

QUAIRE





Contents:

4-9	A feature on Our Lady's College, Gort. Brendan Long writes on the history of the College, Sean Devlin and Joe Lambert trace the development of hurling in the College and Anthony Brennan writes on Fr. C. Burke.	Page 24	Youth Club report.
10-11	Colette Griffin takes a look at Gort from afar.	Page 25	The Credit Union in Gort - Edel Cunningham.
12-13	A report on the A.G.M. of Gort Golf Club.	Page 26	Egit Pleb - a humorous contribution from Geraldine Killeen.
14	Fr. P. Carroll pays a tribute to Joe McInerney the former Secretary of Gort Golf Club.	Page 27	Some Home Cures - Una Burke.
15	The Autograph Tree in Coole Park.	Page 28-29	News from Kilmacduagh - Noel Finnegan, Martin Connolly and Billy Glynn.
16	Fionnuala English takes a look at Fashion trends.	Page 30-31	Gort Macra na Feirme - Paddy Moloney.
17	The Fairy Fort in Glenbrack - John Spelman.	Page 32	Gort Bridge Club - Our Bridge Correspondent.
18-19	Peadar Ó Conaire writes on Máire Ní Eidhin 'The Enchanting Beauty'.	Page 33	Songs - Martina Walsh.
20	First Aid in Gort - Joe Roche.	Page 34-35	The inimitable W.M. Quinn writes on 'ASSES'.
21-22	Out and About.		
23	Kiltartan Notes.		

Cover: A view of the historic Thoor Ballylee.

Special thanks to Claire Quinn, Geraldine Killeen (Corofin), Catherine English and Margaret Boland for their help in preparing the presentation of this magazine.



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Guaire is an independent magazine about Gort.

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After two issues perhaps the time is appropriate to discuss what this magazine, Guaire is trying to do. Three ideas immediately spring to mind:

- 1) To mirror what is happening in the parish of Gort - to bring together the different strands at work in the locality.

History is also relevant here. Guaire is not a historical magazine, but from time to time it will delve into the past. "He who knows not the past cannot understand the present work for the future". History has a place in all our make up.

Freedom of speech is essential to any community. Within the bounds of charity and justice this magazine will always vigorously defend the right to freedom of speech.

You will not always agree with everything written in this magazine. This is your privilege. But if you have something to say, some axe to grind or corrections to make why not write to us. We cannot ask everyone individually to write but if you feel you have a point to make, why not step out from behind the shadows.

Old stories, old photographs will be particularly welcomed. Our next issue will come in early summer. Why not start putting your thoughts together now.

Guimid lá le Pádraig sona sásta dár léitheoirí ar fad sa mbaile agus i gcéin.

On Friday 23rd March at 8.15 p.m. in the Convent of Mercy Gymnasium, Gort Youth Club invite you to the following programme:

- 1) Best Overall Speaker of Youth Club Debate
  - a) That the Irish are a drunken race - Speaker Frankie Conway.
  - b) That the world is gone sport mad - Speaker Carmel Cahill.
  - c) That we live in a violent age - Speaker Elizabeth Joyce.
  - d) That God is dead - Speaker Kathleen O'Regan.

- 2) To glance back into the past and show readers that this past is one Gort can be proud of.

- 3) To provide a constructive forum on the issues important to Gort's future - employment, youth and amenities.

Guaire would hope to educate inform and entertain its readers. There are difficulties. It is of course not possible, on this side of eternity, to please all the people all of the time. One can only try.

For instance there are over 1,000 young people attending schools in Gort. Everyone will surely agree that a special effort must be made to cater for this audience. A little tolerance from all sides for the different viewpoints expressed will not go astray.



- 2) Concert Items performed by Youth Club Singing Group.

- 3) Youth Club Debate Final: Convent of Mercy Boarders v Church St.

**Convent Team:** Margaret Boland, Margaret Purcell, Aideen Fahy.

**Church St. Team:** Jarlath McInerney, Bernadette Fennessy and Declan Spelman.

**Adjudicators:** Seosamh Mac Eoin, Seamas O'Malley and a female adjudicator.

Trophies for the Debating Competition were kindly donated by Tony O'Connor, George's St.

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# Our Lady's College

Breandán Long

On the Ennis Road, on the way from the town of Gort is situated probably one of the most striking buildings in the town. Its design is modern. The large windows allow the light to enter revealing the halls within. Its layout is symmetrical. One room is exactly another each following each in a definite pattern. It was

Bridge St. became no longer adequate to cope with the ever increasing numbers.

A new school was definitely needed. Eventually a six-acre site was acquired on the Ennis Road. Belmont Lodge, a small house, once the residence of the Shanaglish curate stood there. It was demolished. A government grant was

fire and determination of Fr. Burke, the founder. Christmas day 1977 marked an event which, although we should have expected, we never really believed would happen. The man for whom everyone had acquired such admiration lived no longer.

Following the death of Fr. Burke, Fr. Carney was appointed President.



Our Lady's College to-day.

with a view to providing the modern student with all the facilities necessary for success in a very competitive world.

## HUMBLE BEGINNINGS

This college had its beginning in humble surroundings. In May of 1956 Fr. Conway P.P. Kilbeacanty referred to the Bishop, Most Rev. Michael Browne that a school be built in Lahiffe's house, Bridge St., was available. In August of the same year Father C. Burke was appointed President. The school was known as Our Lady's College. It was also taught at the very beginning. Thirty nine students were on the first year.

The school gradually progressed. Fr. Carney, Father Healy and Fr. Devlin were added to the teaching staff. However, the house in

made available for the construction. No money was collected from the people of the town; the funds were helped by contributions from the salaries of the priests working in the College. The work was begun with the McNamaras of Lisdoonvarna as the contractors. Mr. Jeffers was the architect.

## SUCCESSSES

On September 15 the school was blessed by Dr. Browne. It contains twelve class halls, an assembly hall, and basket ball and volley ball courts at the back. At the present 196 students are attending the school. Even since its beginning the school has had a remarkable success rate both on the academic field and on the sports field. This success can be attributed to the excellent staff of teachers in the school and also to the

The school has continued its successes.

## DEBATES

In 1978/79 the college has added a new dimension to its activities. The new team has had many impressive showings already. It is the debating team which consists of Martin Cormican, Jarlath McInerney, Albert Moylan and John Fahy. There is a great interest in the debates among the lads as was shown in the last debate against Seamount College. Whether their intellectual passions have been aroused or not it is hard to say.

It would be no exaggeration to say that the college is one of the great institutions of the town. The people of Gort and of the surrounding areas are very proud of it. So too the students know that they belong to one of the best schools in the West.



# Hurling in our Lady's

Sean Devlin and Joe Lambert



As befitting a school in a hurling area, Our Lady's College, founded in 1956 has always been interested in the promotion of the game. In latter years the school has enjoyed some measure of success on the field but it was not always so. The early years were ones of disappointment and frustration, particularly for those students who trained each afternoon and cycled home in all weather and reaping no reward for their efforts. Many reasons may be advanced for this lack of success, small panels, lack of tradition and the absolute dominance of St. Mary's, Galway in the late 50's and through the 60's. However despite lack of team success the school did produce some really outstanding hurlers during this lean period. Names like Marty McGrath, Michael Regan, Padraic Niland, Michael Bond, John Fawl, Ray Canning and Austin Costello spring readily to mind.

## FIRST SUCCESSES

Due to its achievements during the last decade the school can now lay claim to a strong tradition in Connacht Colleges hurling. The corner stone of this tradition was laid in the Spring of 1967 by the team which won the Senior B Championship, captained by Fr. Michael Brennan. Some at the time may have thought this win to be of little consequence but its importance was underlined in the following two years. In 1968, the school won its first Junior Championship in the premier division, by defeating St. Mary's by a large margin. Gort stalwarts Pat Burke and Gerry Fahy contributed a combined total of 4-3 on that occasion.

In 1969, the same team, now Seniors, were determined to prove that what they had accomplished as a Junior team, they could repeat as Senior. Again they succeeded in reaching the final, again the opposition was St. Mary's. Despite conceding a soft early goal and giving their supporters several anxious moments they recorded a truly outstanding victory on that memorable day. The team that day read: P. Walsh (Gort), J. Regan (do.), M. Downey (do.) Capt., P. Murray (Ardrahan), Michael Donoghur (Ardrahan), John Donoghue (Tubber), G. Staunton (Kinvara), M. Cunningham (Ardrahan), G. Fahy (Gort), P. Burke (Gort), M. O'Connor (Tubber), M. Cahill (Gort), B. Forde (Kinvara), Martin

Donoghue (Ardrahan), B. Brennan (Gort), Subs: O'Forde (Gort), E. O'Connor (Tubber), M. O'Keane (Kinvara), G. Flaherty (Gort). Referee was Fr. C. Walshe.

Playing on the defeated St. Mary's team on that day was Francis Fahy (Kilbeacanty). Success breeds confidence, and a few weeks later the Junior team, backboned by Brian Brennan Brendan Forde, Michael Donoghue and a youthful Enda O'Connor, retained the junior cup, defeating Athenry by one point in the decider. Many say that this was the best game of hurling ever played by Brian Brennan.

## 4 IN A ROW

Success eluded Our Lady's at Senior level for the next two years but in 1972 saw the beginning of the most outstanding era in the school's history. From 1972-1975 the school won 4 Connacht Senior titles defeating St. Mary's for the first three and Athenry for the 4th. Those close to the teams have many fond memories of that period. John Conneely proudly relates his daring, in laying "a considerable wager" on the team during the '74 final when with five minutes remaining Our Lady's were four points in arrears. Others recall broken resolutions as packets of 20's went up in smoke during the course of these tense finals. The goal by Pat O'Connor in the '74 final while St. Mary's were still celebrating, what they must have felt was their decisive score.



Comparisons of teams prove odious to many, but few would disagree with the view that the College's outstanding hours were during the All-Ireland series of 1973. Having travelled more in hope than in confidence to Limerick to take on the Munster Champions, Farrenferrius of Cork, the team produced, what everyone considers the most inspired hours hurling by a college team. It was a faultless performance by all, from Kevin Fahy in gaol, to Noel Lane at left full forward.

