills as the largest producer of flour in County Galway in 1783, under the ownership of Richard Hickman & Co. Richard Hickman was from Newpark in County Clare and this document provides the earliest confirmation of the existence of the mills found to date, pre-dating Paul Gannon's 1789 deed. Paul Gannon and Richard Hickman were certainly associates. Paul Gannon reported in the *Dublin Evening Post* in October 1789 that his partner in the Flour Mills of Drumgriffin - William Robinson - had served him with notice of his intention to sell his part of the mill, and Gannon's intention to purchase this, and set off his own House and Mill in order to reside in Drumgriffin. His own house and Mill were Captain Eyre's Mill, which he had leased from Richard Hickman.

Hely Dutton compiled a Statistical and Agricultural Survey of County Galway in 1824, with a chapter dedicated to milling. His interest was mostly in the city of Galway and John O'Donovan held his work in disdain, describing Dutton as 'a helter skelter Irish writer, who has not the organ of order very prominent in his pericranium' and resolving to send back the book, deemed not worth carrying. Dutton does mention twelve flour mills in County Galway at the time. Cullen (1977) found Dutton's assertion that before 1790 there were only two mills in the town to be incorrect. Dutton told of a Mr Waddleworth, who built the first flour mill in Galway some 40 years prior to 1824, had his mill burnt and was run out of the town by the local bakers. An interesting notice appeared in the *Dublin Evening Post* in 1779 where the General Insurance Company of Ireland offered a reward of one hundred guineas to the person who discovered and prosecuted the person or persons who intentionally set fire to the Flour Mills of Galway, with Richard Hickman offering a further reward of thirty guineas. While conjecture, it may well be that Richard Hickman was the miller held in such contempt by the Galway Bakers in Dutton's survey.

The townland of Drumgriffin, amongst others in the area, was purchased by Marcus French and James Skerrett in 1675 from the Honorable George Legge. George was a son of Colonel William Legge who obtained these lands through an Act of Settlement subsequent to the Cromwellian Transplantations. The land was previously held by Sir Roebuck Lynch. In 1795, the same Ross Maguire with whom Paul Gannon mortgaged Cregg Mill, granted one moiety of Drumgriffin Mill to William Robinson. In 1814 a Michael

Rooney leased the mill 'lately held by Wm Robinson' from James Blake of Cregg. The Blakes, originally residing in Mace Castle had been steadily growing their estate in this area during this period and had leased the Cregg Estate from the Kirwans with James Blake styled 'of Cregg' in a 1795 lease. In 1820 Drumgriffin Mill was leased to Francis Brennan and Patrick Wade. As of yet, no mention of Aucloggeen Mill is found in the Memorial Deeds.

In 1820 Francis Blake leased the mills of Drumgriffin to Francis Brennan of Cregg Mills, Miller, for the natural lives of Francis Brennan and Patrick Wade, eldest son of Philip Wade of Windfield Mills, miller, and Philip Duignan of Kilnacapp near Creggs, farmer, at the yearly rent of £60, with a covenant attached dated 1823 that the life of Anne Brennan, wife of the lessee be inserted instead of Philip Duignan who had since died.

The island of Islandsellagh is referenced both in the above deed and the 1834 marriage articles of Patrick Wade and Maria O'Farrell where the following description of the holding appears: 'All the dwelling house, out office and flour mills of Drumgriffin with the water and watercourses to and from said mills, the mill dams, building yards, gardens and appurtenances thereto belonging two small parks adjoining the garden west thereof and the island of Islandsellagh North of said mills'. On the OSI 6-inch maps an island appears to the north of the mills, in between two bodies of water running to the mills at the time. This land has since dried out with only a direct body in the form of the River Cregg remaining.

The Mills of Aucloggeen and Cregg are no longer in existence and this can be traced back to two unfortunate fires on the premises. On 9 June 1834 the Freeman's Journal reported that 'the extensive mills of Cregg in the vicinity of this town, the property of Patrick Wade Esq., were burned to the ground. We understand the accident arose from the stones of the mill coming in contact one with the other, the miller neglecting to keep a proper supply of grain in the hopper. We have heard the amount of property destroyed by the raging element is estimated at 2000*l*. We regret to add the concerns were not insured [sic] - The fire continued with great violence during Saturday night and Sunday'.

A second fire was reported by the Freeman's Journal on 8 November 1853 where a mill belonging to Mr Wade was totally consumed and property to a large amount destroyed. The Tuam Herald, in reporting the same incident on 12 November 1853 also stated that the premises, once again, was not insured. The destruction of the mills must have been huge incidents locally, with the fires seen for miles around, and it is strange that no trace of the fires seems to survive in local folklore.

While the newspaper account describes the mills as 'Cregg' in the reports of the fire without differentiating which mills they were, the house books of 1845 give excellent descriptions of the mills. The smaller mill at Aucloggeen to the north of the road is absent, and the larger one, referred to in the records as Cregg Mill, was burned in 1853.

