

A Pictorial History



**BRITTAS • SAGGART
RATHCOOLE • NEWCASTLE**

PART 1

(Revised Edition)

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A Pictorial History of Rathcoole, Saggart, Brittas and Newcastle

*with reminiscences of members of
Four Districts Day Care Centre, Rathcoole
and local residents*

Part 1

(Revised Edition)

Published by South Dublin Libraries 2006

Dedicated to HELEN SHEEHAN

*Without her drive and perseverance the
Four Districts Day Care Centre
would not have had its strong beginning*

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Introduction by Mayor Thérèse Ridge



OVER the past 25 years and more particularly in recent years there have been many changes and developments in the Saggart, Rathcoole, Newcastle and Brittas areas.

One constant in the area has been The Four Districts Day Care Centre which is run by a corps of volunteers and managed by a committee elected at the annual general meeting. Since it was officially opened by President Hillery in 1981, the centre has gone from strength to strength and is among the best run centres in the country.

I wish to compliment the Four Districts Day Care Centre for producing this excellent pictorial history of the area. Its evocative pictures tell the history of these communities most eloquently. South Dublin County Council through its library service is delighted to publish this book, a model for other communities wishing to capture their histories.

I wish the Four Districts Day Care Centre, its management committee, its volunteers and its members every good wish for another twenty-five years of excellent and enjoyable endeavour.

Mayor of South Dublin County
May 2006

FOREWORD TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE Four Districts Day Care Centre was established in 1981 by a group of interested people in the community in consultation with the Eastern Health Board for the purpose of providing a facility where the senior citizens of Saggart, Rathcoole, Newcastle and Brittas could meet socially in pleasant surroundings and enjoy meeting old friends and making new ones.

It was our good fortune that the premises made vacant by the death of Dr Josephine Clarke was ideal for our requirements. Dr. Clarke had been the dispensary doctor in Rathcoole from 1931 and these premises, attached to the old dispensary, were the residence of the dispensary doctor since around 1888. Dr. Clarke had retired in the late 1960s but for thirty years had been a much loved doctor and friend to the community of Rathcoole and surrounds.

This Project, undertaken by Vera McCormack and Mary McNally, has generated much interest and support in the community at large and has served as a source of reminiscence for our senior citizens who attend at the Centre. It has also helped, in its own way, even at this stage, to bridge the gap between the generations in the European Year of Older People. The front cover is the result of a competition carried out in the Holy Family Community School, Rathcoole, and the winning design is the work of Jean Anderson.

HELEN SHEEHAN (*Chairperson*)

Introduction

Saggart and Rathcoole

Saggart and Rathcoole are two very individual villages which have co-existed since our country's earliest times. The way of life in each village was very different and yet they have always worked in unison and complemented each other. Rathcoole seems to have been the first mentioned in ancient historical records because of its position on the main road south from Dublin. The Parthalonians are said to have first landed at Howth and then spread out into what are now Counties Meath, Kildare, Wicklow and, of course, Dublin. Gradually, communications spread further and, so, Rathcoole, ten miles from Baile Átha Cliath and the sea, became known as the Rath of Cumhall, the leader of the Fianna, Ireland's first trained army.

At the same time, Saggart in its more secluded setting, was also developing and when Christianity came, one of the earliest monasteries was that of Saint Mosacra. As time went on, both villages were pillaged by the Danes and later by the Normans. Rathcoole became a royal manor in 1215, but Saggart became a unit of the Deanery of St Patrick's Cathedral which received all the rents of the area.

Perhaps because of its strategic position, Rathcoole was guarded more closely by the authorities, but Saggart was raided frequently by the O'Byrne and O'Toole clans from the hills. Succeeding records refer at times to Rathcoole as prosperous and shabby, so we must assume that Rathcoole too was a frontier town of the Pale and suffered for it.

When more peaceful times prevailed, the businesses and inns in Rathcoole flourished and in Saggart, near the end of the seventeenth century, life changed completely when the papermill was founded, giving regular employment. The village grew and, at one time, there were three public houses as well as shops and small houses tightly packed in the village and around the mill. It was only at the beginning of the twentieth century that people from Rathcoole and Newcastle went to work in the mill. Rathcoole had declined in the latter part of the nineteenth century as the railways took most of the prosperous travellers off the roads.

The invention of the motor car changed all that again, bringing fast traffic and easy access to the city. With Dublin continuing to sprawl, it looks as if both villages will soon be suburbs, perhaps like other areas even being given postal codes, but it is doubtful if area numbers or modernisation will change the independent spirit of Rathcoole and Saggart.

Brittas and Newcastle

Brittas is a very unusual place. The name means wooden fort or fort in the woods and it must surely have been a fortified stronghold as the invading Normans tried to gain more land, and the O'Byrnes, O'Tooles and Hanlons fought to keep them back. Mount Seskin, Saggart Hill and Sliabh Tuathal formed a strong barrier against the invaders and to this day, Brittas is a very close-knit community. The mountain scenery and the Brittas Ponds (two lakes extending to forty acres) in the foreground are very beautiful and there is a great demand for the few building sites available. New residents have blended with the locals, the school has expanded, and the new generation growing up in Brittas will be well equipped to deal with changing times.

Newcastle, on the other hand, was once a town of the Pale. Remains of tower houses still exist - an ancient pre-Christian motte has been uncovered. The ancient church, now Church of Ireland, has a wonderful tower, and a window unrivalled in Ireland, with some of the oldest glass known in Ireland. The Hill of Lyons, where the Kings of Leinster were crowned long ago, dominates the village. The Grand Canal, less than a mile away, brought prosperity and development in the late eighteenth century and, in the mid-nineteenth century, the Great Southern Railway was opened close to the canal and the townland of Hazelhatch benefited very much. On that side of Newcastle, too, in the early-twentieth century, with the assistance of the Governor-General's wife, Lady Aberdeen, Peamount Sanatorium was founded and between the excellent care given and the healthy atmosphere, many were saved from the prevalent scourge of the time — tuberculosis. Baldonnell Aerodrome, founded by the British in 1917 and continued by the Irish Free State, was also a great employer and Newcastle prospered and expanded into a thriving village and parish.

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Members of the Day Care Centre who contributed photographs and reminiscences.

To the communities of the Four Districts for their kind assistance.

European Year for Older People 1993.

Dublin County Council and Communities Affairs Officer.

MARY McNALLY, without whose dedication and hard work this book might never have been published

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JULIA STEWART (NEE HENNESSY) TELLS HER STORY



I was born at Scotch Parade, Athlone, in November 1909. My mother was from Carlow and my father was from Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny, where he trained as a gardener in McCalmonts of Mount Juliet. There were twelve gardeners there and when they were trained some of them moved on to other estates and my father moved to the Deanery in Athlone. I was the fifth of the family. Mary, Maggie, John and Kit were older. Bill, Paddy and Evelyn were younger. We moved to Tassaggart when I was three years old, when my father came to work for the Verschoyles, and we lived in the yard beside the old castle, where my brothers kept guinea pigs and pet rabbits. I went to Saggart to school. Miss Agnes Monks taught the small children and Mr. Keane the big ones. We played

among ourselves, but we had a good lot of work to do too, weeding and helping my father in the garden. Mrs. Verschoyle was an old lady and she was very particular. John used to get up at 5.30 am to cut the grass and there was an awful lot to cut. We used to harness ourselves with ropes to the lawnmower to help him.

There were a number of gardens. The rose garden was beautiful, with borders trimmed and the perfume of the roses was beautiful. There was a fig tree there too and a huge glasshouse with lovely grapes and flowers. The other gardens had every kind of vegetables and fruit. When I got bigger, I used to go into the house after school to help my sister Maggie, who was the cook, or Kathleen, the parlourmaid, and when there were tennis parties we had to run around and help retrieve balls and so on.

As soon as I was fourteen years old, I left school and went to work at Colley's at Corkagh as a nursemaid. There were six children there and the work was hard and I left after a year. My mother was cross because money was scarce, but I got a lovely job after that as housemaid to Miss Perrin at Fortfield House. I was nearly three years there when she died. Her nephew came from Tanganyika to clear things up and he was very good to us all, sharing out blankets, etc., among the staff.

After that I went to Maudes at Belgard Castle, where I spent ten happy years until I got married. They were a lovely family and were very good to us all. They entertained a lot and when the Miss Maudes went out to a party or dance we would stand at the dining room door to watch them come down the splendid stairs in their beautiful dresses. During Horse Show week they always entertained all the foreign competitors and the officers were gorgeous in their colourful dress uniforms. It is lovely to look back on and remember. They all gave me lovely presents when I left to get married.

I got married in Saggart on 9 January 1939. I then came to live in Rathcoole, beside Haydens, opposite Pa Keogh, and I had four children, Joe, Kay, Billy and Carmel, and I have twelve grandchildren. Mrs. Prosser, the midwife, who attended all the births in the village, also lived opposite. We moved to St. Anne's on Ascension Thursday 1950.

REMINISCENCES OF JACK O'CONNOR



I was born in Clondalkin on 16 October 1913. When I was six years old we moved to live in the Tassaggart Lodge on the Naas Road. My father was herd to the Corkagh estate. I had two older sisters, May and Lil. Paddy, Mick and Carmel were younger. Lil died of scarlet fever in Cork Street Hospital when she was seven years old. My grandfather had a pony and trap and he used to take the girls to the Convent school in Clondalkin and we boys footed it to Rathcoole where we had a very good teacher, Mr. Cleary. There weren't many children near us to play with. My uncle lived in the lane to Baldonnell, where Aeromotif now is, and he had two boys. There were also the O'Tooles who lived at the corner of that road and the Naas

Road, Kathleen, Sarah, Owen and Paddy, and we used to go across the road to Bartle Healy's as well, where the sewage farm is now. But there wasn't a lot of time for play, we all had work to do, gathering sticks and going to Murphys of the Mill Bridge for milk and drinking water. The rainwater was always kept for washing.

As soon as we were able, we went thinning turnips and mangolds for the farmers. You'd be very lucky to get 4d per drill, mostly it was 3d. When the hunt came round, we'd be there to hold the horses. That could mean up to a shilling a time! Riches! I went to work on the farm at Walshs of Kingswood — the biggest farm in the parish — when I was fourteen years old. I got 2/- a day (12/- for a six-day week). We went in at 7.30 in the morning to make up the time for a half-day on Saturday. Later, I got 15/- per week working seven days a week feeding stall-feds.

When I was seventeen years old I got into Swift Brook where I was paid 10/- a week, less 5d for a stamp, for a twelve-hour day. I worked on the cutters, a tricky job where there were a few accidents. I nearly lost the tops of two fingers, but the doctor stitched them back and I carried on. The management had a way of keeping us a bit worried about the jobs. If we did anything wrong we'd be "let go" and not taken back for a month or two. I was fired once and I got no dole for six months because I signed on as John Connor and the Swift Brook office had me down as John O'Connor. I played football with the "Mary's" and Swift Brook. We went to the pictures in Clondalkin and in Hudson's shack in Rathcoole. We went to the dances in the Swift Brook Pavilion, but I liked ceilidh best and went miles on the bicycle to different ones, Ballyboden, Kiltipper and the Mansion House.

I got married in Bohernabreena on 12 April 1936 and we lived in Tallaght for the first year and then in one of Campbell's houses in Saggart. They were all knocked down when the new cottages were built. We had four children, one boy and three girls, and I have seventeen grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

JOHN DWYER (BROWNSTOWN, NEWCASTLE)

by DEIRDRE LEE (5th Year Student)



Mr. Dwyer started school when he was five years old. At that time the school was beside the church in Newcastle. There were two teachers, Miss Hennessey who taught the infant classes and Miss Lynch who taught first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth classes. He finished school when he was fifteen years old. There was no exam at the end of his schooling and he didn't go to secondary school. A teacher would send two boys out every day to get sticks for the fire to heat the school in winter. He told me that he often got homework but seldom did it. They only had to bring one copy and a catechism to school with them. There were seven children in his family, he was the third eldest. His father died aged sixty-three of pneumonia. He was a very religious man. Every evening at 6 pm his father would say the

Rosary and if anyone was late for it they were in big trouble. Mr. Dwyer told me that the parish priest was much more respected then and held a higher position in the community than today.

I asked Mr. Dwyer if he thought neighbours were more or less friendly than today. He didn't even have to think to find the answer which was: "The neighbours then were the best. You never had to lock your door and you could walk into any house and you were always made welcome." They would visit each other on a Sunday night and sometimes they would have a dance in the kitchen. There would be a ring board on the door and there would be plenty of tea and food to go around. The kids would play skittles on the road as there were very few cars then. In the summer they would swim in the canal. He told me that the people didn't drink that much as they would rather visit each other for a cup of tea and a chat.

Women would call to each other's houses for a chat when the men went to work, but the children would never be allowed to sit and listen to their conversation. They would always be sent out to play. He thinks that people were more healthy years ago. They worked out in the field picking potatoes.

Mr. Dwyer's first job was on a boat on the canal. He was second to the engine man. Later he worked on the farm at Peamount Hospital. That is where he met his wife. They would go to dances where the Village Stores is in Newcastle today. There was no band at this dance, just a man playing the accordion.

There was a shop at Hazelhatch where they got most of their shopping. Every Saturday their mother would go to town to buy clothes and some shopping, she would bring one of the kids to carry the bags. She would go on the train from the Hatch.

REMINISCENCES OF ELIZABETH (MURPHY) TISDALL



I was born at Ballysmutten, Kilbride, on 10 June 1903. My parents already had four girls and had hoped for a boy and an old neighbour said to my father: "Throw her under the bridge." The next baby was a boy and altogether there were eight girls and four boys. I was only three when the family moved to my father's other farm at Oldcourt and that is where I grew up. I went to Blessington to school, where there were only two teachers to look after 103 girls, but we were well taught. We walked the three and a half miles to Blessington in all weathers. We'd start off in boots (we all wore boots in those days) and when we were out of sight, we'd take them off and hang them round our necks till we got to the outskirts of Blessington and we did the same on the way home.

I was nine years old when I got my First Communion in Cross Chapel and I was confirmed there too by Archbishop Walsh. Between our own family and the six Mooney girls we had plenty to play games - handball, rounders, skipping and spinning tops, but we had work to do too although we were fairly comfortably off. We had to thin turnips and mangolds and pick potatoes, and help with the hay and, of course, pick sticks and search for nests when hens laid away.

The Blessington tram was the source of everything. All the goods for the shops in Blessington came on it and on a fair day the big cattle for export were loaded on and taken to Terenure to be driven to the North Wall. The sidings were near where Hughes's garage and supermarket are now. It was really a big train and even had a white-lined carriage for carrying a funeral. I never remember anyone being killed by it although I know there were plenty of accidents. Punchestown was a great day out. We went in the trap which we left at our cousins' and walked across four fields to the course.

When I was eighteen years old I went to serve my time in a drapery shop in Phibsboro' where I lived-in and got no wages. I only got home for Christmas. After that I worked in a drapers in Capel Street and got 28/- a week, very good pay for that time. I got digs near Iona Road. I made all my own clothes and still do. We worked from 9 to 6, Monday to Friday, and 9 to 1 on Saturday, but I couldn't afford to go home at weekends. It was 2/6 return, so I only went home for my fortnight's holidays and at Christmas, but I had a sister married in Pearse Street and I often went to her.

I was married in Iona Road Church on 23 June 1926 and came to live in this house and I've lived here ever since. I went to Mass mostly to Kilbride, it was more level than going to Saggart on a big high bicycle, and that's the way I did most of my messages too. I had twelve children, seven boys and five girls. Nine are alive. Two of my girls entered the convent. I have twelve grandchildren and one little great-grand-daughter.

I think the most terrible moment of my life was when four men broke into the house in 1981 looking for money and beat up my son, Tom. I'll never forget seeing him on the floor with them beating and kicking him. He never got over it and died in December 1986, a man in his fifties.

SIOBHAN O'NEILL INTERVIEWS HER GRANNY, MRS KITTY O'NEILL



A newspaper article on Rathcoole, written in the summer of 1992, called our home-town a "Village of History". A village so old that not only is it mentioned in history, but also in legends. I'm sure many people know that Rathcoole was the home-town of Fionn Mac Cumhaill. It was his father who named the village "Rathcoole" and it means the home of Coole (Cumhaill).

Rathcoole as it is today is quite obviously a changed place. Home to about 3,000, with many foreign visitors dropping in now and then, we have many clubs and organisations for young and old. These range from football to GAA, to badminton, to No-Name and, for older people, we have card nights, golf and, of course, we have the Day Care Centre.

That is Rathcoole as it was in legends and Rathcoole as it is today. In the 1930s and 1940s, when my gran was growing up, things would have been very different. My gran, Katherine (Kitty) O'Neill, had three sisters and one brother, they lived in a two-bedroomed house with an outside toilet and no running water, just like many other houses in the village. The village pump was used by everyone and was where Sam Farrell's coalyard is today. This was used for the drinking and cooking water. For washing, there was a well behind J. J. Keogh's shop. This was St. Doolough's well.

Like all other villages in Ireland, Rathcoole had its fair share of pubs. It seems that all the pubs in the village today have always been pubs. There was Fyan's and that was run by two men. It was where the Village Inn is today. Walsh's was at the top of the town (where Muldowney's now is). Mrs. Walsh and her daughter ran that. They used to own two pubs but as time went by and as others opened, Walsh's closed one of the pubs. It was closed and sold as a house to my great-grandparents. There were also two other pubs in the village, O'Carroll's and Roche's, and they were where the Poitín Stil and the Rathcoole Inn are today.

Rathcoole also had its fair share of shops. Purcell's was the main one, with anything, everything and the kitchen sink on sale there. There was also Stewart's and Keogh's. One of the Keogh sons decided to expand and thought that a bicycle shop was in order, later on he also decided to sell radios there. There was also one butcher, a drapery and a post office in the village.

There was only one school for both boys and girls, most would have left when about eight or nine years old. My gran left when she was nine years old and went to the "big" school in Clondalkin. The school in Rathcoole had two teachers, Mrs. Archbold and Mrs. Lennon. Mrs. Archbold was from Newcastle and Mrs. Lennon, the head teacher, was from here in Rathcoole. She lived in Green Lane, commonly known today as Lennon's Hill. Two of her sons went away to be priests and for a small Catholic village this was a really exciting thing.

Much the same as today, there were many different past-times. Camogie teams for the girls, gaelic football and hurling for the boys. Street games, such as hop-skotch, skipping and cowboys and indians, were popular. The girls also had "chainies", these were bits of broken delph used for dolls or also for picnics.

As my gran got older, she went to the library more often and became a member of the Red Cross. There was also a drama group and trips were made to Brittas to put on different productions. Before my gran's time, there was a dance hall in the village. A big brass band played in the hall, which was called Forester's Hall. However, the Black and Tans broke in and they stole all the instruments, which were never returned. Obviously, that was the end of the brass band and, sadly, of Forester's Hall too.

Another prominent club in the area was the boxing club in Saggart. It was in 1937 that Brendan O'Neill, my grandfather, won the all-Ireland when he was just fourteen. For both Saggart and Rathcoole this was great recognition, as many around attended the club regularly.

As regards travelling, twice or three times a year to Dublin was about the limit. Nevertheless, trips in to see Santa at Christmas-time and to the seaside in the summer are always fondly remembered. Swift Brook Club would bring the children to the seaside once a year and I'm sure that like all the excursions these are thought of with a smile ... or two. Trips to Brittas were made most Sundays in the summer months, by foot, I hasten to mention.

Job opportunities were mostly provided by the mill in Saggart, Swift Brook Mill, named after Dean Swift. He once lived in Saggart, in a castle, sadly this castle fell into disrepair and no longer stands. Most people started work at about fifteen years of age. When they reached sixteen years they had to pay for a stamp and that would have been about one shilling. The shops and pubs around were run by the families who owned them so job opportunities in this area were few and far between. A few of the more well-off girls might have gone into Parnell Square Tech to do a secretarial course. They would more than likely have then got a job in an office in the city.

Although the appearance of the village has changed, the friendliness of the community is still here. We are a friendly and caring village, a real community, and I can't think of any other place where I'd rather live. Sentimental, maybe, but true.

REMINISCENCES OF CATHY DUNNE (AS TOLD TO CHRISTINE QUINN)



I was born here in September 1902. I had one brother, Pat. I've spent all my life here. I've seen many changes during my ninety-one years. I went to the old school (it was very new then). Mrs. Archbold taught up to second class and Mrs. Lennon taught the rest. We were well taught. We may not have had the wide curriculum they have today, but I'm sure any child of that time could beat any of the present-day ones in English, Irish, arithmetic, geography, history, cooking, singing and rural science. At that time, Mr. Hallissey taught the boys and Mrs. Dowdall (then Miss Mulhare) taught the small ones. There were only outside dry toilets and when we wanted water we got it from the pump on the Green. I got First Communion in Saggart

when I was seven years old and I was confirmed there too, by Archbishop Walsh. There were plenty of girls in the village to play with.