## PAT O'CONNOR

But we may be excused in mentioning one player particularly for his contribution during the hour. Pat O'Connor, playing at wing forward, won rare notices from all journalists present. His contribution of 3-6 out of a winning total of 4-6 speaks for itself. However it was by no means a one man band. Kevin Fahy was outstanding in goals, Gerard Curtin and Gerard Murphy kept in check a full forward line, which included Tadhg Murphy, the outstanding forward in Munster Colleges hurling that year. Declan Brogan completely dominated his own 40 yard line. "Red" Curtin gave an exhibition of sideline cutting which was a joy to behold. Pat O'Connors work up front was ably supported by the other forwards, A. Connolly, A. Brennan, Pat Lane and Noel Lane.



1969 team was the first to win Connacht Colleges Senior Championship.

Back row from left: B. Brennan, M. Keane, G. Flaherty, P. Murray, G. Fahy, P. Burke, J. Regan, P. Walsh and M. Donoghue.  
Middle row: J. Donoghue, M.

Donoghue, E. O'Connor, G. Staunton, M. Downey (Capt.), M. O'Connor, M. Cahill and O. Forde.  
Front row: M. Cunningham and B. Forde.



The team again did themselves well in drawing the All Ireland against St. Peters, Wexford, but were well beaten in the replay. However they had made a significant breakthrough in proving that eight teams could win outside province. Athenry again proved when reaching the All-Ireland in 1977.

**FR. BURKE**

No article on Our Lady's College would be complete without mentioning the contribution of Fr. C. Burke. Those who had the privilege of knowing him are aware of his happy knack of getting boys to give of their best. Townspeople of Gort, will fondly remember the arresting sight, in days of more

tolerant law enforcement, of the school team plus subs being loaded and transported to venues in his trusty Commer van. This was in the days when success eluded the teams, but who can say that these players have not fonder memories than have others who reaped success on the fields of play.  
Hurling in the Gort area owes a large debt to Fr. Burke. May he rest in peace.



The three hurling captains for 1978-79: Under 15 Joe Beirne, Junior Frank Shaw and Senior Noel Earlie.



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# FORMER TEACHER

Anthony Brennan

Back in the carefree and twilight  
 /s of childhood one of the names  
 d to dissuade us from mischief was  
 Burke's. "Wait until Fr. Burke  
 s you, he'll straighten you out".  
 my child's imagination he took on  
 role of an avenging Fury, made  
 re ominous by the addition of  
 t, his pet labrador. When the time  
 College arrived, I was caught  
 ween a desire to go and yet a fear,  
 t having been found guilty of evil  
 ys my time of punishment had  
 ne. Fortunately my misdeeds were  
 cknown to Fr. Burke, I had come  
 the college with a clean slate.

Fr. Burke had contact with us in  
 ny different capacities, as priest,  
 ministrator, disciplinarian and  
 ntor; for me, his greatest influence  
 l my biggest debt to him lay in his  
 lities as a teacher. Then at the end  
 a long teaching career, he was  
 h witty and enthusiastic.

## HIS GIFTS

In my first year he taught Civics.  
 always amazed me how he  
 ceeded in holding the attention of  
 e class on parliamentary  
 titutions and their functions, who  
 nutes before on the playground  
 raved like an ungovernable mob,  
 troubled by society and defying all  
 trictions. Yet he opened our  
 nds and induced a spirit of enquiry  
 o what seemed at the time the  
 st humdrum subjects. He  
 tinually related his subjects to life  
 l even a topic like the budget was  
 de interesting by treating its  
 ader implications.

"One can assess a country," he  
 d, "by the amount of money it is  
 pared to spend on Education,  
 fence and social problems". He  
 s deeply aware of the need for law



*The original Our Lady's College  
 founded by Fr. Burke.*

and order, of the necessity of  
 Government not from the view of  
 political rivalry but because of the  
 life it made possible. He was deeply  
 grieved when parliamentary  
 institutions were abused or misused.  
 The burning of the British Embassy  
 in Dublin was such an occasion, the  
 barbarity of that action upset him  
 very much as he considered it one of  
 the worst insults one people could  
 inflict on another.

## INSIGHTS

The following year he taught a  
 Christian Doctrine course and in  
 particular opened up his appreciation  
 and understanding of the Old  
 Testament world. Not only had he  
 succeeded in gaining many deep  
 insights through constant reading of  
 that great book but also from  
 travelling widely in the Holy Land.  
 As a result he had captured both the  
 spirit and traditions of the countries  
 where christianity was born.

Reading through the story of  
 creation in the book of Genesis, he  
 would stop to emphasise certain

words and images, especially the  
 image of light. Repeating the phrase  
 "and then there was light", he would  
 lean against the wall, close his eyes  
 and wrinkle his brow, "Listen" he  
 would say as if out of patience with  
 our dull faces "You will not find  
 many sentences containing the depth  
 of thought that this image conveys".  
 He would then, proceed to outline  
 the meaning behind the image. Set in  
 such a contagious atmosphere one  
 could not but appreciate its power  
 and sublimity.

## ANCIENT WORLD

His mastery of the christian  
 tradition was rivaled by his  
 knowledge of the ancient Greeks and  
 Romans. At the time both Latin and  
 Greek were losing their status on the  
 school curriculum, as subject were  
 chosen from the criteria of utility  
 rather than for their intrinsic value.  
 Fr. Burke had no doubts about the  
 importance of the classics both, as a  
 proven method over the centuries of  
 training the mind and also since so  
 many of our political institutions,

literary genres and arts had their  
 roots in the ancient world — for the  
 broad perspective it opened to its  
 students.

Few of his pupils will forget his  
 sonorous voice urging them to pay  
 special attention to the ablatives  
 absolutes or enthusiastically  
 translating a passage from Caesars  
 Gallic wars. All were spellbound as  
 he outlined the vanities, ambitions  
 and eventual decline of the ancients  
 and as he drew comparison with the  
 modern world one came to  
 appreciate the significance and  
 greatness of Greece and Rome.

Indeed, we did not always  
 appreciate or understand him and  
 many times failed to give the effort  
 needed to reap the full benefit of the  
 worlds and systems he opened to us.

Yet he was not deterred and  
 remained committed to developing his  
 students potential by setting them  
 standards which he through effort  
 and discipline had made part of  
 himself. Even the most unreceptive  
 could not but be thankful for the  
 opportunity of beholding a man who  
 vitalized so well the words and ideas  
 from the printed page.

## ALL ROUNDER

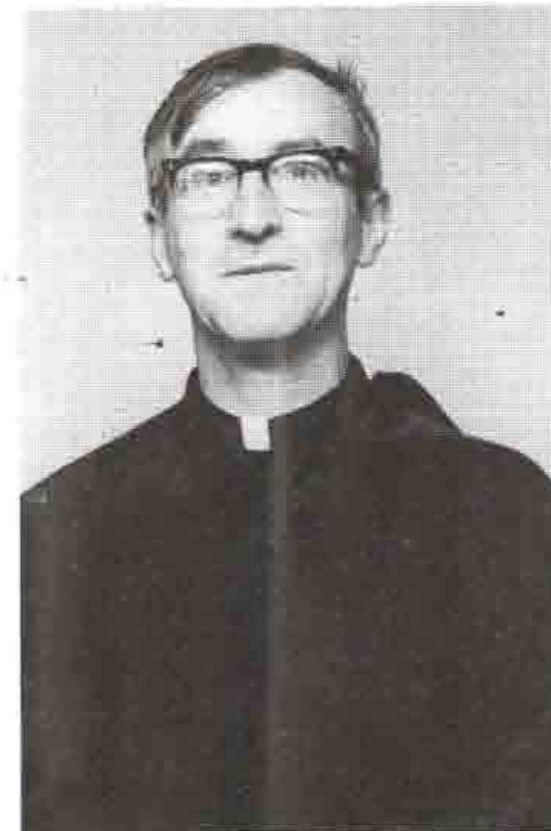
A man of balance, Canon Burke  
 combined a breath of learning with a  
 practical awareness, as accustomed  
 to the feel of wrench and screwdriver  
 as to the feel of pen on paper at one  
 moment discussing his enjoyment of  
 Dean Swift's wrappings and at another  
 fixing broken chairs and tables.  
 Highly skilled in mind and hands he

was both a craftsman and academic.  
 A man of standards, he upheld  
 timeless values, not based on any  
 private whim but rather what  
 experience proved were necessary for  
 mans health and happiness. In  
 pointing to supernatural values, in  
 praising what was well made, in  
 seeking for the good, he  
 distinguished himself as an educator,  
 a man of religion and left a priceless  
 legacy for his pupils.

For a man who contributed so  
 much we are grateful and may  
 appropriately apply to him the words  
 of Adlai E. Stevenson:

"He would rather light candles than  
 curse the darkness,

And his glow has warmed the  
 world".



*To-day's President Fr. Michael  
 Carney.*





# IMPRESSIONS OF A RETURNED

## “EXILE”

### GORT REVISITED

Rennes, 4/1/'79  
Lycee Chateaubriand

simple words what life is really like? All he has to go on are impressions of what he has left behind him and more often than not the longer he has spent away the more distorted these become until he eventually sees his homeland through rose-coloured glasses.

#### NO CHANGE

Even for me, before I returned home for Christmas, I began to look forward so much to seeing Gort again, as if it were merely to assure myself that it were still the same — still paddling along the same slow-moving easy going river. Outwardly, I wasn't disappointed. The same Church spires loomed high to greet me as they have done for as long as I can remember, the Coole Park was as much a haven for the Sunday-afternoon strollers walking-off the 2 o'clock dinner, and the daily weather-report came as usual when the early risers called for their morning paper next door, and a familiar voice cried “Grand day Tom” or “Bad day today Jack”, signal as to whether I should turn-over again or not.

