

Greystones Archaeological & Historical Society

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Acknowledgements

Cover photograph of Old Harbour in Greystones

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Published in 2010, this was the Society's sixth journal. Just click on a title to access the full paper.

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The Society's website at www.greystonesahs.org has material from earlier volumes of our journals, details of our activities and much, much more. Pay us a visit!

Chairperson's Introduction

Once again the Greystones Archaeological and Historical Society is happy to present its journal. The current journal, for which we thank Frank Deignan, is now three times larger than our first one. Its quality reflects his efforts and those of the contributors to whom we are very grateful.

The activities of our society include lectures, tours, visits to museums, historical sites and buildings, and, lately, musical evenings. We have had many enjoyable and informative lectures given to us by presenters who are enthusiastic and meticulous in their research. In recent years some of these talks have been given by members of our own society: Rosemary Raughter, Brendan McCann, John Caffrey and Canon Jennings.

A recent new experience for our society was our participation in the Shoreline Expo in the Greystones Community Centre. The exhibition stand we presented made a much wider audience aware of our activities and received many favourable comments.

Many thanks are due to our committee for their time and valuable input. Also Aileen Short for the tremendous effort in organising the events mentioned and to Joan Jones who keeps our finances in order.

Christy O'Connor – Chairperson

GREYSTONES ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Letters to Stillorgan from the Western Front

By Bryan Mac Mahon

Introduction

During World War I, many women at home sought ways of supporting the war effort and one way was to form an organisation to send supplies to soldiers at the front. Monica Roberts of Kelston, on Stillorgan Road near White Cross, set up such a society in the autumn of 1914. Kelston still stands, now surrounded by houses, and today's entrance is from Leopardstown Road. Monica's father was Rev. W. R. Roberts, a mathematician who was a Senior Fellow and Vice Provost of Trinity College, chaplain to the Lord Lieutenant and treasurer of the Royal Irish Academy.

Some 390 letters sent to Monica Roberts from the front were kept by her daughter and are now deposited as the Monica Roberts Collection in box-files in the archives of the Royal Dublin Fusiliers' Association in Dublin City Library, Pearse Street. They were addressed to '*Kelston, Stillorgan*' and were sometimes forwarded to other addresses when Monica was away from home. The letters form a remarkably vivid and moving source of information about conditions at the front and about the attitudes of the men. It is a privilege to have a glimpse into the hearts and minds of these young men and to witness the courage, endurance and patriotism shown in their letters. Reading the men's handwriting with their underlining, alterations and marginalia gives a sense of the uniqueness of each one. Even the envelopes and postmarks are telling, as is the kind of paper they had available. In some cases only parts of pages have survived, the rest having decayed.



Monica Roberts

The Band of Helpers

Miss Roberts called her group the Band of Helpers, and she set out its constitution in a typed page headed '*Rules for Band of Helpers to the Soldiers*':

1. This Society will last during the war and shall be called 'Band of Helpers to the Soldiers'.
2. Members pay 3d on being enrolled, which sum will go towards buying comforts, also for postage of goods to the front.
3. Members to send monthly, addressed to Miss Monica Roberts, Kelston, Stillorgan, some contribution, however small, either in money or any of the following articles, all of which are said to be useful by the War Office. Handkerchiefs, bootlaces, chocolate, peppermint, dried fruits, briar pipes and tobacco pouches, tobacco, cigarettes, cigarette tobacco and cigarette papers, small tins of boracic ointment or borated vaseline for sore feet, antiseptic powder, post cards, pocket knives, lead pencils etc.
4. These articles will be forwarded monthly to the Dublin Fusiliers and the Royal Flying Corps.

5. If the Society grows, and receives good support, more regiments could be included. But at present, the above mentioned will be all to whom this Society will contribute.
6. Members are required to kindly tell their friends about this Society, for as many members as possible are required.

The *Irish Times* archive has recently been made available on-line, and a search reveals that the work of the Band of Helpers featured from time to time in its pages. Monica kept meticulous accounts, and on 14 December 1914, she listed the items which had been sent to the front: 4,836 cigarettes, 14 pipes, 17 packets of tobacco, 83 pairs of socks, 53 mufflers, 22 pairs of mittens, 12 pairs of cuffs, 7 pairs of gloves, 19 body belts, 16 helmets, 2 vests, 127 handkerchiefs, 138 pairs of laces, 140 tins of boric ointment and Vaseline, 161 tins of foot powder, 142 cakes of soap, 10 shirts, 505 postcards, 48 letter cards, 6 packets of letter cases, 7 packs of playing cards. Other items sent were: chocolate, cake, peppermint, brandy-balls, pencils and knives. In other letters to the paper, Monica also listed the amounts of money donated, and the names of the donors.

Private Edward Mordaunt

There is little information in the Collection specifically on the society's work or the people involved, but the wealth of experiences recounted in the soldiers' letters is quite breathtaking. What I have chosen to do in this article is to present the stories of just two of the soldiers, retaining original spelling and punctuation. In Volume 1 of the Collection, there are thirty-six letters from Private Edward Mordaunt, 8723, No. 6 Platoon, B Co. 2nd Royal Dublin Fusiliers, and they date from July 1915 to December 1917. The first letter is headed BEF (i.e. British Expeditionary Force), France, and it gives some information on his background:

You ask me if I live in Dublin, Well, I should think I do I was born in 19 Upper Rutland on May 26th 1894 and lived in Dublin up to February 1911 when I then enlisted and is still a soldier I left England on April 6th 1912 and went abroad to India which I liked very much I was there until June 18th 1914 when we left India for the front

I landed in France on 25 september 1914 and I am here yet I need not tell you I have suffered cruel since then but thank God I am still alive, the worst of it was the winter out here we were both frozed and up to our chests in water.

Dear Miss Roberts I think if I was made of iron I would not stick it as well as I am doing but for all that I am far from home but happy.

Bravo the Dublin Fusiliers

From your faithful and unknown friend

Edward Mordaunt

ps Please excuse the paper and writing as I cannot get any better between food and writing we are nearly starved for the want of them.

*Goodbye if you do not hear from me again as we are in a very dangerous position.
with best of good luck and wishes*

The next letter shows his appreciation of a parcel received, which included 'my faviouret cigarettes Woodbines' and gives a clear picture of his state of mind on the eve of battle:

I need not tell you Dear Friend your socksare very usefull also especially when I come out of the trenches when we have to keep our boots on without even unlacing

LETTERS TO STILLORGAN FROM THE WESTERN FRONT

them for 7 days and also after a rout march when our feet do be very sore there is nothing like a change of socks for a relieve along with a cigarette.

Dear Miss Roberts I am very sorry to tell you there has been bad news told us I am afraid this is the last letter I shall be able to send you so I will make it as long as I can for our commanding Officer gave us a lecture about it and it is about a big attack which he said we are to be engaged in a very short time he told us that us that our boys and the French are making great progress in both North and South and he said that he hopes we do like wise in the centre which he said we will be in very shortly but I need not tell you that when I say I am afraid we will be soon in action I don't mean that we are afraid of the Huns ah know far from been afraid of them because our irish blood is boiling (looking?) to get in close quarters with them and show them once more what an irish man is made of.

My faithfull friend I am sorry to say that I don't think I have any heart at all after what I seen what the Huns done in certain places in France which I am not allowed to tell. I seen them slay innocent women and children and also young girls it was something shameful it brought the tears to most of our eyes who seen what they did and I think it is our turn now to revenge the death of those poor innocent people and also our poor comrades who died on the field of battle for those we love I am not afraid to die tomorrow for I know I am doing it for a good cause

I shall never forget your kindness to me and a great many of my chums also I must say your name is very much appreciated amongst the boys of No 6 Platoon B Coy RDF out here.

Private Mordaunt survived this engagement, and in December 1915 wrote about his second winter in the trenches:

We are having a very hard time of it in the trenches between rain frost snow and sleet it has us near dead and that is not bad enough but when we lie down to get an hours sleep the rats start to annoy us so that between them all including the Hun I need not tell you that we have a fine time of it (I DON'T THINK) but still "Are We Downhearted? No."

The slogans "Are We Downhearted? No!" and "Will We Win? Yes!" appear frequently in the letters and are the kind of mantra that men might have chanted to keep their morale up. One of the early war songs had the refrain:

*Are we downhearted? No! No! No!
We are ready to go, go go.
Goodbye sweetheart, for a little while,
Goodbye mother, let me see you smile
Soon the bugle will blow, blow, blow.
Duty calls, we know
And we'll hang the Kaiser to a sour apple tree,
Are we downhearted? No! No! No!*

The men passed the time by playing a guessing game about when the war would end and Edward's guess was 5 May 1916. One of his letters ended on a sombre and affectionate note: 'Goodbye if you don't hear from me again. With best wishes xxxxxxxxxxxx'. Cigarettes were vitally important to morale – 'the cigarettes is the most welcomest gift we can receive out here and it is the only thing that helps to cheer us up'. Other items which were appreciated by Edward were a lamp for use in the trenches at night, a pocket knife, a razor, and as Christmas 1915 approached, he thanked Miss Roberts for the cake, crackers, cards and snakes-and-ladders. Around this time, he was sent on a two week course in bomb-throwing, which gave

him a break from the trenches, and in January 1916 he declared that he was 'a 1st class bomb thrower'. He wrote that *'leather gloves would be usefull when I go on patrol at night with a few bombs to share among the Huns'* (In a letter to the *Irish Times* in the same month, Monica appealed for funds and goods, and specifically mentions that old gloves would be very useful to bomb-throwers. It is quite amazing to be able to track this handwritten request from the trenches in 1916 to the digital archive of the *Irish Times* in 2007. Such is modern research.)



Kelston (near Stillorgan)

Edward Mordaunt was back in Dublin on leave in May-June 1916. He visited Kelston, and was disappointed not to meet Monica, who was not at home. His only reference to the Rising was: *'I had a look around the city and I must say it is a very sorrowfull sight'*. He was in a defiant mood again in late June 1916, back at the front and anticipating close contact with the enemy, but also revealing his frustration with *'this sort of work'*:

We expect to beat the Germans out of their trenches very shortly and if we once get them on the run we wont stop until we go straight through Berlin and put Kazior Bill out of his thrown and drown him in the Liffey and rain victorious in Germany and get finished with this sort of work forever.

Edward did finish with this work soon after, as the next letter (dated 16 November 1916) was from Grayling War Hospital, Chichester, Sussex. He was wounded in the right arm and was writing with his left hand. His requests to Miss Roberts now are different: he asks for a wristwatch and a wallet. He requested a transfer to Dublin and wrote from the Red Cross Hospital, Picture Gallery, Dublin Castle in June 1917, where he was having a series of operations on his arm. He visited Kelston several times and thanked Monica for the two days he spent there in July 1917. On another occasion he apologised for not arriving – he had no money for the train fare and went to borrow from his pal, *'but it turned out that he was stoney as well'*. Clearly, the generosity of Monica and her family extended beyond the distant support of letters and parcels, and if Edward was welcomed at Kelston it seems likely that other soldiers on leave visited also.

A major change occurred in Edward's life at his time as shown in the next letter, from 18 Windsor Terrace, South Circular Road, Portobello. He was no longer in the army, and this letter is signed *'Mr. and Mrs. E. Mordaunt'*. There was a subtle change of tone also, as befitted his new station in life:

Just a few lines to let you know I am still alive, also to let you see I have not quiet forgotten your kindness to me.

My arm is still about the same I cannot use it very much I have not got any employment yet, but still living in hope.

The final letter in the archive shows that his new life presented another set of problems for Edward Mordaunt:

In regards to me being plucky in looking for employment so soon, I need not tell you it is a case of having to as I have got no place of my own just yet and am staying in furnished apartments and have to pay 6/- a week for it and now that my pension is down to 16/6 a week I can assure you we are mearly existing on that money.

Theres no mistake about it I have an excellent good character, only it must be light employment such as caretaker or overseer that I have been recommended for,

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and I would be very thankfull to you if you should let me know anyone with such posts vacant for I can assure you I will do my best to please them in every respect.

This is the last information available on Edward Mordaunt, and it is not known how he fared in later times. In the Dublin telephone directory there are seven listings under the surname, and I have made contact with them. None appears to be related to Edward.

Private Patrick Byrne

By way of contrast, the story of Private Patrick Byrne is a tragic one. There is only one letter from him (in Volume 2 of the Collection) and it is dated 4 April 1916. He was aged 28, was born in 9 John's Street West in Dublin, and was also in B Coy, 2nd Royal Dublin Fusiliers. His parents were Edward and Kate.

Dear Miss Roberts

I have received your most kind letter which I always long to get from Ireland, it reminds me of the Happy times I spent there. I came out to France with the 1st Expeditionary Force & I have been twice down the line. Once gased at Ypres on 9th May, wounded 22nd January this year & could not get home but I am still in the land of the living, so I have a chance yet of seeing Dear Old Dublin. We had very bad weather all winter what with Snow, Rain, Frost and all, the worst kind of times you could expect in Winter, I did not spend a very good St Patrick's day (two lines crossed out) outside but not inside. But still you would never hear us Chaps grumble. We just (words crossed out) got our own back by way of throwing Bombs, Rifles, Grenades and Sniping at the Huns so I had amusement after all. Of course I am well used to the game by now, as well as my Comrades, so you can expect we give the Germans a lively time.

I would like you to send me a parcel of Eatables as we are rather short of Grub sometimes. I would be very thankful to you for same. I expect to get my leave in a few months time and then I will relate to you some of my experiences here if it pleases you.

Yours truly

Patrick Byrne

Patrick did not see Dublin again. On the back of the envelope, there is a note, probably written by Monica: 'Killed in action. Recommended for the VC'. He was killed 17 days after he wrote the letter, on Good Friday 1916. Company Sergeant Major J. Connor wrote on 26 April, giving an account of Private Byrne's death:

In the Field, 26-4-16

Dear Miss Roberts

In looking through the effects of the late Private Byrne, I came across a letter of yours. I am therefore writing you this letter to let you know of his sad but glorious end. On the 21st inst. a dug-out was blown in by the enemy. Some men being buried, Pte. Byrne went in to get them out but while engaged in this brave work another shell came through the roof killing Pte. Byrne.

I also take this opportunity of thanking you on behalf of the men of B Co. 2nd RDF for your kindness to us, to the whole battalion in fact.

I have just returned for the third time and I remember your very welcome Parcels when conditions were much worse than at present. I refer to October and November 1914.

Again thanking you for your interest and extreme kindness.

PS The shell which killed Pte. Byrne was what we call a dud, i.e. a shell which did not burst.

The Royal Dublin Fusiliers' Association has added the information that Patrick Byrne is buried in Bienvillers Military Cemetery, plot XIV.A.10. There is no further reference to the Victoria Cross.

Conclusion

The Monica Roberts Collection is a unique one, and will prove even more significant in years to come as the Great War becomes a more distant memory. The gratitude of the men at the front and their appreciation that somebody remembered them and cared about their welfare pervades the letters, and we too should be grateful to Monica Roberts' daughter, the Royal Dublin Fusiliers' Association and Dublin City Library for ensuring that these poignant letters from the men of the Great War are made available to readers today and in the future. Perhaps somewhere, maybe in a long-forgotten bundle in an attic, letters from Monica to one of her soldiers have survived, and may yet come to light.

A Greystones Miscellany - An Early Greystones Builder

By Leo Ireton

Patrick Joseph Kinlen came to Greystones from County Kerry just before the turn of the 19th century. He purchased land from Elizabeth Maine who was the owner of the Burnaby Estate. She was the only daughter of Sir St. Vincent Bentinck Hawkins-Whitshed of Killincarrig House, Greystones (afterwards the Clydagh Hotel, then the Woodlands Hotel). She called her estate at Greystones after her first husband Colonel Fred Burnaby who died in 1885.



2 Killincarrig Road, part of 'Beachview Terrace', 1904

Patrick J Kinlen bought the land in May 1898 and proceeded to build shortly after. He employed an English architect who used a neo-tudor design, especially at Burnaby Road and Killincarrig Road. At that time the Burnaby Estate bordered the La Touche Estate close to Killincarrig Road, on the north side. Kinlen wanted to build a number of houses, which he would name Beachview Terrace, on Killincarrig Road with reasonably sized back gardens. To do this he made an offer to buy land from the La Touche Estate but this was refused. A legal action ensued which eventually resulted in a High Court case, which he lost. This resulted in the terrace of houses he built on Killincarrig Road having very small back gardens though access, for coalmen, was provided at the back of the terrace.

Kinlen Road is named after the builder. He also carried out major work on Roundwood reservoir and in 1908 he built the Holy Rosary Church. He died quite a young man while on summer holidays in Greystones.

Although the Kinlen family lived in a house in Church Road, they retained ownership of a few houses on Killincarrig Road which they let out in summer months. These were: *Iona*, *Armada* (now *Parteen*), *Littlehampton* and *Charleville*, and they also retained (a shop) at 2 Killincarrig Road. Killincarrig Road is so called because it follows a line of access to

Killincarrig village from Greystones Railway Station. When Weston St. John Joyce visited Greystones in 1906 he said: *'from the top of the Killincarrig Road a field path leads by the golf links, through a wood, to the village of Killincarrig'*.

Patrick's sisters, Miss Catherine Kinlen and Mrs Moore, ran a business in the shop at 2 Killincarrig Road until 1935. His daughter, Miss Eileen Kinlen, who lived in *Littlehampton*, sold the houses in the early 1960s.

A Greystones Miscellany - Weather Matters

By James Scannell

Today we are becoming more concerned about climate change, with increases in worldwide temperatures prompting climate experts to forecast various worrying future scenarios (Costa de Greystones, anyone?). However, if we go back 250 years, one discovers that Ireland was struck by a sudden 2-year mini Ice Age from 1739 to 1741, and this major event remained largely unknown by most people until David Dickson's book: *Arctic Ireland – The Extraordinary Story of the Great Frost and the Forgotten Famine of 1740-1741*, published by The White Row Press, appeared in 1997 in which he chronicled the events in Ireland during this 2-year period.

Most of us can remember where we were when Hurricane Charlie swept through the country in 1986, when JFK was assassinated in 1963 or 9/11 2001 when the twin towers of the World Trade Centre in New York collapsed as the result of terrorist attacks. So 100 years ago the ability to recall the *Night of Big Wind of January 1839*, because of its scale and the devastation caused, was one of the qualifying questions asked of old age pension applicants by pension officers in late 1908 where an applicant was unable to provide written proof or confirmable details of his/her birth that they were aged 70 or over as full civil registration of births, deaths, and marriages did not commence in Ireland until 1864.

On the night of 5 January 1839 heavy snow fell across Ireland and was replaced on the following morning by an Atlantic warm front which brought calm to the country with



The Big Wind 1839

temperatures rising during the day resulting in the rapid thawing of the previous night's snowfall. During the day an unnoticed deep Atlantic depression began moving towards Ireland and created a cold front when it collided with the warm air over Ireland bringing strong winds and heavy rain. Around noon reports of severe weather were reported from western parts of Co. Mayo with the storm gathering strength as it moved eastwards across the country. By midnight the winds had reached hurricane force and it's believed that this

storm was the most severe storm to impact on the country for several years. Severe property damage occurred in Connacht, Ulster and North Leinster with between 1/5 and 1/4 of houses in Dublin being damaged ranging from broken windows, tiles stripped from roofs, to the complete destruction of poorly built houses. All over the country the badly built homes of the poor suffered the greatest damage and destruction. Farmers were particularly affected with stacks of hay and corn for livestock being damaged or blown away while shipping was also affected with a number of vessels being wrecked while trying to ride out this exceptional storm.