We knew about Rathcoole's history in the wars of long ago, as in 1641 when all the people hid on Tootenhill from the soldiers and the soldiers set fire to the furze and those who weren't burnt were killed as they ran from the flames. The next story after that was in 1798 when my greatgrandfather was killed by the soldiers. Against his wishes, they ate the hot bread from his bakery and drank ale and some of them got ill and blamed him. Also the parish priest, Fr. James Harold, was arrested and sent to Australia for twelve years and the nineteen-year-old John Clinch from Rathcoole House was hanged in Newgate Prison, they said he was a rebel and he denied it. It is believed it was his cousin, John Clinch, from Hazelhatch, who was involved in the United Irishmen. Five years later, Felix Rourke was hanged from the rafters of Fr. Harold's burnt-out house. Mrs. Dowling's house was built on that site afterwards by the Senior family. They owned all the side of the street nearly from where Fergie Redmond's now stands to the Green. The Seniors had three daughters who were allowed to serve in their public house, now the Rathcoole Inn, until tea-time when their mother would say: "Sophie, Jane and Beckie — all to your compartments."

When the Irish Volunteers were founded in 1913, a lot of local men joined and a few of them took part in the Howth gun-running. In 1914 some of them followed Redmond and joined the British Army. Several were killed and some were injured. Joe Whitehorn, Pat Timms, Joe Phelan and Tommy Kearns died. Paddy "Badger" Whelan also served, but he came home. So did Willie Harvey. And then Easter Week happened.

We heard about it, Maggie Walsh and I went up to Bolger's Quarry and saw Dublin burning, the G.P.O. and O'Connell Street in flames. There was one Rathcoole man in the G.P.O., Peter McLaughlin, Maisie Carey's uncle. He was interned for a while and then he came home. He died in 1927. The British Army units had to march through Rathcoole on their way to Dublin from the Curragh. Rathcoole was full of soldiers and later the Black and Tans. Even though Rathcoole people were not involved in the war, the Tans would still pound on the door and if there was a young man in the house, they were liable to take him away. In Saggart, two men were taken, one was a McDermott. He was imprisoned for a short while, but then he was released, he ended up in Grangegorman due to the treatment he had received. The other man was also imprisoned for a short time and he died soon after his release. During the Civil War a young Free Stater was killed in Brittas.

My cousin, Cis Fyans, and I went everywhere we could and when we went to the funeral of a man named Cotter in Glasnevin, we saw Terence McSwiney there. Not long after that he was arrested and went on hunger strike and died.

For getting to the city we had to go to Hazelhatch to get the train, or to the Embankment to get the steam tram. And then we got our first bus about 1920. It was like a big van with long benches inside and we had to get up on a chair to get into it. The first bus company in the country was the IOC (Irish Omnibus Company). It started in Clondalkin.

I didn't go to Michael Collins' funeral, but the next day Cis and I went. There were huge crowds and masses and masses of beautiful flowers.

The next big event I remember was the Eucharistic Congress just sixty-one years ago. After all we had gone through, nobody would have believed we could organise such a huge and successful event. Imagine getting two million people in and out of the Phoenix Park and home from Dublin and not a single person hurt. The organisation was superb, you couldn't do better today.

From the time it was opened in the 1920s, the library was the centre of everything. There was no television and very few people had radios with earphones and we read everything we could get. There were concerts there too and lectures and when the Second World War came we had first aid and civil defence there. We got electric light just before the war, but there were no power units like electric fires, etc and then there was a blackout and most of the buses went because of a petrol shortage. After that, life became easier, more or less as it is today.

MRS. ELIZABETH BYRNE TELLS HER STORY



I was born Elizabeth Dungan on 28 June 1910 in Celbridge Hospital. Our home was at Brownstown where my father was herd to Mr. Cullen, but when I was very small we moved to a County Council cottage quite near the old house. My father was from James's Street and my mother was from Dublin too. I had three sisters, Mollie, Connie and Katie, and two brothers, Parkie and Kit. There were other children who died young. I went to Newcastle to school in the little old school by the church gate. Mrs. Hallissey had the senior children upstairs and Miss Brien was downstairs with the small ones. It was a long, hard walk, but we got used to it. I made my First Communion in Newcastle and I was confirmed in Saggart. There wasn't much time for play. We

had to go for water and bring in sticks and pick stones and then when I was only twelve years old I was taken out of school to go to work in a house in Dublin, 52 Aughrim Street, opposite the cattle market, minding five or six children.

I was lonely for them at home and many a time when I was hanging out clothes to dry — they all had to be hand-washed, you know, I'd look at the moon and say, "You're shining down on them at home too." I only got home once a month. Every day I had to take the children to the Phoenix Park, pushing the pram with the smallest ones in it. I knew every inch of it — the People's Gardens and the Zoo and all the fields and trees, but what the children and I most enjoyed was watching the Gardai drilling at the Depot. After a few years there, I went home and before long I got a job in Peamont Sanatorium, first in the Serviette, as they called it, where the patients' food was served and the washing up done. Then I got into the laundry and I worked there till I married.

I was married in Fairview church on 30 January 1945, by Fr. John Kingston, who had been our curate in Newcastle, and my eldest girl, Betty, was born on 10 December of the same year. Then I had Michael and Kathleen and Johnny. And I stayed on in the house I was reared in and I'm still in it!

We used to have dancing, ceilidh and old-time in Cullen's dance hall near Hazelhatch station and sometimes there'd be a marquee under the trees near the Protestant church in Newcastle. Sometimes we'd go down to Lucan to the pictures. I loved to walk down to the twelfth lock to see the canal boats going up or down in the lock. First it was the horse-drawn ones and then the ones with the engine going "putt, putt". No. 28B was our special favourite. We didn't get turf from the barges but Mrs. West had a little shop on the bank at Brownstown and the men would throw the turf on the bank as they went down and then they'd call on the way back up for the money and do their shopping. We got the turf from the men with the little pony carts, mostly from Jack Reddy, and there were the Dempsey brothers as well. I always remember when we got the electricity. It was a couple of days after Kathleen was born.



The President plants a tree to commemorate the opening of the Day Care Centre.



The tree planted by President Hillery in 1981 as it is in 2006.



Pictured at the official opening by President P. J. Hillery of Four Districts Day Care Centre on 15 February 1981 are:

Row 2: Ann Kelly, Peg Byrne, Eileen Byrne, Adeline Pearson, Mary McCabe, Kay Ryan, Kitty Davis, Vera Cooke, Margaret Eustace, Helen Sheehan, Vera Quinn, Alice Ahern, Marie Goss, Lily Fallon, Betty McGuire, Ann Minogue, Jenny O'Connor, Phillipa Collins, Amy Quinn.

Row 1: James Bayle, Phil Murray, Margaret O'Reilly, Bridget McCormack, Sally Niland, Margaret Proctor, President Hillery, Joe Clinton, Maura Finnerty, Eileen Browne, Jim Goss.

Seated: Vincent Smyth, Mr. Byrne, Al Hannon.



Joe Quigley, Mary Weston and Bridget McCormack were amongst those from Four Districts Day Care Centre who visited Áras an Uachtaráin on 26 June 1992. As Mr. Nicholas Robinson looks on, Una O'Brien, Rathcoole, presents President Mary Robinson with a tea cosy.



Kay Ryan, the Community Care Nurse responsible for sowing the seed which grew to become the Four Districts Day Care Centre.



The Four Districts Day Care Centre, Rathcoole.



SAGGART PARISH CHURCH BUILT IN 1847
 All the parishioners helped in the building according to their means, by direct labour, supplies or monetary assistance. The McDonnell family of Swift Brook Paper Mills were very generous. Until the church at Whitehall was built, Saggart was the largest church in the diocese and it has the tallest steeple. Until recent changes, it was also the largest parish.



John Hennessy with Fr. Leahy, Parish Priest of Saggart.



Brittas Ponds with Crooksling in the background.



BRITTAS OLD SCHOOL — 1935

Included are Tommy Tisdall, Gus Keogh, Peggy Dowling, Brendan Fox, Willie Mulread, Jimmy Dowd, Jimmy Byrne, Tony Cox, Carmel McGowan, Eileen Dowd, Patty Eustace, May Hayden, Madge McGowan, Jimmy Allen, Kit Griffin, Seán Quinn, Myles Quinn, Michael Quinn, Tommy Allen, Paddy Cullen, Seán McGowan, Madge Dillon, Tom Hanlon, May Hanlon, Dot Hanlon, Lily Griffin, Mick Griffin, Tim Hanlon, Patricia Griffin, Sheila Dowd, Paddy Eustace and Sheila Tisdall.

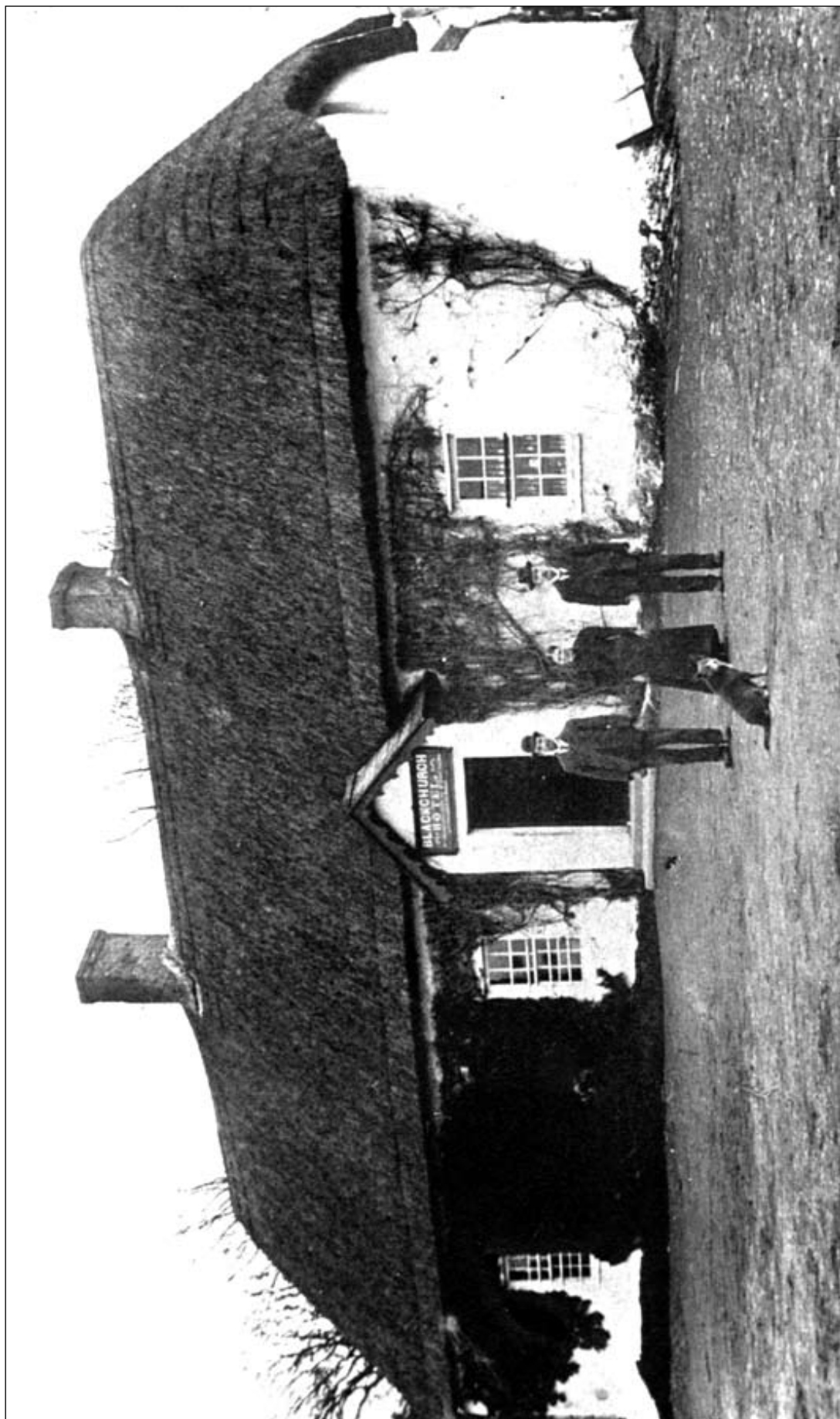


VIEW OF RATHCOOLE AROUND 1900

In the foreground on the right is Fyans' public house which had one of the oldest licences in Ireland. Beyond that is Jacobs' shop. In the large rooms upstairs, the local Magistrate's Court and Assizes were held. In the background is the Church of Ireland belfry.



Carroll's Pub — old name the Sheaf of Wheat (left to right) Jimmy Butler, —, Lizzie Carroll, —, —, Pat Carroll, Paddy Cullen, Charlie Cullen on pony, Sonny Carroll.



Blackchurch (Hotel) Inn was for centuries a coaching halt where the coach horses were changed. This picture, taken about 1900, shows Patrick and Peter with their mother Mrs. Daniel Vickers.



Mrs. Dowdall with her class in Rathcoole. Included are Mary Walsh, Marian McDonnell, Bridie McDonnell, Finola O'Brien, Pat Bayle, Kitty Weston, Patricia Mullins, Helen Timmons and Yvonne Murphy.



TEACHERS IN RATHCOOLE SCHOOL
Mrs. Gallagher, Seán McGillicuddy and Mrs. Dowdall.



RATHCOOLE NATIONAL SCHOOL ABOUT 1948

Row 4: Ann Keogh, Joy Timmons, Alice McGuirk, Brigid Connolly, —, Jack Quinn.

Row 3: Jerry Morton, John Dowling, John Bermingham, John Devoy, Seán Pouch.

Row 2: Ann Sullivan, Kathleen Attley, Kay Stewart, —, Cyril Mansfield.

Row 1: Peter Crabtree, Ned Morrissey, Johnny Connolly, —, Ray Brady.



SAGGART NATIONAL SCHOOL 1927

Row 3: 1 —, 2 Molly Smith, 3 —, 4 —, 5 Kevin Cooney, 6 —, 7 John Meegan, 8 Francis McCrave, 9 John Meegan, 10 Paddy Kelly, 11 Seán O'Neill, 12 Paddy Fitzgerald, 13 Pat Proctor, 14 Lily Riordan.

Row 2: 1 Molly McDermott, 2 —, 3 Ria Meegan, 4 —, 5 —, 6 —, 7 Bridie Conaty, 8 Kathleen Kelly, 9 Molly Cooney, 10 Mary Hinch, 11 May Dowling, 12 —, 13 Phil Rohan.

Row 1: Frank Pitts, 2 Jack Maher, 3 — Murphy, 4 Molly Byrne, 5 Bridie Dowling, 6 Molly Mulread, 7 Bertha Hinch, 8 —, 9 Kitty Hinch, 10 Maureen Monks.



Taking a break from cooking the Sunday lunch, from left to right
Nellie Attley, Nellie Reilly and Maggie Timmons.



A young Bill Attley chatting with his next-door neighbours
Kit and Maggie Timmons, with Nellie Attley on left.



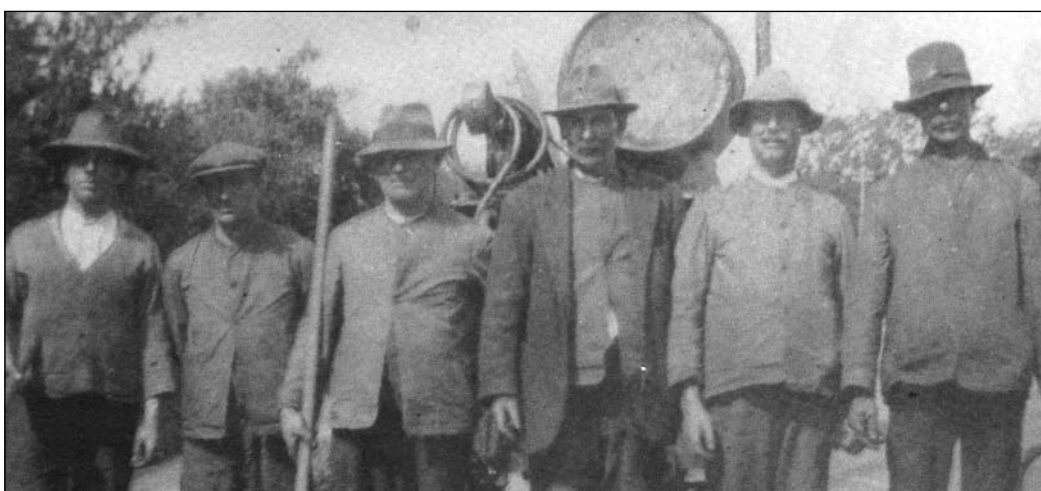
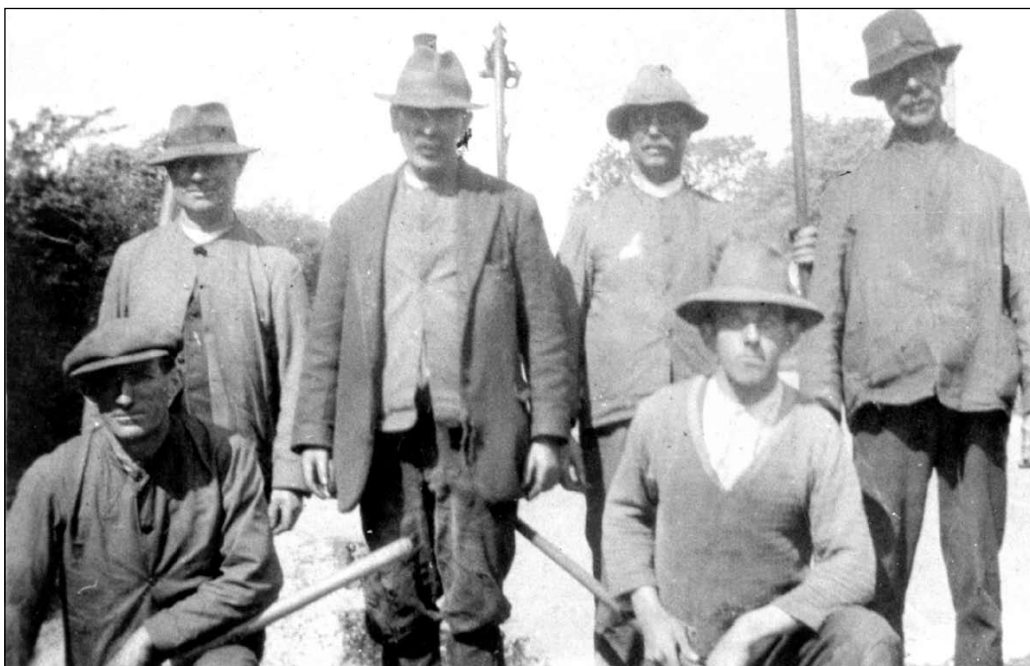
SWIFT BROOK PAPER MILLS TUG-OF-WAR TEAM

Back: Paddy Bermingham, Harry Smith, Joe Timmons, Mick McGuinness, Francis McGrave, Sonny Fitz,
Tom Healy.

Front: Matt Murphy, John Tyndall, Dick Murphy, Jack Doyle.



John Dunne, Calliaghstown, and Dick Flynn, Saggart.



ROADWORKERS IN SAGGART
Included are Bartle Healy, Ned Keogh, Willie Fox, John Stynes, Christy Fitzgerald
and Paddy Cregan.



Kathleen Quinn, parlour maid in Tassaggart House.



1930s side view of Tassaggart House, home of the Verschoyle and Campbell families.



Kevin and Ann Jacob on their wedding day.



The wedding of John Jacob and Mary Callaghan in 1902.



Mrs. Stafford with Mrs. Morrin, Kilteel Inn, and baby Maura.

Jim Morrin, owner of the Kilteel Inn. He was a pioneer of motoring and motorcycles. Before motorcycle sidecars were invented, his wife travelled on a trailer which was fixed to the back of his motorcycle.

Travelling in this style to Dublin one day, he passed John Dowling standing by his wall near Newlands Cross. John nodded to him but failed to lift his hat to Mrs. Morrin. Indignant at this lapse of good manners, Mr. Morrin turned to comment to Mrs. Morrin but discovered to his surprise, that both she and the trailer were gone! He had to retrace his journey back to Rathcoole — no sign — up the Kilteel Road to the Four Roads at Kilteel — still no sign — until he came to the bad bend at the foot of the hill and there he found her, in the ditch, still sitting on the trailer, placidly knitting away. “I knew you’d come back,” she said.





Row 4: Lil Pouch, Kitty Mullally, May Byrne, Molly Byrne (Hurley), Madge Fitzgerald, Kit Attley, Kitty McDermott, Nan McDonnell, Harry McDermott, Peg Timmons, Lil Coogan, Lizzie Quinn, Ned Keogh, Doll Fitzgerald, Peg Fitzgerald (Vivash), Molly Crofton.
Row 3: Violet Smith, Cis Stewart, Nan Healy, Kitty Briscoe, May Hennessy, Kate Smith.
Row 2: Lil McDermott, Mary Reilly, Lizzie Ward, Agnes Smith, Molly Cooney (Kavanagh), Molly Mulread, Dolly Brazil, Catherine Reilly (Kane), Sue Quinn (O'Connor).
Row 1: Madge Dwyer, Nellie Crofton, Lily Attley, Chris Mullally, Mary Quinn, Mary Ann Doyle.