Some things never seem to

change, do they? I can imagine how the “real exile” feels to fall upon the familiar landmarks, when he touches-down at home. For one unquestionable moment he feels as if he has never been away. “Away” merely means new surroundings but old memories, and now the latter becomes real and living forms again — but this “living” is what makes the difference. Both spires are there, but the faces that crowd the church on Sunday are no longer so familiar, the children calling-out from the same school are unrecognisable; at the entrance to Coole Park there is yet another new house, yet another facelift to the old shop on the corner. Little by little as the differences becomes more obvious, the exile must feel his roots come apart a little at the seams. What makes it worse is that he becomes aware of change, but there is nothing he can do about it. He cannot move with it because he will be leaving soon: he finds it hard to accept because it means the Gort he knew is past tense and for he, who has spent a long time away it must be harder still to realize that the Gortonian he was is also past tense.

#### PROGRESS

For the “temporary exile” like myself the changes are not so blatantly obvious, but nevertheless they creep on you unconsciously. You realize that not only is Gort changing, but so are you, much and all as you hate to admit it to yourself. You try to explain to others the world that has helped to change you, but a world un-lived remains always a world unknown and words can never do it justice. This “other world” must almost be

A view of St. Colman's Church, Gort.

forgotten if you and Gort are to accept others again. As you have had to adapt to the new you must now accept the old. The choice facing the exile is not an easy one — whether to dream of tall spirals, to know all those faces again and be known — and come to be known because you are familiar and because you share the same way of life.

An exile can never expect to return to the same way of life that he left behind. Neither can he expect home life to have run the race of his new world. In fact he cannot “expect” at all, but must just hope for the best and “let things happen” (to quote a friend).

For me, my impressions are varied — sometimes glad to see things relatively the same; sometimes mad to see that change has not come about where it could (or should). Impatient at others for not moving fast enough. Impatience towards myself for not being content to let others follow on their own pace. A little embarrassment when you don't recognise someone instantly, knowing full-well that you should, but so glad to see the same faces you knew would be the same. But my greatest impression is still those spires — a sight of relief to think that at least you can count on them.



## John Quinn

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# Golf In Gort

by our Golfing Correspondent



The Annual General Meeting of Gort Golf Club was held in the Clubhouse 1st January. The officers and Committee for 1979 are:

**President:** Val Hoarty.

**Vice President:** Michael O'Grady.

**Secretary:** Val Burke.

**Assistant Sec.:** Sean Devlin.

**Treasurer:** Stephen Fahy.

**Committee:** Noel Mullins, Gerry Cooney, Gerry Cahill, Michael Cunningham, Forde, Tomás O Quigley, Johnny Kelly, Micheál Breathnach and Sean in.

**Handicapping Committee:** Ollie Roche, Micheál O Grady, Val Hoarty, Paddy Mey and Paddy Jordan.

The Handicapping Committee will also serve as a Selection Committee. This include responsibility for selecting teams to compete in the Irish Senior (Holders Shandon Park G.C.), Barton Shield (Holders Malahide G.C.), Irish or Cup (Holders Clonmel G.C.), Jimmy Bruen Shield (Holders Kstown G.C.), Pierce Purcell Shield (Holders Muskerry G.C.) and Oacht Shield (Holders Gort G.C.).



Joe McNerney pointing out some interesting features of Gort Golf course to Harry Bradshaw, a legendary figure in Irish Golf.

Items of interest from the meeting included:

- (1) The possibility of having a Vice Captain and Vice President in the Club: An extraordinary general meeting will be petitioned to discuss this idea. If accepted it will mean that a Vice-Captain and Vice-President will hold these offices in the year prior to becoming Captain and President.
- (2) The £100 entrance fee to the Club is to remain. A suggestion to lower the entrance fee for young members joining the Club was not supported. Some members felt this would not be fair to those who have already paid the £100 entrance fee.
- (3) The Ladies Committee were warmly thanked for their work in the Club, particularly for their fund raising activities.
- (4) Johnny Kelly and Peggy Cummins were commended for their efficient running of the Bar. A group of volunteers indicated to the meeting their willingness to help run the Bar during the coming year.
- (5) A Fixtures Plan with dates of all major competitions in the Club will be drawn up by the new Committee.
- (6) The sponsors for the Open Week competitions were thanked for their help.
- (7) The acting Secretary Sean Devlin, on behalf of the committee, sincerely thanked Joe McNerney for his work for Gort Golf Club.

(8) The new Captain, Michael O'Grady, said he would like 1979 to be Club Members Year. The outgoing Captain, Noel Mullins, mentioned the achievement of having water laid on to the greens and thanked the Committee for their cooperation.

(9) The Connacht Shield and Jimmy Bruen winning teams were congratulated for their 1978 successes.

(10) The new Committee is to discuss the Captain's and President's prizes in relation to the auction and to report back to the next A.G.M.

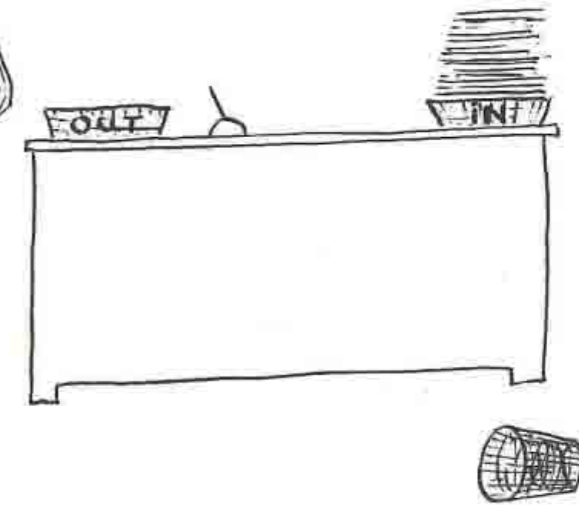
Perhaps they would consider the following.

## AUCTIONS

Golf is a game of skill, of shot-making, of getting a ball around a golf course in as few shots as possible. It is a game that requires practice, patience and a certain mental approach.

One of the beautiful things about golf, especially amateur golf, is the thrill of shooting a good score — perhaps the first round under 80 or the first under 70. For the genuine golfer, at the end of the day, the scores he has shot will give him more pleasure than the prizes he has won.

The main emphasis in golf should always be on what happens on the golf course. An auction sweep interferes with this process. It introduces money and unfair



pressures into what is supposed to be an amateur game.

Auctions are not allowed by the G.U.I. the governing body of amateur golf in this country. The

best thing to do with the auctions in Gort Golf Club is to wipe them off the map completely.

Priority can then be restored to what happens on the golf course.



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# JOE McINERNEY

Secretary,

Gort Golf Club, 1968-'79



Joe McInerney 'Finish high and watch it fly'.

Golf is a healthy outdoor game that can be enjoyed for the whole of a person's active life, from eight to eighty. For this reason, a Golf Club is a worthwhile amenity in every community. Gort is very fortunate to have a beautiful course with a fine clubhouse. The credit for this is due to the members of the Club, but in a special way to Joe McInerney who was honorary Secretary from March 1968 to March 1979. Secretaries are elected as "honorary" when they are not paid for their work. This does not imply that they do very little.

almost half the year, and secondly, the land was not owned by the Club — merely rented.

As an auctioneer, Joe was in a position to know when suitable land came on the market. At his suggestion, five or six different holdings were inspected by officers of the Club, and when it became known that Paul and Martha Halvey were selling suitable land at Laughtyshaughnessy, he persuaded the Club members to buy the land.

## VOLUNTARY WORK

Great credit is due to all who gave their time and energy voluntarily to the building of the New Course and Clubhouse, but to none more than the Secretary. He worked tirelessly designing and planning, recruiting workers and urging them to excel themselves, and ensuring that everything was up to the highest possible standard.

Sunday, the 8th of May 1977, was

a great day for Gort and for Joe McInerney. On that day the New Course and Clubhouse were blessed and officially opened. To mark the occasion, a memorable exhibition match was played by four men whose names are well known in golfing circles: Harry Bradshaw, Nickey Lynch, Eddie Dunne and Frank Cooney. Nobody in Gort was prouder than Joe on that day or worked harder for it.

## SUCCESS OF CLUB

During his eleven years as Secretary, Joe arranged innumerable club events, tactfully supervised them and provided highly regarded trophies and prizes. He successfully encouraged the lady members to participate more fully in the game and in Club organisation. He welcomed young golfers and supported them in every way. He

helped in the selection of teams for the various inter-club competitions, inspired them with his infectious enthusiasm, and the successes of those teams were out of proportion to the smallness of the Club.

In all this activity, Joe was hampered by the constant worry of the Club's debt. It is a tribute to his organisational powers and powers of persuasion that the debt had been reduced to manageable proportions at the time of his resignation.

With the realization that in God's plan recreation is an important part of human life, and that golf is an excellent form of recreation, we thank Joe for his work and achievement as Club Secretary. We wish him many years of enjoyment from the game and the Club as an ordinary carefree golfer.

Patrick Carroll

# The Autograph Tree in Coole

Glenn Cahill

The beautiful copper beech in the picnic garden in Coole is probably the most famous tree in Ireland because of the names associated with it, names like J.M. Synge author of "Shadow of the Glen" which was first performed in Dublin in 1903. He also wrote "Playboy of the Western World". Another name on the tree is George Bernard Shaw who wrote "John Bulls other Island" in 1900.

The next person who signed was Douglas Hyde the first President of Ireland and author of "Religious Song of Connaught".

Another name is G.W. Russell who was a poet and essayist and wrote "Voices of the Stones" in 1918.

Another famous literary person was W.B. Yeats author of many books including "The Wild Swans at

Coole" and the "Green Helmet".

The next name is Sean O'Casey who wrote "Juno and the Paycock".

Augusta Gregory was a playwright and folklorist and wrote "Gods and Fighting Men" in 1904. She also wrote "Poets and Dreamers". Her journals have now been reprinted.

Augustus, John, and Robert Gregory also signed on the tree.

## FASHION

Fionnuala English

It's scarcely a wonder that people never know exactly what meaning to take from this word. It can convey many and varied ideas to different minds e.g. there are such things as fashionable, clothes, fashionable manners and fashionable habits.

On the subject of clothes, lately we are being told that the jeans which have reigned supreme in the world of casual wear for so many years are now on the way out. I find it hard to understand what exactly this is supposed to mean.