In the book *The Night of the Big Wind - The Story of the Legendary Big Wind of 1839, Ireland's Greatest Natural Disaster*, by Peter Carr and published by The White Row Press, the impact of this event on the country as a whole is covered in depth. How many died as the result of this storm has not been quantified precisely but it is estimated that somewhere between 300 and 400 people lost their lives. In Mary Street, Dublin, 6 people were killed in a fire while in Glasnevin a member of the Dublin Metropolitan Police was killed after a wall of the Botanic Gardens collapsed on top of him. In his book Carr provides an A to Z listing of damage by town

and city throughout Ireland where it was reported in the newspapers of the day thus providing the reader with a clear indication of the vast scale of this weather event nationally.

A Greystones Miscellany - The Mysterious Death of Patrick Doyle - 1908

By James Scannell

Followers of crime dramas on television will be aware that there are specific methods by which the time of death of a deceased person can be estimated. Such methods were not known in 1908 and that the methods in use at that time were applied following the death of Patrick Doyle, 10 Strand Cottages, Greystones. His body was found on the railways tracks in Greystones railway station by Thomas White, a parcel man, following the departure of the 6.45 p.m. Down Wexford Mail on Monday 20th January 1908, who then drew his grim discovery to the attention of Andrew Martin the head porter. Present in the station at that time was Captain Fitzgerald of the Army Medical Department, who had just alighted from the train and on hearing of this discovery, jumped down on the tracks and after performing a cursory examination of the body stated that the individual concerned was dead. The station master was informed of what had happened and he in turn notified the local R.I.C. barracks from where Sergeant Barry was quickly on the scene followed by Rev. Fr. Farrelly C.C. and Dr. Price. Dr. Price confirmed that the man concerned was deceased as the result of some terrible



Greystones railway station and beach, 1880 - 1914

injuries sustained. The body was subsequently identified as that of Patrick Doyle. The remains were removed from the track and conveyed to his residence where they reposed until the inquest into his death took place.

On Wednesday 22 January Dr. James Murray, Coroner for East Wicklow, opened the inquest into the death of 70 year Patrick Doyle whose body had been found in Greystones railway station the previous Monday. The jury consisted of Edward Beggs (foreman), Thomas Carling, Patrick Flynn, James Healon, Oswald Spurling, George Stevenson, James Withers, George

Gilbert, Charles Evans, Andrew McFarland, Richard Huggard, James Doyle and Robert Evans. Also present were District Inspector Triscott and Sergeant Barry representing the R.I.C.

After the foreman Edward Beggs was sworn in, he asked Coroner Murray if it was necessary for the jury to view the body of the deceased as he objected to doing this. He was informed by the Coroner that it was necessary to do this. Beggs then stated that several of the jurors objected to viewing the mutilated remains of the deceased and further stated that he had been told some time in the past by a gentleman who viewed a body that he had not been well for a long time afterwards. Beggs said that he had no objections to viewing the face of the body provided the rest of it was covered up. Coroner Murray said that he could not change the law to which Beggs replied: *'No. Will the remains be covered up?'* and was then advised by Sergeant Barry that the remains were covered up except for the face. The Coroner went on to say that the jury would not have to look at any part of the body other than the face. With this obstacle out of the way, the jury was sworn in after which they were taken off to view the remains of the deceased and then returned to hear evidence from various witnesses.

(My father told me that sometimes in the 1930's or 1940's he was a member of an inquest jury concerning the death of a Dublin docker who had been killed by a crane hook which fell on his head when the cable snapped. He remarked that he was thankful that the coroner did not require them to view the remains of the deceased due to the nature of the injuries he sustained, so it appears that a coroner had some leeway in this matter. I am also aware that in 1888 when Thomas Bewley was killed in a Dublin industrial gas explosion, the coroner on that occasion did not ask the jury in question to view the remains due to the terrible mutilated state of the body which was covered up except for the face.)

The first witness called was Edward Doyle, son of the deceased, who confirmed that the remains were those of his father 70 year old Thomas Doyle whom he last saw the previous Monday evening. He said that his father, who was a labourer, was in good health and had worked for Mrs. Doyle for between 30 or 40 years.

Questioning then began from the various parties in the court:

Beggs:	'Where did you last see your father alive?'
E. Doyle:	'Coming down the Burlington Road around four o'clock. The next time I saw him he was dead on the railway.'
Coroner:	'Do you know where he was going?'
E. Doyle:	'No. He told my sister he was going up around the railway station for a walk.'

The next witness called was Captain Fitzgerald of the Army Medical Department who testified that on Monday evening he was standing on the railway station platform when he was told by a small boy that a man had been caught by the train. He went to the spot indicated and found a body lying lengthways between the rails of the tracks with the head facing towards Wicklow. He placed his hand on the body which appeared to be cold.

Coroner:	'Was there a light at the place?'
Fitzgerald:	'There was a lamp by the signal cabin and a porter was there with a lamp.'
Coroner:	'What time were you on the station (platform)?'
Fitzgerald:	'I came down on the 5.59 from Kingstown, arriving at Greystones at about a quarter to seven.'
Coroner:	'The body was in such a position that a person on the opposite side of the station could not see it?'

Fitzgerald: 'Yes and I would not have seen it if my attention had not been directed to it.'

The next witness called was Thomas White, parcels clerk at the station, who stated that on the evening in question he met the 6.45 p.m. train for the purpose of collecting the parcels on it for Greystones from the guard and that someone passed the remark that there was a parcel on the rails. He went with a lamp to the end of the platform and discovered that it was a dead body. He told a porter that there was a man on the line who in turn informed the stationmaster after which assistance arrived. He concluded his evidence by stating that the body was lying close to the platform and was shadowed by it.

Engine driver Christopher Everard testified that he left Dublin at 5.10 p.m. and arrived in Greystones at 5.57 p.m. on the evening in question and did not observe anything unusual on the ground. When he returned to Bray that night at 8.05 p.m. he was asked by the night man there to examine his locomotive which he did but did not find any blood on it. In reply to a number of questions Everard said that the locomotive had passed twice over the spot where the body was found and that nothing unusual was experienced by either himself or his stoker.

Beggs: 'Would the locomotive receive a jolt if it passed over a body?'

Everard: 'I don't know, for I never went over a body as far as I know.'

The next witness called was Thomas Finnegan, driver of the mail train to Wexford who said that coming into Greystones he noticed nothing unusual about the (running of the) engine. When he reached Wicklow, he heard about the accident (in Greystones) and then examined the locomotive but found no marks of blood on it. When he reached Wexford he carried a more detailed examination of the locomotive and discovered a splash of blood on one of the bogie wheels on the locomotive's left hand side. He found no trace of blood on any other part of the locomotive or on the carriages.

D.I. Triscott: 'Did you hear anyone shout (i.e. cry out) at Greystones?'

Finnegan: 'No. If we ran over the man there would sure to be blood on the sand pipe. Of course the blood we found might have been caused by our running over the spot (where he lay).'

A number of witnesses then gave accounts of the last sightings of the deceased including James Byrne, manager of the Railway Hotel, who said that he saw the deceased in the front bar between 4.30 p.m. and five o'clock on that Monday evening. He was served a drink but was quiet sober. He had a drink, went to the back and then returned to the bar and subsequently left without taking any more drink. That was the last time he saw him.

Beggs: 'Was anyone was in his company at that time?'

Byrne: 'No!'

Beggs: 'There was no treating?'

Byrne: 'No. He was in his own company. He got into conversation with some people, but he was not in the house more than ten minutes and he did not come back again.'

Thomas Sullivan said that on Monday evening he saw the deceased in Byrne's public house between five and half past five. He could not say if the deceased had any drink but there was some on the counter in front of him and he seemed to be in the company of the doctor.

Coroner: 'How did you know it was half-past five?'

Sullivan: 'I knock off work about half past four. I judged (the time) by that.'

The next witness called was Sergeant Barry who testified 'On the evening in question I went to the station at about 6.50 p.m. in a cab that was sent for me and found the body of Patrick Doyle lying between the signal rods and the inner rail close to the platform. The body was on its back and the right arm was under the rods. The left arm and the leg were across the inner rail while the head was (facing) towards Wicklow. The man was quite dead and there was a quantity of blood there. The body was moved to the residence of the deceased. The place where the body was lying was about 15 yards to the north of the signal cabin.'

He was followed by Dr. A.G. Price who said that on that Monday evening he was summoned to the railway station a few minutes after 7 o'clock and when he arrived there discovered the body lying as described by the previous witness and that it was quite dead.

D.I. Triscott: 'Was the body cold?'

Dr. Price: 'Yes: strange to say it was. It generally takes eight hours for a body to get cold.'

D.I. Triscott: 'Did you find anything to indicate that the engine struck him?'

Dr. Price: 'The leg was taken off right inside the body as it were.'

D.I. Triscott: 'Could the man's death have taken place before the train struck?'

Dr. Price: 'Yes, The fact that the body was so cold was contrary to the hypothesis that the train killed him.'

D.I. Triscott: 'If he was knocked down by the engine, would you not expect to find the arm where it was?'

Dr. Price: 'No. I cannot say he was not dead before the train ran over him.'

Coroner Murray proceeded to put a line of questions to Dr. Price:

Coroner: 'Would a post mortem examination reveal whether the man died from natural causes or from being knocked down by the engine?'

Dr. Price: 'It would only reveal the condition of his heart. I could not say whether the heart was healthy or not. The left arm was amputated and the right leg taken off.'

Coroner: 'Were these injuries sufficient to cause death?'

Dr. Price: 'It was certainly the case in this instance.'

Coroner: 'Are you of the opinion that death was caused by these injuries?'

Dr. Price: 'I have difficulty in this regard and can only say probably for the body was cold.'

Coroner: 'Suppose he had died from heart disease would his body be cold?'

Dr. Price: 'In my opinion it was too cold for 15 minutes.'

The phrasing of Dr. Price's last answer leaves one with the impression that he assumed that the deceased had been struck by the 6.45 p.m. train and did not consider the possibility that the deceased could have been lying on the tracks from an earlier time.

That concluded the testimony of the various witnesses summoned after which Coroner Murray summed up the evidence presented indicating to the jury that the all the evidence had been examined in detail and emphasised that no blame could be attached to anyone regarding the cause of the man's death whether it was due to heart failure or as the result of his injuries. After due deliberation the jury returned a verdict of '*death due to haemorrhage, the result of his injuries*' adding a rider expressing their sympathy with the deceased's relatives.

A GREYSTONES MISCELLANY - The Mysterious Death of Patrick Doyle - 1908

The inquest verdict was that Patrick Doyle bled to death from his injuries but it did not answer the central question as to how they had been caused. Was he lying on the tracks when the locomotive ran over him or did he fall unnoticed in front of it? On the basis of the inquest evidence on that Monday he was last seen alive at 5.30 p.m. and what he did or where he was during the next hour a half remained a mystery and still does. Did he head for home sometime between 5.30 p.m. and 6 p.m. and suffer a heart attack while crossing the tracks in the station as a short cut home instead of using the footbridge and lay where he fell until his body was found. In the darkness of a January night when the station was only lit by oil lamps, which were also used by steam locomotives, his body was not seen by anyone until after the arrival of the Down Wexford Mail at 6.45 p.m. Why the body was so cold was never explored fully but one piece of critical information not quoted at the inquest was the air temperature that evening: as had it been a very cold night, the body would have cooled very quickly and that would have indicated that it had lain where it had fallen for some time but at that time forensic science was only in its infancy and we today have the benefit of more up to date scientific methods to determine the time of death for a body.

A Greystones Miscellany - Church of St. Patrick, Kilquade: Parish Priests of the 19th Century

By Leo Ireton

In 2002 the parish of Kilquade celebrated the 200th anniversary of the building of the Church of St Patrick. The Parish Priest at the time of the Church's building in 1802 was the Rev. William O'Neill. Born near Rathdrum in 1744, *'for 38 years he filled the Important and arduous situation [an allusion to the 1798 Rebellion] of Roman Catholic Pastor of the United Parishes of Kilquade and Kilmurray'*. He died in 1822 and is buried in Kilquade. Father William O'Neill was succeeded as Parish Priest of Kilquade by the Rev. Alexander Roche in July 1822. Father Roche was appointed Parish Priest of Bray in July 1826 and was followed in the post of Parish Priest of Kilquade by Father Stennett.

Charles Stennett was born in 1783 and went to school at Stonyhurst, England. He gained a commission in the King's Army and fought in the Napoleonic Wars. He married and had an only daughter, Mary Weld Stennett. His wife dying, he resigned his commission and went to study for the priesthood. He was ordained in 1814. From 1815 to 1824 Father Stennett was C.C. in St. Audoen's Church, Dublin City. He was appointed Parish Priest of Donabate, North Dublin, in 1824, and then in 1826 appointed Parish Priest of Kilquade.

Father Stennett proved to be a man of ability and knew his own mind. Nor did the Law Courts frighten him: on one particular occasion the bone of contention being a fight over schools. He was a daring horseman and donned a British officer's uniform more than once and rode out and took over command of the 'running raving wild astonished soldiery' believing, it would seem, that he had no chance donned as a priest. As a known priest he is said to have been fired on more than once.

The Catholic community in area was an active one: after Catholic Emancipation in 1829 Daniel O'Connell wrote to Father Stennett asking if he had received a receipt for the contribution made by the parishioners of St. Patrick's to the newly formed Catholic Association.

His daughter Mary kept house for him at Birch Ville, the parish priest's house at that time. She married Henry M Redmond at Kilquade on 10th February 1840. The marriage ceremony was performed by Rev. A O'Connell, Parish Priest of St Michael and John's, Dublin, and particulars of the wedding are recorded in the Kilquade Parish Marriage Register in Father Stennett's own hand. They resided at Birch Ville.

Father Stennett, whose health had been failing, advised his daughter to see to the renewal of the lease on Birch Ville but before anything was done about it Father Stennett himself expired on 25th December 1840. He was buried at Kilquade. On entering the Church of St Patrick there is a memorial on the wall to the right which reads:

'Monument erected by Henry M Redmond of Birch Ville, Esq., in memory of the Revd. Charles Barker Stennett, P.P. of Kilquade and Kilmurray and Prebend of Kilmactalway [near Clondalkin, Co. Dublin], who departed this life on the 25th December 1840 in the 57th year of his age and 16th [should be 15th] of his ministry in the above Parishes.'

'I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course. I have kept the faith.

R.I.P.'

Henry Redmond and his wife Mary afterwards lived at Popefield House, Athy, Co. Kildare. Their first son, Charles Stennett Redmond, was born in 1843 and was educated in Trinity College and London University. He became a medical practitioner. His son Charles Henry Redmond, 1882 – 1966, married three times and had seven children.

A GREYSTONES MISCELLANY - Church of St. Patrick, Kilquade: Parish Priests of the 19th Century

Father Stennett was succeeded by the Rev. Matthew Fagan in 1842. During his time in Kilquade the Convent of Carmelite Nuns was founded. Briefly this came about in the following way:-

The Chaplain of the Warrenmount Carmelite Convent in Dublin fell ill during Holy Week. Father Fagan, on a visit to Dublin, volunteered to do the Chaplain's work for a week and it was during this time that he mentioned to the Prioress his wish to have a Carmelite Convent in the Parish of Kilquade. A charitable lady, Mrs. Delahoyde, having heard of the proposal, donated £600.

Out one day on horseback, he met with Mr Peter Murray: 'Will this house do?' asked Mr Murray, 'if so I will sell it to the nuns for the same as I paid for it, £400; and the land for the same rent as myself.' The kind offer was accepted and the generous donation of Mrs. Delahoyde paid for the house and for some necessary furniture. The house was occupied by four nuns and two postulants who arrived in Delgany on the 7th December 1844.

Father Fagan was Parish Priest of Kilquade for 21 years and died in 1863 in his 75th year. He was succeeded by the Rev. Peter Segrave who had been A.D.M. for a year or two during the failing health of Father Fagan. Father Segrave was a priest of the parish for 46 years, 30 of them as Parish Priest. He, with the parishioners, built the present Church of St. Joseph in Newtownmountkenedy at a cost of £1,300, construction of which started in the year 1864 with voluntary workers.

The Rev. James Walsh was appointed A.D.M. to aid Father Segrave in his latter years and he became Parish Priest on Father Segrave's death on 4th May 1891. During Father Walsh's time in Kilquade two Convents and Schools of the Sisters of Holy Faith were founded: the one at Kilcoole and the other at Trudder (near Newtown). Father Walsh died in 1901 and was buried in Kilquade.



Church of St. Patrick, Kilquade

Sources

[1] *A Garden and a Grave Kilquade*, by Rev. John Masterson P.P.

[2] Private correspondence from Dr. Shelagh Mary Stennett Redmond, great granddaughter of Henry Remond and Mary Weld.

‘Wild, Ideal, Romantic and Absurd’:

Lady Arbella Denny and the Establishment of Dublin’s First Magdalen Asylum

By Rosemary Raughter

Introduction

In 1767 a pamphlet was published in Dublin, announcing the imminent opening of a new type of charitable institution in the city. The anonymous author acknowledged recent advances in the provision of relief to a range of deserving categories, but drew attention to the need for yet another establishment, ‘an asylum’, as he described it,

For penitent females, early seduced from the paths of virtue ... but now willing, nay eager, to return to their duties to God, themselves and the community.¹

Derided by its critics as ‘wild, ideal, romantic and absurd’², the house opened in the same year in Leeson Street in Dublin was an attempt to deal with the perennial but increasingly visible incidence of prostitution. It was the first undertaking of its kind in Ireland, pioneering both in the objects of its concern and in the role which it allocated to women in the administration of charity.

Lady Arbella Denny

The principal initiator of the 1767 appeal and the founder of the asylum which it publicised



Portrait of Lady Arbella Denny (Hugh Douglas Hamilton)

was Lady Arbella Denny, an aristocratic widow with excellent connections and a record of involvement in a variety of philanthropic and improving initiatives. Born in 1707, Lady Arbella was the daughter of Thomas Fitzmaurice, twenty-first Lord and first Earl of Kerry, and of his wife, Anne, daughter of the cartographer, political scientist and entrepreneur, Sir William Petty. Much of Arbella’s childhood was passed at Old Court, the Fitzmaurice seat at Lixnaw, near Tralee, with periodic visits to Dublin and to London. Her upbringing and that of her siblings was materially privileged, but overshadowed by the whims and eccentricities of her father. Described by his own grandson as uneducated, ‘*obstinate and inflexible*’, Thomas Fitzmaurice was an ‘*excessive bad husband*’, a despotic father, and a tyrant who held his household and the surrounding countryside ‘*in strict subordination*’. Lady Kerry, on the other hand,

was a cultivated woman of ‘*superior understanding, address and temper*’. Ambitious and active, she was credited with having brought into the Fitzmaurice family ‘*whatever degree of sense may have appeared in it, or whatever wealth is likely to remain in it*’. From her father, Arbella

¹ A letter to the public on an important subject (Dublin, 1767), pp 4-5.

² ‘A sermon preached on the opening of the Chapel of the Magdalen Asylum for female penitents in Leeson Street on Sunday, the 31st day of January 1768 ... by the Rev. Edward Bayly Dean of Ardfert’, Occasional sermons, Representative Church Body Library, Dublin, 551.14.1, pp 1-22, p. 10.