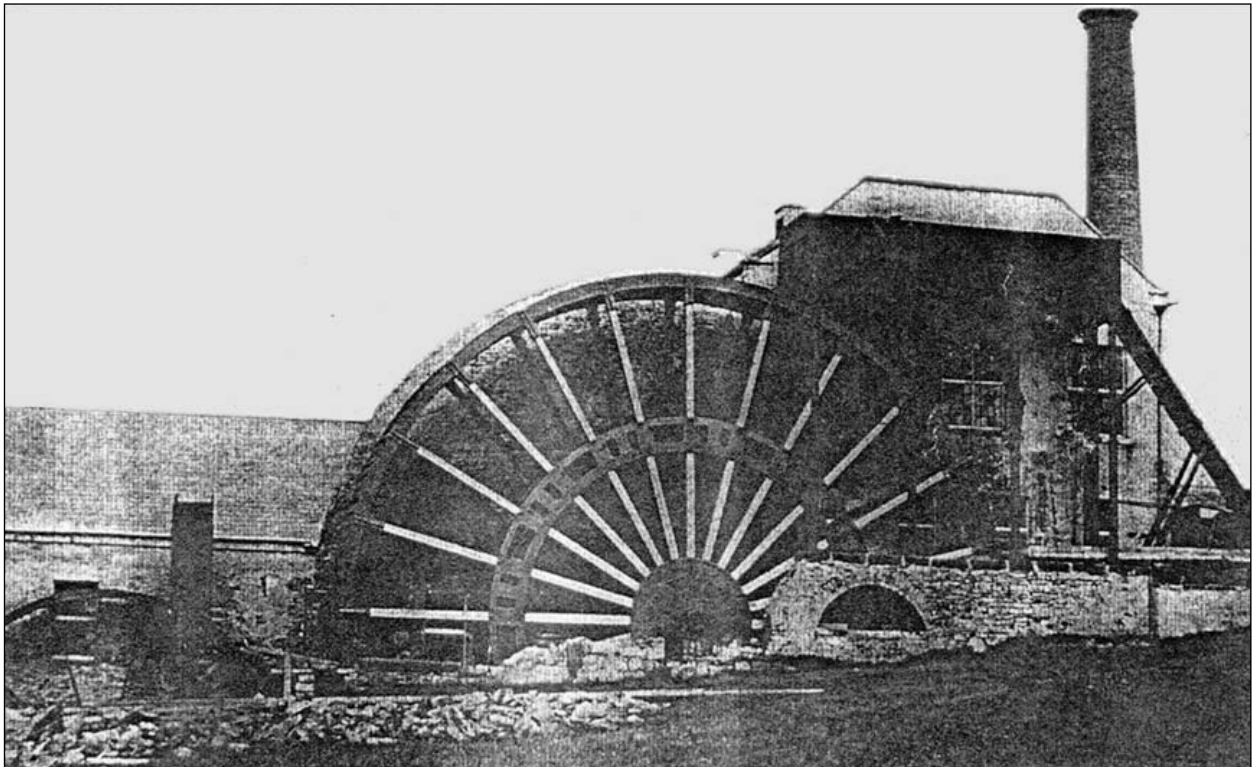


Back: Jimmy Besant, Bill Conyngham, Aubrey Crawford, Tom Healy, Bill Mitchell, Jimmy McGuire, and John Proctor (senior).
Front: Tom Mansfield, Jack McDermott, Matt Malone, Mr. Edge, Jimmy Coogan, John Proctor (junior).



SWIFT BROOK PAPER MILLS FROM THE AIR

Swiftbrook was founded in the eighteenth century and owes its name to Dean Swift in whose deanery it was. It flourished until closed down in 1971 with the loss of over 300 jobs. The finest grades of paper were made there and won gold medals in various exhibitions.



Mill Wheel at Swift Brook Paper Mills, Saggart — 1896. At that time it was the largest mill wheel in Europe. The huge waterwheel was fifty-three foot tall. It was dismantled in 1934 when mains electricity was installed.



RATHCOOLE DRAMA CLUB

Included are Murt Walsh, John Gray, Jim Tunney, Fr. Duffy, John Joe Cruise, Seán McGillicuddy, Brid Murphy, John Phelan, Ann Rogers, Margaret Collins, Maureen Kelly, Tony McDermott and Mary Bradley.



RATHCOOLE DRAMATIC SOCIETY

John Joe Cruise and Pat Weldon look on while Jim Tunney, T.D., the drama teacher, makes up Marie O'Brien.



Sheila O'Neill (nee Walsh), Mill Road, Saggart,
10th August 1939. Sheila was a member of the
Red Cross during the war.



Larry and Margaret O'Neill (nee McPharland),
Mill Road, Saggart, with grand-daughter,
Georgina O'Neill, 1948.



Pictured at Greenogue Mill are Mary Quinn, Ita McMahon, Vera Rice and Maureen Butler.

Greenogue Mill was situated on the right hand side of College Lane, where Brady's Pig Farm was. It as a water mill on the Griffeen River, which rises in Newtown and flows down through Tootenhill, wanders down to Milltown, under the Grand Canal and enters the Liffey at Lucan Demense (Italian Embassy). The mill was very important to the community in the 18th and 19th and early 20th centuries. As well as grinding wheat and oats for flour and crushing oats for animal feeding, timber was prepared for floors, rafters, gates, doors, etc., and the left over produce made into fencing posts and firewood. The Crinion family owned it and ran it themselves until about 1910 when they let it to Mr. Rathborne who afterwards bought the mill. Miss Kate Crinion continued to live in the Millhouse until she died in 1945.



PIPE BAND COMPETITION (NENAGH 1954)

Bluebell Mullally, Billy McGuirk, Jack Timmons and Paddy Murphy.



Jack and Sue O'Connor, Saggart. This picture was taken shortly after their wedding.



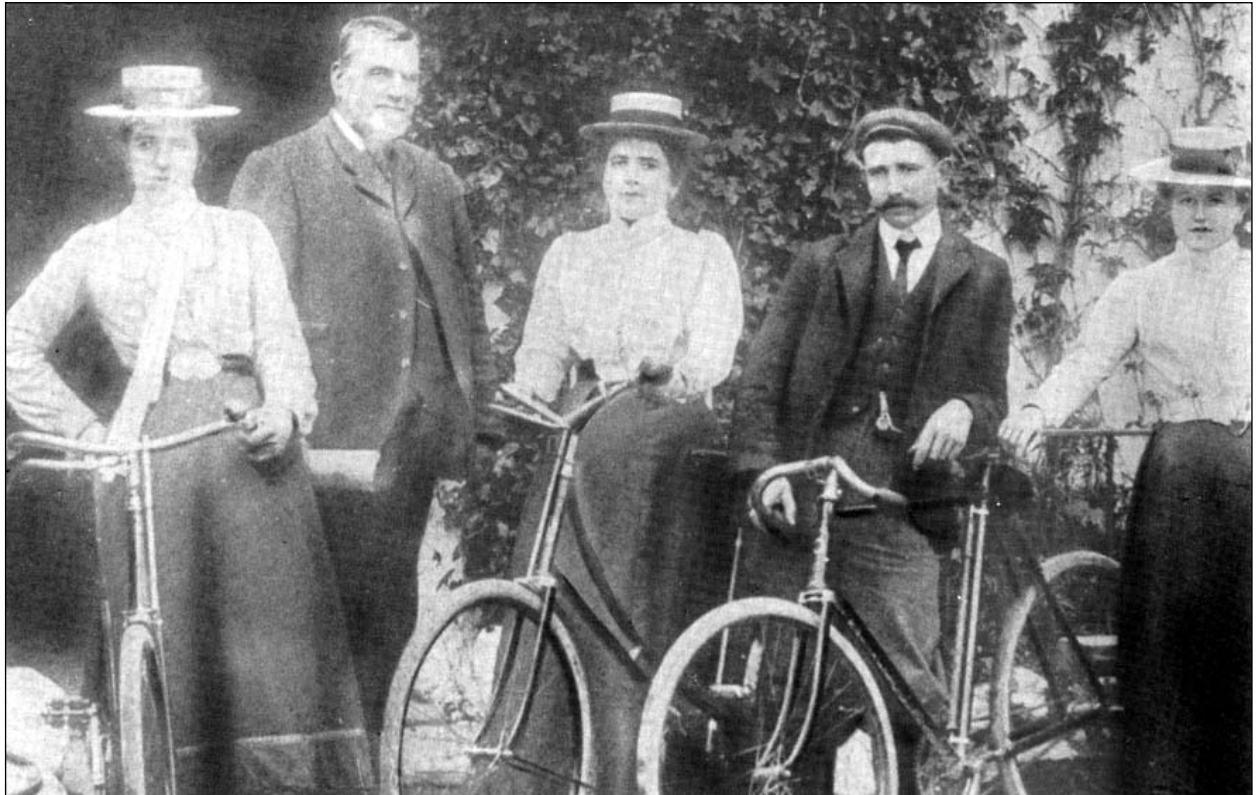
Kit Harte with his first car.



On honeymoon in the Isle of Man. Tom and Annie Hudson, Crooksling and their friends, Mr. and Mrs. Murray of Terenure.



James, Molly and Michael Dillon with their nurse.



Edward Dowling of Brittas Inn with his daughters Mary and Sarah, his son Edward (junior) and his wife Margaret (nee Dunne).



Mr. and Mrs. Eustace, Rathcoole.



Scouts: Paul O'Dwyer, Declan Buckley,
Ian Cooper and Declan McCormack,
gaining some new skills.



SWIFTBROOK GAEILC FOOTBALL CLUB 1939

Winners of Paper Industrial League and J. J. Walsh Cup.

Back: J. Carolan, P. O'Connor, T. M. —, J. Quinn, P. Dunne, M. Healy (captain), J. Quinn, L. Murray, J. O'Connor.

Front: J. Hennessy (hon. treasurer), J. Maher, L. O'Neill, P. Bermingham, P. Lawlor, P. Brady, G. Fitzgerald, T. Healy, P. O'Reilly, P. Quinn.



CAMOGIE CLUB

Back: Carmel Stewart, Kitty Mullally, Margaret Collins, Cathleen Attley, Peggy McDermott, M. Hopkins.

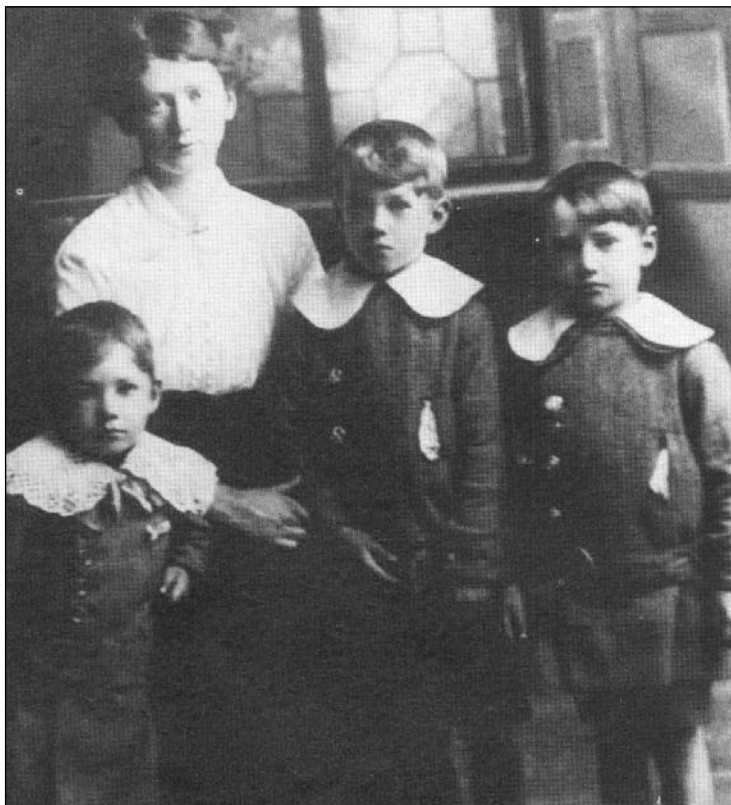
Front: Connie Conway, Ria Brady, Pat Mullally, —, M. Donoghue, Barbara Cooney.



At Punchestown: Jimmy Mahady, Tom O'Rourke and Peter Flanagan.



Coming through the arch, Willie Byrne leads in a thoroughbred mare and foal for Mrs. Greene at Tassagart.



Rosanna Kelly of Mahon's Lane with sons Paddy, John and Bill.



Mr. and Mrs. William Stafford, Calliaghstown.



THE RATHCOOLE PIPE BAND LEADING THE ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE, 1967

The Rathcoole Pipe Band was formed in 1943. That year John Hollowed went into Mrs. Anne Burns' public house in Rathcoole for a drink. His change came to 4½d. Pushing it back across the counter, he said to Mrs. Burns, "Keep it and start a pipe band." Mrs. Burns and her son were indeed the founders of the band, together with Sgt. J. Coffey of the Air Corps and John Hollowed. Other members of the first committee were Billy McGuirk, Tom Gahan, Pat Doolin and James Mallon. The first instructor was Sgt. Frank Somers of the Army. The saffron kilt and blue jacket of the Rathcoole Pipe Band was a familiar sight in parades and at pipe band competitions and they added due ceremony on many a proud occasion for Rathcoole.



Saggart Village in the 1950s.



Nellie Reilly, Annie Brady, Nellie Attley and Harry Reilly enjoying his pint.



James Nolan (standing centre), Beechwood Lawns, with his parents, his brother, Anthony, and his sister Ellen and her children.



Mr. What comes home in triumph after winning the Grand National. Seen outside the “Granny Keogh’s” house.



Even Mrs. Dunne, the oldest inhabitant, turned out to cheer the Grand National winner, Mr. What, and the Taaffes.



ST. MARTIN'S FOOTBALL TEAM (BRITTAS)

Back: Pat Masterson, Eamonn Quirk, — Reilly, — Riordan, Noel Sheridan, Patsy Kelly, — Sweeney, Billy Kelly, Peadar Hall, Liam Hall, Johnny Kelly, Peter Kelly, — Riordan, Mick Griffin, Sgt. Kelly.

Front: —, Dessie Murray, Hughie Reilly, — Joe Broe, —, Eddie Conroy, —, — Sheridan, Dan Hall, Oliver Dunne, Thomas Reilly,



ST. MARY'S SENIOR FOOTBALL TEAM

Back: Included are Kit McDonald, Paddy O'Neill, Paddy Brady, Billy Hennessy, Jack Connor, Peter Stewart.
Front: John Hennessy, Peter O'Reilly, Paddy Connor, Liam Murray, Mick Healy, Jack Maher, George Stewart, Tommy McNally.



John Hennessy, Saggart, listening to the Sunday Match.



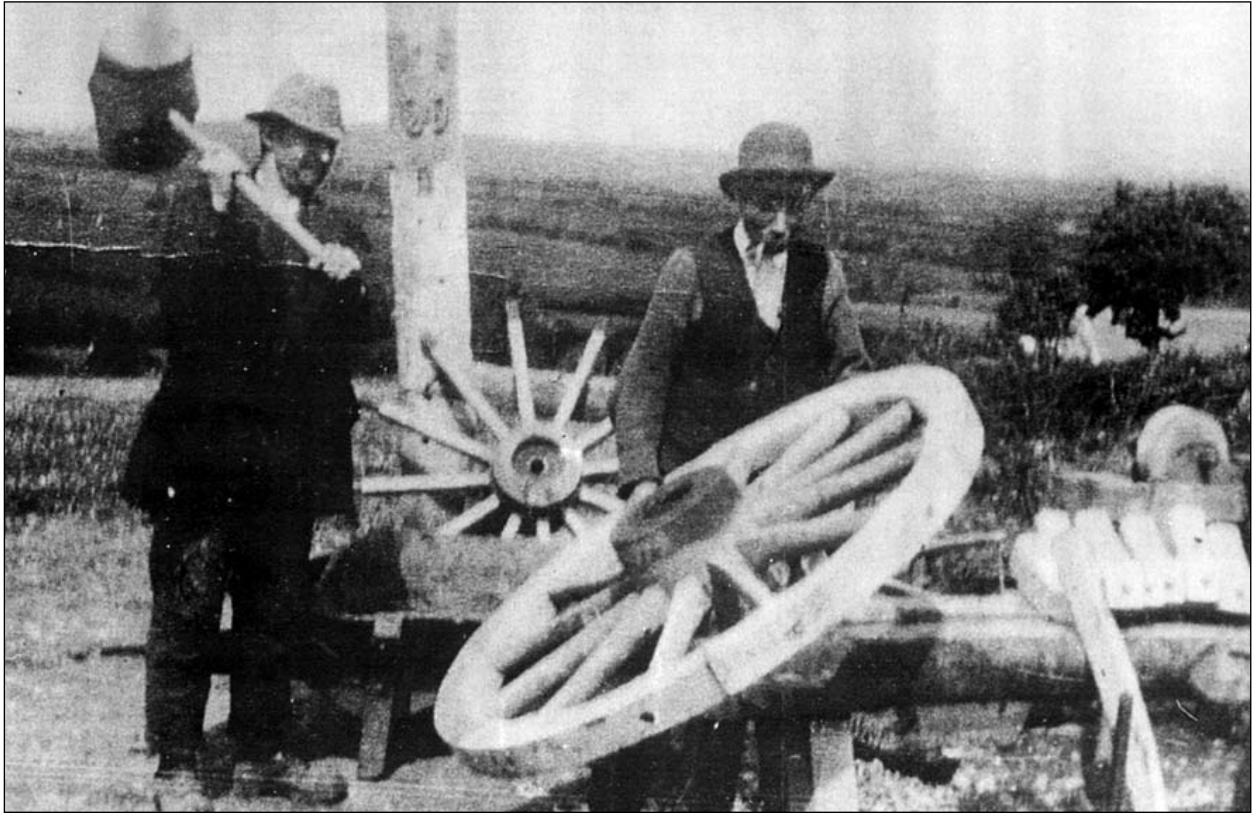
Fred Williams with his daughter, Sr. Concepta,
Little Sisters of the Poor.



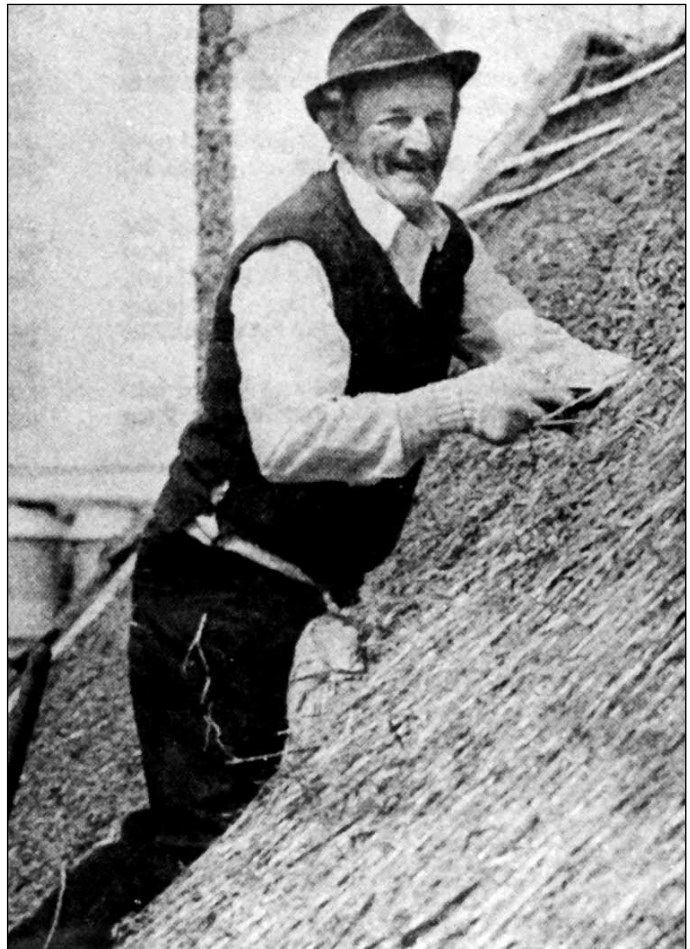
Saggart in the snow, 1961.



Fortunestown Lane in the snow.

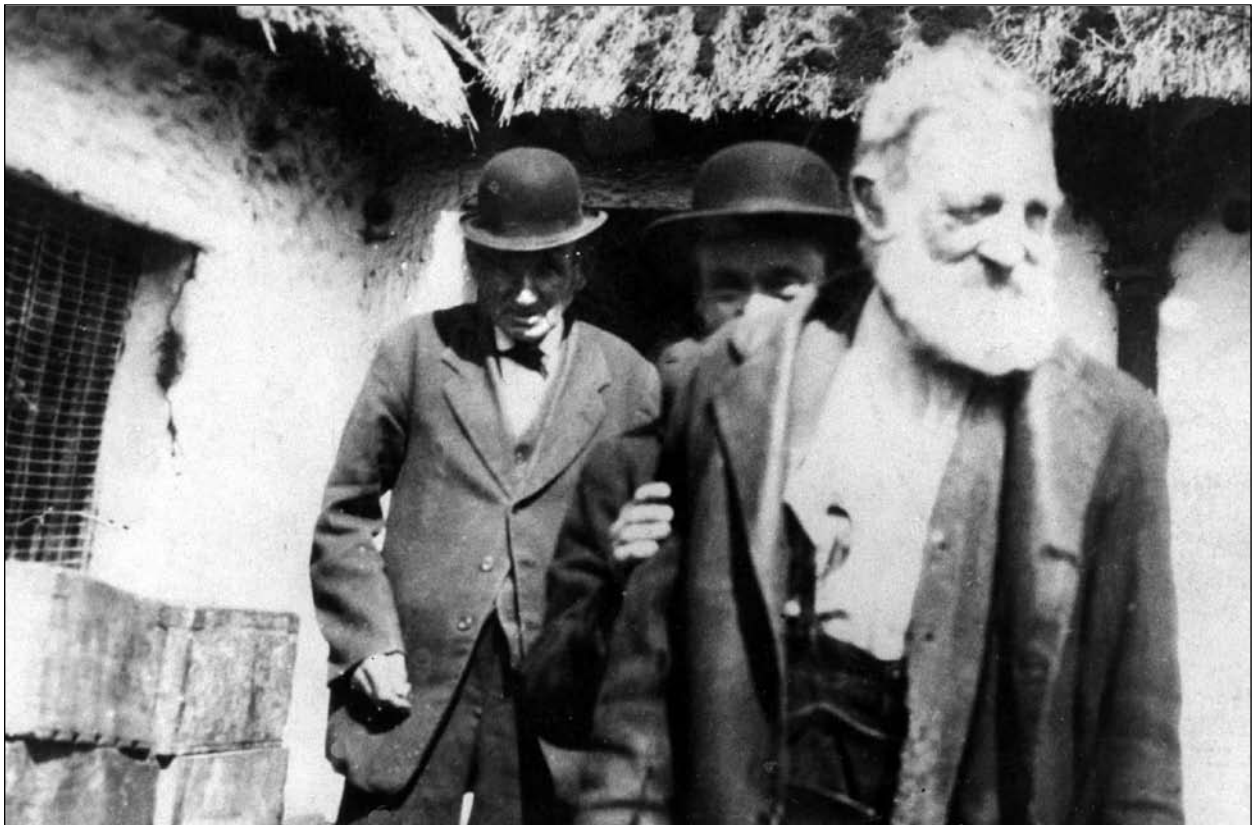


Timothy Mansfield and Charles Hollowed, wheelwrights.