For myself, I can honestly say that my jeans will always hold pride of place in my wardrobe. But, the fashion designers tell us that there is no longer room for jeans in the world of casual clothes. Skirts are in to



stay, at least that's what they say. All jeans look the same — OK — but I for one can't see that there is a great deal of variety in skirts either.

From what I see there are only two types; flared with side pockets or 'A line' with a pleat in front, these to be worn with sensible three inch high shoes! All very well, you might say until the poor unfortunate wearing this 'get up' meets with an extra strong gust of wind and finds she no longer has a skirt, or at least that the skirt isn't where it should be! This may be amusing for some members of the community but definitely not for the individual herself.

Then there is the possibility that her sensible shoes will let her down, and in the most unfortunate of places e.g. in the middle of a dance hall, out on a wet street and most horrible of all, on the gallery stairs at Mass on Sunday when the person in question finds herself sitting on the last step of the stairs looking up into the eyes of an amused male audience minus the heels of her shoes!

## DIFFERENT CULTURES

Fashionable manners are another problem and they are really

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undefinable because of the fact that they depend on the culture and traditions of different countries. In America and Europe, it is not considered civilised to eat with your fingers, but in the Eastern half of the world and the African continent the direct opposite is the case. The people here are in no way ashamed to eat with their fingers and other utensils besides knives and forks because they have been brought up in a certain manner which differs from the manner in which we were raised.

In many African countries the people of certain tribes have strange and as they seem to us barbaric habits e.g. in some tribes when a boy reaches manhood he is obliged to put a wooden peg through his nose or have his body completely tattooed with strange symbols. We in what are termed the civilized countries of the world squirm at the thought of those self inflicted wounds but to those men, it is a fashion and a tradition and they would not feel right if those rituals were not performed.

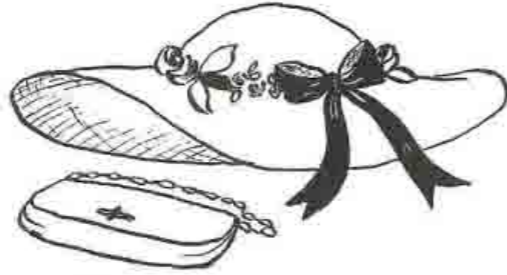
#### INDIVIDUAL CHOICE

So who really has a right to control the fashion world. I say it is the ordinary common people like you and me. Why should some nitwit over in Paris or in the great fashion houses of Italy dictate to you and me, the people of Ireland, what we should or should not wear? First of all there is a slight disparity in weather conditions between Ireland and Italy and secondly these people in Italy have had no experience of our infamous E.S.B.!!

Therefore in my opinion it is up to each individual to decide what he/she will wear, how and what they will eat and how they will behave

and organise their own lives without interference from outsiders.

If the people of the so called barbaric states of Africa can be individualistic, why can't we, from the so called developed countries, be individualistic as well. Why should we allow ourselves be dictated to by a society which has got itself into a rut and can't find a way out.



Glenn Cahill.



## The fairy fort in Glenbrack

John Spellman

In Ray Spellman's land there is a Fort. It is believed to be occupied by

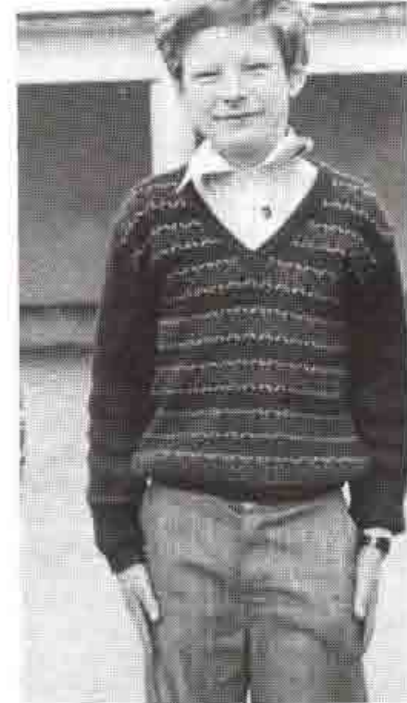
fairies. The mounds around are about two or three metres high. There is a tunnel in it. It leads from this fort to another fort which is also in his land. The tunnel was discovered when his father (my grandfather) John Spellman was coming home from work with a crowbar in his hand. Suddenly it went through the ground. He dug up the ground to find a hole forty feet deep beneath him. He climbed down and got the crowbar and then to his



amazement he saw a tunnel. This tunnel runs under the main Gort-Galway road.

One day his brother Colm was cutting down a pine tree, he was half way through when his father came up upon him. They both went home leaving the half cut tree behind them. Next morning when his brother was going to work he noticed that the tree he had tried to cut, was now fully restored. There was not a scratch on the bark.

Now the tunnel is covered in stones, but those could easily be removed if anyone wanted to explore it.



John Spellman.



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# Máire Ní Eidhin

— THE ENCHANTING BEAUTY

Peadar Ó Conaire

It was said about Raftery, the blind poet, that whenever he praised a person he did so lavishly, not that people sought his praise. Indeed some people went great pains to avoid it, refusing to disclose their names for fear of being mentioned in a song. This was particularly true of women, who rightly or wrongly felt that bad luck would come their way if a poet wrote a poem about them. Like the Bards of former days Raftery, poet-cum-minstrel was respected and feared by many.

He could hardly be described as a 'handsome man' but like all good poets he often dwelt on the beauty of the fairer sex. He married a young woman himself and had a young boy (who played the fiddle). He was tall in stature, poxy faced, with sparkling eyes and was badly dressed but he had immense charm and wit, a good story-teller and a fair character — characteristics which endeared him to many and won him a place at gatherings and places of merriment.

## SONGS

He left us some beautiful songs about women three of which are familiar to this day, especially in County Mayo i.e. *Bean an Fhíor Bhríde Bhéasaigh* and *Máire Ní Eidhin* (an Pabhsae Glégeal). Máire Ní Eidhin lived in Ballylee not far from Raftery's little house. Her closest living relative is John Hynes of Kiltartan. His eldest daughter is Mary. This tradition of calling the eldest daughter Mary has been kept by several generations of the Hynes family since Máire Ní Eidhin's time. The circumstances of Pabhsae Glégeal's death are obscure. John Hynes says she got the eye from a crowd of people at the Holy Well in Derrybrien. She was coming from the Holy Well in County Mayo on horseback. She died of pneumonia shortly afterwards.

There is a tradition (according to John Hyde) that a wealthy gentleman fell in love with her, forsook her later

leaving her to die a lonely death, while still in the blossom of youth. Who was this gentleman? Was he a rich landowner of whom there were many in South Galway at that time, or was he perhaps a neighbour living in Thoor Ballylee.

Máire Ní Eidhin was known throughout the West for her beauty and her charming manner. "I never saw such a good looking woman and

I never will till the day I die", an old woman told Lady Gregory. She had long golden hair down to her shoulders and she generally dressed in white. She was in great demand at 'báire' and 'rinne' and tradition has it that men came from far and near just to catch a glimpse of her. Eleven eligible men proposed to her in one day but she turned them all down.

## DOUGLAS HYDE

Douglas Hyde, poet and writer, came to Kiltartan at the beginning of this century to meet people who could tell him about Máire Ní Eidhin. Hyde who later became Ireland's first President was particularly interested in Raftery's songs. He found some twenty five of the blind poet's songs in a manuscript of the Royal Irish Academy and was impressed by their quality. Some time later he was strolling along the road near Dun Laoghaire when he met a blind man who asked him for a few pennies. Hyde was amazed to find out that

the beggar could speak Irish fluently. He was a Galway man by name of John Mannion. He gave Dr. Hyde a considerable amount of information about Raftery.

Dr. Hyde came West and spent a long time in Craughwell writing down Raftery's poems. He was ably assisted in this task by his friend Lady Gregory. He came to Kiltartan where he met Thomas Hynes a relative of An Pabhsae Glégeal. Thomas was a fine Irish speaker and a great man to sing a song. It was from Thomas Hynes' mouth that Dr. Hyde wrote the song 'Máire Ní Eidhin'. The air commonly used for the song at that time, was the same as that used for 'Anach Cuain' Raftery's famous lament. This bears no resemblance to the 'jazzed up' version used nowadays.

## LOVE

Raftery was on his way to Mass when he met the 'Ainnir' — the beautiful Máire, near Kiltartan. He fell head over heels in love with her and when she invited him to Ballylee he gladly accepted. He was greeted with great courtesy and was given the best of food and drink.



John Hynes, a link with the 'Enchanting Beauty' Máire Ní Eidhin.

Dul chuig an Aifreann dom le toil na nGrásta,  
Bhí an lá cur báistí, agus d'ardaigh gaoth,  
Casadh an ainnir liom le taobh Chilltartain,  
agus thit mé láithreach i ngrá le mnaoi.  
Labhair mé léithe go múinte mána,  
'S d'réir a cáilíocht seadh d'fhreagair sí,  
'sé dúirt sí, "Raiftéirí tá m'intinn sásta  
agus gluais go lá liom go Baile-Uí-Liagh".

Nuair a fuair mé an tairiscint mór lig mé ar cáirde é,  
Rinne mé gairí agus gheit mo chroí,



Ní raibh le dul againn ach trasna páirce,  
'S mór thug muid an lá linn ach go tóin an tí.  
Leagadh chugainn bord a raibh gloinne as cárt air,  
agus cuilfhionn álainn le m'ais na suí,  
'Sé dúirt sí, "Raiftéirí, bí ag ól 's céad fáilte,  
Tá 'n siléar láidir i mBaile-Uí-Liagh".

The poet found Ballylee an enchanting place.

Is aobhinn aerach ar thaobh an t-sléibhe,  
agus tú ag féachaint ar Bhaile-Uí-Liagh,  
ag siúl sna gleannta baint cnó agus sméara,  
'S geall ceileabhar can ann le ceolta sí,  
Cén bhrí san méid sin go bhaighthea teargas,  
ar bhláth na gcaobh atá lena thaobh,  
Níl maith dá shéanadh 's na cúl ar éinne,  
'Sí spéir na gréine agus grá mo chroí.