'WILD, IDEAL, ROMANTIC AND ABSURD'

inherited a strong attachment to her native place – although much of her life was spent out of Kerry, she never lost her interest in affairs there and left strict instructions that she be taken back to Tralee for burial. However, it was her mother whom she recalled with affection, and it was surely from her that she inherited her interest in science and the arts, her enthusiasm for innovation and for improvement. Certainly, it was with the maternal side of her family that Arbella most closely identified, and she is on record as having declared herself *'prouder of my grandfather Petty's struggles, and industry, and success in life, than of all the honours of the House of Lixnaw'*³

At the age of twenty, Arbella married. Her husband, Colonel Arthur Denny, who was a neighbouring landowner, described as *'a very good sort of man'*, but *'uninformed and ignorant'*.⁴ The marriage was childless, but Arbella found a focus for her affections in her nephew, William Fitzmaurice. Neglected by his parents, William spent his first four years in the care of his grandfather at Lixnaw and for the rest of his life treasured the memory of his aunt's care and tenderness at this time. *'If it was not for her'*, he wrote,

*'I should have scarce known how to read, write, or articulate ... It was to her alone I owed any alleviation of the domestic brutality and ill-usage I daily experienced at home. She was the only example I had before me of the two qualities of mind which most adorn and dignify life – amiability and independence.'*⁵

Following her husband's death in 1742, Lady Arbella was left with *'comparatively small means for her rank in life'*.⁶ She refused several offers of marriage, having acquired, she said, *'too much experience ever to become a slave again'*.⁷ In 1745 she moved to Dublin, and occupied the almost half century which remained to her in travel, hospitality and good works. She was a member of the Ladies' Committee of Dr Mosse's Lying-In Hospital, and actively supported the work of the Dublin Society, of which in 1766 she was elected the first honorary and the first woman member. In 1758 she embarked on a twenty-year association with the Dublin Foundling Hospital, and over that period managed to introduce a number of much-needed reforms which improved living conditions and significantly reduced the mortality rates at that institution.

Rationale for the Magdalen Asylum

Lady Arbella's involvement with the Foundling Hospital would certainly have drawn her attention to the plight of prostitutes, and this awareness was presumably a factor in her decision to create the new Magdalen Asylum. However, her enterprise also reflected a more widespread contemporary concern about the incidence of prostitution and the threat which it posed to social and moral order. Traditionally, legislative measures had aimed at the containment rather than the elimination of the practice, and the prostitute herself had been regarded as a public nuisance rather than as an object of compassion. By the beginning of the eighteenth century, however, moralists and reformers had begun to question this approach. While the prostitute continued to be regarded as a sinner, it was acknowledged that her errors had their root in need and distress rather than depravity. Punishment alone was recognized to

³ For biographical details of Lord and Lady Kerry, see Lord Edmond Fitzmaurice, *Life of William Earl of Shelburne* (London 1875), vol. i, pp 2, 3, 5. On Lady Arbella's attachment to her mother, see A. Peter, *A brief account of the Magdalen Chapel, Lower Leeson Street, Dublin* (Dublin, 1907), p. 30. On her pride in her maternal ancestry, 'Curiosities of the peerages of Kerry', VI, *Kerry Magazine*, 22, vol. ii, 1855, pp 189-91, p.

⁴ Fitzmaurice, *Shelburne*, p. 12.

⁵ Fitzmaurice, *Shelburne*, p. 12.

⁶ Peter, *Magdalen Chapel*, p. 22.

⁷ Fitzmaurice, *Shelburne*, p. 13.

be futile, and rescue and rehabilitation increasingly came to be regarded as the most effective means of winning the 'fallen' back to virtue and respectability, thereby benefiting both the individual herself and the wider community.



Section of Rocque's Map of Dublin (1765). The Magdalen Asylum and Chapel were situated on Leeson Street, close to St. Stephen's Green. At the time of the institution's opening, in 1767, this area was on the edge of the city.

As the author of the 1767 pamphlet pointed out, prostitution was an unrewarding and hazardous business. Only the most acute need could tempt a girl to adopt such a course, while the harsh treatment commonly meted out '*often hardens, very seldom reforms*'. The new project, by contrast, was intended not as '*a place of punishment for the wicked but of assistance and reward for those who have ceased to do evil and are resolved to do well*'. Based on the example of the Magdalen House founded a few years earlier in London, the asylum shortly to be opened in Leeson Street provided a refuge in which penitents were '*to be lodged, boarded and clothed ... carefully and conscientiously instructed in the principles of true religion, and powerfully assisted in their virtuous resolutions*', before returning to the world as godly, decent and industrious members of society.⁸

Support, Management and Operation

In soliciting support for the scheme, appeal was made to the self-interest as well as to the piety and humanity of the public. Assistance was sought from all those '*inspired with a truly Christian zeal to turn many to righteousness*', and readers were asked to pity the '*diseases, poverty and brutal insults*' to which prostitutes were routinely subject. But, they were reminded, the evil effects of such practices were not confined to the woman herself. They extended to the wider community, breaching even the sanctity of the family circle, blasting '*the*

⁸ Letter to the public, pp 5-6, 20. The London Magdalen House was founded in 1758.

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bloom and innocence of youth of all ranks', corrupting husbands, and through them passing on 'distempers to virtuous wives and children unborn'.⁹

Such an argument seems perfectly designed to enlist women's support for the new charity, as does the special appeal made to:

'The ladies of this kingdom ... who, with compassion equal to their own superior virtue, will certainly patronize an undertaking designed to restore many fallen and unhappy person of their sex to chastity, decency and competence.'¹⁰

Certainly, the Magdalen Asylum was novel in being almost entirely a female-run institution, at a time when women who involved themselves in charitable action almost invariably did so under the auspices of male-run organizations. Lady Arbella herself took charge of the day-to-day management of the House, and was closely associated with the charity from its opening until her retirement in 1790, when she was succeeded by her deputy, Mrs Usher. She was supported by a committee of fifteen '*governesses*', elected from the lady subscribers, who visited the House regularly, adjudicated on matters of discipline, instructed the magdalens in various skills, and helped them to find employment on departure.¹¹ In addition, female supporters provided financial and practical assistance: early benefactors included Mrs Edward Denny, Mrs Delany, the Countess of Louth and, in 1791, an anonymous lady who personally delivered £800 in banknotes to the House. Women also featured prominently among the donors to the collections at the adjoining Magdalen Chapel, which provided a significant proportion of the charity's annual income. The chapel became one of the capital's most fashionable places of worship, attracting congregations composed of '*persons of the very first station, rank, character and fortune*', each of whom paid an admission fee of one shilling for the morning and sixpence for the evening service. In addition, annual charity sermons raised substantial sums: the largest collection, in 1792, raised over £300 - probably in tribute to the memory of Lady Arbella, whose death had occurred just two weeks earlier.¹²

The Rules of Management, drawn up by Lady Arbella on the opening of the House, offer an insight into the principles upon which the charity operated. Designed to promote regularity and discipline in every aspect of the women's existence, the regulations dictated times of rising (six o'clock in summer and seven in winter) and retiring (ten o'clock) and allocated set periods for '*private devotions*' and meditation, prayers in the chapel and household chores. Even the duration of meals was to be determined by an hourglass placed in the centre of the table, an hour being allowed for dinner and half an hour each for breakfast and supper.¹³

Despite the acknowledgement by the charity's founders that punishment alone was an ineffective approach, the House regime did have some punitive features. The women's correspondence was subject to examination by the superintendent, in chapel they sat behind a screen which hid them from the view of the rest of the congregation¹⁴, and no man, even one of the male Guardians, was '*to be permitted on any pretence to converse with any of [them]*

⁹ Letter to the public, pp 9, 13, 20.

¹⁰ Letter to the public, p. 11.

¹¹ Rules and regulations of the Leeson Street Magdalen Asylum, RCB Library, Dublin, 551.14.1, p. 1; John Watson, Gentleman's and citizen's almanack (Dublin, 1800), p. 139; Registers of the Magdalen Asylum, Leeson Street, Dublin, RCB Library, passim.

¹² Peter, A brief account of the Magdalen Chapel, pp 37-40, 51; Beatrice Bayley Butler, 'Lady Arbella Denny, 1707-1792', Dublin Historical Record, vol. IX, no. 1, 1946-7, pp 1-20, pp 9-10.

¹³ Quoted in Bayley Butler, pp 11-12.

¹⁴ Aaron C. H. Seymour, The life and times of Selina, Countess of Huntingdon (London, 1839), vol. ii, p. 198.



Frontispiece of Jonas Hanway's *Thoughts on the plan for a magdalen house* (1758). Hanway was one of the founders and the first chairman of the London Magdalen Hospital, opened in 1758, which served as a model for the Dublin institution. Note the rules on the wall, the spinning wheel and the bible, representing the regime which operated within both establishments.

without a written order of the Patroness or Vice-Patroness'.¹⁵ In a gesture which emphasized their break with the past, magdalens relinquished their own names on entry, and were assigned a number by which they were known throughout their stay. So Anne Mechland, the first entrant, became 'Mrs One', and so on.

On the other hand, there was an acknowledgement that moral reform must be underpinned by social rehabilitation. The aim of the House, as described by the dean of Ardfert in one of his sermons on its behalf, was to equip the penitents to depend for their future livelihood not on '*the miserable wages of sin, but on the just fruits of industry, honesty and virtue*'. For this reason, '*particular care has been taken to teach them such works and manufactures as may qualify them hereafter to earn a comfortable subsistence*'.¹⁶ Training was given in various branches of needlework, inmates were entitled to at least part of the proceeds of the sale of their work, and the magdalen was only discharged when she had been reconciled with her family or had been furnished with a skill with which she could support herself. A typical example was Agnes Dillon, released in 1776, '*having learned the tambour to perfection in the House ... [and] is*

now enabled to get a decent livelihood'.¹⁷

In order to be dismissed regularly from the House, it was necessary for the magdalen to have behaved satisfactorily during her time there, to have shown sufficient evidence of repentance and a determination not to relapse into vice. The usual length of stay was about two years, although this did vary according to circumstances. For instance, Mary Talbot, one of the youngest entrants, remained in the institution for over five years, and during that time was taught to read '*and to do every kind of work taught in the House*'. On the other hand, a few inmates were discharged creditably within a shorter period if they had behaved well and if the authorities were satisfied that suitable provision had been made for them. So Elinor Ward left after eighteen months to go to her uncle '*in expectation of marriage*', and Honora Mullin, Sarah Newman and Ann Hanway, all of whom had spent only five months in the House, were released in October 1773 in order to join a larger group of former inmates who were emigrating to America.

Those leaving the house regularly were entitled, at Lady Arbella's discretion, to a bounty, or grant, of three guineas, initially payable in full at the time of departure. This arrangement was

¹⁵ Rules and regulations, p. 3.

¹⁶ 'A sermon preached on the opening of the new chapel ... by Edward Bayley (MDCCLXX)', RCB Library, 551, 14.1, pp 99-118, p. 114.

¹⁷ Registers. All further references to individual magdalens come from this source.

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soon amended, and thereafter the bounty was paid in instalments rather than in a lump sum, the first to be paid on departure, the balance after a year if proof of good conduct during that time was forthcoming. In 1785 Lady Arbella, finding herself '*most disagreeably deceived*' by one woman '*who behaved well till her year was expired ... and then relapsed into vice*', extended the probationary period to two years. In addition to the bounty, clothes were supplied to those who needed them, some were also given books – usually a bible and prayer book, and devotional works – while others were provided with the equipment which they would need in order to earn their living outside the House. When Ann Sherwin left in 1779, for example, she was given a tambour, handle needle and scissors, and was later advanced 13s 6d to buy material for her work.

Magdalen Asylum Registers

The registers of the Leeson Street Asylum, which survive from the date of the first admission, are a unique source of information on rescue work at this period and on the women towards whom it was directed. The eighteenth-century volumes cover the years 1767-95, and list a total of 388 women admitted over those that period. While the registers contain an entry for every individual, the information provided is not uniform. The applicant's name, the number assigned to her, the name of the person who had referred her¹⁸, and her final report from the House are supplied in every instance. Other details, such as age, religion, literacy level, skills and former occupation, are recorded in only a minority of cases. Age of entry, for example, is recorded in respect of 140 applicants. On the basis of these figures, the average age at admission was nineteen. There was a theoretical upper age limit of twenty, but this rule was not strictly observed: thirty per cent of those whose ages were given were aged twenty-one or over on entry, and the oldest entrant recorded was thirty-two. The youngest recorded were two girls of thirteen, and two of twelve years old.

Information on the religious affiliation of penitents is provided in only 129 cases: forty-nine are described as Catholic and seventy-eight as Protestant, while the remaining two declared their intention of becoming Protestants. In fact, applicants' denominational background seems to have been largely irrelevant in the early years. Indeed, the bishop of Dromore, in his 1773 charity sermon, specifically dismissed any suggestion that the asylum should cater for only one denomination, arguing '*that distress pleads too strongly against prejudices of this kind*'. Another clerical supporter, defending the admission of Catholics, pointed out that all faiths condemned equally the 'crimes' of which the magdalens were supposedly guilty, and that Catholic women, therefore, stood as good a chance of redemption as their Protestant sisters.¹⁹

At the same time, it is clear that both clerics harboured hopes that some of the Catholic women might '*be convinced of their errors ... and consequently become converts, not only from vice, but superstition also*'.²⁰ All inmates, whatever their faith, were expected to attend services at the Magdalen Chapel and received instruction from the Church of Ireland chaplain, but there is no indication of more strenuous proselytizing, and only one magdalen is reported to have '*turned Protestant in the House*'. By the closing decade of the century, however, the admission policy had shifted decisively in favour of Protestants, and a late nineteenth-century account stated that the charity was '*especially intended for Protestant young women*'.²¹ This

¹⁸ Referees included clergymen, family members and employers, lady supporters of the charity and officers of institutions such as the Lock Hospital and the House of Industry.

¹⁹ 'A sermon preached at the chapel in Leeson Street, Dublin ... on Sunday, the viith of February, MXCCLXXIII by William Lord Bishop of Dromore', RCB Library, 55.14.1, pp 47-73, p. 60; Bayly, 'Sermon', p. 13.

²⁰ Bayly, 'Sermon', p. 13.

²¹ Rosa M. Barrett, Guide to Dublin charities (Dublin, 1884), part iii, pp 4-5.

policy change may have been a necessary decision by a small institution faced with more applicants than it had places to allocate, or it may have reflected a public preference for denominationally-based organizations. In any case, the nineteenth century saw the establishment of a number of other rescue work agencies, the great majority of which were run on denominational lines, with religious-run homes catering for Catholic women and Protestant girls going to lay-run homes, such as the Leeson Street Asylum.²²

The administrators of the Asylum were more concerned with the individual's capacity for reformation than with the details of her past life, and the registers contain no systematic account of entrants' social and economic circumstances. Indeed, the rules specifically forbade '*all enquiry into their names or families, except such as the parties shall consent to*'.²³ However, note was taken of factors which might assist the woman to find work in the future, such as any education, accomplishments, training or employment which she might have had. Thus, thirty-eight women were reported to have some level of reading ability, while a further forty-five were described as being able to read and write, or as having had a good education. One of these, Leonora McCarthy, could speak French, Alice Scott, a '*gentlewoman by birth*', was said to have had a very good education, and Anne Fenton brought with her a small library which included a number of novels as well as a prayer book. In the majority of cases, however, no such information is supplied, suggesting that many entrants were illiterate. Indeed, a 1770 account of the Asylum's work ascribed the women's fall from virtue to the fact that '*the education of most of them has been shamefully neglected*'.²⁴

The speaker in this context, however, could be referring to vocational rather than academic training – indeed, in terms of future employment prospects, practical skills were arguably of more relevance than a literary education. Just over twenty per cent of magdalens are recorded as possessing some such expertise, most frequently in '*plain work*' or '*coarse*' sewing. A minority had more specialist skills, such as knitting, quilting, spinning and '*making trimmings for ladies' clothes*', and inmates included a pastry cook, a silk winder, a glove-maker, a stay-maker, two milliners and ten mantua makers. A few were '*skilled in country business*', such as dairy work, and six were described as chambermaids or servants. Less conventionally, one individual claimed to have served for five years as a sailor. Thus, the great majority of the women on whom information is available had been engaged either in the clothing and textile industries or, to a lesser extent, in domestic service. These were the principal areas of female employment: jobs in these sectors were poorly paid and insecure, those engaged in them were particularly vulnerable to homelessness and destitution, and were consequently easy recruits to the vice trade, which might offer a substitute or a supplementary income at times of need.²⁵

Certainly, on the basis of the information supplied by the records, many magdalens were in extremely poor circumstances on admission. Jane King from Sligo, for instance, was reported to be able to read and write and do needlework '*very well*', but owned no more than a ragged black gown and petticoat, Mary Byrne came in with a ragged stuff gown, a rag to tie round her waist and an old shift, while Mary Cotton '*brought nothing with her but what was so bad there was a necessity of burning them*'. Others, however, came from a more stable and moderately prosperous background: Elizabeth McCleary, for instance, was the daughter of shoemakers in High Street, to whom she went on departure. Elizabeth Keating went to live with her mother, a

²² On nineteenth-century initiatives see Maria Luddy, 'Prostitution and rescue work in nineteenth-century Ireland', Maria Luddy and Cliona Murphy eds, *Women surviving* (Dublin, 1989), pp 51-84, p. 62.

²³ Rules and regulations.

²⁴ 'A sermon preached on the opening of the new chapel ...', p. 114.

²⁵ On employment for women in eighteenth-century Dublin, see Imelda Brophy, 'Women in the workforce', David Dickson ed, *The gorgeous mask: Dublin, 1700-1850* (Dublin, 1987).

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mantua maker, and Hester Herrold was received by her brother, a hatter in Exchequer Street. A minority had families or friends who could afford to pay for their keep in the House or provide for them financially on departure: Catherine Robinson, who was '*descended of a good family*', had her board paid by her friends, and Arabella Russell had friends in England, '*who sent for her and remitted money for accommodating her properly ... on her passage*'. She was later reported to be '*in the way of a speedy marriage to great advantage*'. A very few brought with them an array of possessions suggesting either an unusually lucrative past career or a wealthy family background: Harriet Reuberry, for example, brought an extensive wardrobe, as well as jewellery, silver teaspoons and thirteen books. Mary Thompson had a consignment of belongings transported from Waterford, which included a riding dress and hat and no fewer than ten gowns, and Jane Langton owned a red silk gown, a white riding costume and a hat with a feather, as well as other effects.

While middle-class women did become prostitutes – the celebrated Margaret Leeson, for example, was the daughter of a gentleman landowner²⁶ – it is by no means clear that all magdalens had been on the streets or had been engaged in prostitution at any level. The House was later to cater specifically for '*young women after a first fall*', and it is likely that even at this stage some of those entering fell into this category. Indeed, in a small number of cases the inmates were not '*fallen*' in any sense: Maria Nugent, for instance, was admitted in 1783, having been '*deceived by a gentleman who married her, having another wife*'. Two other women chose to enter the asylum purely as a means of obtaining shelter and training. On Elinor Caugh's discharge after two years' stay, '*it was discovered that her friends persuaded her to take the character of a Magdalen to come here for support, and instruction in needlework and reading*'. Similarly, on Mary Roche's departure, '*it was discovered that distress and a desire to be instructed in needlework were her only motives for coming to this House*'.

It is possibly significant that both Caugh and Roche were recorded as Catholics. The first Catholic school for poor girls in Dublin was opened by Teresa Mulally in 1766, but it was only with the expansion of the female religious orders in the next century that such establishments became widespread, and it may be that the lack of any alternative forced these two women to what was surely a highly unusual course of action. Their histories illustrate the inadequacy of the educational and training facilities available to girls, and the absolute necessity of possessing some marketable skill by which they could support themselves. They are also a reminder of the pressures which had driven the majority of their fellow magdalens to resort to prostitution, and of the narrowness of the line dividing vice and respectability. Lack of employment or of familial support, a single lapse from virtue, or desertion by a husband or partner – any of these might leave a woman with a stark choice between starvation and prostitution, and even those guilty of no more than ignorance or imprudence could find their reputation and status irretrievably damaged.