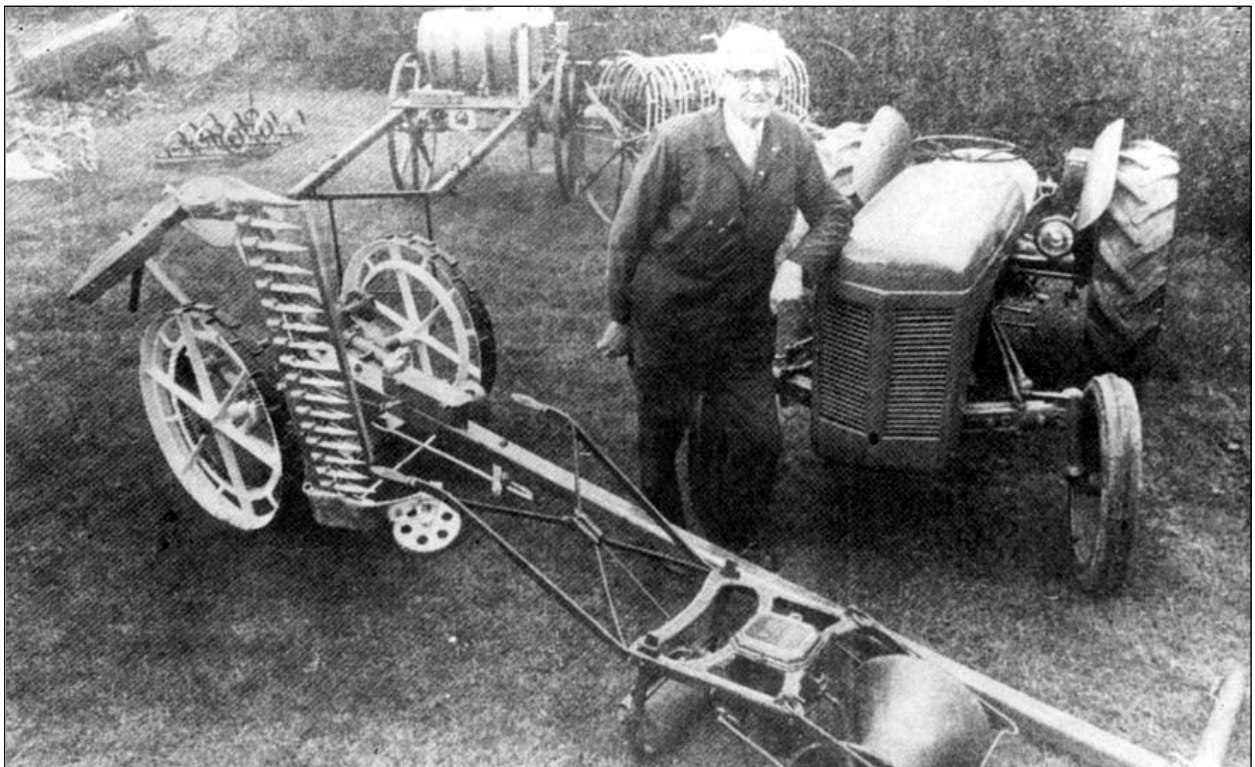


Christy Brereton from Prosperous, Co. Kildare, hard at work at the ancient craft of thatching on the roof of the Rathcoole Inn.

The inn, which dates back to 1735, is Dublin's oldest two-storey thatched pub and has to be rethatched approximately every ten years. The cost to owner Michael McDonald and his partner Jack Graham in 1993 was £3,500. They bought the pub in October 1992 from Tommy Byrne of the Wolfe Tones.



William Mahon and Michael (Mickey) Murray, Mahon's Lane.



Antiques farmer . . . Thomas "Mosser" Dungan with a selection from his collection of old farm machinery, including a 1950 tractor, turnip-sower, horse-mower, potato-sprayer and hay rake. They were on view on the Danny Murphy float — overall winner at the Tallaght parade.



Mrs. Mary O'Rourke, Blackchurch and her prize turkey. In the background is the family home, now under the Naas dual carriageway.



Haymaking at Brittas — the Dowling family.



Official opening of Killeel church, 1934. A cavalcade of local horsemen led Archbishop Byrne's car from Rathcoole to Killeel.



Mrs. McDonnell and her son, John, The Green, Rathcoole.



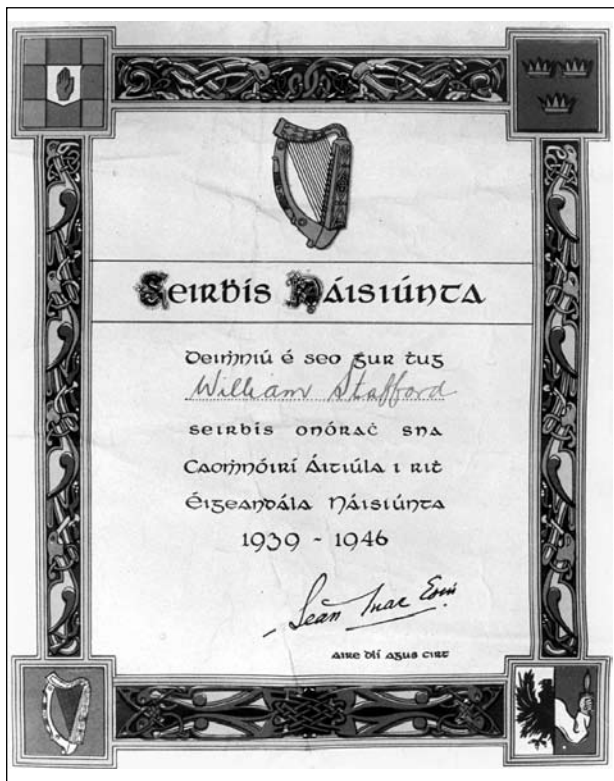
The McNally family, Westmanstown, Newcastle. Kathleen Mansfield is the baby on her mother's knee.



Pictured on a visit home from America is Betty Schicker (back right). Beside her is Mary Browne with (in front) Bridget Whelan and Mrs. Dunne.



Michael Collins' funeral reaches Dublin, August 1922. On the right is John Sheil, Dublin County Council.



William Stafford's L.D.F. Service Medal and Certificate of Service.





Seen here taking the salute in Rathcoole at an Army march from Cork to Dublin are An Taoiseach, Éamonn de Valera, Major General Eoin MacNeill, his Aide de Camp and Oscar Traynor, Minister for Defence. The children are Ann Coffey, Doris Braden and Maurice Fitzgerald.



SHEILA McDONNELL'S 70TH BIRTHDAY PARTY



After his first Mass: Fr. Pat Scahill with his parents and other members of his family.



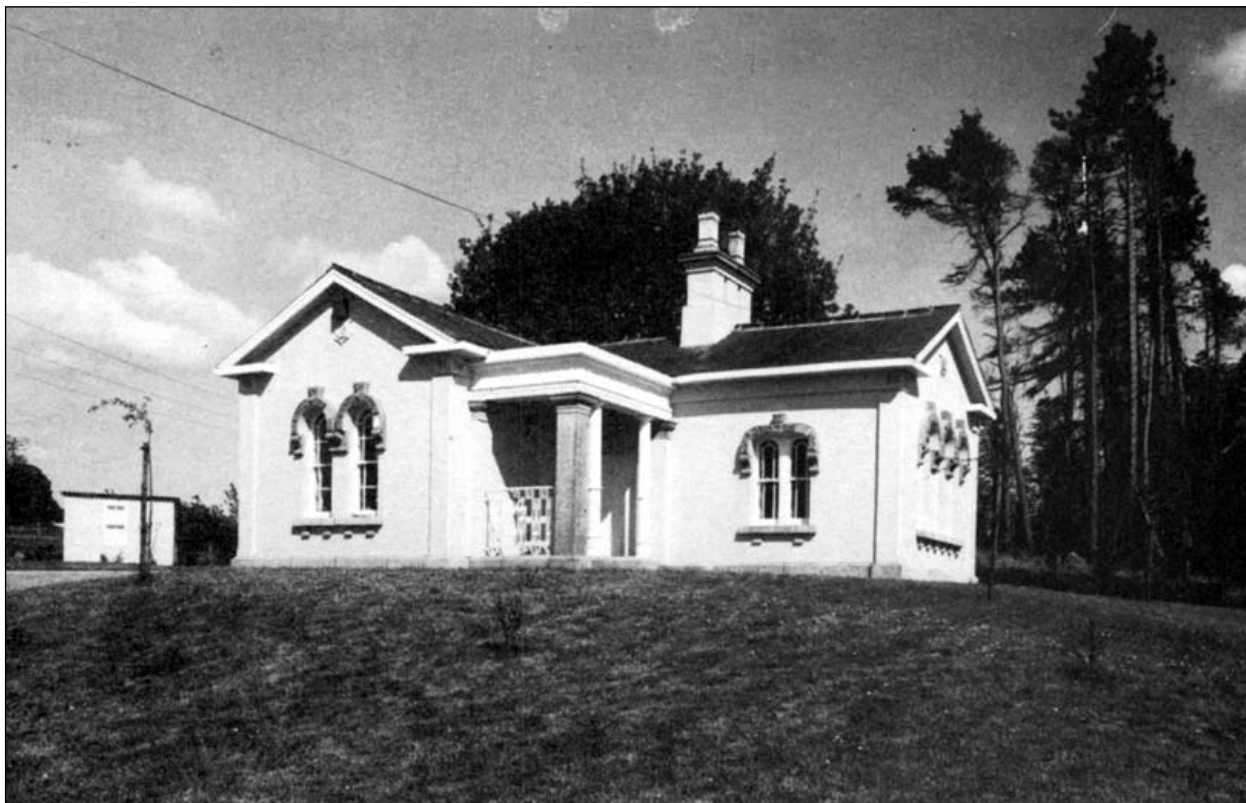
The Missioner in Saggart in 1936.



Kevin O'Donoghue and Brigid O'Connor pictured here on their wedding day. Also from left to right: Andy O'Connor, Raymond O'Donoghue, George O'Connor, Jim McDermott, Ellen O'Donoghue, Angela O'Connor, Peg O'Connor. Children in front are: Michael McDermott, Imelda Halpin, Kathleen Walsh, and Lillie O'Connor in frock and straw hat.



Back row: John (with Ita in arms), Tom and Paddy McDonnell and Christy O'Brien, pictured with children Ann, Teresa, P.J., Christine and Paul.



Gate Lodge at the Johnstown Kennedy Estate. Now privately owned.



Johnstown Kennedy, home of Sir James Kennedy and where the "Irish R.M." was filmed. Now part of Beechpark Golf Club.



LADIES OUTING

Row 3: Mrs. McGabhann, —, Mary Curtin, —, Peggy Proctor, —, —.

Row 2: Kathleen Quinn, Mary Timmons, —, Mrs. Eustace.

Row 1: Mrs. McKeerin, Peg Balfe, Peg Vivash, Margaret Proctor, driver, Mag Hennessy.



RATHCOOLE RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION DINNER AT THE DOWNSHIRE HOTEL

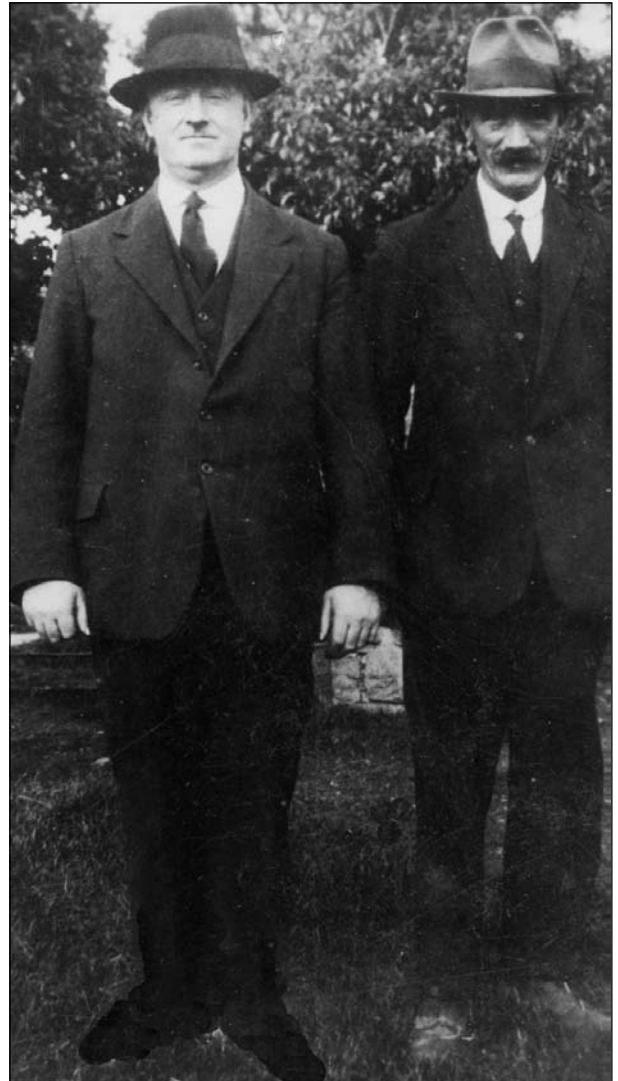
Row 3: Jim Bayle, Seamus Bayle, John Reilly, Jack Quinn, —, —.

Row 2: Harry Collins, Seán Nolan, Ned Timmons, Peter Smyth.

Row 1: Peggy Bayle, Mrs. Graham, Molly O'Brien, Mary Timmons.



Mrs. Dear with her daughters Annie and Laura,
Fortunestown.



Mattie Murphy and William Hennessy.



KIT MULLALLY'S 21ST BIRTHDAY PARTY

Back: Pat Timmons, Pat Reilly, Kit Mullally, Eddie McGuirk, John Dowling, Pat Keogh, Barney Timmons.
Front: Willie Mullallay.



Katie Walsh (nee Duggan), of Mill Road, Saggart,
 with her granddaughter, Diana Freeman, 1948.



WEDDING OF JOHN HENNESSY AND MARGARET TYNDALL

With the bride and groom, left to right are Evelyn Hennessy, Billy Hennessy, Vera Tyndall and Peter Stewart.



Wedding at Newcastle Church of Billy Hennessy and Molly McEvoy with Peter O'Reilly, best man, and Kathleen Hennessy, bridesmaid.



ICA 6TH BIRTHDAY

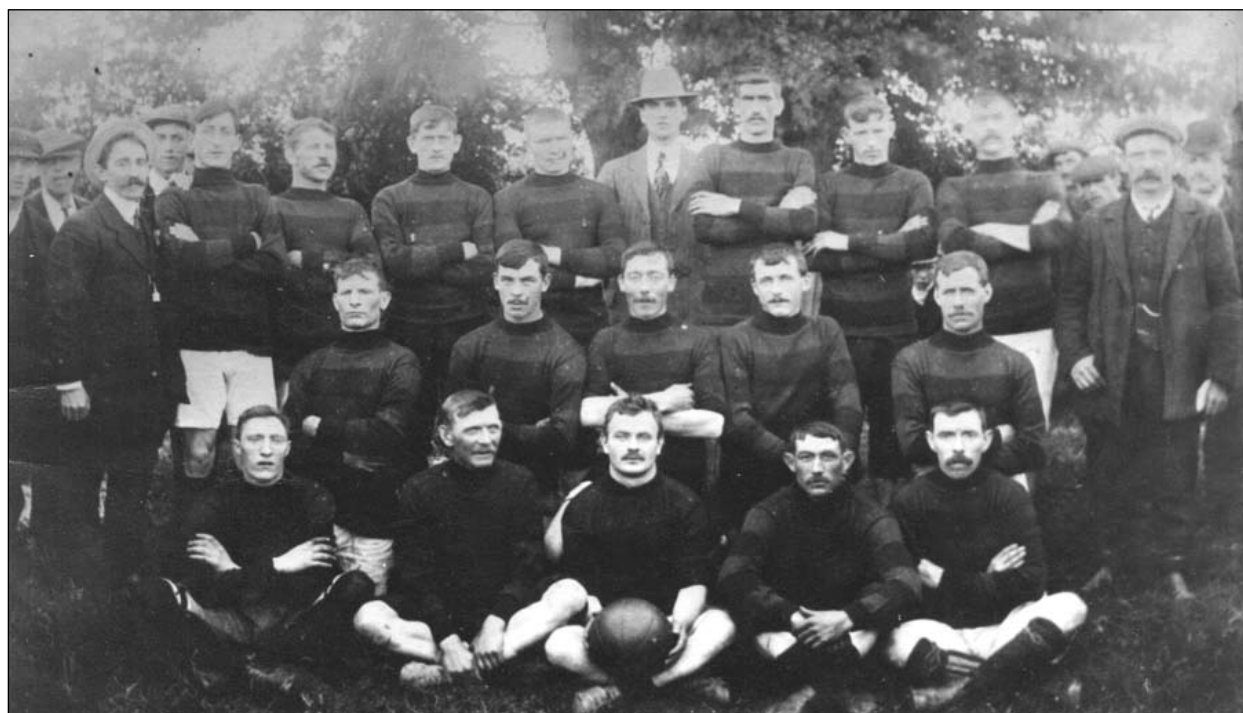
Left: Maggie Proctor, Maggie Hennessy, Mrs. Ryan, Betty Dungan, Peg Vivash, Eileen Brady, ——.
 Right: Sheila Colohan, Emily Gordon, Sue Pouch, Sue Sweeney, Frances Nixon, Ann Walsh.



Members of the ICA, left to right: Nan Nolan, Mrs. Cullen, Annie Brady, Nellie Reilly, Annie Timmons, Mrs. Dargan, Marie Quinn.



Kathleen Mansfield with all her ten children and some friends.



Sons of Erin, forerunners of St. Mary's Gaelic Football Club.



Garden Fete on Jacob's lawn in Rathcoole around 1910.

RATHCOOLE		<i>1st July 1924</i>
<i>Dr Shiel</i>		
Bought of J. JACOB,		
General Grocer, Draper, and Ironmonger, Chemist and Druggist.		
Petrol, Oil Paint, Colour, and Window Glass.	Timber, Tin Ware, Iron, Coal, Salt, Flour, Meal and Bran Stores.	
<i>2 Gallons Petrol</i>		<i>4 2</i>
<i>Paid</i>		
<i>Mr Jacob</i>		

The price of petrol in 1924!



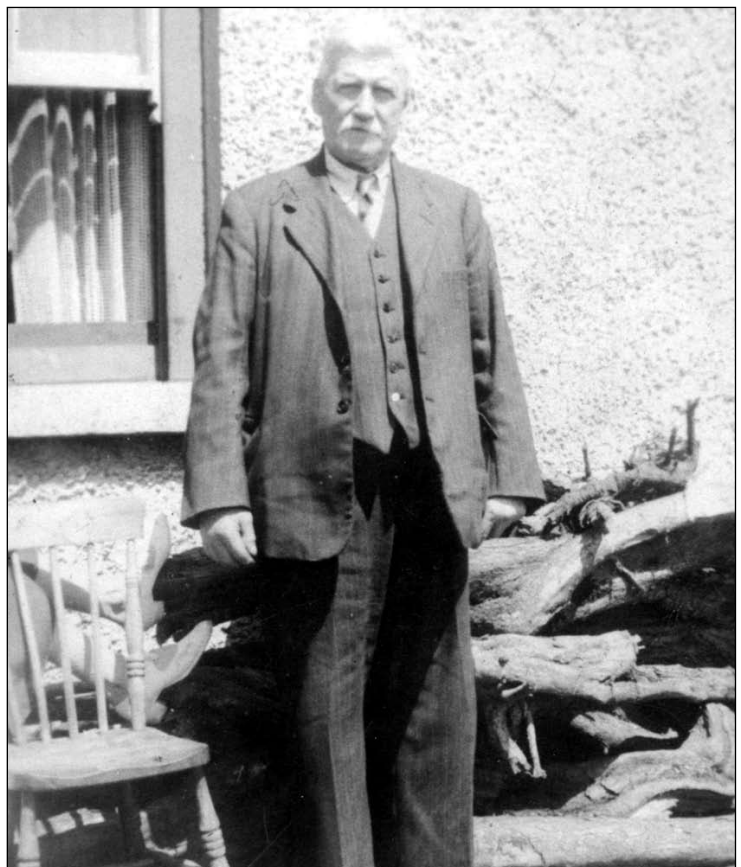
Mrs. Dowling, Brittas and her sister, Mrs. Hudson, Manor Kilbride.