It is in the fourth and fifth stanzas that we find the poet at his brilliant best. He has travelled through Ireland, England, France, Spain and even Greece but nowhere did he meet anyone like Máire. She surpasses in beauty the legendary Deirdre, the Goddess Venus and even Helen of Troy. Two hundred clerks could not note a third of her good traits.

Shiúl mé Sasana 's an Fhrainc le chéile,  
An Spáinn, an Ghréig, agus ar m'ais arís,  
Ó bhruach Loch Gréine go béal na sléibhe,  
's ní fhaca mé féirín ar bith mar í,  
Dá mbeinnse pósta le bláth na n-óige,  
Trí Loch an Toraic do leanfainn í,  
Cuanta is cóstaí do shúilfainn is bóithre,  
Indiaidh an t-seoid bhean tá i mBaile-Uí-Liagh.

Sí Máire Ní Eidhin an stad bhean bhéasach,  
Ba deise méin agus b'áille gnaoi,  
Dá chéad cléireach is a gcor le chéile,  
agus trian a tréithe ní fhéadfadh scríobh,  
Bhuail sí Deirdre le breácht i Venus,  
'S dá n-abrann Helen le'r scriosadh an Traoi,  
ach scoth ban Éireann as ucht an méid sin,  
an Pabhsae Glégeal tá i mBaile-Uí-Liagh.

In the final stanza Raftery addresses Máire. He calls her his 'Bright Star' his 'Autumn Sun'. He asks her to go with him, 'nó go ndéanfaimid comhairle cá mbeidh ár suí'. He will provide music for her on Sunday nights, and punch or wine whichever is her preference.





# out and about



Joe Roche.

## FIRST AID IN GORT

The Red Cross was first formed in Gort during the war. It lapsed and recently came to life again with the formation of a Branch by the Youth Club.

First Aid lectures are given by the Galway Red Cross every Friday night at the Youth Club with the very able help of Mrs. K. Nestor and Mrs. Marie Devlin. About 15 youth club members are taking the course.

One of the aims of the Red Cross is to enable youth in Gort to be of assistance to fellow men in an emergency, to visit the old and lonely.

## NO AMBULANCE

The Gort Red Cross are of the opinion that a central town of its size is inadequately serviced and lacks the use of an Auxiliary Ambulance for accidents in the town and immediate areas. In certain cases, if help was available more quickly, lives may be saved. As there are approximately 1,000 children attending schools in Gort who are at potential danger with the vast flow of traffic through the town, this is also another reason why an Ambulance is necessary.

With the co-operation of the people of Gort and the enrollment of new members, the Red Cross could be a very beneficial asset to the town.

Our thanks to the Red Cross in Galway for all their help.

The following members were elected to form a Branch:

*Chairperson:* Mrs. K. Nestor.

*Secretary:* Mr. J. Roche.

*Treasurer:* E. Joyce.

*Assistant Treasurer:* Mrs. S. Devlin.

*P.R.O.:* Mr. J. Fahy.

## OUT AND ABOUT

The Boy Scout movement in Gort continues to grow. Uniforms for the troop are on order and it is expected that the troop will attend Mass in uniform. Officers for the coming year are:

*Scout Leader:* Sergeant Jerry Sheehan.

*Assistants:* Dan Casey and John Finnegan.

*Chaplain:* Fr. Liam Power.

*Chairman:* Garda Michael Cunningham.

*Secretary:* Peadar Ó Conaire.

\*A second hand book shop has opened in Gort. Mrs. Margaret Linnane, Bridge St., who will run the shop, believes the idea has great potential. Not long ago Gort had three bookshops and the new shop in Bridge St. will have something for everyone — magazines, comics, romance, detective, spy, thrillers, western, etc. Mrs. Linnane believes that "interest in reading is not dead, but only submerged due to the excessive price of paperbacks."

\*1979 marks the centenary of the erection of the triple stained glass window in the organ gallery of Gort Church. The inscription on the window reads: "Presented by John Forrest Esq. in memory of his beloved mother A.D. 1879".

John Forrest was the founder of Forrest's Royal Hotel, which became Lally's Hotel in later years and is now Sullivans Hotel. The window is a very fine example of stained glass of the period. The central panel depicts the crucifixion surmounted by the Dove. The right panel shows the Mother of Sorrows and on the left is the Beloved Disciple.

\*The Ballyaneen Group Water Scheme which provides water for 25

houses was blessed and officially opened on 4th March. An enjoyable buffet and social followed in Glynn's Hotel.

\*The first funeral to pass through Ballyaneen in eight years was that of Mrs. Bridget Quinn who died in January. A kind mother, her daughters Noreen and Rene returned home and nursed her through her sad illness. Noreen has since returned to teach in Cameroon, West Africa.

\*Two girls from the Gort district are attending courses in Templemore to



train as Ban Gardaí. They are Mary Moran, Loughrea Road and Anne Walsh, Cloughnacave.

\*Congratulations to our advertising agent Suzanne Griffin who will shortly take up a position with Allied Irish Banks.

\*The new Chairman of Gort G.A.A. Club is Sergeant Jerry Sheehan. Will 1979 be the year when the long awaited County Cup makes its return to a Gort sideboard? The year has opened brightly and with the success of neighbouring teams in county championships in 1978 there is a feeling that this could be Gort's year. Senior selectors are Michael Linnane, Fr. Power and Brendan Murphy.

A Réaltan an tsolais agus a ghrian an fhómhair,  
A chúilfhionn ómra agus a chuid den t-saol,  
An ngluaisfeá liomsa faoi chomhair an Domhnaigh,  
Nó go ndéanfaimid comhairle cá mbeidh ár suí,

Níor mhór liom ceol duit gach aon oíche Domhnaigh  
puins ar bord agus dá molta fíon,  
Is a Rí na Glóire go dtriomaigh an bóthar,  
go bhfagh mé an t-eolas go Baile-Uí-Liagh.

The population of Ballylee has dwindled dramatically since Raftery's time. Only three houses are occupied in the townland at present. All that remains of Máire Ní Eidhin's house are a few stones.



*Zigger Zagger*, the play produced by Mr. Frank Larkin with the pupils of Our Lady's College, was a noted success and enjoyed by all who saw it performed in the College Gynasium. The leading parts were played by Albert Moylan (Shanaglish) as Harry and James Fahy as Zigger Zagger. Tom O'Shaughnessy acted as Musical Adviser.

\*Thirty pupils from St. Joseph's Secondary School, Convent of Mercy, Gort will spend Easter in Paris. They will visit the ancient monuments in the historic city and surrounding areas. It promises to be an enjoyable tour.

This Easter as well 52 students from Our Lady's College will visit London for three days. Tours of this

nature are fast becoming a feature of the school year.

\*The Gort community was united in shock at the tragic death on Friday, February 23rd of Mrs. Marie Minogue, Ennis Road. There is nothing to add to the wonderful tribute the people of Gort paid her at her funeral. May the bright light of heaven shine on you, Marie.



On Monday 5th March Barbara Scully died in a Dublin hospital. We extend sympathy to her father Mark, her mother Olga, her fiance and the other members of her family. May

she rest in peace.

Her father Mark was a regular contributor to the Poetry Corner in Guaire.

"Then do not shudder at the knife

that deaths indifferent hand drives home

but with the strivers leave the strife Nor after Caesar skulk in Rome."

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## Classic Ballroom, Gort



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Sunday March 18th

First visit of the APACHES

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## Kiltartan notes

### THOOR BALLYLEE

Patricia Connors

Thoor Ballylee was once the home of the famous poet W.B. Yeats. For some time it was a ruin. In recent years it was restored. Today it is a very beautiful castle and is a great tourist attraction.

### YEW COTTAGE

Yew cottage is only a few hundred yards from Ballylee. It was once the home of Mary Hynes about whom the rambling fiddler Raifteiri wrote the poem (song) *Máire Ní Eidhin*.

### KILTARTAN CASTLE

Kiltartan castle is today a ruin. It was once the home of the O'Shaughnessy chieftains. The ruin shows, that in its younger days the castle was a very large place, towering high into the sky. The castle and surrounding buildings were built of limestone. Inside there are many big arches and a staircase which leads to an upper room. The castle stands on a hill overlooking Kiltartan river.



Patricia Connors.

### THE OLD CHURCH OF KILTARTAN

In the midst of Kiltartan graveyard stands the ruin of the old church. It contains the stone which was tied round Rena's neck, Saint Colman's mother, when the soldiers tried to drown her. The rope left a mark on the stone which can be seen to this day.

### ROBERT GREGORY

Tomás Melville



Thomas Melville.

Robert Gregory was born in 1880. He was the son of Lady Gregory. He joined the army as a pilot. He got married and he had three children. Their names were Catherine, Anne and Richard. Robert Gregory was a good artist. He painted two famous oil paintings. One was of Coole Lake and the other of Thoor Ballylee. He was a Major in the army. In 1918 just before the end of the first world war he was killed while flying over North Italy with the Royal Flying Corps. All his property was left to his wife Margaret. Robert Gregory is buried in Sean Nolan's field about two hundred yards North west of Kiltartan school.

### LADY GREGORY

Kevin Egan

Augusta Perse was born on March 15th, 1852 in a place called Roxboro in County Galway. She was the youngest daughter of Dudley Perse who at one time owned an estate of nearly four thousand acres.

In 1880 she married Sir William Gregory whose house and property, Coole Park, Gort were only a few miles away. Sir William had an



Kevin Egan.

interesting career. He died in 1892. They had one child Robert. Robert married Margaret Lucy Maynard Perry and had three children, Richard, Anne and Catherine.

Lady Gregory referred to her grandchildren as the "chicks". Lady Gregory had a most accurate memory. She spent years collecting folklore in cottage and farmhouse and in the workhouse wards.

### An Irish Airman Foresees his Death

I know that I shall meet my fate  
Somewhere among the clouds above  
Those that I fight I do not hate  
Those that I guard I do not love  
My country is Kiltartan Cross  
My countrymen Kiltartan's poor  
No likely end could bring them loss  
Or leave them happier than before  
Nor law, nor duty, bade me fight  
Nor public men, nor cheering crowds  
A lonely impulse of delight  
Drove to this tumult in the clouds  
I balanced all, brought all to mind  
The years to come seemed waste of breath.