In only one instance is the entry into prostitution and the subsequent decision to enter the Asylum fully documented. Sarah Lucas, about twenty-two years old, was admitted in 1777 on the recommendation of the rector of Drogheda, who in a letter to Lady Arbella pleaded:

'The uncommon and hideous circumstance, that her parents, tho' nearly allied to some persons of special worth in this town, did by their own profligate lives, and even instigation, chiefly promote the prostitution, which soon became common, of their unhappy child ... She, now struck with horror at the view of her crimes, and at the prospect of her consequent misery, shows the most apparent marks of contrition, and seeks ... admittance into your asylum.'

²⁶ On Leeson's background and career, see Mary Lyons ed, *Memoirs of Mrs Margaret Leeson* (Dublin, 1995, orig. published 1795-7).

Sarah stayed for about a year and a half, and left *'with a good character having behaved very well during her residence in the House'*. Nearly three years later, however, Lady Arbella received word that she had been dismissed from her place, having been found in bed with a man by her mistress. On the Asylum's own standards, then, Sarah must be counted among its failures, but her subsequent lapse need not negate the sense of *'contrition'* which she had claimed earlier, and which was the basic requirement for entry to the house. In many cases, however, other factors must have played a part in prompting women to seek admission. Pressure from family members was clearly decisive in some instances, with parents, grandparents and other relatives listed as recommending individuals for admission. Others were nominated by employers, some of whom promised to take them back after their release. Destitution and illness must also have acted as incentives. Despite the fact that *'good health is a necessary qualification for admittance'*, it was inevitable that some inmates would subsequently be discovered to be ill. Where this occurred, the patient was either cared for on the premises or sent elsewhere for treatment, to be returned to the House on recovery. Those found to be suffering from venereal disease were apparently subject to the same policy as those with other illnesses. One woman, found to have the *'bad disorder'*, was given the opportunity of going to the Lock Hospital, and a number of cases were actually received from the Hospital, having presumably completed their course of treatment there. According to the registers, however, several of those sent to hospital for medical treatment subsequently ran away, or behaved so badly there as to be forbidden re-entry to the House, suggesting that their initial application may have been prompted less by penitence than by need and infirmity.

Pregnancy was another circumstance which affected a woman's earning capacity, and which might have led some to apply for admission. However, very few such cases are recorded. Where women were discovered to be pregnant, they were apparently sent to hospital for their lying-in. Catherine Carroll, admitted in January 1795, went on 13 May to the Lying-in Hospital, where she gave birth, dying there twelve days later. Mary Meskell was more fortunate: admitted in October 1777, she *'prov'd to be over four months with child, therefore was sent to the House of Industry to pass her time in safety till she should be brought to bed'*. Meskell later returned to the Asylum, from which she was dismissed with credit three years later.

The registers contain no record of the fate of the child in either of these cases – both may, of course, have died. However, it is very unlikely that these were the only instances of pregnancy among magdalens in the course of these years, or that some women did not already have children. The House itself seems to have made no provision for the care of infants at this period – it is possible that some remained in the care of relatives or were placed in one of the parish or privately-run orphanages. Alternatively, lady supporters of the House may have helped to find homes for them, as they did for the penitents themselves. Certainly, a number of those listed as friends of the Asylum subsequently lent their support to initiatives established during the closing decades of the century to meet the needs of homeless and unprotected children.²⁷

For some applicants, the Asylum may have served as a temporary shelter during the winter months or during the absence of a male partner or breadwinner. Mary Sarsfield was reported to have spent time in the Marshalsea with her lover, who was confined there for debt, and came straight to the House from the prison. *'A very bad-minded woman ... totally ignorant of everything that was good'*, she was expelled after six months for causing disturbance. Another

²⁷ For instance, Mrs Theodosia Blachford, a supporter of the Magdalen Asylum, was one of the founders of the Female Orphan House, opened in Prussia Street in 1790. For details of this establishment see Rosemary Raughter, 'Women's philanthropy in late eighteenth-century Dublin: the Female Orphan House and the House of Refuge', Thomas Bartlett ed., *History and environment* (Dublin, 1998), pp 82-93.

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woman, Mary Stephens, behaved well for two years, '*but a soldier coming to Dublin who (she said) was her husband*', she insisted on leaving with him.

The House authorities clearly disbelieved Stephens's story, and in general insisted that magdalens should have a respectable home or means of support awaiting them on departure, in the belief that this would be some guarantee of continued good behaviour. So Lady Arbella



A typical magdalen in 1766

noted of one former magdalen that, while her '*understanding is not very strong*' and '*she wants industry*', her intentions were good, and '*as her kindred have received her, I think she may do well with them*'. While some were restored to family or friends, others supported themselves by doing needlework, either on their own account '*in a creditable lodging*', or more rarely in a workshop environment: Ann Maria Hoey, for instance, '*went to work with a woman ... who employs them at the tambour*'. The great majority, however, went into domestic service, often on the recommendation, and sometimes in the employment of lady supporters of the charity. The preference for service was in part a response to market forces: female employment in the needle trades was already in decline at this period, while demand for women servants was on the increase.²⁸ However, service may also have been regarded by the House authorities as a safer option, placing the former magdalen under supervision in a respectable environment and thereby minimizing the possibility of a relapse into vice.

Another option available to women leaving the House was emigration. The registers list twenty-three former inmates as having gone to North America during this period, one of whom was originally from Boston and chose to return there following her time in the House. Two of these

travelled as paying passengers, but most of those who emigrated probably did so as indentured servants, in some cases having had their indenture fees and other expenses paid by the charity. When Elizabeth Gogan, whose family had disowned her, went to Maryland in 1769 she was given clothes and books, 1s 1d was paid for her indenture and 2s 2d for a coach and boat to bring her to the ship. Maria Nugent, who sailed in 1788 for New York, was given, in addition to the usual articles of clothing and twelve books of Dr Skelton's *Appeal to Common Sense*, '*a pair of mattresses for her to lie on at sea*', and the proceeds, totalling £19 8s 2d, of a collection made for her among lady supporters of the House.

While a few women travelled alone, most did so in company with another magdalen or as part of a larger group: in October 1773, for instance, a group of ten left the House at the same time to go to America. The outbreak of war with Britain temporarily put a stop to emigration, but between 1783 and 1795 a further ten women are listed as having gone to America, and some at least sent back word of their experience of life there. In April 1784 Lady Arbella heard from

²⁸ On the decline in certain areas of female employment in Dublin, see Brophy, pp 57-8.

Mary Moore, who was in service with a merchant's wife in New York and was 'very happy'. Moore's travelling companion, Anne Dillon, was also reported to be 'well placed' as a housemaid in the city.

The practice of delaying the payment of bounties until the subject's continued good behaviour had been confirmed ensured that some record was kept of magdalens' subsequent careers, and this indicates a reasonably high success rate among those '*dismissed regularly*' from the Asylum. Of the total of 388 admissions in the period 1767-95, 248 fell into this category, of whom just twelve were reported to have misbehaved within two years of leaving the House. However, approximately one third of entrants left before the expiry of their term, some by their own choice, others put out of the House. Reasons for expulsion varied from apparently quite trivial misconduct to criminal conspiracy. The very first entrant, Ann Mechland, was '*expelled for misbehaviour not conforming to the rules of the House and supposed to be out of her reason at times*'. Others were ejected '*for violence of temper and ill language*', or for disruptive behaviour: Ann Lee was expelled '*for saying she seen a ghost and terrified all the women ... it was suspected ... in order to frighten some of the penitents out of the House*'. A few were accused of more serious offences: Mary Dunn was put out after just a month for having planned to rob the House. Others were believed not to be sincere penitents or to be in contact with former associates: Elizabeth Calvert and Margaret Duff, both seventeen, were expelled after they were discovered talking to men out of the drying-loft window, Catherine Denison was said to have '*sent for a woman who kept a house of ill fame and with whom she had lived*', and Esther Goin and Mary McDaniel were put out '*for looking out of the street window ... and speaking to a woman in the street of suspected ill character*'.

In theory, those expelled could take with them only what they had brought into the House – in fact, a rather more compassionate regime seems to have operated. In 1776 Jane Hearn was dismissed for disrespectful behaviour towards the matron. However, '*in compassion to her poverty*', but, '*for example's sake*', without the knowledge of the other women, Lady Arbella ordered that she be given a guinea when out of the House – a later note records that '*the above money appears to have been well disposed of as she since proves industrious*'. Similarly, Margaret Clark, who was '*expelled for bad behaviour, being vulgar and ungovernable*', but who promised to go into service and remain virtuous, was given clothes and a spelling book on departure.

Despite her description of herself in 1779 as '*a cripple*', Lady Arbella continued to be closely involved in the charity's management until 1790, when she recorded her final entry in the register. She died two years later at the age of eighty-five, expressing in her will her regret '*that the smallness of my fortune will not, in justice and prudence, allow me to make any donation to charities so worthy of support*' as the Foundling Hospital and the Magdalen Asylum.²⁹

Conclusion

The registers for the period immediately following Lady Arbella's departure show evidence of some lessening in the House's effectiveness, as reflected in the numbers admitted and in the success rate reported.³⁰ Such a decline, however, is not uncommon in institutions heavily dependent on the commitment of a single individual – Nano Nagle's ventures in Cork, for instance, suffered a much more severe check in the period after her death. But both Denny's

²⁹ A. Peter, *Sketches of old Dublin* (Dublin, 1907), p. 162.

³⁰ Of fifty-six admissions in the period 1791-5, thirty-four (sixty-one per cent) were dismissed regularly and nineteen (thirty-four per cent) were expelled, eloped or chose to leave. By comparison, the figures for the final five years (1785-9) of Lady Arbella's management show that of seventy women admitted, forty-eight (sixty-nine per cent) were dismissed regularly and twenty (twenty-nine per cent) were expelled, eloped or left of their own accord.

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and Nagle's initiatives did survive, largely because both women had the opportunity and foresight to create institutional frameworks and a sisterhood of co-workers and supporters from which other women emerged to carry on their work. By 1814 the Asylum had received 726 girls, and it was claimed that *'so far as it was possible to trace their future progress through society, those who have been dismissed have evinced, with few exceptions, a thorough reformation'*.³¹

As the service read to the departing penitent reminded her,

'You will find the world you are returning to the very same as when you were rescued from it. You will find the same levity, the same dissipation, the same vanity, the same follies, the same vices; in a word, the same temptations ... to shame and ruin.'

But, it continued, she herself was now a different person, armed not only with vocational skills but with moral training, and with her own experience of the *'bitter fruit'* of vice.

It might be objected, of course, that in preparing its inmates for employment, the Asylum simply directed them back into those areas from which many had originally come but, given the increasingly strict division of labour between the sexes in this period and the declining number of occupations open to women, this was a problem almost impossible to circumvent. It should be said, moreover, that female philanthropists, a number of whom were actually associated with the charity, did increasingly concern themselves with the plight of homeless and destitute young women in an effort to provide some sort of safety net and to deter them from resorting to prostitution in the first place.³²

Another factor which should be taken into account in assessing the charity's effectiveness is its very limited capacity: during these years an average of twelve to thirteen women were admitted annually to the House. Meanwhile, as one contemporary account noted, the Dublin Lock Hospital treated approximately 2,000 patients in one eleven-month period in 1792-3. The Asylum, as this report observed, was:

'An institution noble in its design, but when the multitudes who need the relief are compared with the few individuals who can receive it there, it must be acknowledged too, too narrow in its plan.'³³

It should be remembered, however, that this was a pioneering initiative, the first institution of its kind in Ireland and one of the first in these islands to offer any prospect of shelter and rehabilitation to women who had fallen foul of the orthodox moral code. Nor should it be assumed that those involved in the project were blind to defects within their own society. Poverty was readily identified as the primary factor behind prostitution, and others, besides the woman herself, were asked to bear a share of the guilt. While her choice was the *'wretched'* one, *'to sin or starve'*, her plight was exploited by *'the opulent'*, who preyed on the distressed, the unwary and the ignorant. Once a woman had *'fallen'*, society's attitudes made it almost impossible for her to change her way of life. As Dean Bayly demanded in one of his sermons, *'can she work, whom no one will employ, or can she serve, whom no one will receive?'* There was even some recognition of the existence of a double standard in relation to sexual morality. Thus:

'While the character of the betrayer remains perhaps untainted in the eye of the world ... the sad victim of his perfidy is often doomed to sufferings of every kind ... Outcasts from all good

³¹ J. Warburton, J. Whitelaw, R. Walsh, *History of the city of Dublin* (London, 1818), vol. ii, p. 773.

³² For example, in 1803 Mrs Blachford founded a House of Refuge in Baggot Street for unemployed and homeless young women. See Raughter, 'Women's philanthropy in late eighteenth-century Dublin', *History and environment*, pp 82-93.

³³ *Thoughts on the misery of a numerous class of females* (Dublin, 1793), p. 6.

members of society, and estranged from those before united to them by the strongest of ties, their fate is the shocking alternative of persisting in their vices or of becoming an immediate prey to want and hunger.³⁴

The aim of the House, however, was not to change the world but to equip its graduates to survive within it. Far from being the '*wild, ideal, romantic and absurd*' concept which its opponents alleged it to be, the enterprise made a rational and comparatively effective attempt to deal, on a very small scale, with a very large problem. If its aim was modest, it was also realistic and – in the context of its time - humane, and on that basis the project compares favourably with any of the rescue work initiatives which were to be undertaken in the succeeding century and a half.

³⁴ 'A sermon preached at the Chapel in Leeson Street, Dublin ... on Sunday, the viith of February, MXCCLXXIII, by William Lord Bishop of Dromore', Occasional sermons, pp 47-73.

Sir William F. Butler

By John Caffrey

A slideshow used in the presentation of this paper can be downloaded from [here](#).

Introduction

The question arises as to why William Butler is a subject of interest. There are a number of factors which make him a key figure in the history of his country and in its relations with our neighbour the United Kingdom.

Firstly he was a scion of the Butler clan who have had a seminal influence on the history of Ireland over eight centuries equal in prominence to such noteworthy families as the O'Neills and Fitzgeralds. Secondly as a Catholic Irishman he had the unusual experience of serving as a commissioned officer up to general rank in the British Army in the 19th Century – the first since the time of King James II. Thirdly as a serving officer under Queen Victoria he witnessed at first hand many of the momentous campaigns which were undertaken to expand the British Empire in the era of its greatest aggrandizement. And fourthly he was a prolific author leaving a wealth of publications including fiction, biography, memoirs and autobiography.

He has a special interest for residents of Greystones because he lived for a time in Delgany. Also he served in the campaign in the Sudan in 1884 to rescue General Gordon in which Colonel Fred Burnaby, whose name will be forever associated with Greystones, was killed. Two of his grandsons, William and Stephen Preston, were educated at St. Gerald's School in Bray. Both gave their lives in World War II.

Although a consummate professional soldier Butler was an attractive personality showing great sympathy for the weak and underprivileged and chivalry towards an enemy even those whom the typical British officer of the time would have held beneath contempt. He was tolerant and respectful of the faith and culture of others but he never wavered in his own religious and national loyalties even though it was neither prudent nor profitable to assert them.

Let us review the place of the Butler clan in Irish history.

The Butlers

The founder of the clan Theobald Walter came to Ireland in 1177, seven years after the Norman invasion. It is said that from his family connections which included an archbishop of Canterbury he was granted the title of '*Kings Butler*' and an immense tract of Irish land, up to 750,000 acres stretching from Nenagh and Thurles in Tipperary to Tullow and Arklow in Wicklow. It is said that King Henry II was exceptionally generous to the Walters out of remorse for the murder of St. Thomas a Becket who was their kinsman. Butler became the family cognomen and the Ormond title was added in 1329 when the head of the family was granted an earldom.

Over the next two centuries the Butlers secured and expanded their holdings by alliances and strategic marriages with Irish and Gaelicized Norman families. They were also fortunate in their ability to produce an unbroken succession of male heirs. Their first seat was at Nenagh but in 1391 the 3rd Earl bought Kilkenny Castle which remained their principal residence until they donated it to the state in the 1970's. From this location they dominated the Barrow-Nore-Suir basin.

Their first period of dominance ended with the execution of James the 5th Earl for treason for supporting the Lancastrian faction (the White Rose) after the defeat at the Battle of Towton in 1461. The Lancastrians fought back intermittently over the next 25 years but were finally

suppressed in 1485 when Richard III was defeated at Bosworth Field by Henry VI who became the first Tudor monarch.

Over the next century, following the death of the 5th Earl, the Butlers influence declined due to internal family feuds and the resurgence of the Gaelic clans. However they learned a hard lesson which they were never to forget, namely, that political astuteness is the foundation of success. Unlike the Fitzgeralds who were fiery and aggressive, sometimes to the point of self-destruction, the Butlers played a cool political game which preserved their interests during the religious and dynastic upheavals of the 16th and 17th Centuries. They were often disdained for these qualities by the more militant exponents of Irish nationalism.



'Black Tom': Thomas Butler, 10th Earl of Ormonde

The first exponent of these skills was Thomas 10th Earl (Black Tom, 1532 - 1614) who was brought up a protestant at the court of Henry VIII. He assisted in the defeat of the Desmonds which led to the plantation of their lands in Munster but he fended off encroachments on his own territories by playing off his influence with the court in London against the ambitions of the Lords Deputies seeking to establish English dominance in Ireland. He died a catholic demonstrating the Butlers' indifference to religious attachments when territorial or dynastic politics had to be served.

In the 16th Century the labels '*Catholic*' and '*Protestant*' had different connotations to those which would apply in Belfast today. In the first place the old Gaelic Christian church had diverged from the orthodoxy of the continent due to distance and poor communications. Most priests and bishops were married or had concubines. The priestly order tended to be hereditary within septs attached to the major clans as were the judges, poets and

apothecaries. As the reformation progressed some bishops and clergy accepted the supremacy of the Crown and the ordinary members of their congregations continued to worship as they always had without realising that they had become Protestants. The difference is better expressed as '*The Established Church*' and '*The Roman Church*'.

William F. Butler descended from the 9th Earl and was therefore a collateral descendent of Black Tom.

Before considering William's family and background it is worth briefly recording one more outstanding personality in the Butler clan, namely, James 12th Earl (1610 - 1688) who supported the crown of Charles 1 in the English Civil War and participated in the Confederate War in Ireland 1641-1652. He had been born a Catholic but was brought up an Anglican by direction of King James I but lived without any sense of hostility towards his Catholic relatives or fellow countrymen. With the execution of Charles 1 and the failure of his efforts to achieve compromises between the Irish, the Old English and the parliamentarians' factions he went into exile in 1650. With the restoration of King Charles II in 1660 Butler returned to Ireland and was raised to a dukedom.

He became Lord Lieutenant in 1662. Part of his legacy is evident in Dublin where he reserved the Phoenix Park as a public open space, laid out St Stephens Green, built the Royal Hospital in

Kilmainham and founded the College of Surgeons. He also established Dublin as the capital of Ireland rather than the first city of the Pale – before this it had been variously centred at

Family of William F Butler

William Butler was born on 31st Oct 1838 on the family farm at Ballyslateen where his parents Richard and Ellen farmed about 1100 acres, part of the estate of Ballycarron, which this branch of the Butlers had farmed for eight or nine generations, since the time of '*Black Tom*', after the destruction of the Desmonds in 1584.