Michael and Mrs. Dowling, Brittas, with friends.



Jack Quinn, son of Ouncer Quinn, at the old Quinn home
beside the old school.



John Quinn, Killeel Road, beside the schoolhouse.



Back: John Burke, Mona Maguire, Michael O'Reilly, Billy Hennessy.
Front: Molly (McEvoy) Hennessy, Kitty (Bermingham) O'Reilly, Nellie Holland.



SUNDAY L.D.F. MASS PARADE SAGGART 1942

Front Row: D. Cullen, K. Daly, E. Cullen, J. Brady
Middle Row: P. Brady, P. Redmond, F. Pitts, J. Redmond.
Back Row: ———, H. O'Riordan, P. O'Toole.



Thomas Walsh.



Mrs. Margaret Byrne.

Margaret Walsh.

Mr. and Mrs. Walsh were Vera Quinn's grandparents and Mrs. Byrne was her great-grandmother.



COMMITTEE AT THE OPENING OF THE COMMUNITY CENTRE, SEPTEMBER 1979
 Back: Tom Meehan, Joe Ryan, Betty Ryan, Jack Quinn, Catherine O'Brien, Keel Duggan, Fergus Ennis.
 Front: Annie Brady, Vera McCormack, Jack O'Brien, Seán Nolan (Chairman), Tony Kearney (Secretary),
 Michael Mullally, Evelyn McLoughlin, Eileen Brady.



Mark Clinton, T.D., speaking at the official opening of the Saggart and Rathcoole Community Centre,
 September 1979.



Passage grave on Seefin near Kilbride camp.



Kilbride camp about 1911. The lower camp was much larger. In 1914 there were more than 12,000 men stationed there, providing much work for local people and making much use of the Blessington tram.



SAGGART PARISH CHURCH

Left: The altar as it used to be with five steps.

Right: View of new altar rails, panelling of sanctuary and old sanctuary lamp.



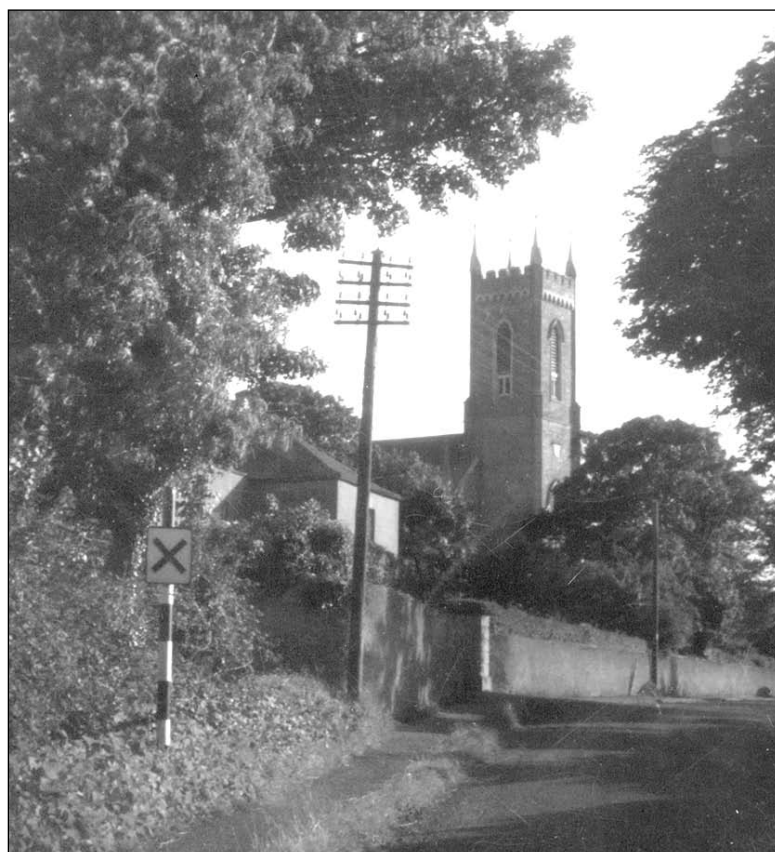
Right: The baptismal font in its old setting.



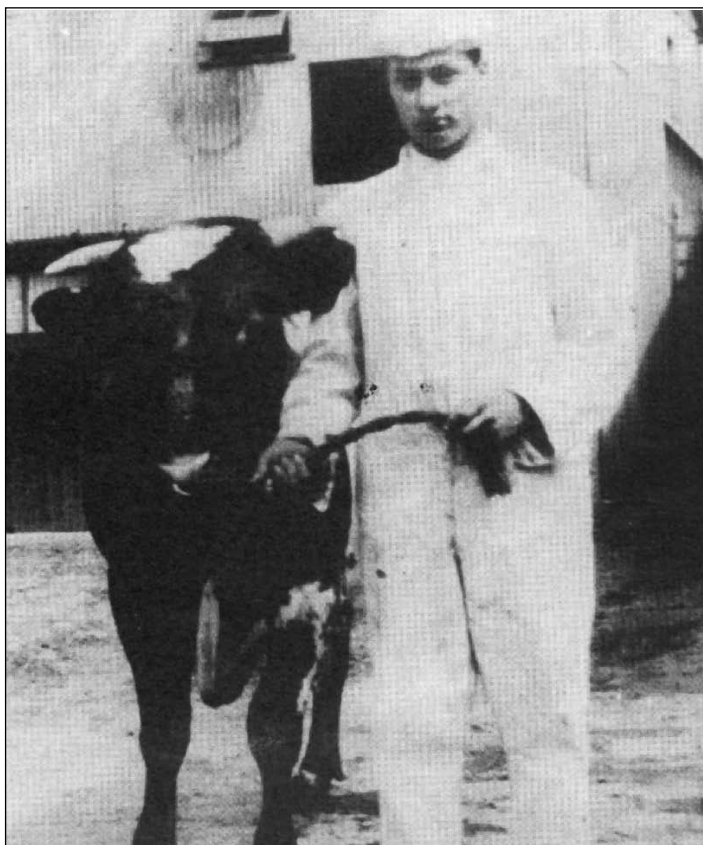
Left: View of interior with the old altar rails and pulpit.



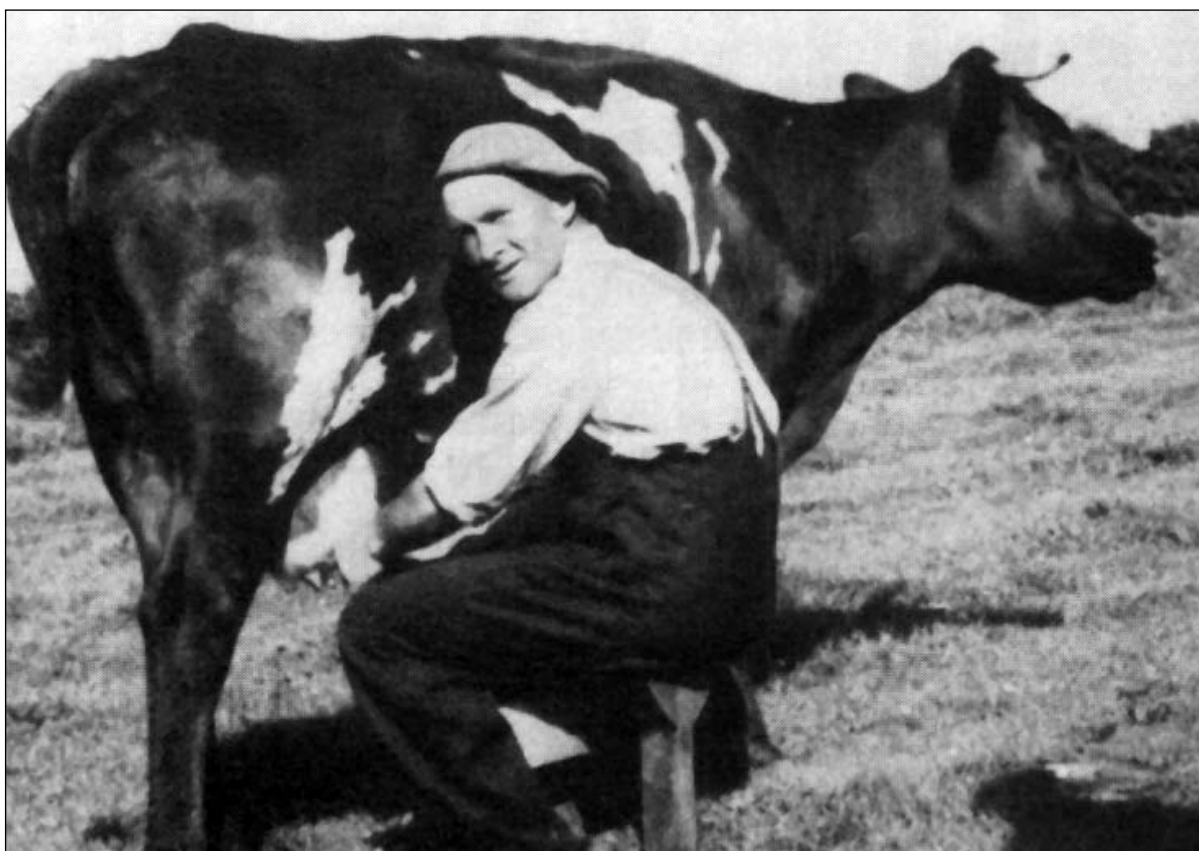
Saggart from the air about 1950.



View of Saggart Church, including old parochial house,
from Garter Lane.



Joe Broe in Crooksling farmyard.



Paddy Kelly of Mahon's Lane, milking.



Rural scene at Tassagart.



Brittas Ponds completely frozen and covered with snow in February, 1963. In foreground, Tom Hudson and Martin Proctor.



Ted Keogh with a sheep and her four lambs at Hillview.



A hay bogey.



Tom Mansfield at Dwyer's farm, Lynch Park (now Slade Valley Golf Club).



1934 — Ploughing at Castlewarden, Jimmy Mahady stopped while the horses Charlie and Tess are photographed with Elsie Kynaston, who was 101 in 1993 when this book was first published. She lived to 105 years of age.



Timothy Mansfield, Redgap, Rathcoole, grandfather of the Mansfield family.



Pam Hennessy on the clean rake at Tssaggart.



Left to Right: Julia Stewart, Kit Hennessy, Mrs Catherine Hennessy, Evelyn Hennessy and Mr. Denby (a steward for Col. Campbell, Tassaggart House).



Left to Right: Hugh Hanlon, Tom McDermott, Billy Kelly, Christy Pitts, Paddy Kelly, Tommy Pitts and Johnny Kelly.



May Procession at Saggart.



Rathcoole girls at the Eucharist Congress in June 1932



RATHCOOLE GIRLS NATIONAL SCHOOL - 1930

Back: Sue (Monahan) Sweeney, Catherine (Reilly) Keane, Maggie Dunne, Mabel Montgomery, Eileen (Murphy) Kelly, Bridget (Mansfield) O'Neill, Mary Casey.

Front: Paddy McEntee, Bridie (McEntee) O'Neill, Nellie (Coogan) Hart, Kathleen (McNally) Mansfield, Rose (McMahon) Hannon, Maureen Quinn, Annie (McMahon) Timmons, May (Keogh) Timmons, Lil Byrne, Mary Murphy.



CONFIRMATION IN SAGGART — 1931

Included are: Mary Connolly, Maggie Dunne, Bridie McEntee, Mary Casey and Susie Monaghan.



SAGGART NATIONAL SCHOOL - 1924

- Row 4:* 1 Paddy Kelly (Lugg), 2 Mary Kelly, 3 Girlie Walsh, 4 May Kearns, 5 John Healy, 6 Paddy Kelly, 7 Mick Brady, 8 Jim Dear, 9 Jimmie Hudson, 10 George Dear, 11 Esther Meegan, 12 Nell Ward.
- Row 3:* 1 Paddy Rohan, 2 Willie Byrne, 3 Peter Maxwell, 4 May Dowling, 5 Christy Byrne, 6 Peter Proctor, 7 Mickie Murphy, 8 Paddy Lalor, 9 Paddy Bermingham, 10 Peg Fitzgerald, 11 May Murphy, 12 Dody Brady, 13 May Dillon, 14 May Kenny.
- Row 2:* 1 – Murphy, 2 Tommy Pitts, 3 Dan Brady, 4 Ger Fitzgerald, 5 Larry O'Neill, 6 Mary Byrne, 7 – Kearns, 8 Linda Murray, 9 Christy Riordan, 10 – Byrne, 11 Mike Meegan, 12 Evelyn Hennessy.
- Row 1:* 1 John Conaty, 2 Maggie Proctor, 3 Phil Rohan, 4 Bridie Dillon, 5 Kathleen Kelly, 6 Molly Cooney, 7 Molly Byrne, 8 Eileen Murphy, 9 Bridie Conaty, 10 Molly McDermott 11 —.



BRITTAS NATIONAL SCHOOL - 1960

- Back:* 1 Betty Delaney, 2 Helena Leavy, 3 Mary Masterson, 4 Betty Dunne, 5 Seán Reilly, 6 Joe Eustace, 7 Hughie Reilly, 8 Jean Burnett, 9 May Keogh, 10 Anne Byrne, 11 Brian Leavy, 12 Liam Healy, 13 Mick Lawlor, 14 Joseph Mansfield.
- Bench 1:* 1 Mary Bawn, 2 Alice Kinsella, 3 Margaret Gordon, 4 Judy Curtin, 5 Patricia Healy, 6 Mary Kelly.
- Bench 2:* 1 Noreen Delaney, 2 Marie Cox, 3 Rose Masterson, 4 Michael Healy, 5 Kitty Hilliard, 6 Margaret O'Toole.
- Bench 3:* 1 Paddy Eustace, 2 Jim Keogh, 3 Anthony Mansfield, 4 Peter Burnett, 5 Anthony Hamilton, 6 Thomas Clarke.
- Bench 4:* 1 Kay Dillon, 2 Noeleen Dunne, 3 Paddy Reilly, 4 Mick Eustace, 5 Michael Dillon, 6 Francis Gordon.



SAGGART NATIONAL SCHOOL ABOUT 1950

- Row 3:* Kay Masterson, Peg McDermott, Mary Phelan, Joan Timmons, —, Sadie and Mella Rogers, Rosie McLoughlin, Rosie Sherry, Kathleen Conway, Mary McDermott, Teresa Healy.
- Row 2:* Phil Watkins, K. Considine, Lily Muldowney, Eileen Considine, Eileen McLoughlin, Betty Keogh, Babs Keegan, Kathleen McLoughlin, Tilly Corrigan.
- Row 1:* Ann Healy, Maggie Phelan, Ann Tuohy, Ann Vivash, Vera Rice, Kathleen Timmons.



The old school, Saggart, built in 1840 by the parishioners, on Verschoyle land, subject to 1/- per year ground rent. The teachers lived upstairs. Kathleen and Ellen Devoy (sisters of the Fenian, John Devoy) taught there for years. The last teachers to live there were Mr. and Mrs. Monks, who moved out about 1932.



BRITTAS SCHOOL

Back: Michael Healy, John Broe, J.J. O'Toole, Kevin Fox, Martin Proctor, Paddy Kelly, Mary Faulkner, Clare Faulkner, Rosemary Clark, —, Carmel Cox.

Front: Anthony Hamilton, —, Anthony Mansfield, Thomas Clarke, Brian Leavy, Liam Healy, Patricia Healy, Mary Bawn, Marie Cox, —.



RATHCOOLE BOYS' SCHOOL — 1931



ST. MARY'S GAEILIC FOOTBALL CLUB - 1928

- Row 3:* Christy Timmons, Pat Cullen, John Kelly, Willie Roche, —, Mick Gray, Paddy McMahon, Ned Quinn, Tom Behan, Jim Coffey, —, Pat Dunne, —, Mick Healy, —, Pat Quinn.
- Row 2:* Willie Murray, Dan Dunne, Christy Attley, George Stewart, Willie Bermingham, Jack Quinn, Jack Timmons.
- Row 1:* Larry Hurley, —.



ST. MARY'S GAEILIC FOOTBALL CLUB

- Row 3:* Matt Murphy, Tommy Murphy, John Kelly, George Stewart, Jimmy O'Hare, Paddy O'Neill, Mick Healy, Dick Earls, Joe Lawless, Jim Dunney, Bill McDermott.
- Row 2:* Peter Maguire, Gunch Hopkins, Paddy Bermingham, — Tobin, Paddy Murray, Paddy O'Connor, Paddy Kelly.
- Row 1:* Ned Timmons, Dan Dunne, Jim Coffey.



NELL'S FIFTH BIRTHDAY

Row 3: Jennie Hoey, Jack Mangan, Maureen Mangan, Josie Behan, Betty Mangan, John Sheil.

Row 2: Nell McLoughlin, Josie Mangan, Maura Chick, Maureen Brennan, Kitty Butler.

Row 1: Michael Mangan, Mary Smith, Tom Mangan.



Christy Dowdall and his wife Mary (nee Mulhare).



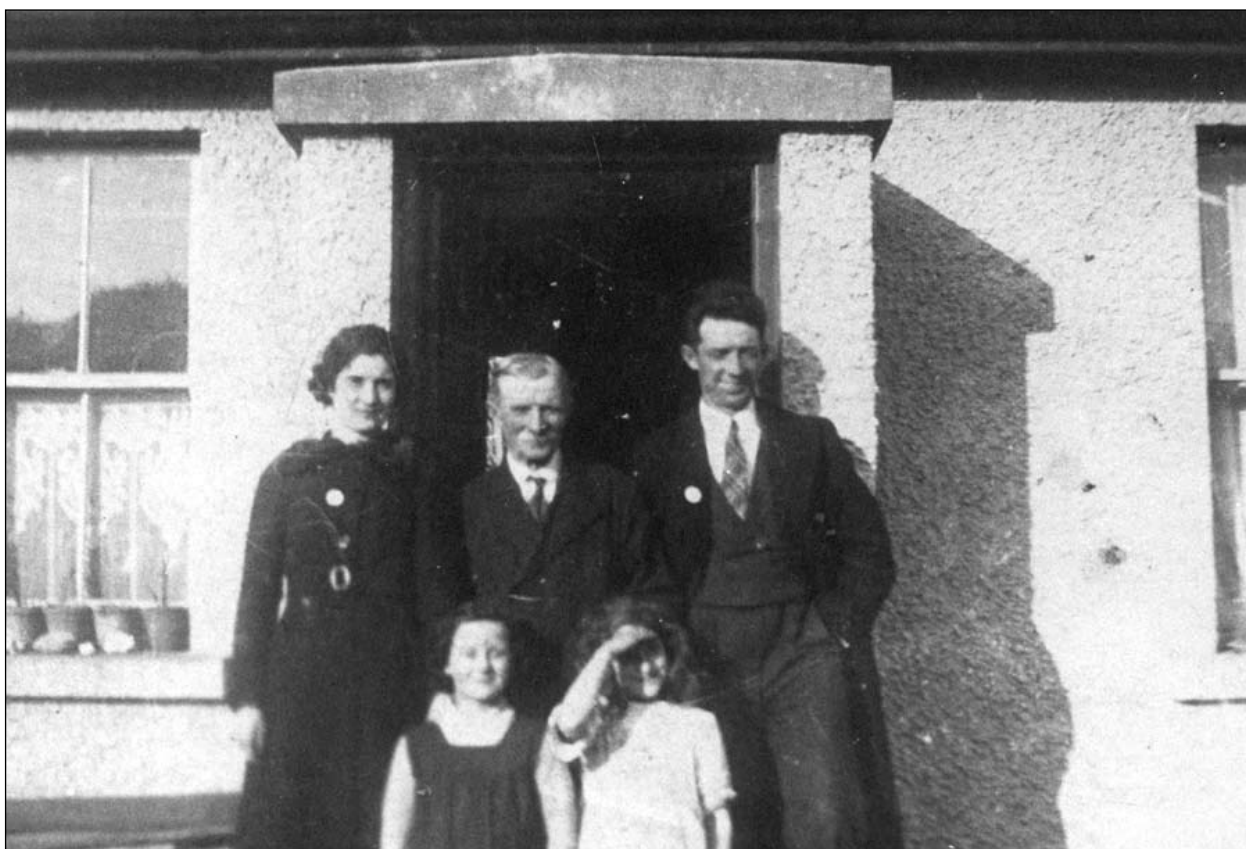
Poker classic September 1979.



Annie Brady placing her bet at the Race Night, held during our first Community Week, September 1979.



Kay Stewart, May Nolan, Peggy McDermott, May Vivash and Pam Hennessy on holidays in Galway



The Garrigan family, Brittas.



IRISH DANCING IN BRITTAS

Row 3: Betty Hudson, Sheila Redmond, Margaret O'Toole, Noeleen Dunne, Kay Dillon, Betty Dunne.