A waste of breath the years behind  
In balance with this life, this death.

W.B. Yeats



# GORT YOUTH CLUB

Enda Glynn

The reorganised Youth Club in Gort is progressing satisfactorily. The main aims of the Club are to provide entertainment for the youth of the area and to give them an opportunity to express themselves and develop their many talents. To date the story is:

Members meet every Friday night and choose two of the following activities:

1) **Singing:** Anthony Brennan helps a group prepare for a Folk Mass in Gort Church at 11 a.m. on Sunday. Tom O'Shaughnessy also helps. Special thanks are due to Mrs. Eithne McCarthy, Crowe St. who helped the group in its infancy. The Folk Mass is an

order of the day.

5) **Badminton:** Padraic Cummins is a very capable organiser of this group, assisted by Evelyn Roche, Sheila Duffy, Bridie Murray and Michael Reddy. The Gymnasium in Our Lady's College is a most suitable setting.

6) **Table Tennis:** After the exertions on the Badminton Court members can enjoy a game of table tennis

Youth work, who adjudicated two debates, has commented that the standard of debating has been the highest he has seen at this level.

Twelve teams competed. Glenbrack, Galway Road, New Houses, Crow St., the Square, Church St., Ballyhugh, Bridge St., George's St., Ennis Road, Suburbs and the Boarders, Convent of Mercy (Inner Queen St.). Motions debated included:

'That Christmas is too commercialised', 'That people today have no respect for authority', 'That the Irish Educational System is too narrow', 'That the youth of today are gone to the dogs', 'That the Farmers of Ireland are a dead loss', 'That the media is of no advantage to the community', 'That

sponsored lovely trophies for the competition and the final will be between Church St. and the Boarders. Special thanks are due to the adjudicators - Colm Ward, Fr. Paddy Healy, Rosaleen Cahill, Tim O'Driscoll, Michael Cunningham. There is also a prize for the Best Overall Speaker of the debate.

A number of other projects are planned for the coming months. Commitment, understanding and cooperation from all involved will see the Youth Club make a valuable contribution to life in Gort.

## Gort Credit Union

*Doing Project:* Mary Murphy, Maura Commins, Christina Halvey, Edel Cunningham.

Back in the 1960's a small group of enthusiastic people in Gort heard about the Credit Union movement and looked for further information on it and arranged to call a general meeting in Gort area. After a considerable amount of negotiations and enquiries, a committee was formed in July 1965.

On July 26th St. Colman's Credit Union held its first meeting in the premises of Joseph McInerney. The main inspirators were the late J.J. Coen, Michael Cunningham, Séamas Conway, Tom O'Quigley, Michael Roche and Gerry O'Donnell. These names mentioned formed the original board. From that on membership grew and shares and loans improved.

The present day monthly receipts stand about £4-6,000, and almost a corresponding amount is paid out in loans to members. The money saved by members is passed out to other members who are in need of money in form of loans. Loans must be for useful and productive purposes and the Credit Committee must approve.



*Some members of the Youth Club Folk Mass Group: Back row from left Anne Gallagher, Darina Fahy, Jennifer Liston, Bernadette Fennessy, Mary Reddy, Noreen Corcoran.*

*Front row from left: Geraldine Moloney, Susan Joyce, Patricia Kelly, Mary Teresa O'Flaherty, Joan Hallinan and Ingrid McGrath.*

just off the court.

7) **Mixed Soccer:** Mossy Clabby, John Cummins and Paddy Crowley are in full swing from 8 to 10 in the Classic. This is the most popular activity with the intricate skills of a future Liam Brady on display every Friday night.

### DEBATES

At 10 p.m. all the members come together and since Christmas an Inter Street Debating Competition has been run off. The standard of debating was exceptionally high. Fr. Tom Tarpey, Diocesan Director of

people today are too money conscious", "Woman Rule Okay", "That Gort is a pain", "That Socialism is the answer to the problems of Ireland" and "That Pop Music had no lasting value".

Tony O'Connor, Georges St



*Edel Cunningham.*

The Credit Union is so designed that a person can save money and borrow at the same time. All adult members have equal rights regardless of saving. One of the main advantages of Credit Unions is that you can leave your savings intact and get a profitable loan at the same time. Within certain necessary legal limits the members can select their own rates of saving and repayments.

### THE BUILDING OF THE CENTRE

The building of the centre was started in April 1970. Purely voluntary labour was used to build the centre. This hard work continued over several months. As a result of

their hard work there are 5 rooms now let as flats.

At the A.G.M. this year the Committee expressed a desire to see more young people join. The Credit Union is more useful to the young than the old. The reason for the small membership is that people do not wish to expose themselves locally even though the committee are under an obligation of secrecy.

The Gort Credit Union Committee would like to offer their unique services to everybody in the locality. It is really surprising that in Gort there are many people who know little or nothing of the Credit Unions good work.



# EGIT PLEB

by Geraldine Killeen

(Background:  
The People of Gort want a loo  
So the busloads of girls won't pass  
through  
So that when they're in Coole  
They won't break any rule!  
By what nature intends them to do.

The Year: 2279.  
The Place: 6th Floor St. Joseph's  
Secondary School.)

The students of Room 8g murmured vigorously while awaiting the next class. They expected it to be exceedingly boring – Miss MacBeth's Local History classes always were and to-day's class was expected to be no exception. They declared her classes to be 'positibely painful' and pronounced her presence as sleep inducing.

The escalatous deposition of Miss MacBeth at the automatic door of the classroom quelled the noise.

"Girls", said Macbeth after the prayer and the emergence of her table and chair from the wall, "today we shall deal with the Life and Times of Egit Pleb, a distinguished hero and pioneer in our locality. Does anyone know anything about Pleb?"

A lacadasical hand oozed up.

"Yes Ophelia", said Macbeth, enthused.

"Wasn't it Pleb who founded the 'Give Gort a Ladies Loo Association' asked Ophelia.

"Yes Pleb started the movement about 1980 nearly 300 years ago. The Ladies Convenience was a major issue at the time and Pleb being a radical and free thinking soul took it upon himself to head the female population in the achievement of their goal.

"Pleb was a respected person in the area at the time, known for his influence and women clubed behind him in thousands. Nuns came in busloads from far and wide heralding that Egit Pleb was the answer to many prayers."

By this time the snoring had become quite audible. But only the retraction of her seat into its compartment in the wall at the end of the class period could serve to discourage the mighty MacBeth. And thus till then regardless of the heedlessness of her class, she ranted on.

Continuing she said: "Women weren't Plebs only following – his charisma attracted males too. Some men from the Junior Chamber of Commerce – you remember girls the



Geraldine Killeen.

Junior Chamber was one of those old fashioned town committees who organised parades, festivals etc. – were very active and devoted to the 'Movement'."

Even for this obvious pun the

class could not see fit to neglect their much needed rest. But the valiant Macbeth was not in the least put out and she bravely ventured on.

"However the County Council – another of those obsolete organisations – was not to be rushed into rash decisions. The Convenience had only been in consideration for several years. Pleb, however, was equally determined. He would make them see reason. He launched a gigantic campaign to make known, world wide, the plight of South Galway females and most especially those women who 'passed through the town'."

MacBeth majestically paused to allow the information sink in. The fact that she was breathless due to the mounting excitement was also

instrumental in her reasoning.

"Pleb's campaign was successful. Mary Mother's Guilds who had passed through the town at earlier dates and were subject to embarassment as a result heard of his

efforts. They descended in mass upon the town and staged a sit-in on the Main St. The Tullamore women were among the staunchest supporters there, for they, more than anyone knew the pain of a visit to the town of Gort.

"The Mothers' Guilds inspired Pleb to organise a mass demonstration. The Rev. Sisters, who had also been revitalised by the Mothers Guilds' spirit, were the first to arrive. Convoys of Irish women of the cloth converged on the town bringing with them their female students and chanting 'we shall not

be moved'."

"The people of Gort responded most favourably to the strain on the hotel lavatory facilities and opened their doors to the overflow of females beconed by nature providing them much needed relief."

"The Council were prompted to action and construction was soon begun. Now Pleb..."

There was a sudden whirr as the wall reclaimed its chair from beneath the unexpectant MacBeth, lowering her unceremoniously to the ground. The by now alert class went into

spontaneous hysterics at the sight. Miss MacBeth speedily pulled herself together and with suitable adieu made a hasty exit.

The chatter resumed and in the din was heard the remarks: "Some machinery has moved into town to-day I wonder what for. "It is reputed that the Ladies Convenience is to be fitted out with the necessaries. But I don't see the reason with the new tablet feeding system. We don't need it any more. Oh it's typical. 300 years behind the times".

## HOMES CURES

Una Burke

1. A nettle sting can be cured by rubbing a dockleaf to the sting.
2. A wart can be cured by rubbing it with a dandelion.
3. An apple rubbed on a bee sting, is said to cure it.
4. A lemon rubbed on a wasp sting is said to cure it.
5. A cure for foot ailments is to wade in a running stream.
6. A shock will cure your hiccups.
7. A cure for an aching back is to wear a belt.
8. A cure for a sore wrist is to tie a band around it.
9. A cure for rheumatism is to wear a brass bracelet.
10. A cure for a swelling of the joints, or to loosen up the muscles, is to rub on goose grease.



Una Burke.

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## THE RESTORATION OF THE BISHOP'S HOUSE

In September 1977 the Board of Works began the restoration of one of the mastic buildings in Kilmacduagh. This building is called the Bishops House, because Saint Colman lived there. He was the first Bishop of Kilmacduagh. The house was built in the twelfth century.

The height of the building is only two feet. When it is finished there will be two floors in it. There will be a stairs going from the bottom floor up to the top. There is a door-way left on top, where people can go out and walk around. When it is finished we will have a museum here, and masses will be celebrated for the souls of all who are buried in the cemetery.