In his autobiography Butler wondered how his Catholic family had been able to hold onto their land through the confiscations under the Penal Laws from the time of Cromwell until the Relief Acts of the late 18th Century. By 1700 only 14% of the land of Ireland remained in Catholic ownership. Despite that, the proportion in South Tipperary was much higher than the average because many branches of the Butler dynasty were vehemently anti-establishment and they contrived to hold onto their properties by a number of stratagems. In some cases a family member would overtly convert to the established church to confirm his title and then sublet to his Catholic kinsmen as head tenants. Another of their ploys was to invite any Protestant seeking to claim possession of land under the Penal Laws to '*come and get it*'. By these means, in Butler's words, '*the 1100 acres of Ballyslateen remained tolerably secure throughout the three hundred years of penal confiscation*'. From 1778 onwards a number of Relief Acts (prompted by the Government's fear of the spread of ideas from the American Revolution) removed the threat of confiscation.

William was the seventh of nine children of Richard and Ellen and he recalled his earliest years as idyllic in a beautiful countryside. Between the ages of 4 and 6 he was sent to live with an aunt and uncle in Dublin which were very happy times for him. On one occasion he was taken to the Richmond Penitentiary to be presented to Daniel O'Connell who was imprisoned there from May to Sept 1844. It was a small boy's memory which he treasured for the rest of his life.

He returned to Tipperary in 1846 to experience the horrors of the famine and plague which were to devastate the country over the next two years. His father and their better off neighbours did their best to alleviate the suffering of the poorer people. It could never be enough and they became themselves impoverished.

By Sept 1847 things were somewhat brighter and William was sent off to the Jesuit school at Tullabeg in the King's County. He detested the place and was ruthlessly bullied by older boys. In 1849 he was removed from the school because his mother had died and his two younger siblings were dying of the plague which still ravaged the country. During those years away from school he records one event which shaped his mind more than years of study could have done. His father took him to the scene of an eviction to witness the destruction of a miserable cabin and the occupants, a screaming woman, half naked children, a paralysed grandmother and a tottering grandfather hauled out to be dumped on the roadside. The twelve year old Butler regretted that he did not have a firearm to hand to punish the perpetrators.

When the family finances recovered a little, William was sent with his brothers back to a new school in Dublin. It was during this time that he first became aware of the military life. The Crimean War (1853-56) had begun and Dublin was the scene of a great deal of military activity as soldiers were recruited, trained, and marched through the streets in magnificent parades before being dispatched to war. The war was over before he left school but his desire to follow a military career had taken hold.

At this time fully 40% of the rank and file of the British Army were Irishmen but few of the officers came from Catholic families. It had long been the tradition for the sons of the Catholic gentry to take commissions in the armies of France, Spain and Austria. What seems to have eased William Butler's entry to the British Army was the fact that a kinsman Richard

O'Doherty had become a general and had influence to obtain a commission for his young protégé. The older man had progressed to high rank by the simple expedient of changing his religion and dropping the O from his name so he was now styled General Sir Richard Doherty.

William Butler was gazetted an ensign in the 69th Regiment on 17th Sept 1858 and proceeded to the regiment's depot at Fermoy Barracks. Fermoy was then the biggest military station in Ireland before the Curragh became the main depot. The 69th Regiment, known as '*the Ups and Downs*', were later, by amalgamations and redesignation, to become the Royal Regiment of Wales. From the beginning he loved the military life, the parade grounds drills, the exercises in the mountains and the camaraderie of the mess. He revelled in the yarns of campaigns told by the older officers some of whom had seen active service against Napoleon. He also relished the opportunities to fish in the Blackwater and shoot in the surrounding countryside, the pastimes of his old home life.



Ensign W F Butler

After four or five months he was given parade ground command of a company. His first military duty was part of a detachment of 200 men sent to Limerick to deal with troubles arising from the General Election of 1859. The march from Fermoy took two days. The soldiers' task was to protect the approaches to the polling station. Those were the days of the '*rotten boroughs*' when as few as 20 or 30 voters would send a stooge selected by the landlord to the House of Commons. Butler's ironic comment was that the '*free and independent electors*' had to be marched under military protection through a howling mob of stone throwing viragoes. He observed that the mob and the soldiers got on remarkably well. At twenty years of age he had already perceived that a corrupt electoral system served only the vested interests of the establishment which kept it in place.

At this time the 69th Regiment was serving in Burma. Britain had been involved in wars against the Burmese since 1832, all part of a strategy to protect the Indian border; to dominate the Southeast Asia region; and counter French influence in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Burma

In July 1860 Butler embarked on an 800 ton ship, '*The Coldstream*' at Queenstown with a draft of three officers and one hundred and twenty men bound for Madras. There were also three officers and sixty men of the Royal Irish Regiment on this tiny ship. The voyage lasted until November. They trained at Madras for three months before embarking for Rangoon. Butler was delighted by the tropical environment, the animals, the birds, the trees and the exotic

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local people. From Madras the detachment sailed again to Rangoon and thence marching and by riverboat to Toungoo on the Sittang River where the main body of the 69th Regiment was quartered.

Butler enjoyed his time in Burma. Toungoo was a difficult station, deep in the rain forest, and during the monsoon it was only possible to travel by elephant in the deep mud. Nevertheless Butler enjoyed the experience. He hunted on an elephant, and got to know the Burmese people whom he admired, describing them as smiling, kind and gentle. He always loved socialising in the mess listening to the yarns of the old soldiers of whom a few then still serving had fought at Waterloo. He developed a lifelong hero worship for Napoleon which led him in his later travels to seek out locations associated with the Emperor.

The main body of the regiment had served 3 years in Toungoo and the men were in poor condition due to the difficult climate. In 1862 they were to be moved back to the drier climate of India. The regiment was split into two detachments for the march to Rangoon and the colonel, with a keen eye for leadership, selected Butler, who was still only an ensign, to command the second unit, 450 strong. He relished his first staff job and delivered his charges safely to the port. The convoy across the Bay of Bengal consisted of a steamer towing a battered hulk of an old sailing ship. Butler's group of soldiers, families and camp followers were loaded on to the hulk. Halfway across the bay a ferocious storm blew up, the towline was cut and the steamer disappeared into the weather. Somehow the hulk remained afloat and a week later they limped into Madras where they had already been given up for dead.

For the next two years Butler served in India. He spent his leaves travelling all over the subcontinent. His autobiography records with boundless enthusiasm all the experiences of his thousands of miles of travel in India.

In 1864 the regiment was ordered back to England by sailing ship a voyage of 12,000 – 14,000 miles depending on the winds. There was a port of call at St Helena where Butler was able to visit the last abode of his hero Napoleon at Longwood.

Aldershot and Guernsey

He spent the next year at Aldershot which he detested. The only redeeming feature was an excellent library which he exploited to the full. He also made a hiking trip to the battlefields of Northern France in the footsteps of Napoleon and lodging with peasant families whose courtesy and generosity to the traveller echoed for him the people of his own childhood.

The regiment was moved to Guernsey in 1866 and Butler had the immense good fortune to win the friendship of Victor Hugo who was in exile following the republican uprising of 1851 in Paris. Butler learned enough French to be able to follow the great man's conversation and spent many evenings in his company. He clearly impressed the old man who said on one occasion:

'I have studied your face and if I were to be put on trial, I would wish for you as my judge.'

At the age of 29 Butler was still only a lieutenant because having entered the army by direct commission rather than by purchase his promotions were always to lag behind other officers regardless of merit. This situation infuriated Butler who saw vacancies in his regiment filled by younger men over his head whose only claim was based on the ability to pay for promotion.

Canada 1867

The 69th was ordered to Canada in late 1867 where there was a threat from a Fenian band of ex-civil war soldiers to invade from the U.S.A. In the event the threat fizzled out due to dissensions in the leadership and drunkenness and indiscipline amongst the rank and file. Butler obtained three months leave of absence which he spent travelling with a brother officer, Lieutenant Mansfield, in America west to Nebraska. This was still Indian country and Butler

loved the company of the frontiersman and soldiers he encountered on his travels. He loved the open country and delighted in the friendliness of the Americans. He admired their self-reliance, their patriotism and the commitment to progress on merit and ability which differed so much from his own experience. He was hugely impressed by the professionalism of the American officers and noted in his autobiography that the United States need never fear a foreign enemy as long as West Point survived.

He was sorely tempted to resign from the army but having spent ten hard years he decided to hold on a little longer to see whether any better prospect might arise.

He was given an opportunity to invest in an oil prospect in Ontario but lacked the £400.00 needed to buy a stake. He returned home to Ireland where he successfully canvassed family and neighbours to support the venture. It was a sad visit because his father Richard was failing. Butler loved and respected his father whom he described as '*a king among men*'. Richard died in the spring of 1870 and was buried in the family plot at Killardrigh at the foot of the Galtee Mountains where Butler himself was one day to lie.

Canada 1870



Until 1870 the boundary of the Dominion of Canada ended at the border of Ontario. Beyond that point the great wilderness area known as British North America was administered by the Hudson's Bay Company. It ran the territory through a chain of trading posts where trade goods, tobacco and coffee were exchanged with the local Indians and French settlers for furs and buffalo hides.

In 1870 British Columbia was granted accession to Canada because the leaders of that province feared the USA which had recently bought Alaska. The British and Dominion governments started negotiations with the Hudson's Bay Company to incorporate the territories between Ontario and British Columbia into Canada.

Unfortunately there were about 15,000 settlers of French and mixed race known as the Metis living on farms along the rivers just west of Lake Winnipeg. The main centre was Fort Garry near the present city of Winnipeg. The Metis took fright at the prospect of their lands being overrun by settlers and their traditional way of life destroyed. A revolt began to take shape under the leadership of a Meti called Louis Riel and a provisional government formed. The response of the government was to send a military expedition to the Red River to bring the rebellious Metis to heel.

The expedition was assembled in Toronto under the command of Colonel Garnet Wolseley, then a rising star of the British army. Butler still in England and desperate for a military posting telegraphed Wolseley and set sail immediately for Canada. At first Wolseley refused him an appointment on the grounds that every post was filled but Butler pointed out that they had no intelligence of what to expect and volunteered for the job. He had already travelled further west on the American side of the border. Wolseley already knew Lieutenant Butler and had marked him as an officer of exceptional intelligence and ability. He was therefore

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commissioned to go round by way of the United States to find out the situation and to rendezvous with Wolseley when halfway to Fort Garry.

Butler travelled by train to St Cloud in Minnesota and then by stage coach and river steamer north towards Fort Garry. As he approached the fort he saw horsemen on the riverbank and knew that his movements were being watched. He feared being arrested and shot as a spy. He began to seek help from the local Indians promising them rewards when the redcoats arrived. Realising that the government was serious and that a military expedition was on the way, Riel and the Metis leaders sent a message offering talks. Butler met them and although still only a lieutenant acted as the representative of an imperial power. Riel appeared unwilling to back off his position and Butler perceived that militarily the Metis were toothless. He determined to make his way eastwards, to try to find the expedition and report his contacts to Colonel Wolseley.

Butler set off in a canoe with a crew of Indian and half-breed paddlers down the Red River to Lake Winnipeg and then along the southern shore of the lake to the mouth of the Winnipeg River. He now had a journey upriver of 160 miles through falls, rapids, whirlpools and long portages. It took him seven days through a wilderness, in the company of Indians, living off the land, confirming the romantic notions which he had cherished since his childhood reading of the works of Fenimore Cooper. It would in time inspire him to write his own adventure story '*Red Cloud*' which was a popular favourite with Irish schoolboys in the 20th century. He reached the Hudson Bay post at Rat Portage which is now a resort town called Kenora on the Lake of the Woods. He heard from local Indians that there was an army of white braves some 80 miles away. He was still being shadowed by Metis scouts. Nevertheless he set off to find the expedition. Four days later he stood on a rock overlooking Rainy Lake and watched a canoe paddled by eight Iroquois braves carrying a British officer who turned out to be Colonel Wolseley.

Wolseley's first Question was '*Where the hell have you come from?*' And Butler replied '*From FortGarry, sir, 12 days out.*' He had covered 400 miles of the toughest wilderness on his own in 12 days. He now led the expedition back across the Lake of the Woods and down the Winnipeg to Fort Garry. The troops had now crossed half a continent, hacked through long forest tangles, built 40 miles of road and carried enormous loads of supplies over endless portages. They took Fort Garry without a fight because the Metis had fled into the wilderness.

On September 6th 1870 the Hon Adams Archibald was installed as Lieutenant-Governor of Manitoba and the North-West Territories. The troops now withdrew eastwards but Butler stayed behind: the wilderness was in his blood and he did not want to leave. Whilst he was considering his future, which included a desire to become a '*Wild Goose*' and join the French Army which had just suffered a huge defeat by the Prussians at Sedan, he received an offer from Governor Archibald which fitted exactly his wishes and his abilities.

The Great Lone Land

At this time there were no settlements west of Winnipeg, just a great vast wilderness stretching to the Rockies and inhabited by nomadic tribes of Indians - Assiniboine, Blackfeet, Cree, Piegangs, and Salteaux. Archibald announced that the Government of Canada intended to take over the administration of this huge empire. Butler was instructed to carry out the following tasks:

1. To examine the state of security in the region and advise how to arrange for the protection of life and property
2. To ascertain the prevalence of smallpox and to bring medicines for the relief of those affected
3. To ascertain the size of the trade in furs and advise on the potential for commerce

Quite a task for a military officer of 32 and the rank of Lieutenant. The Governor appointed him a Justice of the Peace to confirm his official status.

On October 24th 1870 Butler set out on his mission mounted on a pony named 'Blackie' and accompanied by a half-breed driving a cart with his kit, some food and medical supplies for smallpox sufferers. Butler's joy at being once again alone in the wilderness did not last long: in early November a blizzard blew out of the north and the temperature dropped to 40 below freezing. They had now reached a point on the Saskatchewan River some 40 miles south of what is now Prince Albert. They tried to raft across the river and when that failed they waited until they judged that the ice was thick enough to support them. Unfortunately they misjudged and 'Blackie' fell through the ice into the freezing water. The pony tried gallantly to recover but the current was too strong. Butler was obliged to get his rifle and shoot the animal to spare him suffering. His description is poignant:

'I went back to the camp and sitting down in the snow and cried like a child. With my own hand I had taken my poor friend's life; but if there should exist ... a happy Indian paradise where horses are never hungry or tired, Blackie at least will forgive, if he can but see the heart that long regretted him.'

Butler travelled 3700 miles through that terrible winter recording the condition of the few people he met, appalled at the cruelty and hardship of their lives, and personally enduring hunger, cold and fatigue which would have killed a lesser man. At the end of February 1871 he submitted his report to Governor Archibald, a remarkable document detailing the population, the number and distribution of Indian bands, and the extent of smallpox. He appraised the value of prairie soil for agriculture and suggested means of opening the territory to settlement without unduly disturbing the Indians. He set out a pattern for establishing law and order based on a force 100-150 men, well-mounted and backed by a travelling magistracy to dispense justice. This led to the formation two years later of the North West Mounted Police.

It is acknowledged that his report is not only a comprehensive social and economic record of the place and time but is written in a colourful and readable literary style. It is considered to be one of the great documents in the history of Western Canada.

His experiences were recorded in his memoir '*The Great Lone Land*' which was published in 1872 and which is still a classic in the literature of travel.

Butler regretted the impact which the development of the territory would have on the nomadic Indian tribes. He admired their lifestyle and enjoyed sharing their activities but he recognized that more intensive exploitation of the territory was inevitable. In 1885 the railway link from east to west was to be completed and within 50 years the provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta were to become the breadbasket of the western world.

Butler was poorly rewarded by the bureaucrats in Ottawa who failed to use his talents for further exploration in the western lands. He was still a lieutenant, and an angry and embittered man. He took a ship for England, again with the aspiration to join the French Army. However when he reached home France had been defeated. He still made the trip to Paris to see the situation for himself. He found France torn by civil war between the Government and the Commune; bloodshed, mass arrests and executions were the order of the day. He had no option but to return to join his regiment, the 69th, at its new depot at Chatham.

Fortune however turned in his favour. His book was accepted by the first publisher he submitted it to and, miracle of miracles, his oil speculation came good providing him with £1000 worth, approximately £17,000.00 in today's money. Any other man would have been happy to enjoy his good fortune and indulge himself in pleasant recreation. He was also in a position to purchase a majority in the army which had long been withheld on merit alone. It is the hallmark of the man that he chose to take another leave of absence from the army and spend his money on a new and more ambitious expedition to the Canadian North west.

The Wild North Land

The story of this new journey is best told in the form of an itinerary because it would otherwise be an unending repetition of loneliness, subzero temperatures, and rations of moose meat, pemmican and milk less tea.

Autumn 1872	Train to St Cloud Minnesota North by stagecoach and Red River steamer to Fort Garry 600 miles to the forks of the Saskatchewan River A thirty day hunt with his Indian scouts to obtain a winter's supply of buffalo meat; did not meet another human being
January 1873	North along the Athabasca River to Lake Athabasca and then Westwards along the Peace River to Fort St John's Traversed the northern Rockies into British Columbia
June 1873	Quesnel on the Fraser River 400 miles northeast of Vancouver; this area still populated by a few mining prospectors

He was accompanied on this trip by a magnificent sleigh-dog called '*Cerf Volant*' who was leader of the team of huskies by day and his bed warmer by night. They made their way along the Cariboo trail to Victoria and thence by steamer to San Francisco.

In the autumn of 1873, Butler parted company with Cerf Volant in Boston and returned to Canada. By now his funds were low but he was reluctant to return to England. He hoped for a commission from the Canadian Government but this was not forthcoming. Then by chance he read in a newspaper of a new colonial war to be planned by the Imperial Government on the Gold Coast of West Africa

Akim Foo

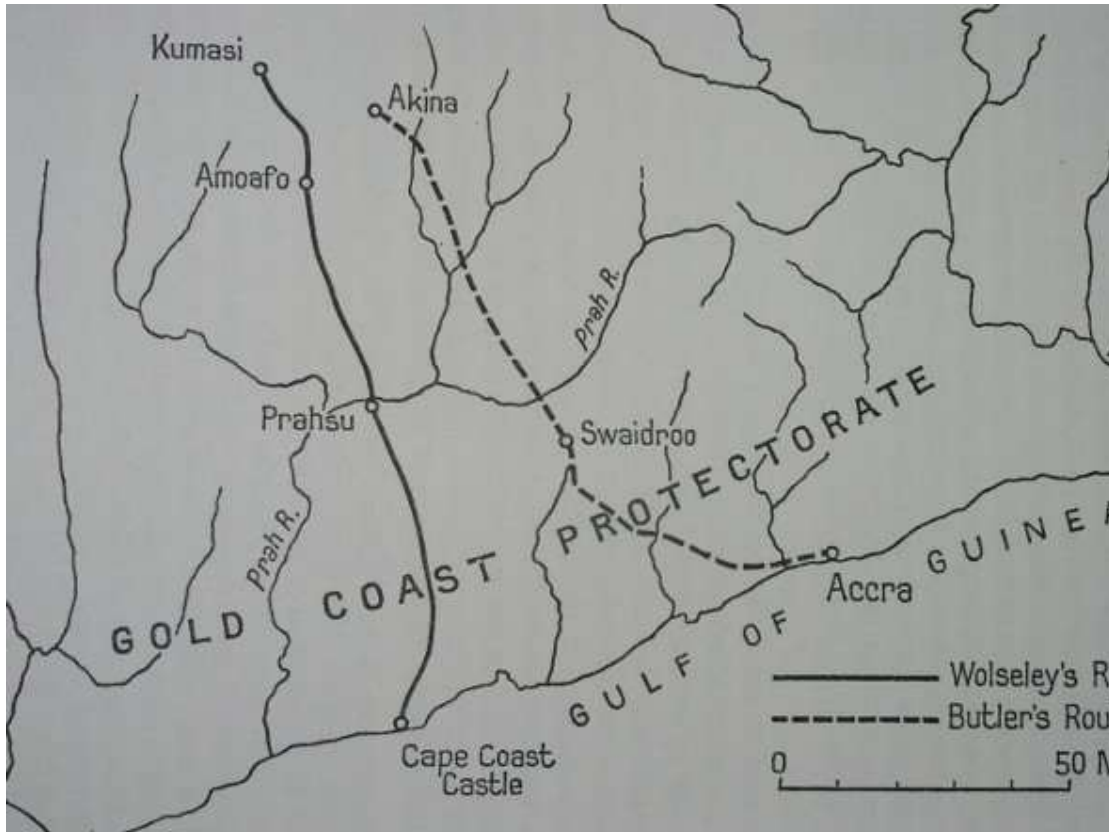
For centuries European merchants from Britain, Holland, Portugal and Denmark had been operating trading posts along the Gulf of Guinea. They traded guns, knives, textiles, and rum for gold, ivory and slaves. The tribes along the coastal belt had been corrupted by venality, rum and the white man's diseases. However the real power in the region rested with the Ashanti tribe who were the Zulus of West Africa-centrally organised, disciplined and militarily competent. Their territory lay north of the Prah River and their capital was Kumasi, about 100 miles inland. From time to time they raided the coastal region and were able to exact tribute from the traders under threat of attack.