Row 2: Alice Kinsella, Mary Bawn, Ursula Tisdall, Marie Cox, Margaret Gordon, Betty Delaney.

Row 1: Judy Curtin, Martin Proctor, Mary Masterson.



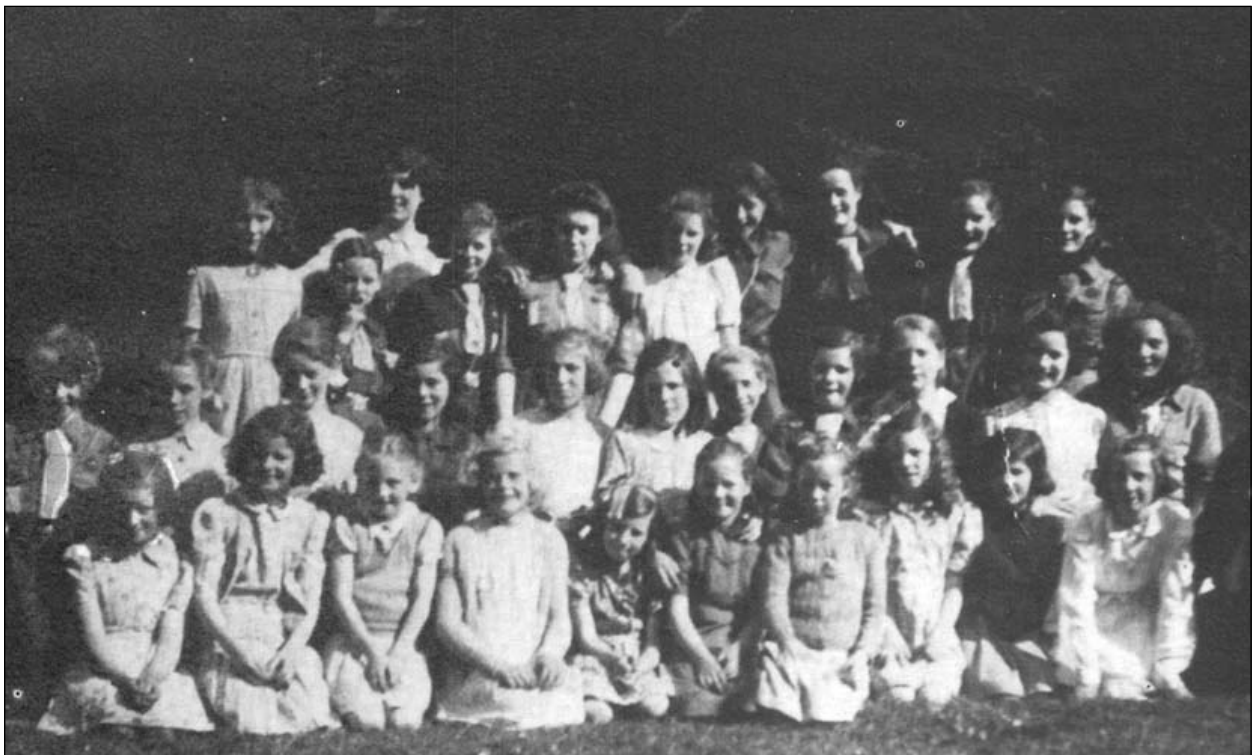
KILBRIDE DRAMA GROUP (*including several from Brittas*)

Back: Included are P. Reilly, Willie Donohue, Michael Donohue, Paul Donohue, Billy Smith.

Front: Margaret Dillon, Nancy Fox, Mrs. Byrne, Assumpta Byrne



The Rathcoole Hill, football team 1934-1935.



Girl Guides from Harrington Street on a picnic in the Slade with local girls, including Kathleen Fitzgerald, Rita Rogers, Ann and Mary Bradley, Ita McMahon, Mary Quinn, Laura Dear, Phil, Kathleen and Clare Watkins, May Rogers, Kathleen Phelan, Pam Hennessy, Maureen Butler and Ann Rogers.



Stewart's shop where Peter Lagrue's is now. Josie and Cis at the door.



Memorial Cross at Crookslin to someone killed by the Blessington Steam Tram.



The Dublin Blessington Steam Tram rounds the bend at Crookslin, June 1932.



The Sheil family, Hillview, 1899.



Hillview, Rathcoole.



The Dowling sisters, Embankment.



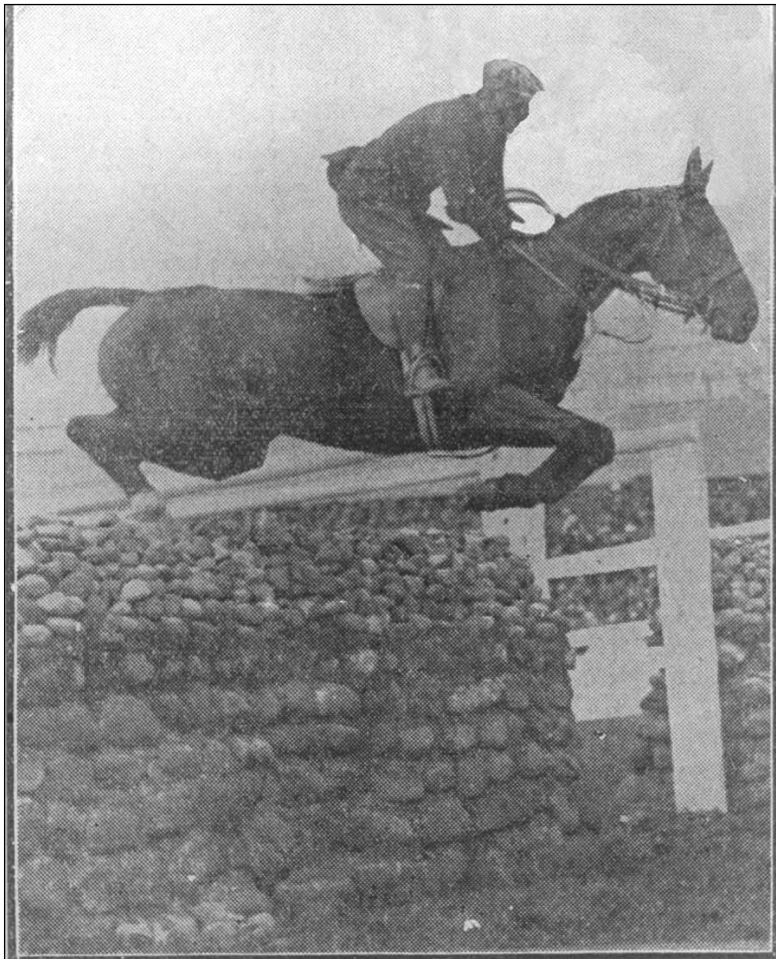
Sarah Dowling of Brittas Inn.



Dr. John Paul O'Riordan, Medical Officer, Rathcoole. He occupied the house which is now Four Districts Day Care Centre and Health Centre. He was one of the first in the area to own a car, a "bullnosed" Fiat, which found steep hills difficult – except in reverse! So he went up the hills backwards.



Left to right: Nan Flood, Ellen Dowling, John Dunne (Newtown), Myles Healy (Corballis), at the wedding of Edward Dowling and Katherine Dunne.



The Winner of the Stone Wall Jump at the R.D.S. Horse Show.—Miss Maude's Patrick's Day. An "action" photograph taken during the competition yesterday.—"I.I." Photo.
W. HARVEY riding.

Willie Harvey riding to victory at the stone wall jump at the RDS Horse Show about 1935.

From Athgoe, in Newcastle, he died in 1990 at the age of ninety-eight. As a young lad his over-riding ambition was to join the British Army and he twice ran away to join up but was fetched home by his father. Finally, a Captain Barr, who lived at Athgoe Castle, arranged for him to join the South Irish Horse, allowing him to become a part-time soldier. He received his mobilisation papers in 1914 and he rode with his squadron to the North Wall where he embarked on a troopship for Le Havre, terrified that the war would be over before he got there! He participated in the retreat from Mons and went on to fight and survive many bloody battles of the First World War.

Willie Harvey never married but settled in Colemanstown, where he built his own house. He was one-time huntsman to the South County Dublin Harriers. Very creative, he hand-made bicycles, invented stirrups which would not trap dismounting riders and made his own shotgun cartridges during the Second World War. He was known to be a wonderfully straight shot and in later years he was a familiar sight on his racing bike, bum in the air and head down over the handlebars, heading for Hanlon's, the fish and poultry merchants, to sell the result of his efforts. He rode his bicycle until he was over ninety-seven years of age.



SWIFT BROOK PAPER MILLS 1912

Back Row left to right: Christy Pitts, Pa Byrne, Bill McDermott, Paddy McDermott, Penie Brady, Bridgie Quinn (Whelan), —, Nannie Pitts (Archbold), Harry McDermott, Mary Fitzgerald (O'Neill).

Front Row: Rosie Williams (Kearns), Easter Brady (O'Neill), Chris Burchall (Pouch), Mary Bennett (Murray), Mollie McMahon (Birmingham), Bridget Byrne (Murray), Nell Murphy (Birmingham), Pat Timmons.



Our pride and joy! Our very own Community Centre, September 1979.



RATHCOOLE PLAYERS LADIES GROUP

Row 3: Mary Prone, Ann Hackett, Delores Dignam, Kay O'Reilly, Colette McAllister.

Row 2: Monica Mahoney, Deirdre Francis, Christina Keogh, Margaret Farrington.

Row 1: Rita Kiersey, Maureen Callan, Marie Brazil, Geraldine Boland, Molly Grimes.



RESIDENTS' OUTING TO LOUGH SHEELIN

Left to right: Marie Quinn, Mrs. Conway, Terry Quinn, Kathleen Quinn, Mary Timmons, Peg Quinn, Kitty Brabazon and Nan Healy.



Joe Dowdall with some of the patients of Peamount Hospital.



Peter and Peggy Proctor with Mrs. Ellen Byrne, Postmistress, Brittas and, in front, Martin and Seamus Proctor and Tom Hudson.



At the back of the "Cosy Bar," Rathcoole: Phil Rohan, Tommy Pitts, Paddy Gilroy, Jim Coogan and others.



LOURDES — 1966
 Peg Quinn, Mrs. Kelly, Mary Timmons, Mary McNally and Kathleen Quinn.



Christy Pitts, Lil Coogan, —, Mrs. Coogan and Jim Coogan.



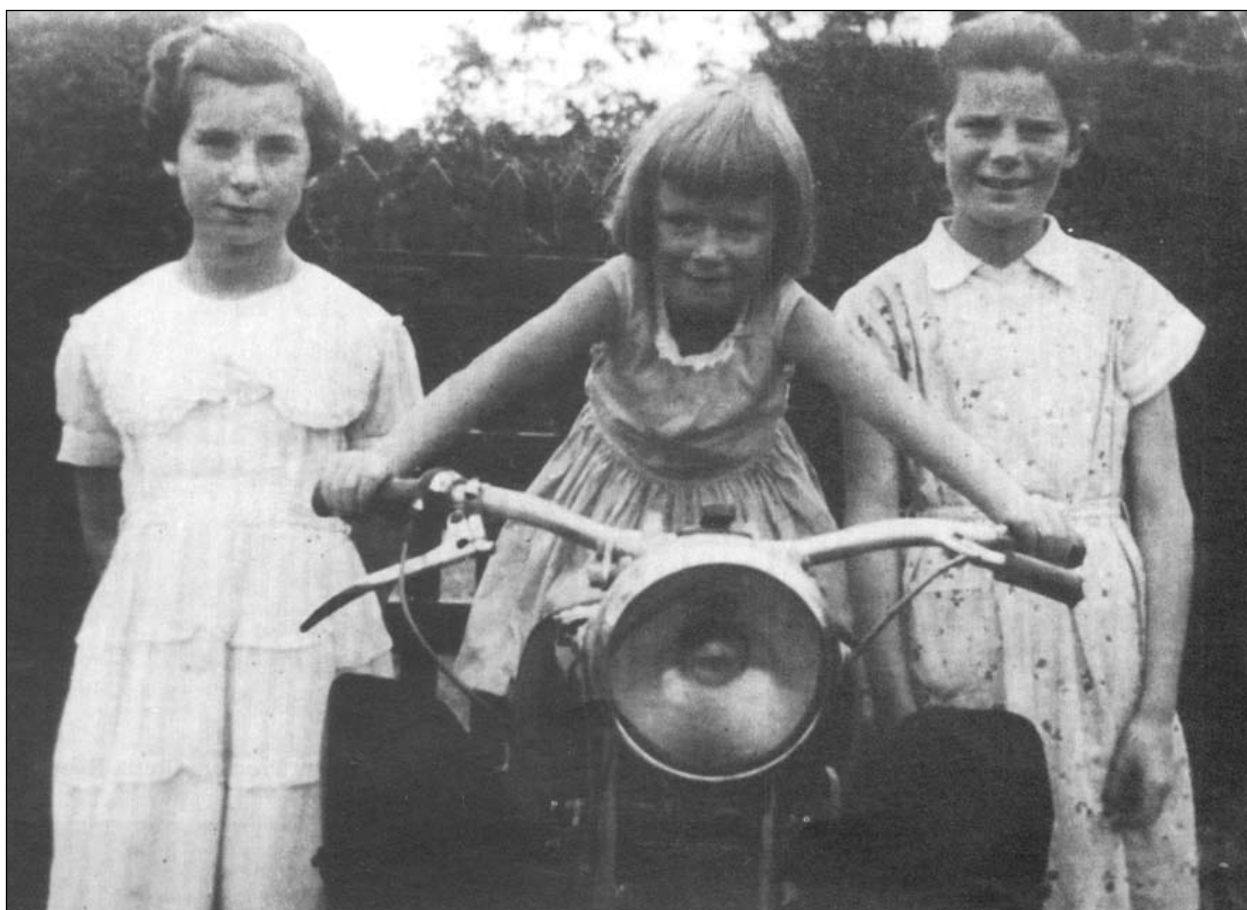
Linda Murray, Saggart.



Evelyn Hennessy, Cis Fox, Lil Fox, Maggie Hennessy, Josephine Fox (Granny) at rear.



Dispatch riders at Clancy Barracks. John McNally, Westmanstown is fifth from the left.



The Fitzgerald sisters, Helen and Geraldine, with a young friend, Mary Quinn.

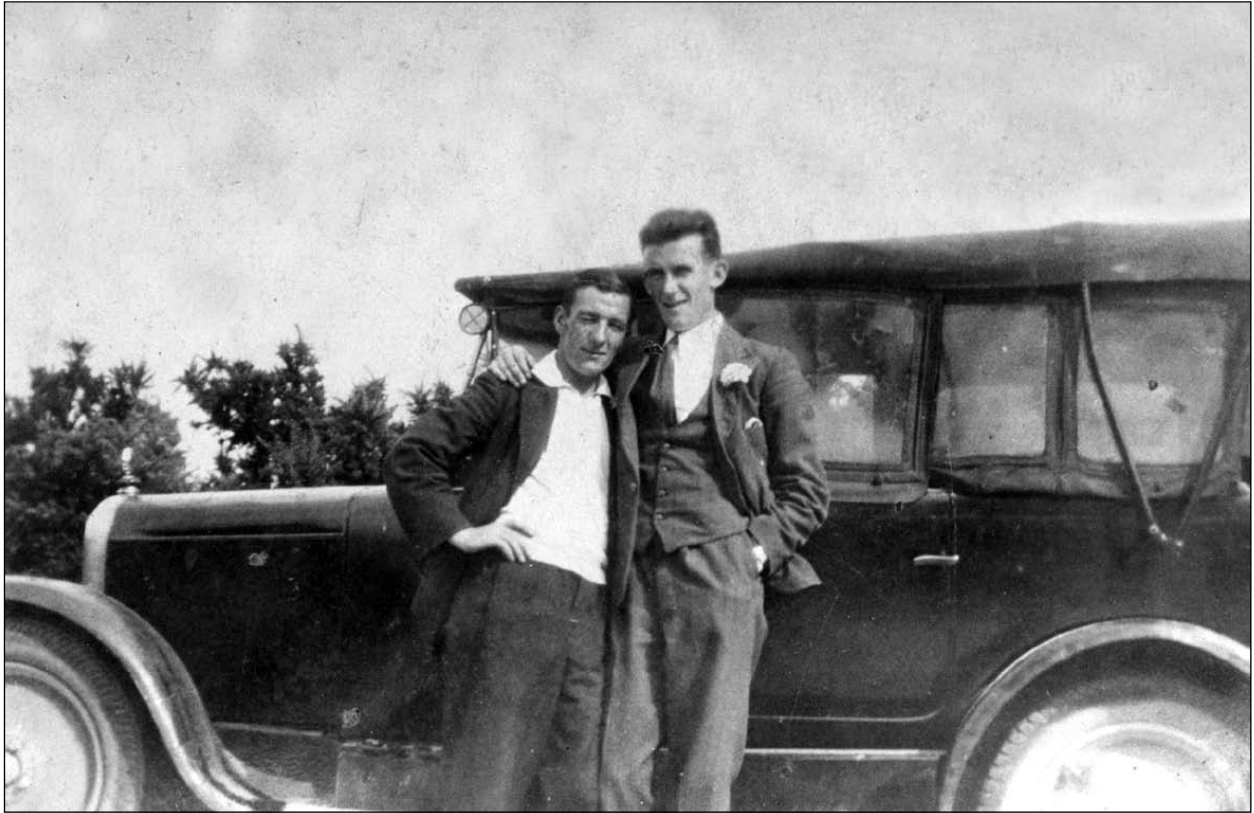


BRITTAS LADIES' SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Margaret Dillon, Mrs. McKernan, —, Mrs. Taggart, Mrs. Kinsella, Peggy Balfe, Peggy Proctor, Greta Ryan with Fr. Kelly and Fr. Brady.



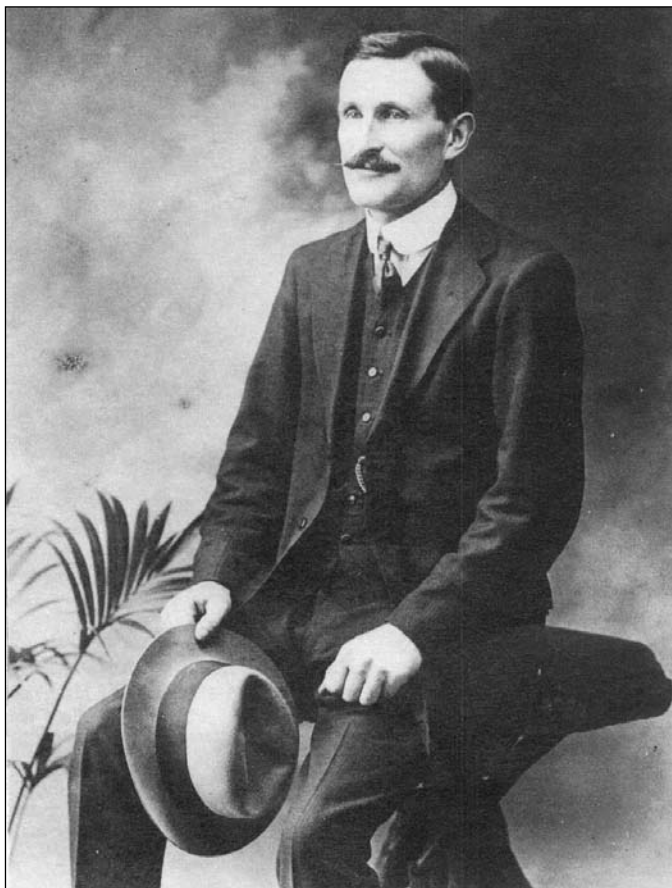
Margaret Quinn, Mary Vivash, Peggy McDermott, Gladys Vivash, Ann Murphy, Kathleen Attley and Kitty Mullally stepping it out in Salthill in 1952. Before leaving home they had all been forbidden to wear slacks, but they bought them and hid them in McDermotts, where they changed before getting the Galway train. The fat was in the fire when they came home and had their photographs developed!



Ned Timmons and Ned Quinn with Fr. Ryan's car on Ned Quinn's wedding day.



Back: Andy, Bridie, Rosie and Billy Kelly, Boherboy, Saggart.
Front: John Kelly, Rosanna Kelly, with Tommy and Paddy.



Michael Dowling, Lake House, Brittas.

1882 RECALLED.

Spending a holiday at the Grand Hotel, WICKLOW, at present is Mr. Christopher F. Cullen, hotel director, Sydney, Australia. He was formerly a member of the D.M.P., and in 1882 he was stationed at Kilmainham. On May 6th, 1882, he was on railway duty at Kingsbridge, when Inspector Dunne called him to the Phoenix Park, and he learned of the assassination of Lord Cavendish, Chief Secretary, and Mr. Burke, Permanent Under Secretary. Mr. Cullen assisted in the removal of the bodies to Steevens's Hospital.