### SETTING TO WORK

The timber they have on the roof is the best of oak. The flags they use under some of the slates came from Liscannor. Some of the slates came from the roof of Lady Gregory's house in Coole. They were

stored for years in a shed in Gort since the demolition of Coole house. The rest of the slates came from King John's Castle in Athenry. Some of the men are skilled stone masons. The work is very slow. The men stay in caravans during the week and they go home for the week-ends. The workmen have huts for their machinery and tools. They have a hoist for lifting up the heavy flags.

Before the restoration the building was in ruins. There were just four walls standing. It is said that the original roof was thatched. When the men arrived first they put scaffolding up to the roof. Then they raised the wall about two feet. The men have an engineer to guide them. The original building had a staircase. You enter the building by gate. There are four windows in the entire building. They have a new cut stone window which cost six hundred pounds. There are six men working there at present. There is a small building attached to the main one, and it is roofed also. It was there the bishop blessed his pilgrims.

*Noel Finnegan,  
(12 years).*

### LOUGH DEECHAN

I live near Lough Deechan in Killomoran. Last year a gentleman came out from U.C.G. and he asked me would I take levels in the lake for him. He was doing research to discover if the tide is coming in to Lough Deechan from Kinvara.

He put sticks in the lake. If the tide was coming in some of the sticks would be covered by the extra water. The sticks were one hundred and five centimetres high. There are three holes in the middle of the lake. They are near each other. When the tide comes in, in Kinvara, you could see



*Martin Connolly.*

foam on top of each hole, where the water comes out in Killomoran.

I was given a book. I entered the level of the water at each stick into the book at 9 a.m. and 6 p.m. each day. I did that for a whole year, beginning in October 1977.

### COINCIDENCE

In 1755 there was an earthquake in Lisbon. That was the time the holes formed in the lake and a part of Caher-Glissane Castle fell at the same time too.

Some years ago Canon Quinn proved that the tide was coming into the lake. He spilled oil into the lake, when the tide was going out in Kinvara. The Canon had someone waiting in Kinvara when the tide was due to go out. After a while that person saw the oil on the water which was coming out in Kinvara. That proved that the tide was going from Kinvara to Lough Deechan, and

back again from Lough Deechan to Kinvara. The lake never goes dry. It covers about eight acres of land in winter.

*Máirtín Ó Conghaile,  
(11 years).*

### AN OLD CEMETERY

There is an old cemetery in Barry's land in Newtown beside the new line. It is completely surrounded by bushes and briars. There are still headstones to be seen in it. It is about two miles from Gort, and there is a red gate about fifty metres from the cemetery. It is extremely difficult to get into it, but at the front there is an entrance. If you got in, you would have to bend down or you would get entangled in overhanging branches.

The headstones are either curved at the top or rectangular and are about one metre high by half a metre wide. They are a bit tilted and are covered in moss. My companions and I saw what looked like a grave that had sank into the ground. There are also long flags lying on the ground. They are more than two metres long.

My grandfather told me that about eight or one hundred years ago people were buried in it. He remembers children having been buried there. Near this cemetery there is the ruin of Calluragh Chapel.

*Billy Glynn,  
(Age 11 years).*



*Billy Glynn.*

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*Noel Finnegan.*



# Gort

# Macra

# na

# Feirme

*Paddy Moloney*

After a lapse of some years Gort Branch of Macra na Feirme was revived about five years ago on the initiative of Fr. Healy. It was actively supported by a small group of enthusiasts that included Paddy Moloney, John Coen, Robin Lahiffe, Frank Rock, Joe Kearney, Pascal Greaney, Danal Healy, Joe Donoghue and many others.

Macra na Feirme was founded in

too numerous to mention. And so the organisation has truly integrated people in a way which to many would seem impossible and so the high ideals of the founders are fully realised.

### ACTIVITIES

During the past five years Gort Branch has played a dominant role in the activities of Macra in Co. Galway. The County programme includes - Make and Model competitions senior and junior debating competitions, panel speaking, light entertainment, Artistry in the home, stock judging, senior and junior debating, senior and junior quiz, and many other competitions.

*Members of the Macra Junior Debating Team: Patricia McDevitt, Suzanne Griffin and Josephine Wallace. Robert Coen was also on the team.*



1944 for educational, cultural and social activities among young farmers. It has played a vital and necessary role in these spheres and has done more than any other organisation for the evolution of country life from the depressed social and economic conditions of past decades. Although present day circumstances are very different from those that obtained during the years

when Macra became established, it never-the-less has grown in strength in recent years which proves that its programme is relevant to present day needs.

It's newly found riches embraces all strata of society and its members now include town and country folk alike - farmers, teachers, office staff, bankers, vets, solicitors, indeed the varied occupations of members are

### DEBATING SUCCESS

The Gort Senior Debating Team have won 4 county titles in the past 5 years and are this year's Co. Champions also. The panel of speakers from which the teams were drawn are Máirtín Curran, Francis Fahy, Joe Kearney, Robin Lahiffe, Nodlag O'Grady, Joe Donoghue, Joan Kearney, Robert Coen and

Martin Cahill. They were beaten in the All-Ireland Ennis Finals in 1975 and 1978. This year they are hoping for an all Ireland win. They deserve the support of all.

The members have made their mark in stock judging. The team includes Robin Lahiffe, Donal Healy, Pascal Greaney, John Coen and Pat Quinn. In judging Dairy Stock Robin Lahiffe has several Co. titles to his credit and was second in the All Ireland competition at the Spring Show in Dublin last year. His prize was a trip to Rome.

Donal Healy and Pascal Greaney has also won County titles in Beef and sheep judging respectively. The former was 5th in last year's competition at the Spring Show.

### OTHER SUCCESSES

Last year the County Farm Plan competition was won by Gort. This is the most sought after competition in the annual calendar of events. The team with the distinguished win to their credit is Joe Donoghue, Robin Lahiffe, Frank Rock and Joe Kearney. The task involved drawing up a four year development for a 120 acre farm belonging to a well known Ardrahan farmer. The prize of £450 was sponsored by Allied Irish Banks.

The Plan is at present being studied by Macra clubs throughout the country.

The Panel speaking team of Joe Donoghue, Bernice Forde, Joe and Máirtín Curran won last year's County Competition. They were beaten by Tipperary in the Inter County rounds. Four newcomers went on stage this year to contest the County Junior Debating Competitions. They were Robert Coen, Susan Griffin, Josephine Wallace and Patricia Mc Davitt. They opposed the motion "That Married Women should not return to Work". They lost to Dunmore.

### SOCIAL ACTIVITIES

With the county executive the Gort Branch organises an annual Barbeque and Barn Dance at Lahiffes silage lay-out on the Tubber Road. Patrons from as far a field as South Clare and Tipperary flock to this mid summer event to sample a festival flavoured with the aroma of Barbequed pork, crubeens and many other rarities. The young enjoy the freedom of the wide open spaces and the not so young return to the hay shed to reminisce. A substantial proportion of the profits are donated to the Mentally Handicapped

Association.

The Gort Branch plays host to an annual gathering of South Galway clubs at Glynn's Hotel and members from Kinvara, Ballindereen, Ardrahan and Clarinbridge enjoy the social atmosphere and the friendly rivalry of the Quiz and Public speaking which are part of this annual get-together.

Sport is not forgotten. An annual soccer competition is organised between neighbouring parishes and always proves a very popular and enjoyable competition.

### ATTRACTIONS OF MACRA

Whatever your talent, taste or interest Macra na Feirme has an outlet for it. You will enjoy the competitions in a real life atmosphere, you will make many new friends and cannot but profit from the many and varied experiences. An ideal introduction to life for those who have just left school, it will widen your horizons, develop your personality and help you establish your identity. Why not join now. All you have to do is contact the Bord Secretary, John Coen, Cloone, Gort or any member.

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Club President Greg Lundon.

# Gort Bridge Club

by our Bridge Correspondent



Korea. Before leaving Kinvara members of the Gort Bridge Club presented him with a Pyx and a holy oils set.

Members had many enjoyable outings to clubs like Ennistymon, Ennis and Ballinasloe in those years. A visit to Ennistymon was always an occasion — many names are still linked with the Ennistymon Club: Joe Roughan, Paddy and Agnes Chambers, Nancy Connole, Kathleen Gallery and Jimmy Griffin. Some like John O'Connell have gone to their reward. John enlivened many a Bridge gathering with his rendering of "He shot Molly Leary because she looked like a swan".

Glynn's Hotel, then owned by Molly O'Brien was the Club's first meeting place. The Club afterwards moved to Geaghan's Cafe (now Mrs. Gerard Keane's sweet shop), the Town Hall, Miss Kilduff's house and Ned Walsh's pub. About 1953 the Club lapsed and was not revived until 1971.

## JOE MULDOON

One name towers above all others whenever Bridge is spoken of in Gort. He is tall, wears his years lightly and is capable of finesse and squeezes that the ordinary mortal would never dream of. This is Joe Muldoon, a bridge legend in his own lifetime.

Other players in these early years were Fathers Conway, Hanniffy and Canavan. Fr. Canavan was then a curate in Kinvara and he was destined to die in The Long March in

## REVIVAL

At this time a number of keen bridge players in the town invited Joe Muldoon to assist in reviving the Club. Joe gladly and willingly accepted the invitation and under his direction the Club was put back on its feet again.

Sullivan's Hotel on Tuesday night is now the popular meeting place and the Club can boast of over sixty members. The first officers of the revived Committee were: President Jack Murphy, Secretary Pauline

Glynn and Treasurer Maud O'Hara. Mrs. Ryder from Galway forwarded some Bridge Notes and 'Joe' gave the lessons.

The Club has five big competitions in the year and this year, a sixth, the Gort Bridge Congress, was inaugurated. The Congress had 60 competitors, 30 of whom were invited from Ennistymon, Kinvara and Athenry. The Congress was a huge success and the winners were Greg Lundon and Pat Cunningham. The winners of the other competitions were:

*Team of Four:* John Moylan, Tommy McGovern, Paddy Moloney and Fr. Enda Glynn.

*Christmas Competition:* Joe Muldoon and Mary Kelly.

*Sullivan Cup:* Joe Muldoon and Michael Cunningham.

The Pairs Competition and Presidents Prize are still outstanding.