The Ashanti were a thorn in the side of the British who were trying to establish a Gold Coast Protectorate to secure their trade. As far back as 1825 they had given the British a bloody nose when a punitive expedition led by an Irish Governor, Sir Charles MacCarthy, invaded their territory complacently believing that the Ashanti would be cowed by a display of military splendour. The expedition was surrounded and annihilated and MacCarthy's head was cut off and for many years thereafter his skull was paraded around Kumasi on ceremonial days. The band instruments were another prized trophy of the Ashantis – possibly the origin of jazz!!

In 1871 the British press, reacting to Ashanti pressure on the trading fort at Elmina, and encouraged by the trading lobbies, began a campaign of censure. British prestige was said to be at stake and nothing outrages the British more than a blow in the prestige. The Government in London was spurred to take action to put the Ashanti in their place.

Butler heard in Montreal that Lieutenant-General Sir Garnet Wolseley had been appointed to lead the expedition but by the time Butler reached England Wolseley had already sailed. He embarked immediately on a fever ridden death trap called the '*Benin*' and sailed on September

30th 1873. The voyage lasted 22 days during which the captain and six sailors died. At Cape Coast Castle, Wolseley and his staff were planning the campaign. By December they assembled a force of some 4,000 men including three battalions of British regulars and the remainder African levies from the coastal tribes. With this force they intended a direct assault towards Kumasi which was defended by up to 40,000 Ashanti warriors led by their king Kofi Karikari. Butler was sent on his own 150 miles to the northeast to raise a force of several thousand Akim tribesmen which he was to lead in a flanking attack from Accra.



Two days out from Accra, Butler met a procession of Akims headed in the opposite direction that had no intention of fighting anyone. He sympathised with their anxieties; they were afraid of the Ashantis and knew from previous experience that the British having scored a victory would go home leaving them to face the music. At this stage Butler came down with fever which was to plague him for the remainder of his time in West Africa. His body wasted away and he was at times so weak that he had to be carried on a litter. Nevertheless he managed to assemble a force of 200 Akims and had been joined by two more British officers who also came down immediately with fever.

Wolseley set the date of January 15th 1874 for the crossing of the Prah River with his own force on the direct line north and Butler's column moving from the east. On that day only Butler reached the start point. The Akims refused point blank to cross the river. Butler and two of his fellow officers stripped off and crossed first and eventually succeeded in assembling a force of several hundred men north of the Prah. Meantime Wolseley's main force crossed the Prah and engaged the Ashanti at the village of Amoafo. The Ashanti fought bravely but their muzzle loaders were no match for the rifles, rockets and artillery of the British. The Ashanti withdrew but were still an effective fighting force. By this time Butler and his people were at Akina but the Akims had no intention of fighting. Butler was in despair feeling himself to be a total failure. It became apparent afterwards that his presence alone compelled the Ashanti to divide their forces making it possible for Wolseley's force to capture and burn Kumasi.

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On March 14th a treaty was signed at Fomena which deprived the Ashanti of their power. Some evidence of human sacrifice was found in Kumasi which provided retrospective justification for the campaign to the readership of the British press. It was the Victorian equivalent of weapons of mass destruction.

Butler was by now seriously ill and by the time he was taken on board a steamer at Cape Coast he was near death. In fact on the voyage home he was being prepared for burial at sea when sailors noticed a small sign of life. On arrival in England he was delirious, a near skeleton and lay in Netley Military hospital for two months.

In spite of his sense of failure Wolseley was highly appreciative of his efforts and Butler was written up in the Illustrated London News, mentioned in the House of Lords, promoted to major and awarded a CB. Queen Victoria came to visit him in hospital. From Netley, still barely able to walk, he returned to Ireland to spend eight months in Kerry recuperating. During this time he wrote his experiences on the Gold Coast in his book '*Akim Foo - The Story of a Failure*'. The verdict on his contribution by independent observers was that he had confronted impossible odds and shown qualities of courage and perseverance which few men could have matched.

South Africa High Commission in Natal

In February 1875 Butler in Kerry received a telegram from Wolseley inviting him to accompany him to South Africa where he had been appointed as Governor and High Commissioner of Natal. This was a political initiative.

The situation in South Africa at the time was that the British controlled Cape Colony and Natal, the Afrikaners having withdrawn to the Orange Free State and Transvaal. Natal with 4000 white settlers operated as a quasi-independent entity with its own Legislative Council. The British Government wanted to bring Natal under direct control of the Colonial Office and create a federal constitution embracing Cape Colony and Natal. Butler joined his four colleagues on the Council as protector of the Indian community.

As part of his task Butler travelled extensively all over South Africa, to Kimberley to see the diamond mines, to Bloemfontein to meet the Boer president Brand and meet and note the situation of the Boers, the Basutos and Zulus. The received wisdom of the time was that the Boers were no match for the British and that the Africans should be dominated. Butler instinctively rejected both premises. He saw the Boers as tough and effective potential guerrillas and he recognized that the native Africans were a different proposition from the Indians of North America. They would not be exterminated and their treatment at the hands of the white man would eventually provoke them to savage retaliation. He had gained valuable firsthand experience of the situation in South Africa and he perceived the remedies which might avert the tragedies which were to come. Unfortunately the prevailing current of opinion saw no need to adopt fair or commonsense policies to meet the aspirations of the various parties. Wolseley's mission ended in Sept 1875 and Butler returned to a War Office job in London. It was not as attractive to him as the active life in the great outdoors but there were compensations.

London 1875 - 1878

One of these was his encounter with Colonel Charles '*Chinese*' Gordon recently returned with an heroic popular reputation from his two year service as Governor of Equatoria, including mostly the Sudan and Darfur. There was an instant rapport between the two men: both professional soldiers; both scions of great families – the Butlers of Ireland and the Gordons of Scotland - and both intensely religious and humane in character. The major difference between them was that Butler enjoyed the life of the barracks and the mess when duty imposed it. Gordon detested the regimental life and his earlier experiences in China and Africa

came about as a result of his seeking secondments to overseas administration which the British Government wished to influence without actively participating. They were never to meet again but eight years later Butler was to take part in the great effort to rescue Gordon besieged in the fortress of Khartoum.



Lady Butler

The other great event of this period was Butler's marriage in 1877 to Miss Elizabeth Thompson, a renowned artist and already an exhibitor at the Royal Academy. Their marriage was presided over by Cardinal Manning and attended by Wolseley and all of Butler's senior colleagues. They spent their honeymoon in Ireland. It was Elizabeth's first visit but she was enchanted by the country and its people, an enthusiasm which persisted for the rest of her long life.

Elizabeth Thompson was born in Lausanne, Switzerland in 1846. She achieved some fame at twenty-seven years-of-age when Queen Victoria bought her painting, *'Calling the Roll after an Engagement, Crimea'*, more commonly referred to as *'The Roll Call'*. Such crowds came to see The Roll Call at the 1874 Royal Academy Summer Exhibition that a special policeman was engaged to protect the picture and keep public order. Lady Butler spent much time talking to soldiers and studying military uniforms in order to achieve accuracy in even the smallest details. She painted at Bansha Castle, in *'the wilds of Tipperary'*, from

1905 to 1922. Lady Butler lived at Gormanston Castle, County Meath, with her daughter Eileen, Viscountess Gormanston, from 1922 until she died in 1933.

The Zulu War

In 1878 Britain under Disraeli annexed the Transvaal laying the foundation for the conflicts between the Afrikaners and the British which were to disturb the closing years of Queen Victoria's Reign.

The following year the British confronted the great Zulu chief Cetewayo and when he refused to submit they mounted an invasion north from Natal. Due to incompetence and overconfidence the invaders suffered heavy defeats by the Zulu impis of which the ones remembered best today are Isandhlwana and Rorke's Drift. The massacres of 1500 crack British troops shook the empire to its core. There is a local connection in that there is a memorial in Christ Church, Delgany to a young officer who was killed at Isandhlwana, erected by his father.

As part of the mobilization to deal with the Zulu threat Butler was sent to Durban as Quartermaster General to organize the munitions and supplies for a strongly reinforced army. As usual he distinguished himself with his energy and competence. He was not involved in any of the fighting which ended with the capture of Cetewayo in June.

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There are two anecdotes which illustrate Butler's character. The widow of the former Emperor Napoleon III, Empress Eugenie, was living in exile in England with her eighteen year old son known as the Prince Imperial. The young man was mad keen to join the South African adventure and wangled a post for himself. Butler met him in Pietermaritzburg and formed a good opinion of him. Sadly the Prince was killed in a clash with a Zulu band. When news of this tragedy reached England there was a Princess Diana style outburst of grief. It was Butler's duty to arrange the cortege for the young man which he organized with splendid dignity. In later years Empress Eugenie became one of Butler's closest friends.

The second anecdote concerns Cetewayo himself who was imprisoned and treated with contempt by the victors. It will be recalled that on his previous visit to Natal Butler had expressed forcefully the opinion that the Zulus should be left untroubled in their own enclave. He now heard that the great king was unhappy in his cell, unable to sleep on a prison cot. He begged for mats made from green rushes on which he had slept all his life. Butler personally carried bundles of green rushes to the prison and met the king in his cell. Cetewayo wept and thanked Butler for '*bringing sleep to me*'. Butler himself was emotional describing his action as '*putting a green sod into the cage of a lark*'. In later years Butler was to describe the conflict between breech-loading rifles and assegais as an unworthy contest. He detested the expansionist policies of the Tory governments of the time but accepted that the first duty of a soldier is to obey. He probably could not in conscience have continued to serve in an army which was being deployed to further the objectives of the Tories but he admired and respected Mr Gladstone and hoped to see fair and honourable policies pursued under his political leadership.

On his return to England he resumed his staff job and concentrated on his writing which led to the publication of his novel '*Red Cloud; or the Solitary Sioux*'.

Egypt Tel-el-Kebir

Butler's next military deployment was to Egypt in 1882. He was by now 44 years old and a Lieutenant-Colonel. The background to this military adventure harked back to the political structure of Egypt which was nominally a province of the Ottoman Empire ruled by a viceroy called '*the Khedive*'. In reality The Khedive Ismail exercised authority without reference to Istanbul. For many years he had made a practice of hiring British civil servants and soldiers on secondment to buttress his administration. Ismail was intent on modernizing Egypt and he spent lavishly on infrastructure projects including public buildings in Cairo, Railways and the Suez Canal. Unfortunately it was all borrowed money and by 1879 the country was bankrupt. Britain bought 40% of the Suez Canal Co for a fraction of its value but it was not enough to satisfy the bankers in London, Paris and Zurich. Ismail was deposed and replaced by his eldest son Tewfik. Before long the Egyptian peasantry, reduced to misery by government exactions to repay foreign loans, rose in revolt. A popular uprising led by Colonel Arabi staged a coup in which Tewfik was overthrown. Gladstone did all in his power to avoid getting Britain embroiled but the financial lobby and the press, citing the safety of British residents, prevailed and an expedition of 20,000 men was launched under Sir Garnet Wolseley in August 1882.

Alexandria was bombarded; the British force landed and marched to Ismailia on the Suez Canal. The Egyptian army was based at Tel-el-Kebir 25 miles to the east. Butler served on Wolseley's staff planning the campaign. In mid-September following a night march, the British force, following an intense artillery bombardment, launched an assault on the Egyptian camp which caught the defenders unprepared. They did not panic but fought bravely against overwhelming odds. In an hour the British victory was complete.

Butler in his autobiography pays tribute to the Egyptian soldiers:



Lieutenant-Colonel W F Butler

'They fought with the greatest determination and gallantry against overwhelming odds. The heaps of dead lying with and across their rifles facing the upcoming sun bore eloquent testimony to that final resolve of these poor fellows. Peace be to them ... No word should soldier utter against them; let that be left to the money-changers. They died the good death.'

In the aftermath of the fighting there was a conspiracy to put Colonel Arabi on trial and execute him. Butler knew that his commander Wolseley supported this idea. He also suspected that the British administrators, who detested Gladstone, wished to implicate him in a vengeance killing. Butler was outraged at this unchivalrous behaviour and not for the first or last time committed an act of insubordination. He sat up all night writing a letter to Wolseley's Chief of Staff protesting against the plan to execute Arabi, which he described as '*a national crime which will raise the voice of the civilized world against us*'. Arabi was in fact reprieved and sent to exile in Ceylon.

Butler returned to England after Tel-el-Kebir little knowing that he was to return within

two years as part of an expedition to rescue the man he admired most in the world, Colonel Charles Gordon, besieged in Khartoum by the rebel force of Muhammad Ahmad, '*the Mahdi*'.

The Campaign of the Cataracts

Since the beginning of the 19th century Sudan had been governed by an Egyptian administration. The population was mostly black Africans of the Nubian and Nilotic tribes but dominated by desert nomads called Arabs but in reality a mixed race of Arab and black African blood. Their main trade was slavery in which they seized and sold black Africans from the Nubian and Darfuri regions. The Arabs detested Egyptian control mainly because it interfered with the slave trade.

From the 1870's a revolt against Egyptian rule had been growing in strength. It was partly political but mainly a jihad led by a Moslem cleric called Muhammad Ahmad who proclaimed himself '*the Mahdi*': the promised redeemer of Islam. In the summer of 1883 the Egyptian government assembled, at Khartoum, an army of 7,000 Egyptian infantry and 1000 cavalry under a British general, William Hicks, and twelve British officers. They set out to relieve El Obeid a desert town, 700 km northwest of Khartoum which had been captured by the Mahdists. They encountered a Mahdi army of 40,000 and were annihilated.

British public opinion was outraged but the Egyptian government, financially unable to sustain another war, decided to evacuate the Sudan. The main task was to evacuate the Egyptian garrisons scattered across the country. The man selected for this task was Charles Gordon who had already served for two years 1873 - 1874 as Governor during which time he

had brought some integrity into the administration and had severely disrupted the slave trade.



He was the popular choice of the British press which complained loudly of the blow to national prestige caused by the defeat of Hicks. Mr Gladstone, the Prime Minister, was desperate to avoid any further military entanglements in the area. There were problems enough trying to achieve stability in Egypt. Gordon's orders were to organize the evacuation of all Egyptian forces from Khartoum and outlying garrisons and leave Sudan to the Mahdists.

When he reached Khartoum in February 1884, Gordon immediately began a series of actions which were at variance with his instructions. Nobody knows why he failed to implement them but nobody was surprised. Although a popular hero in England, he was absolutely the wrong man to implement a strategy devised by the British Government. Never in his life had Gordon carried out orders which varied from his own perception of what needed to be done. The possible reasons for his change of course may include the following:

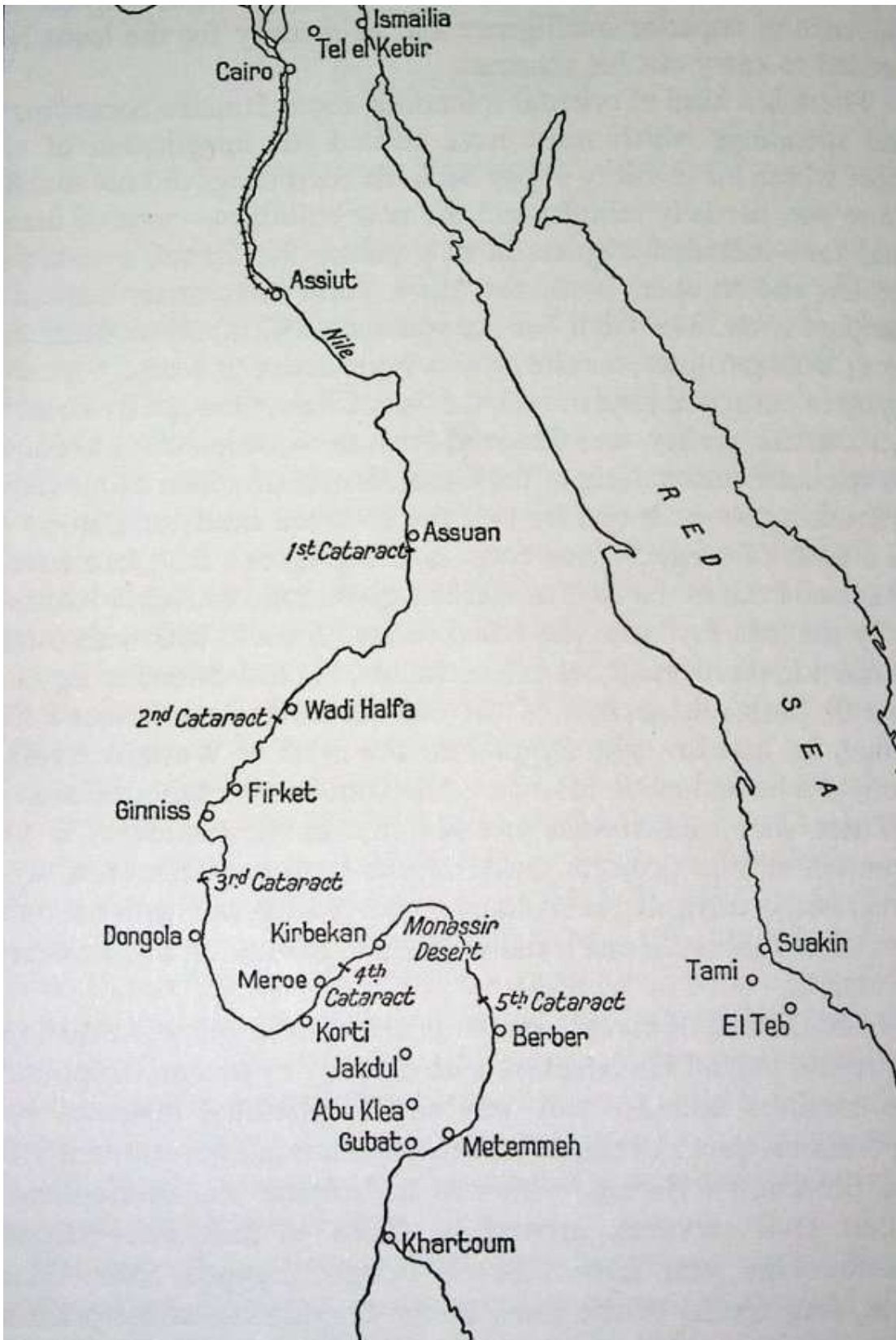
- The Egyptian garrison in Khartoum may have preferred to mount a fixed defence rather than risk a withdrawal through Territory controlled by the Mahdists
- Gordon had previously governed the region successfully, creating a reasonably honest administration and curtailing the slave trade and may have hoped his prestige would counteract the charisma of the Mahdi
- Many commentators have drawn attention to Gordon's personality: he was very devout Christian, his dearest possession was his Bible and he expected and may have hoped to die a martyr

Gordon's position in Khartoum was strong to begin with. The city was protected on three sides by the Blue and White Niles. He had 7,000 Egyptian soldiers and food and ammunition for six months. He was a Royal Engineer and immediately built fortifications on the open side. However by March the Mahdists had cut the telegraph line to Cairo and deployed 50,000 men around the city ending all hope of a breakout.