EXTRACT FROM *THE IRISH TIMES*, 1910

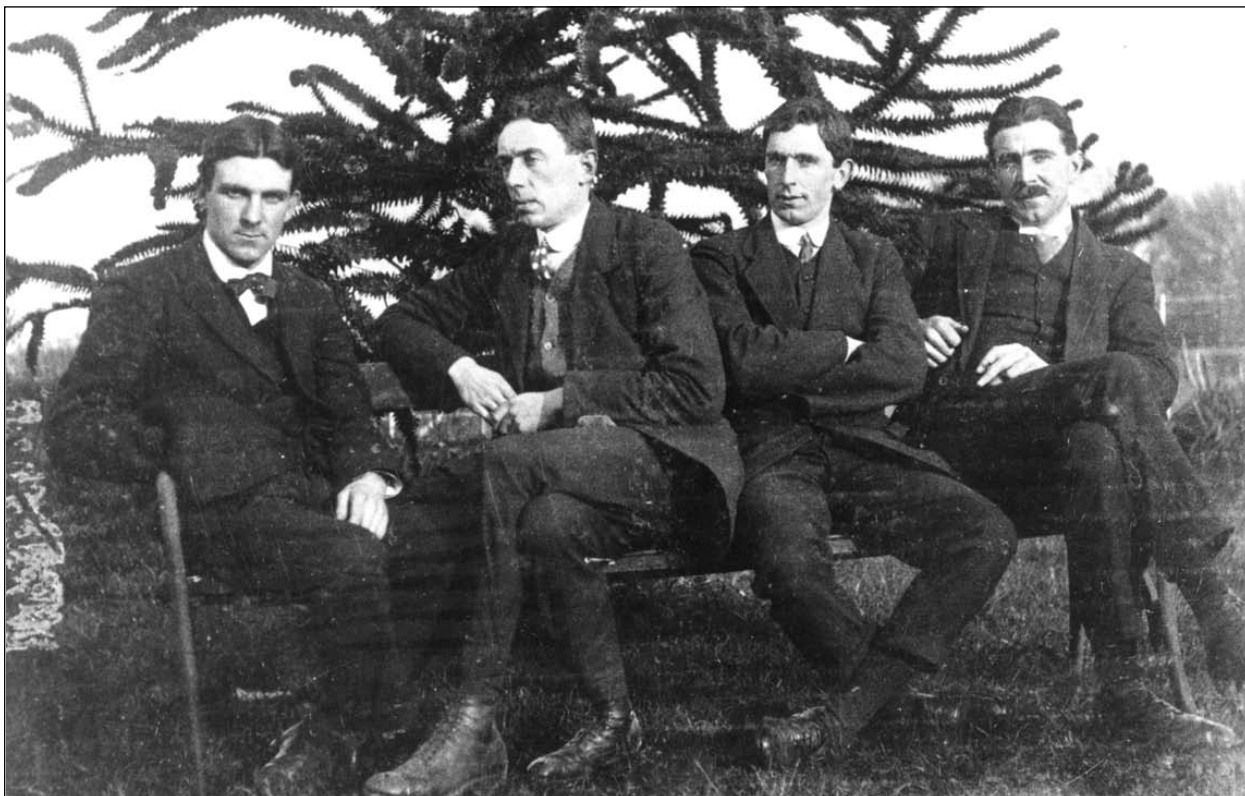
Christopher F. Cullen, born at Collegeland, Rathcoole, was one of six brothers who were famous at every sports in Leinster for their athletic prowess. Descendants include Cullens, Scahills, Dunbars, Conways and Seerys.



Baby Joe Sheil with his aunt Catherine Sheil and Mary Byrne.



Our oldest photograph taken around 1878. James Sheil, Rathcoole House. Mr. Sheil was a member of the building committee for the Parish Church in Saggart.

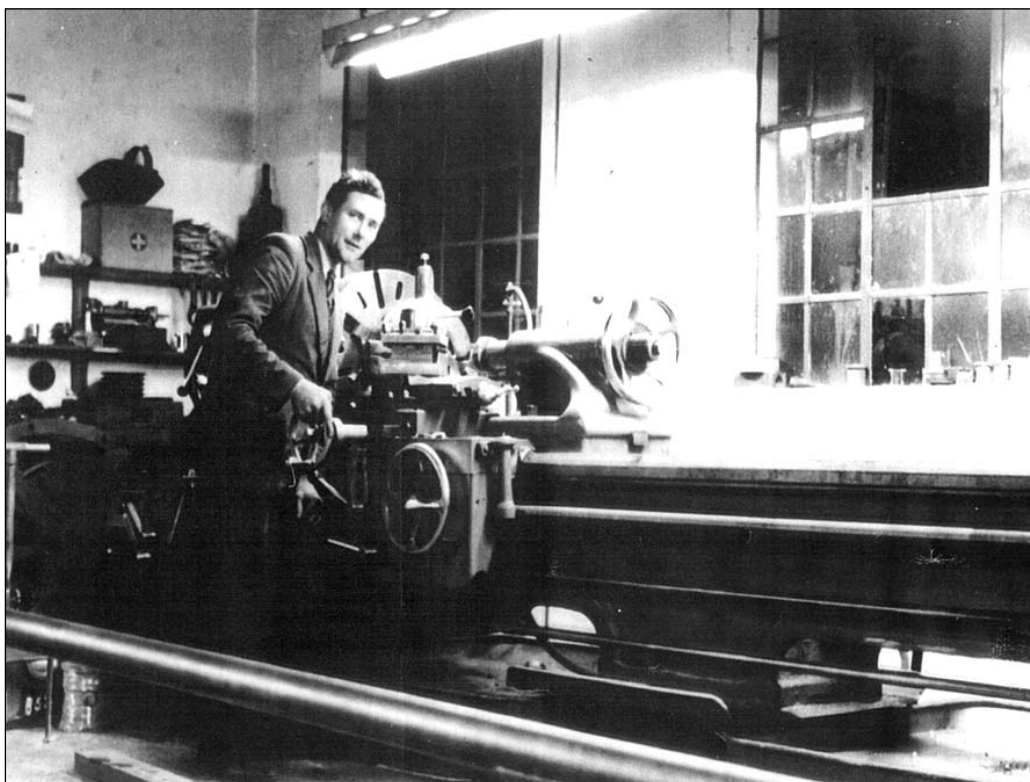


William, James, Joseph and John Sheil, 1924. At their mother's funeral, Paddy Maher said to Joe Sheil, "Ye have every known means of robbing the public in the family – doctor, rate collector, vet and solicitor!"



Back: Paddy Keogh, John Proctor, Jim Muldowney, Paddy Murphy, George Redmond, George Weston, Tom Mansfield, Sonny Fitzgerald, Maurice Murphy.

Front: Jimmy Butler, Miley Crofton, Mick Murphy, Peter Proctor, Freddy Williams (Newcastle).



Tom Mansfield working the lathe in Saggart Mill.



INDUSTRIAL ROSARY CAMPAIGN, CIRCA
1950 IN SWIFT BROOK PAPER MILLS
Left to right: Mrs. Winifred Sheil,
Fr. Gabriel Harty, O.P., Mrs. Essie
(McCrave) Dowling.

The wall decoration behind the statue was
the work of Paddy O'Toole.



BRITTAS SCHOOL

Row 4: Peadar Hall, Douglas Sheridan, Paddy Hudson, Ollie Dunne, Johnny Kelly, Noel Broe, — Hall, Jim Tisdall, Mick Dunne, Patsy Kelly.

Row 3: Nora Maher, —, Kathleen Mansfield, —, Bernie Hanlon, Bunnie Fox, Brigid Hanlon, —, — Sheridan, Willie Sheridan.

Row 2: —, Maureen Hudson, Deirdre Dunne, —, Anne Hudson, Pearl Eustace, Maura Healy, Rosie Healy.

Row 1: —, —, Don Hall, Donal Dunne, Timmy McGillicuddy, Seamus Delaney, Peter Eustace, —, Seán Eustace, Bertie Hanlon.



AT SWIFT BROOK

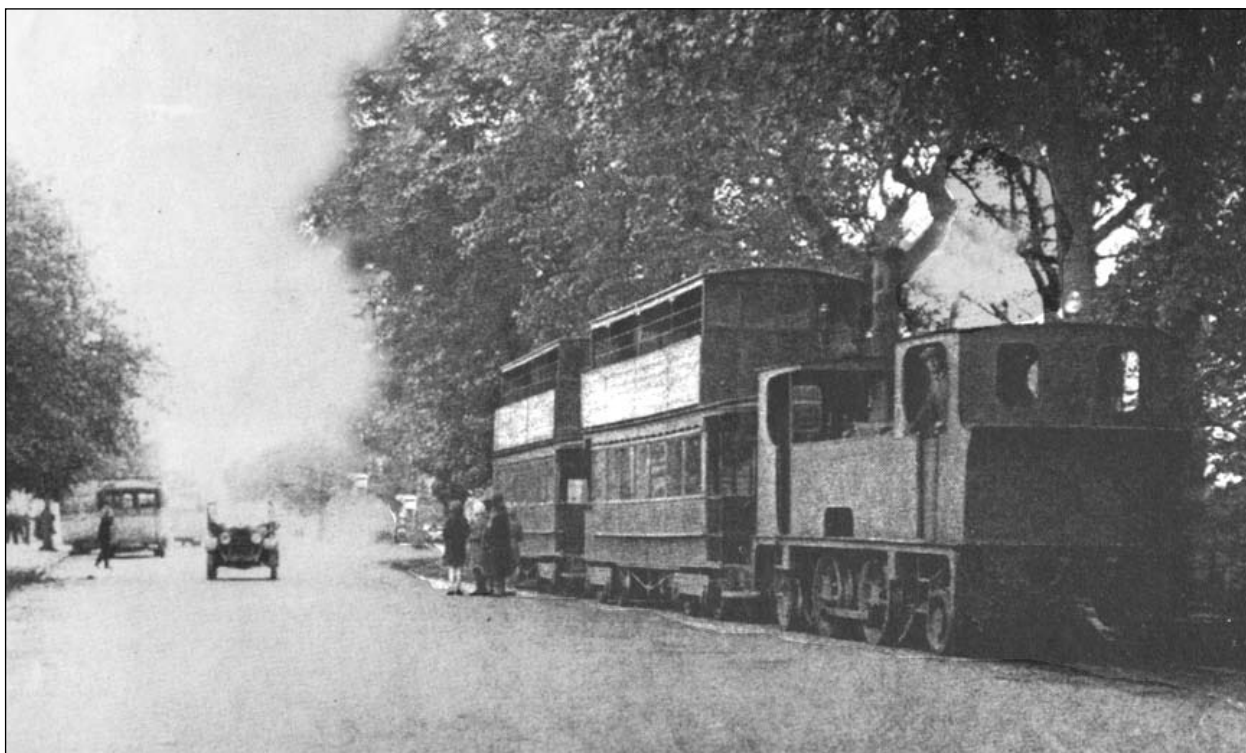
Left to right: Maggie Kenny, Betty Brady, May Kearney, Sadie Quinn, Dina McGuinness, Margaret Collins and Annie Fitzgerald.



Dillon's of Brittas as it used to be with the Blessington tramlines in the foreground.



Jim and Eileen Hall, Glenaraneen.



The Blessington steam tram, which ran from Terenure to Poulaphouca via Embankment and Brittas from 1887 to 31 December 1932.



The Dublin to Blessington Steam Tram takes on water at Embankment, June 1932.



ST. MARY'S FOOTBALL CLUB

Row 3: Paddy Healy, —, Willie Roache, Billy Kelly, Jimmy O'Hare, Mungie Behan, —, Pat Quinn, Mick Healy, Kevin Jacob, —Tobin, Paddy Bermingham, Martin Phelan, Mick McDermott, —, Kit Timmons.

Row 2: Peter Maguire, George Stewart, Danny Dunne, Jim Tunney, —, Gunch Hopkins.

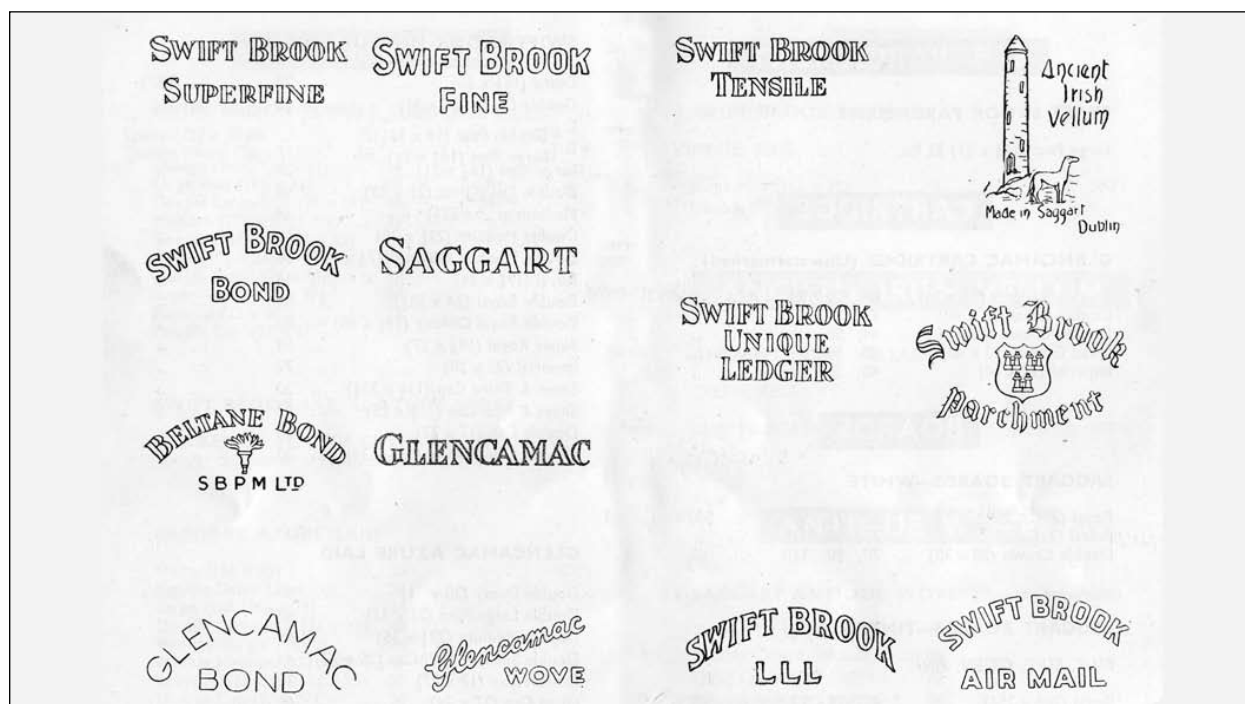
Row 1: Ned Timmons, Dick Earls.



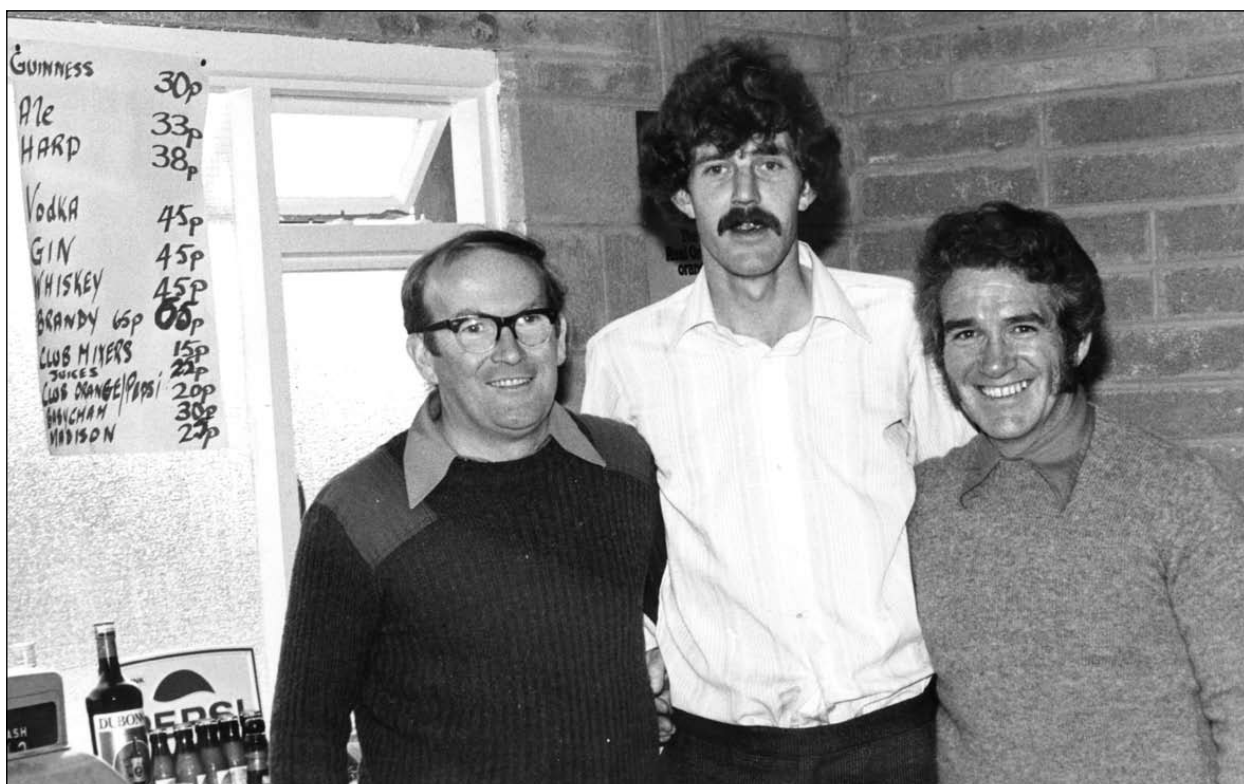
Swift Brook — Part of the shift on their way home after checking out. *Back row:* Paddy Kelly, Tommy Barry, Tom Walsh, Joe Timmons, Bat Murphy, John McDermott; *3rd row:* Desie Reilly, Peter Brady, Bill Hennessy, Jim Gray, Tom Kenny; *2nd row:* Tom Gahan, John Walsh, Joe Keogh, Tony McDermott, Willie McEntee, Myles Brazil and Paddy McDermott; *front row:* Jim McDermott, John Quinn, Tom Connolly and Jim Quinn.



Left to right: Tony Kearney, his mother Mollie, and Ann and Michael Mullally. This picture shows Mollie Kearney. Mrs. Kearney was a founder member of Rathcoole Bridge Club and the Kearney Cup was donated by her family to the Bridge Club after her death. The cup is now the most prestigious prize awarded annually in the club.



Swift Brook Paper Mill watermarks from a 1962 catalogue.



Left to right: Jimmy Hayden, Phil Meehan and Jack Quinn. Look at the bar prices.



Ann Keegan and Margaret Farrington keeping the Brownies in line.

DUBLIN, BLESSINGTON AND POULAPHOUCA TRAMWAYS.

TIME TABLE FROM AND AFTER 1st OCTOBER, 1923.

This Time Table is liable to alteration on all Bank Holidays. Particulars of running on those days can be obtained at Booking Office.

Weekdays.														Sundays.													
FROM DUBLIN.							TO DUBLIN.							FROM DUBLIN.							TO DUBLIN.						
	a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.		a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.		a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.		a.m.	a.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.	p.m.
TERENURE ...	7.30	7.30	12.0	2.0	3.30	6.0	POULAPHOUCA ...	9.20	9.20	...	...	...	7.55	POULAPHOUCA ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	POULAPHOUCA ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TEMPLEOGUE ...	7.37	7.37	12.7	2.7	3.37	6.7	BALLYMORE ROAD ...	9.25	9.25	...	...	...	8.0	BALLYMORE ROAD ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	BALLYMORE ROAD ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BALROTHERY ...	7.44	7.44	12.14	2.14	3.44	6.14	BLESSINGTON ...	9.35	9.35	...	...	...	8.10	BLESSINGTON ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	BLESSINGTON ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
TALLAGHT ...	7.50	7.50	12.20	2.20	3.50	6.20	LAMB ...	9.50	9.50	...	...	...	8.15	LAMB ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	LAMB ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
JOBSTOWN ...	8.0	8.0	12.28	2.30	3.58	6.30	BRITTAS ...	9.57	9.57	...	...	...	8.20	BRITTAS ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	BRITTAS ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
EMBANKMENT For Saggart & Rathcoole ...	8.10	8.10	...	2.40	...	6.40	CROOKSLING ...	10.5	10.5	...	...	...	8.25	CROOKSLING ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	CROOKSLING ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
CROOKSLING ...	8.25	8.25	...	2.55	...	6.55	EMBANKMENT For Saggart & Rathcoole ...	10.15	10.15	...	...	...	8.30	EMBANKMENT For Saggart & Rathcoole ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	EMBANKMENT For Saggart & Rathcoole ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BRITTAS ...	8.30	8.30	...	3.0	...	7.0	JOBSTOWN ...	10.25	10.25	12.32	...	4.2	8.35	JOBSTOWN ...	...	...	12.32	2.50	4.2	5.20	JOBSTOWN ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
LAMB ...	8.35	8.35	...	3.10	...	7.10	TALLAGHT ...	8.30	8.30	10.35	12.40	3.0	4.10	TALLAGHT ...	...	...	10.35	3.0	4.10	5.30	TALLAGHT ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BLESSINGTON ...	8.50	8.50	...	3.25	...	7.25	BALROTHERY ...	8.30	8.30	10.41	12.45	3.6	4.16	BALROTHERY ...	...	...	10.41	3.7	4.15	5.35	BALROTHERY ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
BALLYMORE ROAD ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	TEMPLEOGUE ...	8.42	8.42	10.47	12.52	3.12	4.22	TEMPLEOGUE ...	...	...	10.47	3.14	4.22	5.40	TEMPLEOGUE ...	...	...	...	...	...	...
POULAPHOUCA ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	TERENURE ...	8.50	8.50	10.55	1.0	3.20	4.30	TERENURE ...	...	...	10.55	1.0	3.20	4.30	TERENURE ...	...	...	...	...	...	...