The Club visit Ennistymon, Kinvara and Athenry every year who then return the compliment. Officers for 1978-79 are:

*President:* Greg Lundon.

*Secretary:* Brid Burke.

*Treasurer:* Pat Cunningham.

*Tournament Director and Permanent Member of the Committee:* Joe Muldoon.

*Committee:* John Moylan, Tommy McGovern, Mrs. Chris O'Shaughnessy, Mrs. Mim Moloney, Mrs. Joan Griffin.

New blood is very welcome in the Club. There are lessons for beginners at the start of every season. So if you would like to join why not contact Greg Lundon or any member of the Committee. If you ever take the game up, you will never regret it.

## Songs

compiled by Martina Walsh



WOMAN IN LOVE

### MIRROR

"Mirrors" is recorded by Sally Oldfield. This is a delightful song about the joys of loving and the happiness it brings to people. Happiness can only be received when we give love away since life is love made visible.

1

*Oh we are mirrors in the sun and we brightly shine  
We are singing and dancing in perfect time  
There is nothing in the world that we can do  
To stop the light of love come shining through  
And the power of a newborn moment is shining round  
you*

*Kiele a lo ha hoy of perfect stranger, I feel I know you.  
Kiele a lo la hoy come be with me for we are, we are,  
we are, we are.*

2

*Mirrors in the sun and we brightly shine  
we are singing and dancing in perfect time  
There is nothing in the world that we can do  
To stop the light of love come shining through,  
And the fire of a golden light is shining round you  
Kiele a lo la hoy the wind is cold  
And I long to hold you*

*Kiele a lo la come be with for  
we are, we are, we are, we are. Chorus.*

3

*Mirrors in the sand and we brightly shine  
We are singing and dancing in perfect time  
There is nothing in the world that we can do  
To stop the light of love come shining through.  
Now the streets are filled with bells  
and the snow is falling.*

*Kiele a lo la there's so many things I long to tell you  
can you hear me calling*

*Kiele a lo la hoy come be with me for  
we, are, we, are, we are.*

### A LITTLE MORE LOVE

This song is recorded by Olivia Newton John. It shows that love isn't always the right solution to problems and love doesn't always bring a happy ending. It tells us that we shouldn't be led on by other people's good looks.

*Night is dragging her feet  
I wait alone in the heat  
I know know that you'll have your way  
till you have to go home  
No's a word I can't say.*

*Chorus:  
'cos it gets me nowhere to tell ya no  
And it gets me nowhere to make you go*

"Woman in Love" is recorded by the Three Degrees. It tells the story of a woman in love, but her love is not returned. He cares for her, but on leaving her she tells him that she'll always be around when he needs a woman's love. It shows us that some people are selfish and they don't care for other person's feelings, that they are always taking but no giving.

1

*It's the same old story  
you care but you don't love me.  
Though I know it, it still hurts to hear the truth  
Don't expect me to forget you.  
I love you and I can't hold back the lov I want to give  
to you*

*I know it isn't easy, I understand your leaving and  
I'm happy  
just to see you when I can  
Do you understand my reason  
I love you and a woman in love, loves only one man.  
Chorus*

*Just give me love when you can  
If you need me a woman in love will understand  
and I'll give you all that I can  
So believe me a woman in love needs only one man.*

2

*So don't be sorry baby,  
I guess you think I'm crazy  
But to be there when you want me is enough  
I'm not a child, I'm a woman  
I love you and I'll always be around when you need a  
woman's love.*

*So you see it's the same old story  
you are but you don't love me.  
Though I know it, it still hurts to hear the truth.  
I'm no child, I'm a woman  
I love you and I'll always be around when you need a  
woman's love.*

*Will a little more love make you start depending  
Will a little more love bring a happy ending  
Will a little more love make it right  
Will a little more love make it right.  
Where, where did my innocence go  
How, how was a young girl to know.  
I'm trapped, trapped in the spell of your eyes  
In the warmth of your arms  
In the web of your lies  
Chorus repeat to fade.*



# OUR ASS

W M Quinn

We had an ass at home in Labane. You will note that I use the past tense — we no longer have an ass at home, neither have any of our neighbours. We have grown modern and sophisticated and foolish.

We have a tractor instead, and a motor car — a posh model in silver gun metal — a big impersonal inanimate affair that is dependent on Saudi Arabia and Garage Bills.

We miss the ass; but who could journey to Mass nowadays in an ass and cart, or even a trap, if you could find a trap. We'd be the laughing stock of the whole parish and a disgrace to our post primary offspring. Their marriage chances would be minimal, and their social standing reduced to that of the Travelling People, for the tinkers were always associated with asses.

But, let me repeat, we miss our ass. A big awkward sleep eyed shaggy haired lumbering fella with untrimmed horny hooves, he was, nevertheless, a faithful, if not always a willing servant; for asses are no fools — he could be stubborn and rightly so, for the he was abused and resented it at times.

Like Shep the sheepdog, he didn't like to get his feet wet, so a trip to the local pump for a barrel of water was a nightmarish experience of recalcitrance.

The pump was surrounded by a deep slimy puddle, and no appeal to heaven or the saints above would induce him to wade the mire. Only brute force, and a backing strategy could bring him close enough to the pump to connect the chute to the barrel.

## A ROGUE AND A ROVER

But for all his faults Brownie (as we called him) was an integral part of our simple rural life. We would have

been lost without him. In fact we were often lost without him for he was a born rogue and a rover, and when most needed, he was on the "missing list".

Donkeys, as I say, were aligned to the tinkers, and like them, loved the uninhibited freedom of "The Long Acre", and the luscious grass on the road-side.

Now, even the road-side grass has gone, to make life speedier for our, and other people's mechanical contraptions.

It would be early in the morning when Dad, first out in the fields, returned to announce that — "the ass is gone".

Pandemonium — there was dung to be hauled to the potatoe field — a barrel of Spring Water to be brought — a bag of Guano to be dumped in the hill field and Dad himself wanted to go to the village pub for a pint in the evening — not to mention a neighbour who forever seemed to be wanting the loan of the ass; for not all our neighbours were so richly endowed as to own an ass. A lad would often arrive at the kitchen door — "me father wants to know can he have the lend of the ass".

## WITH THE TINKERS

The hue and cry went up — where could he be, but you didn't have to be the F.B.I. to guess, if Danny Donoghue was camped near the Lackan woods about a mile off.

Danny was a small wiry and well-wrinkled tinker with a handful of childer, who specialised in asses, just as Vincent O'Brien would specialise in thorough-breds.

Asses have cunning and intelligence, and one ass brays to another in a love or companionship call.

The ould people used to say when

they heard an ass bray loud and long — "there's a tinker dead somewhere", and they blessed themselves.

Invariably we found Brownie frisking himself among ten or twenty "pals" at Danny's encampment. It was cruel to estrange him and there was an unusual venom in his beg eyes as he twisted his head in defiance of putting on the halter.

But however unwilling, back he had to come, and there was joy in the return of the wayward and the bread-fruit of our existence, but a sour frustrated far-away look in his big sheepish blue eyes all that day.

But though a faithful servant, he was a born rogue. He could undo with his teeth, the spun yarn that kept the gate shut, and push the bolt across with his head. Once he knocked the single stone wall with a heave of his behind to make an escape gap.

## MADE A SWOP

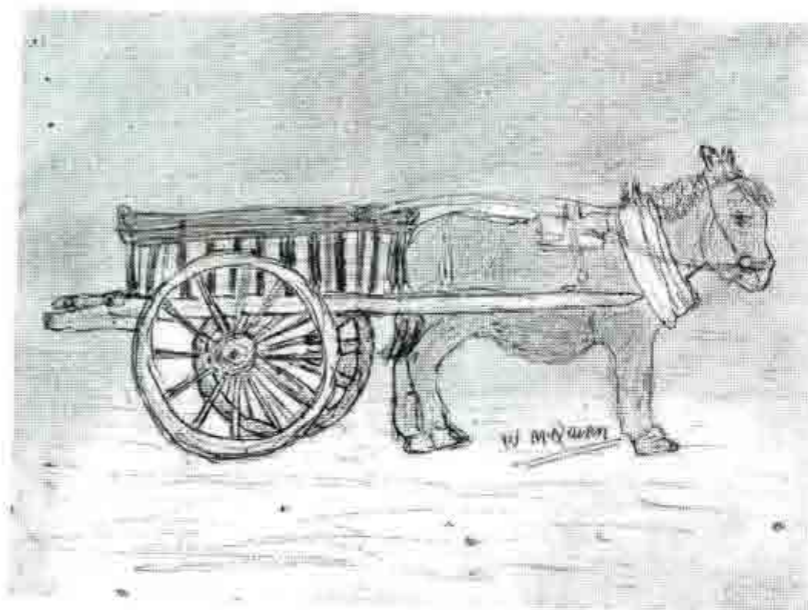
Eventually we made a swop with Danny. He gave us a lively well-trimmed grey ass — as sprightly as Arkle and only a 2-year old.

It was only later we learned he was as ould as Methuraleh, gingered up by the tinker man, who, if he had the opportunity, could put many a low grade race horse on a winning streak. For Danny had the knack and he didn't mind an exchange so long as a half-crown changed hands in his favour.

No doubt old Brownie was later pepped up, trimmed and exchanged as a "youngster" for another old ass — and so went on the exciting happy swopping of the itinerant ass dealer.

## BRING BACK THE ASS

But that "lively" newcomer never niched as affectionate a place in our



hearts as did poor ould Brownie. We had grown up with Brownie. He catapulted us off his back when we drove him too hard in a trot, and, as we lay on the ground, he'd give a knowing glance with his wise old eyes, as much as to say "Now; the Devil mend ye".

The big gun-metalled motor may be speedier, more posh and soft-cushioned, but if I had my way again, I'd swop the posh expensive yoke for the slow plodding philosophic donkey — no I didn't say ass for time has proven that the present day motorist is the ass and Brownie and his breed are a great and sad loss, not only to the economy but to rural placitude.

Bring back the birch! I say — bring back the ass, and away with Saudi Arabia, Garage Bills and Tranquillisers. A handful of thistles then equalled a tankful of diesel today.

Oh! happy carefree peaceful days.