As Gordon's predicament worsened a clamour arose in Britain for a relief expedition. Gladstone held out as long as he could against what he perceived as moral blackmail but eventually the press, his cabinet colleagues and even Queen Victoria prevailed. In August an expedition under Sir Garnet Wolseley was dispatched.

Wolseley and his trusted inner circle of staff officers, including Butler, had already been appraising the situation. Wolseley was the most successful general of the period. He wasn't liked in the army probably because he was competent and a meticulous planner which always

generated mistrust in the British officer corps. However Butler liked and trusted him and looked forward to taking part in a campaign which for the first time he found morally justifiable.



The alternative routes available to Wolseley were either from Suakim on the Red Sea coast overland to Berber on the Nile or up the Nile valley. The Suakim route was rejected because of

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the long distance over the desert and the fact that 4,000 camels at least would be needed to carry supplies including water. The Nile route eliminated the water problem and offered the hope that river boats would meet part of the supply problem. Butler was put in charge of the project to design, obtain transport and commission on the Nile 400 boats for the expedition. His team included officers who had served on the Red River expedition in 1870.

The prototype was built and tested at Portsmouth on 18th August. She was 32 feet long, 7 feet beam and drew 10 inches. She had to be light enough to be manhandled over cataracts, to be capable of moving under sail in deeper water, to carry 4 tons of stores and 10 men. She passed the harbour tests. Then builders had to be found and contracted to build 400 to be ready for shipment to Alexandria by mid-September. By a miracle of organization Butler himself was ready and waiting at Alexandria only six weeks later to see the boats unloaded from a steamer.



Manhandling a boat over a cataract

In parallel with the procurement of the boats Butler arranged for a corps of '*voyageurs*' to be brought from Canada. There were almost 400 of them including 83 Indians. One of the latter was an old friend of Butler, William Prince, Chief of the Swampy Indian tribe who had crewed his canoe on Lake Winnipeg 14 years earlier.

The plan was that the boats would have a voyageur fore and aft with 8 soldiers pulling the oars. At the cataracts the soldiers would go ashore and pull or manhandle the boats with the voyageurs on board to steer. The distances to be covered were:

- 220 miles: Alexandria to Assiut by rail
- 540 miles: Assiut to Wadi Halfa by river steamer
- 860 miles: Wadi Halfa to Khartoum by river boat

There was a possibility that the last leg could be reduced to a 180-mile short cut across the loop of the Nile from Korti to Metemna. To prepare for this possibility Wolseley formed a Camel Corps of Guardees. Later there was to be a debate as to whether the split of the

expedition into a 'River Force' and a 'Camel Corps' was to cause the fatal delay which brought about the failure to rescue Gordon.

By mid-November the force had only reached Wadi Halfa. They had been delayed by bickering between staff officers, many of whom believed that the River Force was the wrong option. They constantly gave priority to supplies and equipment for the land force.

Meantime Wolseley received a message from Gordon to the effect that he could hold out for 40 days more. By then he was running out of ammunition; food rations were exhausted and the garrison and population were reduced to eating domestic animals, even rats. No man other than Gordon could have held out for ten months against overwhelming odds and provided leadership to a garrison which was increasingly reduced by sickness and starvation. If he were to be saved Wolseley needed to reach Khartoum by end December at the latest.

In fact by early January his leisurely overland progress had only reached Korti 400 miles from Khartoum – the jumping off point for the overland dash to Metemmeh where there were river steamers to transport the vanguard up the Nile for the last 100 miles to Khartoum. There seemed no sense of urgency to force a way through to Khartoum by the land route. Meantime Butler was fuming that he had been left with only a token force of soldiers and no support to keep his unit moving upriver.



Muhammad Ahmad, self-proclaimed Mahdi

On 18th January when the Land force reached Abu Klea, a force of 10,000 Mahdists was lying in wait for them. There were 1600 men in the British contingent plus some artillery and a naval detachment. The British formed a square which was attacked by columns of native soldiers, each under an emir who came forward into a storm of rifle fire indifferent to their losses. The torrent of Arabs broke through but the British managed to repair their line but not before they had lost 65 killed and 61 wounded. It was in this action that Colonel Fred Burnaby was killed. About 800 of the Mahdists lost their lives.

A second action followed a few days later at Abu Kru where the Mahdists might have destroyed the British force but their courage was their undoing. Instead of holding off, pinning the soldiers down with firearms, they charged into the wall of rifle fire and suffered huge losses.

After this the way to Metemmeh was open which they entered on 19th January. They found four paddle steamers which Gordon had dispatched from Khartoum. Unfortunately the column wasted time resting and repairing the steamers. Before they reached Khartoum the Mahdist army finally broke through into the city on January 26th 1885 and Gordon was speared to death. The whole purpose of the expedition was now futile.

Butler only heard of Gordon's death three weeks after the event. He was still at Korti, convinced that the River Force could still achieve the advance to Khartoum by the longer route but the order from Wolseley to start came too late. At first there was some discussion of a punishment expedition against the Mahdi but the soldiers were exhausted and the Arabs continuing to increase in numbers. The decision to evacuate Sudan had been made for them.

Butler's verdict on the episode was to bitterly regret the failure to rescue Gordon whom he admired above all men but he recognized that his hero had died a soldier's death and done his

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duty to the end. In later years he was to write a biography of Gordon extolling the great man's achievements in China and in Africa.

Butler remained in the Sudan for 18 months until July 1886 during which time he fought numerous small engagements to cover the orderly withdrawal of the British and Egyptian forces, protecting the communications north of Wadi Halfa. His wife joined him for part of this time and recorded in pen and ink sketches the scenes of some of his military activities. In July he was invalided home and placed on half pay, mainly because his dispatches criticizing the authorities conduct were bitterly resented in the War Office. However fearing that public opinion would become aware of the shabby treatment meted out to him, the War Office had him gazetted a Brigadier-General and awarded a K.C.B.



Departure of troops

He took his young family to Brittany where he wrote and relaxed in their company for the next 18 months. His sojourn in Brittany was to be disturbed by an unsavoury divorce case in which he was maliciously implicated.

The Campbell Divorce

Lord Colin Campbell, son of the Duke of Argyll, had been judicially separated from his wife of two years on grounds of his cruelty towards her. In revenge he set about trying to obtain evidence of her adultery. He started proceedings citing numerous well known public figures such as Captain Shaw, chief of the fire brigade, Dr. Bird, a prominent doctor, the Duke of Marlborough and Sir William Butler. She in turn sued him on grounds of adultery with a housemaid for which the evidence was more substantial. The case was sensational and occupied pages upon pages of the popular press. In the end a hung jury dismissed both petitions. However Butler's reputation was smeared because he refused to appear as a witness. The press verdict was that he was guilty. In fact those who knew him were of the opinion that he abstained from defending his reputation because he knew that Lady Campbell had been indiscreet with someone of his acquaintance and feared that this might be exposed under cross examination. He was pilloried in the press but he remained impervious to criticism. The verdict of those who admired him were that he was firstly, a man of honour and unlikely to have been implicated and secondly that he refused to lend himself to a circus staged by people whom he held beneath contempt.

The Delgany Interlude

In 1888, after 18 months on half pay and no prospect of further military employment, Butler moved his family from Brittany to Delgany, Co Wicklow. His book '*Campaign of the Cataracts*' had been published in 1887 and he was now working on his life of General Charles Gordon. It was an idyllic time for the family. They roamed the Wicklow hills and Butler befriended Parnell who invited him to stay at his lodge in Aughavannagh for the grouse shooting. Butler considered Parnell one of the greatest men of his era and pays effusive tribute to him in his autobiography.

It was also during this time that Lady Butler painted the famous picture '*The Eviction*'. It was at the height of the Land War about which both she and her husband felt very deeply. For the first time one of her pictures was not well received in England. Indeed the notorious Lord Salisbury, Prime Minister of the time sneered that he admired the '*breezy beauty*' of the scene and wished he could take part in an eviction himself.



'The Eviction' (Lady Elizabeth Butler)

During this time the coercion policies of the Tory Government, the failure of Gladstone's efforts at land reform and home rule, the smearing and downfall of Parnell were blows against the values closest to Butler's heart. Nevertheless he was a professional soldier and when his old friend Wolseley offered him the command at Alexandria he was delighted to accept

Alexandria 1890 - 1893

Butler spent almost 4 years in Egypt during which time he travelled indefatigably in the region studying its history, its agriculture, social organization and economy, and recording perceptive impressions of what he saw. He also visited the Holy Land and wrote in his usual poetic style his impressions of the holy places. During this time he also travelled extensively in Europe visiting the scenes of the great battles of the Napoleonic era - Arcola, Marengo, Austerlitz, Wagram, etc. Butler hero worshipped Napoleon, obviously as the epitome of the successful professional soldier and these battlefield tours allowed him to study the ground on which the

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master tactician had achieved his greatest triumphs. It is noteworthy that Butler never visited Russia and does not anywhere comment on Napoleon's disastrous invasion of that country. He may well have read the recently published '*War and Peace*' in which Tolstoy displays his contempt for Napoleon – sentiments diametrically opposite to Butler's.

Aldershot

In 1893 Butler returned to England to take command of a brigade of infantry at Aldershot. He describes the training systems in use by the British Army of the day as relics of the Crimean War – '*massed divisions, shoulder-to-shoulder tactics, parades, plumes, drums beating, etc.*' which were to bring about the disasters of the Boer campaigns. He describes with grim amusement the useless inspections by '*old dodderers*' and some of his yarns are really funny.

Around Christmas of 1895 Butler led his brigade on a route march to counteract the effects of '*pudding and plenty*'. During the march an officer riding alongside him revealed that an invasion of the Transvaal was about to take place by white irregulars led by Dr Jameson. At the time the Colonial Office under Chamberlain had aspirations to unite all of the British Southern Africa territories into a great confederation but the resistance of the Boers, and the interests of the African tribes in Bechuanaland and Lesotho were obstacles. The white settlers, '*the Uitlanders*', were determined to force the government's hand. It appears that conspirators in England financed by Cecil Rhodes provided them with an inventory of the most modern military equipment. A force of 600 men was to capture Pretoria. Butler, who knew the territory and the capability of the Afrikaner farmers said:

'You may go to London and tell your friends that those fine fellows who are about to invade the Transvaal will get the most infernal dusting they ever had in their lives.'

And so it came to pass, Jameson and all his officers were prisoners of the Boers.

For the next two years the South African situation simmered with the Government talking of peace and progress whilst some officials in the Colonial Office abetted by others in the War Office were laying plans for further military action.

South Africa 1898-1899

Late in October 1898 Butler was summoned to the War office and asked to take over the military command of the Cape due to the death of General Goodenough. He was very reluctant but, professional as ever, accepted that his personal preferences and family life had to be subservient to the wishes of his superiors. It then came to light that Butler was also being asked to take over the civil administration because Sir Alfred Milner, the High Commissioner, was coming home.

Butler discovered on arrival in South Africa in November 1898 that there was a strident media campaign promoting military action against the Boer Republics of the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. Gold had been discovered at Witwatersrand in 1886 and the Transvaal was immediately swamped by an influx of miners. Two consequences followed:

- The Boers already nervous following the Jameson raid became very apprehensive and prepared for an armed response to any threat
- Rhodes and his supporters initiated a media campaign in the Cape and Natal complaining that the new white immigrants were being abused by the Boer authorities and demanding intervention by the British Government

Butler came under pressure to plan a military offensive against the Boers which he resisted for three reasons:

- He was convinced that the media campaign and the reports being fed back to London were mischievous and were motivated by plain greed

- Contrary to the settlers' naïve assumption that the Boers would be cowed by a show of force, he believed that there were inadequate military resources to invade the Boer republics and he doubted that those available would even be capable of resisting a Boer attack
- Whilst he disapproved of the Boers' treatment of the native Africans, he believed that they only wished to live in peace and that they could be incorporated into British administered confederation if their aspirations could be assured



Sir William F Butler in later life

These perceptions underpinned the policies he pursued and the advice he fed back to the War Office and the Colonial Office. It was not the attitude that Milner and his supporters wanted and it did not appeal to the imperialist faction in politics and the civil service in London. He

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advised the War Office that '*war between the white races coming as a sequel to the Jameson raid would be the greatest calamity that ever occurred in South Africa*'.

Realising that his advice was unacceptable Butler tendered his resignation which was gratefully accepted. He returned to England in August 1899.

The second Boer War broke out in October 1899 and everything Butler had predicted came to pass. The Boers besieged the available British forces in three cities: Ladysmith, Mafeking and Kimberly. The efforts to relieve the besieged cities resulted in a series of military defeats at Magersfontein, Stormberg, Colenso and Spion Kop. It took huge transports of troops from Britain to retrieve the situation and the Boers were not defeated in the field until June 1900. Even then they continued a guerrilla campaign which only ended in May 1902 after a scorched earth policy by the British authorities. The numbers speak for themselves:

- A British force of 450,000 was needed to subdue the Boers
- 22,000 British soldiers died
- 7,000 Boer fighters died
- 25,000 Boers died in concentration camps, mainly women and children
- 14,000 Africans died as either soldiers or civilian casualties

When he reached England Butler discovered that there was a campaign in Government circles and in the London press to denigrate him. He was represented as an Irish Catholic, a nationalist, disloyal to the Empire, neglectful of his duty and favouring the Boers. He besought the War Office to defend him against charges which as a serving officer he could not himself refute, but without success. Even after he had left South Africa he was blamed for the succession of defeats suffered by an incompetently led and inadequately trained army. He got some small comfort from a growing awareness that he had in fact warned of the foolhardiness of a military initiative and he was quoted as having advised that a force of 200,000 would be needed to subdue the Boers. In 1903 the Government set up a commission to investigate the conduct of the war. Butler defended his actions very ably and the publication of its report in 1904 found no fault with him. In fact he was appointed to investigate a scandal about war stores during the South African War which led to the exposure of serious corruption in procurement of supplies for the army.

In 1905 Sir William Butler retired from the army after 47 years' service.

Bansha Castle

On his retirement Butler bought Bansha Castle near his old family home and close to the Suir and the Galtee mountains which he had loved since childhood.

For the last five years of his life he interested himself in community and national affairs and lectured widely to clubs and societies. He was a member of the Senate of the National University, a Commissioner of the Board of National Education and a Privy Councillor. He continued working on his autobiography until his death and left the task of final editing and publication to his daughter Eileen. He lent his voice to the campaigns for Land Reform and Home Rule.

He died on June 7th 1910 and was buried next to the family vault in Killardrigh Cemetery. Tipperary has seen few such splendid funerals. His coffin on a gun carriage was led by the Band of the Royal Irish Regiment and escorted by detachments from the Royal Irish and the Connaught Rangers. The Royal Field Artillery fired a salute of six guns.

After his death a poem was found amongst his papers:

*Give me but six-foot three (one inch to spare)
Of Irish earth and dig it anywhere;*

*And for my poor soul say an Irish prayer,
Above the spot.*

*Let it be where cloud and mountain meet,
Or vale where grows the tufted meadow-sweet;
Or breen trod by peasants' shoeless feet,
It matters not.*

*I loved them all – the vale, the hill,
The moaning sea, the flagger – lilled rill;
The yellow furze, the lake shore lone and still,
The wild bird's song.*

*But more than hill or valley, bird or moor,
More than green fields of my native Suir;
I loved those hapless ones, the Irish poor,
All my life long.*

*Little I did for them in outward deed,
And yet be unto them of praise the need;
For the stiff fight I waged 'gainst lust and greed,
I learnt it there.*

There are echoes here of what Yeats would later write of another Irish warrior in British service:-

*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 can bring them loss,
Or leave them happier than before.*

The verdict on him must be that he was a man of immense fortitude and moral courage. He always stood up for the poor and the oppressed. The question, given his background and instincts, is why did he ever become a soldier. The answer must be that all his life he lived for adventure and danger. As a youth his opportunities were limited and the army offered at least a career. Later in life he showed himself to be a capable administrator in Canada but no one offered him an opening. His organization skills were displayed in planning and supervising the River transport for the Nile Campaign. Similarly in South Africa he showed a wise appreciation of how the impasse there should be resolved and showed great courage in putting forward opinions directly contrary to the spirit of the age,

His experiences in the Gold Coast, Egypt and South Africa left him disillusioned. He felt that the soldiers had been misused to further the greed and lust for power of politicians and financiers. He believed that the professional soldier should be an agent of justice, a defender of the weak and enemy of evil, and regretted that only in the Campaign to rescue Gordon had he seen these ideals pursued. We may hope that modern times have seen soldiers, particularly Irish soldiers, employed to deliver the kind of objectives which Butler would have approved.

One Hundred and Fifty Years of Life boating in North Wicklow

By Kevin Rahill

The Early Years

Following the unfortunate wreck of the *Adventure* off the mouth of the River Tyne in 1789, the same year that Delgany Church was built, two South Shields businessmen put up a prize of 2 guineas for the best plan for a lifeboat. Two designs were eventually selected and the prize was shared between two designers: William Wouldhave and Henry Greathead. Greathead's revised design, a boat named *Original*, was built and placed on service, where she remained for forty years.

In 1824, Sir William Hillary, himself a lifeboatman in the Isle of Man, founded the National Institute for the preservation of Life from Shipwreck, the first nationally co-ordinated lifeboat service, which was renamed the Royal National Lifeboat Institute in 1854.

Wicklow Lifeboat station was established in 1857, a new boathouse being built on what is now the Packet Pier. The first lifeboat to be placed on service at Wicklow was the *Dauntless*, a 30-foot 'pulling' lifeboat, which was rowed by a crew of twelve and launched and recovered on a slipway.

On of the last services carried out by the *Dauntless* was to the Whitehaven brig, *New Draper*. Her claim to fame was that some years later she transported two Fenian Leaders, John McCafferty and John Flood to Ireland to take part in the Fenian Rising of 1867, although their identities were unknown at the time to the Captain.

The Wicklow boathouse was replaced after storm damage by a new boathouse at the back of Leirim Place in 1866. A new boat, the *Robert Theophilus Garden*, was placed on service. This boat was launched by horse and carriage, requiring a considerable amount of manpower to launch and recover the boat.

When the east breakwater was built, a new boathouse and slipway was built beside this breakwater, allowing access directly to the water at all times. This boathouse, built in 1887, is still used by the present lifeboat and crew, albeit with several additions and extensions. In the same year, a new lifeboat, again designed for slipway launching was placed on service at Wicklow, named the *Robert Theophilus Garden II*.