The house books describe the mills in the area with great detail as can be seen from the table below. Kilroe and Drumgriffin appear to have been similar in form and func-

tion, Cregg was a sizeable mill and Bunatober Mill was a much smaller operation.

Two other documents reference Patrick Wade's tenure - an 1847 document of local applotments prepared by Thomas Browne where Wade held a mill and offices in Drumgriffin worth £33, and land, mills and offices in Aucloggeen worth £11-5-0. Griffiths Valuation in 1855 shows Patrick Wade holding a house, office, flour mill and land in Drumgriffin, valued at £26-15-0 from Francis Blake. He also held an office and land in Aucloggeen from Pierce Joyce valued at £9-0-0.

Patrick Wade died in 1876 following a fall from a horse. His interests were inherited by his son Harward, and at some point in the following years the mill fell into disuse. James Blake had held the Mill and Mill Plot up until 1874 when a deed of assignment of mortgage showed Pierce Joyce and Robert Charles French lending James Blake £16525 out of trust. Pierce Joyce Snr, as owner of the lands, intended to sell land adjoining Wade's, and Harward Wade accosted Pierce Joyce Jnr in May 1883 in Eyre Square, telling him that there would be 'open murder' if anyone else got the land. As a result of this encounter, Pierce Joyce had Harward arrested and he spent a month imprisoned with hard labour in Galway Gaol. During this time, Harward also lost his right to bear arms from the Lord Lieutenant.

Just why milling ceased in Drumgriffin, in the period between Patrick Wade's death and its resumption in 1919 remains unclear. In May 1919, the Galway Express advertised the sale of 850 shares in Harward Wade, Son & Company Ltd., set up for the purpose of the resumption of milling in Drumgriffin Mill. The directors were E. Kenny, Harward Wade, Mary E Wade, Rev Patrick Nicholson C.C., Rev John O'Malley P.P., James Kenny and John Sharkey, with the Secretary in Office being Michael Canavan. Several directors were relatives of Jane Kenny, Harward's wife.

The attempts to resume milling in Drumgriffin were met with great fanfare, with a Tuam Herald article in 1919 praising the efforts, stating that the present Mr Wade's father sent his goods all over the provinces. At the time of resumption, flour was not produced, only oatmeal and wholemeal. In 1932 a petition by 13 shareholders to wind up the company was refused. In 1935 on the amended petition of Francis Brennan Wade, it was ordered that the company be wound up. Legal wrangling ensued with Edward Kenny appearing in the High Court in Dublin in 1938 saying that it was monstrous to sell the mill in its current condition. This appeal was dismissed with costs. In 1940 the Tuam Herald reported that Cregg Mills was an estate being administered by the court for many years. Francis Brennan Wade, was pursuing a petition looking for £200 for machinery, costs and a final order. The Circuit Court granted £80 to Jane Wade and ordered the liquidator to hand over possession of Cregg Mills to her. Cregg Mills hit the newspapers again in 1953 when it was used as an office for the ESB's Rural Electrification Scheme. Following the death of Francis Brennan Wade in 1972, the mill building was sold and restored, and has been inhabited by a number of private owners since then. This beautiful building remains a wonderful living landmark of Annaghdown heritage.

	Drumgriffin	Cregg	Kilroe	Bunatober
Owner	Patrick Wade Esq.	Patrick Wade Esq.	John Gunning	Simon Furey
Mill Type	Double Flour Mill	Corn Mill	Double Flour Mill	Corn Mill
Size (ft.)	L66 B26 H37	L57 B22 H26	L63 B26 H34	L17.6 B18 H8.6
Diam. of Wheel	11 ft	12ft	14ft	11ft
Breadth of Wheel	2ft 5in	4ft	4ft	1ft 6in
Depth of Shrouding	1ft 6in	1ft 6in	1ft 3in	1ft
No of Buckets	32	24	32	28
Fall of Water	4ft	4ft	4ft 6in	2ft 6in
Stones	2 pairs grinding stones, one for shilling, diam 4ft 6in each	1 pair grinding stones, 1 pair shilling, diam 4ft 6 in each	2 pairs grinding stones, diam 4ft 9in	1 pair grinding stones, diam 4ft 6in used for shilling
Quality Letter of Machinery	B	B	Bx	C
Revolutions per Minute	20	N/A	N/A	N/A
Section of Trough	4ft 6 x 2ft 6	4ft 6 x 2ft 6	4ft x 2ft 6	1ft 9 x 2ft
Fans	4	2	N/A	N/A
Sets of Elevations	4	3	2	N/A
Operation	Whole year round, day and night	6 months in the year, 14 hours per day	About 1 month in the year for the people in the neighbourhood, 16 hours per day, one wheel out of order	Works chiefly for the neighbours 4 months in the year, 12 hours a day
Notes	Both wheels of similar dimensions	1 sifter This Mill was burned on Friday Nov 4th '53	The two wheels were of similar dimension	N/A

Table I. Overview of mill descriptions from Valuation Office records



Figure 3. Franciscan Boys' School, Corrandulla, year unknown. Many thanks to Noreen King for this photo. Please get in touch with us if you can name anybody!