Meanwhile, in Greystones, a lifeboat station was opened in 1872. The boathouse was built at the north end of the harbour and still stands today. The pulling lifeboat, *Sarah Tancred*, was placed on service. Between 1872 and 1886 the *Sarah Tancred* launched only four times, but saved four lives. In 1886, the Greystones lifeboat was replaced by another pulling lifeboat, the *Richard Brown*.

Interestingly, the *Richard Brown* never launched on service and she was withdrawn from service in 1892 and the station closed. Just prior to the closure of the station, three of the crew were drowned while assisting the *Mersey*, a brig moored alongside the harbour wall, during a storm. The coxswain, John Doyle and two other crew members, his cousin William Doyle and his cousin's son, Herbert Doyle, were trying to get additional lines onto the ship when they were washed into the harbour and unfortunately were drowned.

By 1899, the Wicklow Lifeboat was getting old and was replaced by the *Robert Theophilus Garden III*. This latest lifeboat was a 'pulling and sailing' lifeboat, the addition of two masts and sails assisting the oarsmen to carry out services further from the town. After only thirteen years on station, the *Robert Theophilus Garden III* was replaced by the *Robert Theophilus*

Garden IV in 1911. She was the first motor lifeboat to enter service in Ireland in 1911. The placing on service of a motor lifeboat greatly improved lifeboat cover in North Wicklow,



Present Wicklow boathouse: built in 1887

allowing the boat to travel further and remain at sea for longer. Interestingly, one of the coxswains of this boat, Edward Byrne, had been a sailor on the *Great Eastern* under another famous Wicklow mariner, Robert Halpin, when the first trans-Atlantic cable was laid. In all, four Wicklow Lifeboats were paid for by the generosity of Robert Theophilus Garden of River Lyons, Philipstown in County Offaly.

The War Years

The First World War saw the Wicklow Lifeboat launch eleven times on service. Two services during this time are particularly interesting and show the human face of war. On the 29th March 1917 the Wicklow Lifeboat launched to the rescue of the crew of the *SS Wychwood*, which had been sunk by the German U-boat, *U65*. All 18 crew were rescued and brought ashore at Wicklow. The interesting thing about this service was that in the 1980s an elderly gentleman visiting Wicklow asked at the station to see the service records for 1917. On inspection he decided that the dates were correct and it was the *SS Wychwood* he was interested in. On checking the station records and discovering that all crew were saved, he was relieved. It turned out he was one of the U boat crew, and always wondered if anyone escaped that night.

The same year, on the 29th August, the *SS Lynburn* struck a mine and sank within four minutes near the North Arklow Light Vessel. The Wicklow lifeboat launched to her assistance. After picking her way through the minefield, she picked up three survivors, the Captain, Mate and Engineer, clinging to some wreckage. The lifeboat continued to search for survivors and only turned back on the insistence of the Captain, who reckoned that the lifeboat crew had put

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY YEARS OF LIFE BOATING IN NORTH WICKLOW

themselves at enough risk and that he did not want them to risk their lives any further. A difficult decision. A letter of appreciation and thanks was received at the lifeboat station from Rev H R Cadwallader of the Congregational Chapel in Moelfre, Wales, where the master and many of his crew hailed from.

During World War II, the Wicklow lifeboat launched a total of ten times. Interestingly, apart from one ship that grounded after being chased by a U-boat, none were casualties of hostilities. The normal risks of going to sea continue, even in wartime.

A Medal Service

The RNLI recognise their coxswains and medals bravery and dedication, and every year an Awards Ceremony is held at London. Awards are not given lightly and most years only two or three gallantry medals are awarded. One such medal, a Bronze Medal for Gallantry, was awarded to Coxswain Ned Kavanagh after the successful rescue of ten crew from the *MV Cameo*, wrecked on the Arklow Bank.

The motor lifeboat *Lady Kysant*, placed on station in 1937, was first launched on Sunday 10th September at 10.30 in the morning and stood by for several hours before returning to station. On Monday 11th, she was again launched and stood by with two tugs for ten hours in deteriorating weather. Finally, conditions reached a point where the ship's captain decided the abandon ship and the lifeboat was again called at 9.30 on the night of Tuesday 12th, when she took the crew off the *Cameo* arriving back at Wicklow Harbour at 4.00 the following morning.

Recent Times

The 42 foot Watson Class Lifeboat, *J W Archer*, arrived on station in 1956 and shortly afterwards was officially named by Mrs Sean T O'Kelly, wife of the then President of Ireland. By the time of the lifeboat's retirement in 1987, she was the only non-self-righting boat left in the Irish fleet. In her station life, she launched one hundred and sixty nine times, and saved seventy-five lives. The RNLI categorises its services according to the risk to the casualty. A 'life saved' is where it is deemed that but for the presence of the lifeboat, a life would have been lost.



J W Archer naming ceremony

The replacement for the *J W Archer*, the *Annie Blaker*, was a state of the art boat, self-righting and fully equipped with all the modern navigation and communications equipment. Arriving on station in 1989, cover being provided by relief lifeboats in the intervening two years, she was formally named by President Hillary.

Nothing remains constant and in recognition of the changing profile of services, the RNLi supplemented the *Annie Blaker* with a 'D-Class' Inshore Lifeboat in 1995. This inshore inflatable lifeboat, although only 16 feet in length, is no less a lifeboat than the forty seven foot *Annie Blaker*.



The Annie Blaker exercising with the Coast Guard helicopter

The People

Perhaps the great constant in the one hundred and fifty years of life boating on the North Wicklow coast has been the people: perhaps not surprising when one considers that throughout history, this has been the same. If one takes the history of any settlement from earliest times, the first settlers may have been farmers, living in ring forts, later inhabitants may have lived in or around the castle, even later around the '*big house*' and so on, but life was essentially the same. People worked the land, albeit in different ways, made a livelihood and interacted with each other down through the centuries. So it is with a lifeboat community. Since the establishment of any lifeboat station, people step up to the line and volunteer to crew the boat, whether in 1857 to row the boat or in 2006 to man the radar, look after the engines or navigate. The spirit is still the same. The boat will be crewed and no call for help unanswered. Equally, the people who help keep the lifeboat running in other ways are the same as they were one hundred and fifty years ago. Running a lifeboat service costs money. Thanks to the generosity of the public, this money has always been there, but someone has to go out and raise it. The volunteers who continue to work tirelessly to raise the much needed funds to keep the service going are driven by the same spirit as their forbearers when Wicklow and Greystones lifeboat stations were established.



Crew and station personnel: past and present

The Future

As with any organisation, change is constant. The RNLI exists to save lives at sea. To do so requires the Institution to keep abreast of changes not only of technological developments, but also of changes in how people use the sea. One hundred and fifty years ago, the sea provided a livelihood for many people, either transporting goods and people or fishing. Today, there are more leisure boats on the North Wicklow coast than commercial vessels. While the type of craft may have changed, the types of services have not. Vessels still run aground, foul their propellers, suffer engine or rigging failure, sometimes sink or lose people overboard. Who can tell what the lifeboat service will look like in the future, what kind of boats will be used or where lifeboat stations will be located. One thing we can be sure of is that the RNLI will continue to provide up to date boats, continue to train their crews and will operate lifeboat stations where there is a proven need.

Sir Albert Hime, Prime Minister of Natal

By Canon Robert Jennings

Introduction

It is an indication that a state has come of age when it recognises and gives equal care and concern to all its citizens, and especially the minorities among us. Join me in delving into the past to discover and give recognition to some minorities who contributed so much in Ireland and elsewhere in the past.

Dare I say many think that the history of Ireland began with the foundation of the state in 1922. Yet over hundreds of years Irish men and women have contributed so much to the enlightenment and development of practically every country in the world, as educators, doctors, missionaries, writers, poets, engineers, explorers, sailors, soldiers, politicians and so on. Most of the American presidents claim direct Irish connections as well as those from many other countries, such as South Africa, Australia and New Zealand. Even a name sake of mine, Patrick Jennings, born in Newry, was a Prime Minister of New South Wales. In 1815 an Irishman changed the course of world history when Wellington, born in Dublin, defeated Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo. The bulk of his army were Irish. In the Second World War, every other Field Marshal was Irish, including Montgomery, Alexander, Auchinleck, O'Connor, Templar, Brooke and several others. Of the three heads of the army during the Second World War, two were Irish.

There is also a minority of 52 Irish heroes, largely unknown, and with no memorial in the land of their birth. They were the bravest of men from every county in Ireland who were awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest honour for bravery that can be given. Three were from Co Wicklow - Denis Dempsey from Bray, James Byrne from Newtownmountkennedy and Donald Edward Garland from Ballinacor. He was the very first in the history of the Royal Air Force to receive a Victoria Cross. They too are a small minority, forgotten and with no memorial.

Early Life

A few years ago, while researching information for my book *The History of Kilcoole*, I came across the story of our own home grown Prime Minister Albert Hime, who was born in Kilcoole in 1842 in Ballydonerea House off Lott Lane. The farm of 965 acres was along the original sea road and is still a 'right of way'.



Foyle College, Derry

Albert was the 7th son of Rev. Maurice Hime, and Harriette, daughter of Rev Bartholomew Lloyd D.D., who was the Provost of Trinity College Dublin. Although Ballydonerea is in the parish of Newcastle, Albert was baptised in Delgany Parish Church.

The Hime family were of Jewish descent, having changed their name from Hyam in the late 18th century and when they also changed their religion. Albert's father was headmaster of the well-known Foyle College in Derry. It is of interest to record that when corporal

SIR ALBERT HIME, PRIME MINISTER OF NATAL

punishment was an everyday occurrence in public schools he was well before his time when he abolished it in Foyle College.

Actual details of Albert's early life are not readily available as the family history contained in letters, papers, mementoes etc, were destroyed in a German bombing raid on Colchester during the last war. However, it was a most difficult and distressing time for Irish people as Albert grew up in the period after the potato famine that witnessed two million emigrating between 1845 and 1847 and many more dying. However, we do have a copy of his baptismal certificate and we know he attended Portora Royal School in Enniskillen along with his brothers. His name appears in a copy of boarders at the school in 1857. He entered Trinity College Dublin in 1858 and then the Royal Military Academy at Woolwich, where he trained as an army engineer. To put his era in context, it was the time of the Crimean War, De Lesseps was engaged in building the Suez Canal and the Pope was proclaiming the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. To bring us right up to date the first hole-in-one was scored by a Scottish golfer.

Bermuda

At the young age of 24 Lieutenant Hime, recently married to Josephine, arrived in Bermuda in 1866. At this time the British colony of Bermuda felt threatened by the USA and plans were drawn up to fortify the islands.

The newly arrived Albert Hime was given the major task of building a road 1.8 miles long, half of it across a harbour incorporating two bridges, one of which was to be a swing bridge for the passage of ships. It joined St Georges Island to the mainland of Bermuda. It took four years to complete without any serious accident. In 1871 there was a grand opening ceremony with brass band playing and bunting everywhere. Six thousand people, half the population of the Island, were present when Lieutenant Hime



Causeway, Bermuda built by Albert Hime

presented the Governor with a report which began *'I have the honour to announce to your Excellency that this causeway is now completed and ready to be opened for public traffic'*. The Governor replied *'I receive this report with the greatest satisfaction, and I congratulate you on having associated your name inseparably with the social history of Bermuda. I trust in a long future career you may reap many distinctions'*. High praise indeed for the young 24 year old Lieutenant Hime.

Natal

At the age of 33 in 1875, now Captain, Albert Hime, arrived in Natal to take up the important post of Colonial Engineer with responsibility for organising the construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, military outposts, etc. In addition his tasks included the extension of the railway from the coast to the interior; the dredging of the harbour at Durban, the building of a pier there, and everything else that was needed to improve the facilities of the colony and strengthen its defence.

Of course the Boers, who were the original Dutch settlers, and the Zulus both resented the expansion of the British into their lands, which resulted in continuous warfare. Gold and

diamonds are not only a girl's best friends, but in Africa and elsewhere everyone fought over them.

Albert Hime was much involved in the preparation of an expeditionary force of soldiers and auxiliaries who advanced into Zululand. He was fortunate in that he did not accompany them for some 14,000 were massacred by superior numbers of Zulus. Shortly after this horrific defeat was redeemed in the battle of Rourke's Drift where a mere 100 men under Lieutenant Chard RE fought a heroic and successful defence against 4,000 Zulus. Chard and 10 others were awarded Victoria Crosses, the most ever awarded for a single battle. No doubt you have seen the film of Rourke's Drift. I have been to both battle fields and was greatly moved by the mass graves and memorials.

Completion of Army Service

Albert Hime retired from the army in 1893 when Natal was granted representative government. He was more an engineer than a soldier or politician and so became Minister of Lands, Works and Defence for which his experience as Colonial Engineer suited him very well. It was said of him that *'In Council he was a universal favourite with his Celtic readiness and wit. How well he knows how to demolish an opponent's argument with good humoured badinage'*. He was a highly efficient engineer for which he had been trained. Although he held a military rank he never led men into battle and it is unlikely he ever carried a military weapon. As a Colonial Engineer his task was to establish and maintain means of communication such as roads, bridges, railways and harbours so that military and civilian alike could receive their necessary supplies. It was for his engineering feats that he received recognition and rewards, not for any military success in which he was engaged.

As Colonial Engineer he was given the task of surveying and marking the state boundaries between Natal and the Orange Free State. A report sent back to London on the survey gives the participants great praise *'I would beg to bring under your most favourable notice the services of Colonel Hime and Mr Fannin who both in their relations with the Free State and in carrying out the work of the survey, discharged the commission entrusted to them with a tact and discretion that call for my warmest commendation'*.



San Bushmen Painting

During his survey, often up in the Drakensburg Mountains he discovered many of the San Bushmen cave paintings in the area. Here and elsewhere he discovered cave paintings depicting scenes of stalking and hunting of game, of fish being caught in rivers, preparation of food and religious ceremonies and so on. The final paintings are scenes of wagons, cattle raiding, and riders on horseback carrying guns with flames coming out of them and the Bushmen defending themselves with spears and bows and arrows. Tragically the paintings end here as new invaders, including the Zulus from the North, exterminated the San people. All

that remains of these lost people are their vivid and beautiful cave paintings.

Prime Minister

He became Prime Minister of Natal in 1899 and was largely responsible for guiding Natal through the difficult period of the second Anglo-Boer war. One of the main incidents of that was the capture of Ladysmith by the Boers in 1900. All communications were cut off between Ladysmith and Durban during a long siege of 4 months. It took some time for Heliograph

SIR ALBERT HIME, PRIME MINISTER OF NATAL

contact to be made. So rather amusingly, lacking our instant access via mobile phone, the message of the capture of Ladysmith was sent to Prime Minister Albert Hime by a carrier pigeon called '*Invincible*'. Its last resting place, now preserved and stuffed, is a glass showcase in the museum in Durban.

Albert Hime received many rewards during his lifetime. He was made a CMG, Companion of St Michael and St George. He was knighted in 1900 and made a Privy Councillor in 1902. His own University of Dublin, as well as Cambridge and Edinburgh conferred honorary degrees of Doctor of Law on him. He received his honorary degree with some other very distinguished people. There was Whitelaw Reid, Ambassador to France, two Indian Maharajas, the Governor General of Canada and the Governor of Ceylon among others.

Retirement

In 1903 Albert Hime retired as Prime Minister of Natal and returned to England. He took a 21 year lease at £210 per annum on a house on the banks of the Thames near Marlow. He renamed it Lynbrook after a favourite fishing place he had known.

In this peaceful spot he had time to reflect on his long career and enjoy his retirement and fishing. He remained there until his death in 1919 aged 77. He had indeed achieved what was predicted about him when aged 24: that '*he would enjoy a long future career and reap many distinctions*'. He was a man with the outlook and morals of his day and should not be judged by today's standards. There were seven children from his marriage to Josephine. All of them remained in South Africa. Five sons were in government service and one became a lawyer. Most started as clerks with a yearly salary of about £200. All of the family were keen on sport and represented South Africa in Test Cricket. Some of his grandchildren still live and work in South Africa. Himeville is named after him.

Visit to South Africa

All of this information came to life for me when on my second visit to South Africa I crossed a bridge called Hime Bridge and realised I had just bypassed the town of Himeville. Returning home I contacted the South African Embassy who gave me the name and address of the Mayoress of Himeville. This led to much correspondence and a visit from Beryl Robins from Himeville to Kilcoole. On my next visit to South Africa my sister and I were invited to stay for a few days with the Mayor of Himeville. We were given a great welcome and I formally presented a painting of Kilquade church and a few copies of my book on Kilcoole to an invited group at the Museum.

Himeville is situated at the southern end of the Drakensburg Park and is a world heritage site. Drakensburg means the '*Mountains of the Dragon*'. This honour was granted in recognition of, to quote, '*Its unique richness of biological diversity, its endemic and endangered species, its superlative natural beauty as well as its masterpieces of human creative genius in the form of tens of thousands of San rock paintings*'. In plain English, it is a wonderful and beautiful place to visit. It is also the home of the renowned Drakensburg Boys Choir.

During our few days there we travelled on roads and railway tracks built by Albert Hime, crossed bridges he had construct-ed, saw the rivers where he loved to fish, climbed the mountains he had surveyed and visited the caves and saw the paintings of the original Bushmen. We dined in the Himeville Arms hotel which was once owned by a Mr Hitler – no relation to Adolph, I am assured.

I started this piece with the observation that Irish people were to be found in every land. We found a number of them here. We climbed by Land Rover up the San pass to the border of Lesotho. At the top of the pass there is a rest house and pub. We had a pint of beer. It is the highest pub in the whole of Africa and owned by an Irishman. Who else but an Irishman would own the highest pub in Africa?!!

I have an email here from the present Mayoress of Himeville regretting she will be unable to attend today's ceremonies. She is a very kind and conscientious African lady called Eugena McNamara. With a name like that, she also must have an Irish connection.

For me it has been a memorable experience to have followed in the footsteps of a Prime Minister from Kilcoole in Wicklow to Himeville in Natal which like our own garden county is world famous for its beauty.

The following is an email received from the current Mayoress of Himeville:

'It is a great sadness to the community of Himeville that we cannot be present at today's ceremony honouring a great Irishman who became a great South African.

Sir Albert did not live in Himeville but he frequently visited this beautiful part of our country, walked in the mountains and fished the rivers. He must be counted as being one of our very first tourists and we are proud to be called Himeville after him.

Tourism is one of our top three industries, the others being dairy farming and forestry. We boast rare Alpine flora and avifauna, many examples of San Rock Art and a few years ago we were declared a world heritage site.

It would give us immense pleasure to welcome tourists from Kilcoole, Wicklow and Ireland, and, as you say in Ireland, we would give them a 'Céad Mile Fáilte' to share the beauty and peace of this area.

Although currently we are unable to officially 'twin' with Kilcoole, it is our dearest wish that it will come to pass one day, and we believe Sir Albert would approve. Unlike others who sent their children home to be educated all of his went to school here, grew up, married and worked here. His grandchildren still live here. Had he lived in the days of air travel he might have encouraged student exchanges and we look forward to the days when we can establish such links between you and us. We have so much poverty in our area with orphanages and limited schooling for children with AIDS and T.B. that tourism and exchanges would benefit us all.

Until then please let us use the doors that have been opened by Robert Jennings and join hands in an enduring friendship.'

Editor's note: this paper was presented by Canon Jennings as part of the La Touche Seminar on 1st October 2006. It was followed by the unveiling of a plaque on the house where Albert Hime was born in Kilcoole and the planting of a tree in his memory. This was the ceremony referred to in the mayoress's email.

The Society welcomes New Members.

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