•• Will run 15 minutes later on Tuesdays Thursdays and Saturdays-only.

Time Bills.—The published Train Bills of this Company are only intended to fix the time at which Passengers may be certain to obtain their Tickets for any Journey from the various Stations, it being understood that the Trains shall not start before the appointed time. The Company do not undertake that the Trains shall start or arrive at the time specified in the Bills. The right to stop the Trains at any Station on the Line, although not marked as a Stopping Station, is reserved.

THE BLESSINGTON TRAM by ROVING BARD

The "Roving Bard" was Peter C. Grattan and the "Bank" referred to in his poem is the famous "Embankment", which is the "half-way" house between Terenure and Blessington.

I'm but a poor Cobbler that dwells in the Coombe,
As good as they're made, I may safely presume;
I frown not for riches nor seek not the "dole",
I'd rather be striving to save your poor sole.
From early till late for to patch and repair,
I toil the whole week yet I never despair —
On Sunday I'm off like the good sport I am
For a bona-fide "stunt" on the Blessington Tram.

We first hit Jobstown, where Toomey resides,
There's a Céad Míle Fáilte for all bona-fides;
You may safely indulge in good porter galore
While "ould Killenarden" keeps guard at the door.
We bathe our ould gums for half an hour or so
Till the thirst-quenched conductor his whistle does blow,
Then we're off with a sandwich of bread and cowl'd ham
To amuse our ould jaws on the Blessington Tram.

We stop at the "Bank" for our engine's run dry
While bould Patsy Brien gives us the "glad eye"
And Conaty views his rich store on the shelf
Where every "good drop's" stowed away for himself.
For he-males and she-males of every degree
And ould lads with whiskers right down to their knee
You would ne'er meet the equal from here to Potsdam
Of the bona-fide crowd off the Blessington Tram.

Refreshed and elated we dance and we sing,
Nor heeds not the Guard yelling, "On board for Crookslings",
Sure the company's good and we can't drink enough
For listening to Patsy give out his ould "guff".
At last we're announced with a terrific roar,
"The tram's on the move!" — there's a rush for the door,
Sure the battle of Ypres was only a sham
Compared to the charge for the Blessington Tram.

The resolve to condemn, it's now knocked on the head,
I believe they became overwhelmed with dread,
Count all the stone crosses, which tell you quite plain
Of some who attempted to stop it in vain,
Back home to ould Dublin we now to retire
Lord send us an encore's my prayer and desire
All week I'll be careful on tea, bread and jam
To save us some cash for the Blessington Tram.

The big-wigs declare it's a horrible sin
The way we do squander our hard-earned "tin",
Sure had they the will, like a poor wretched ass,
They'd drive us through life on cowl'd water and grass.
They "thump their ould craws" and proclaim as good boys
All them they can wind like mechanical toys
I'll have while I live let them all go be —,
My bona-fide "stunt" on the Blessington Tram.

INTERVIEW WITH KIT BRADY, SAGGART



I went into the Mill in 1947, in August, and I started work in the mill pulling ragwort weeds. Jean, the daughter of the manager, Mr. Horsborough, used to run the farm and my first job was to pull ragwort. There were three fields of them. They were 3 ft. high and had to be pulled by hand and taken away and dumped.

Next I worked in the sheds. My father Peter Brady was a foreman in the sheds. From the sheds you supplied all the stuff for the machines: wood pulp, clay, alum and all the other ingredients. You had to leave in the supply for the night shift coming in.

My brother Peter was a boiler man. The oil they were burning then was very thick. It wasn't nice diesel like we have now. It was dreadfully thick old stuff and there was a gravity feed to the burners. It came down from the third floor, heavy tarry old stuff. He was the helper on the boiler. The boiler man was out sick so he stepped in as boiler man and he in turn needed a helper. All the helper had to do was to pump this oil up to the third floor using a manual pump with a little short handle that you moved backwards and forwards to pump the oil with little or no exertion whatever. You were on your own in the oil house and could sing away to yourself.

After a while I thought that I'd better go and see if the tank was nearly full. This was at night, a night shift. When you went up the first flight of stairs in onto the first floor there was no light. When I went in the dark to go up the next flight, "God" I said to myself "it's after starting to rain since I came in the blooming door". I could hear the rain falling. Up the next flight and here's the oil coming across the floor to the top of the stairs. The foreman on shift in the mill got all the spare lads he could. They collected empty clay sacks, china clay sacks and threw them in on it. You couldn't soak it up. It was a loading shed. There was a door to the outside and we threw the sacks out through the door and brought them down to the old coal burners and put them in there and burned them. The spilled oil didn't go to waste.

I went home and I thought no more about it that night and went back in the following day. The electricians' shop was the bottom floor and that oil came down and destroyed everything there. They were all day trying to clean it up.

Yes, dreadful stuff it was. I was in a terrible state and somebody said "don't worry, sure Paddy Flynn let it out in the yard one night." He was going across the yard and the oil was coming out the door into the yard after coming down the three flights of stairs.

Then I was put in on shift work on the beating loft in with the bleach house. The bleach house was under the breakers, the machines that broke up the rags. After bleaching, the rags were let down into an area we used to call the piggery because there were two rows on each side of concrete compartments and the floor was all a drain. When they were pulped up, the rags were let down and they would drain. They could only come down in one of the compartments. Then you had to fork it from one into the next, into the next and keep forking it until you had made room. Then you put in into containers and the boys up in the beating loft took it and mixed it in the beating machines.

My sister worked on the beating loft while she was still young. There were a couple of women standing there and it was their job to pick out the little bits of stuff with colour that didn't break up. And they were only tiny little bits. She said that you'd be as sick as a dog with the smell of the bleach.

I wasn't up in that part for long until I was sent down to the glaze room. You would be moved around. In the glaze room I was put helping on a cutter. Then I was up onto a calender, number 1 calender. I worked there for a couple of years until I had an accident on the motorbike and was out of work for ten months.

When I went back into work I was on day work for a while running one of the two cutters down the lower mill. Then I was put back up onto the cutters in the glaze room. From that I went up onto the calender. You would be promoted as you went along. I was asked to go up to a machine as a backtender and I didn't go. Anyhow, about a year later, my first cousin, a machine man on the number 1 machine, came down to me. We were very friendly. . He said that they were going to ask me to go back up on the machine again and not to say no this time as I'd be with him. So I went up. I was there backtending for years and then I was made a machinist. I was 11 years a machine man, when the mill shut down in 1971.

I was born here in this house I'm living in now. This was a new house when I was born. Our family had lived beside the pub. There was a little thatched house. All my family worked in the mill from time to time: Mary, Carmel, Dan, Mick, Paddy, Peter and my father. My father was a foreman and my aunt Kate, his sister, was a forewoman up there as well. Kate Smith was her name.

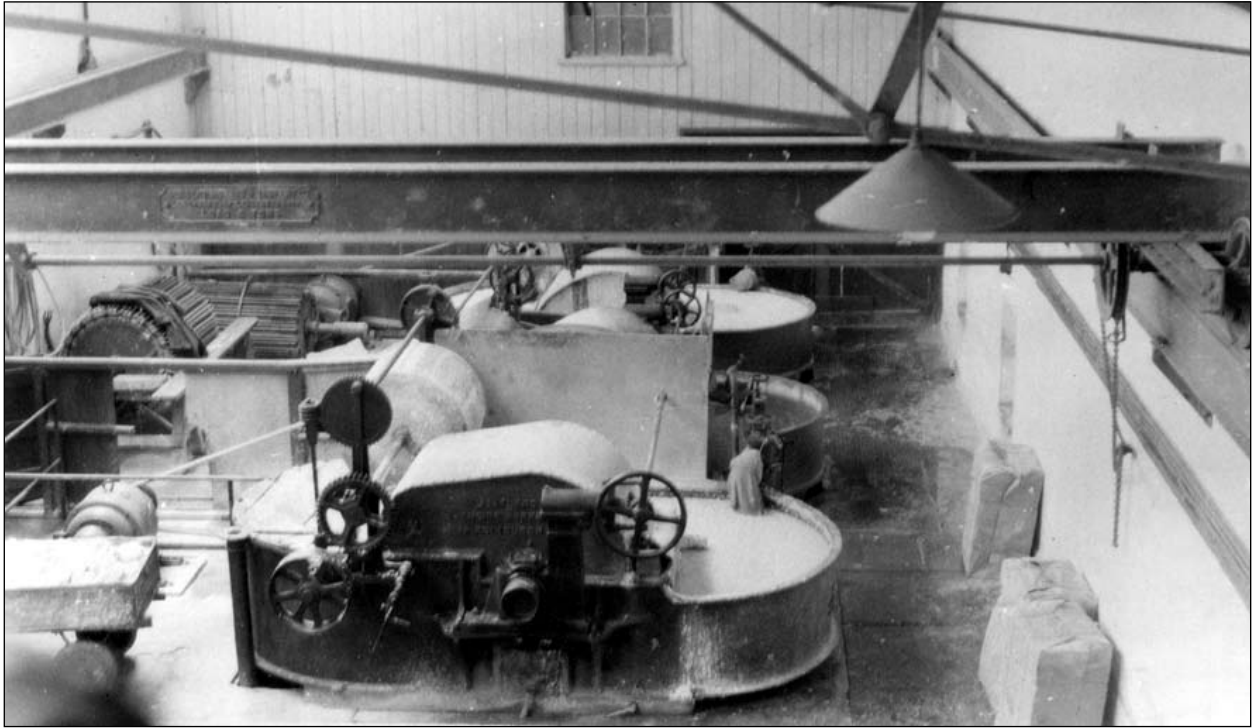
The work on the machines was fairly hard. But down in the glaze room and at the calendars and the cutters it wasn't, because you could stop and have your food. The machines were continuous, so you couldn't stop.

At one time stamp paper was made in Swift Brook on no. 2 machine. I didn't work on no. 2 machine. They might only make one reel of paper for the night. All the rest would be scrapped. The stamp man would be out from the G.P.O. They had their own dandy with all the little "e"s on it, you know, Irish "e"s. And at the weekend you would have to gather up all the waste paper and he'd put a tape around it and put a seal on it in case of fraud. I think that the paper had to be sent to England to be printed. You used to have an awful lot of waste all night long. If he saw one of the watermark "e"s showing up on the surface of the paper or anything like that it would be all scrapped.

We used to run dances and there was a great pavilion in Saggart at that time attached to the mill which was used as a dance hall. There used to be some great dances just before my time, because when I was a kid the women from Newcastle would ride their bikes over and they'd change their clothes in our house before going up to the dance.

In my time they had started a club in it again. They had tennis. They had lots of sports up there. They had gramophone dancing and I used to play the records some of the weeks. It used be great. A shilling to get in and we got the new "Shotgun Boogie." One of the families that were up in the mill lived at the gate beside the hall and one night, he said that if I played that bloody Shotgun Boogie once more he would come in there and break the record.

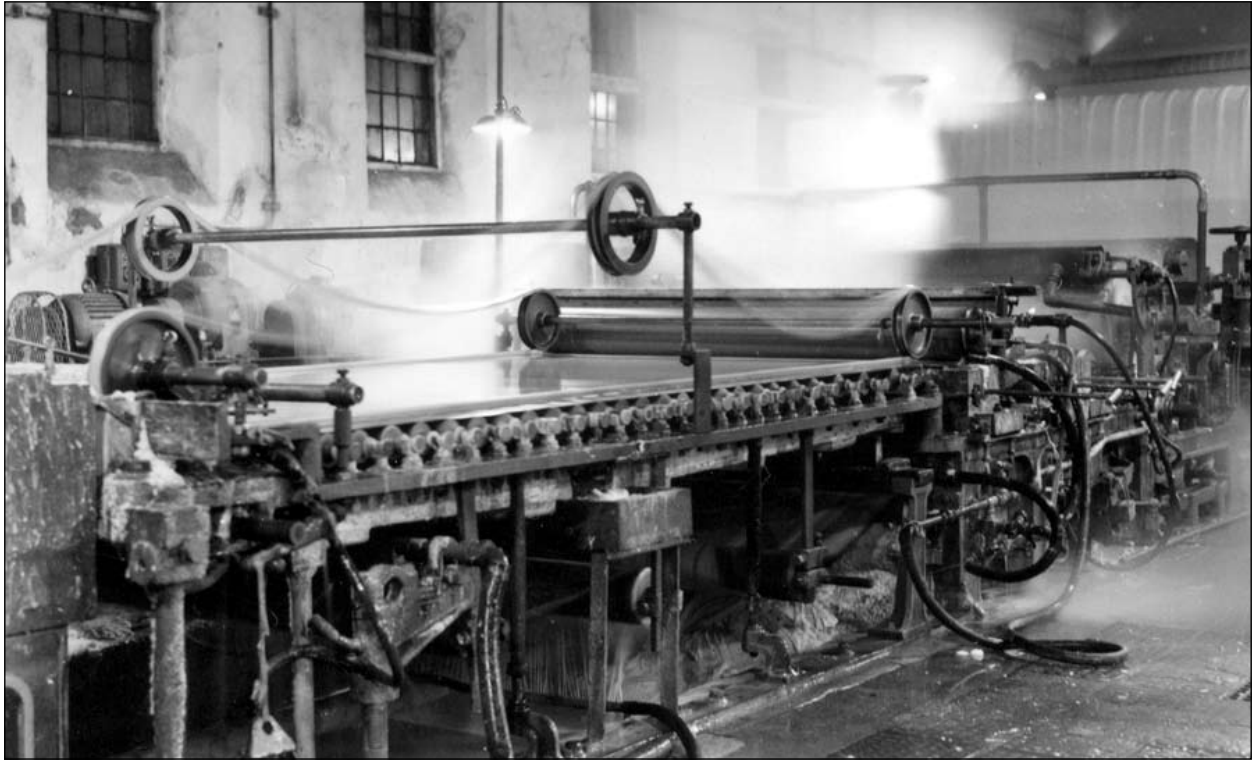
The following is an account of some of the people and machinery of Swift Brook Mill using photographs from my album.



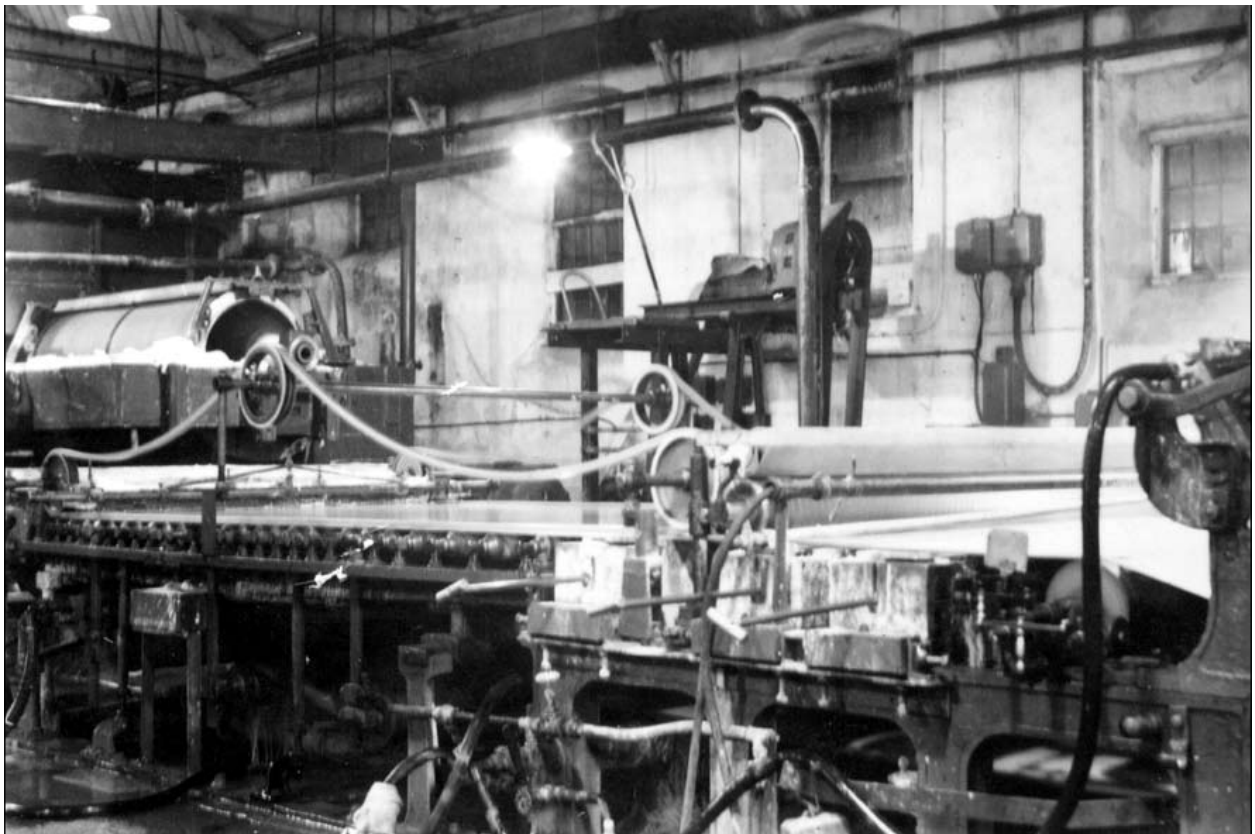
These three machines were called breakers as they were used for breaking up the rags, which went into the papermaking. When I started in the mill in 1947 they were still using rag, but I don't think they were using it in the quantities they used it in the earlier years. The round reels that you can see on the left-hand side of the photograph are the works from under the podium of the machines that broke up the rags.



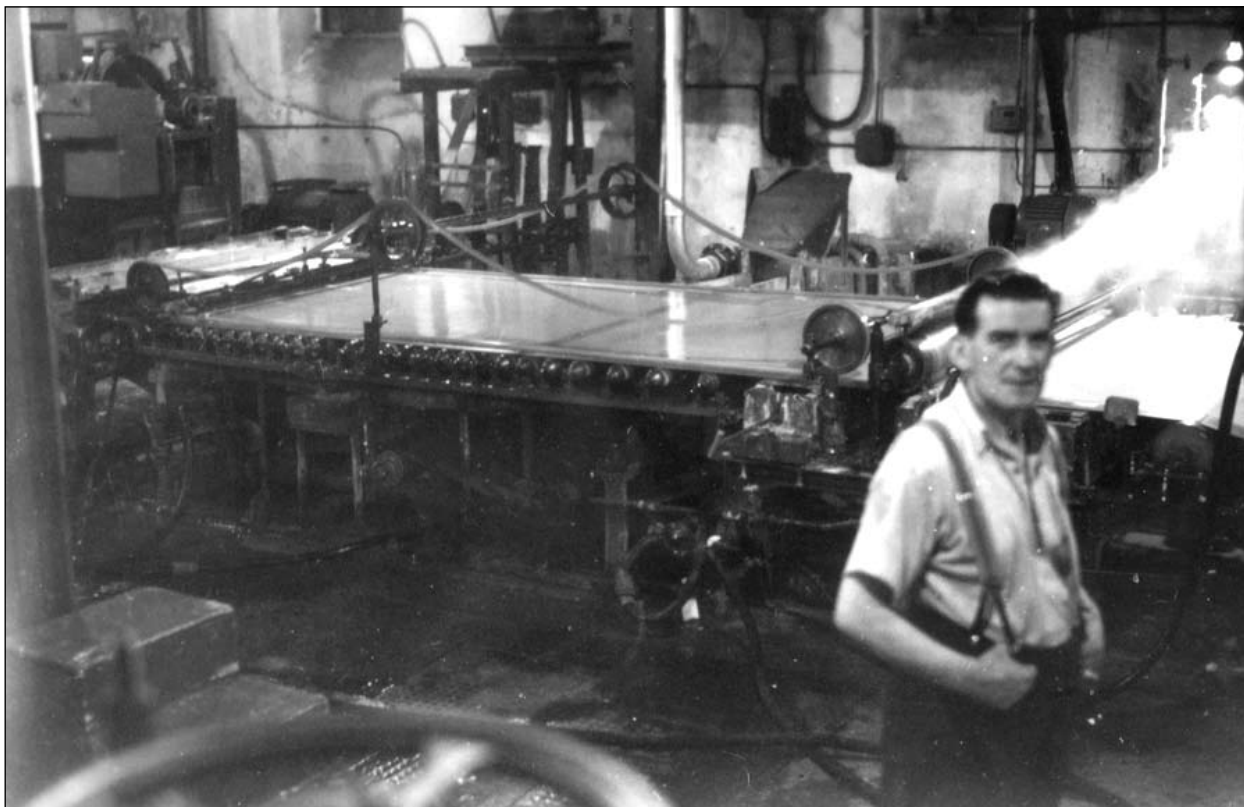
This is a beater. Beaters were used to mix up the ingredients, that went into making paper. There were, I think, about 4 of these machines on the beating loft. They beat up the wood pulp, rags, china clay, alum, colouring and other ingredients for making paper. When it was ready it was let down through pipes into containers down in the machine room, which were called chests. They held several thousand pounds of "the stuff." That's what the machine the workers in the mill called the mix. The mixture from the beaters was always called "the stuff."



This is the wet end. You can see one of the strainers up at the left-hand side of the picture and on the near end you can see the three suction boxes under the wire. The dandy is running on top of those boxes. The dandy was the instrument that put the watermark into the paper.



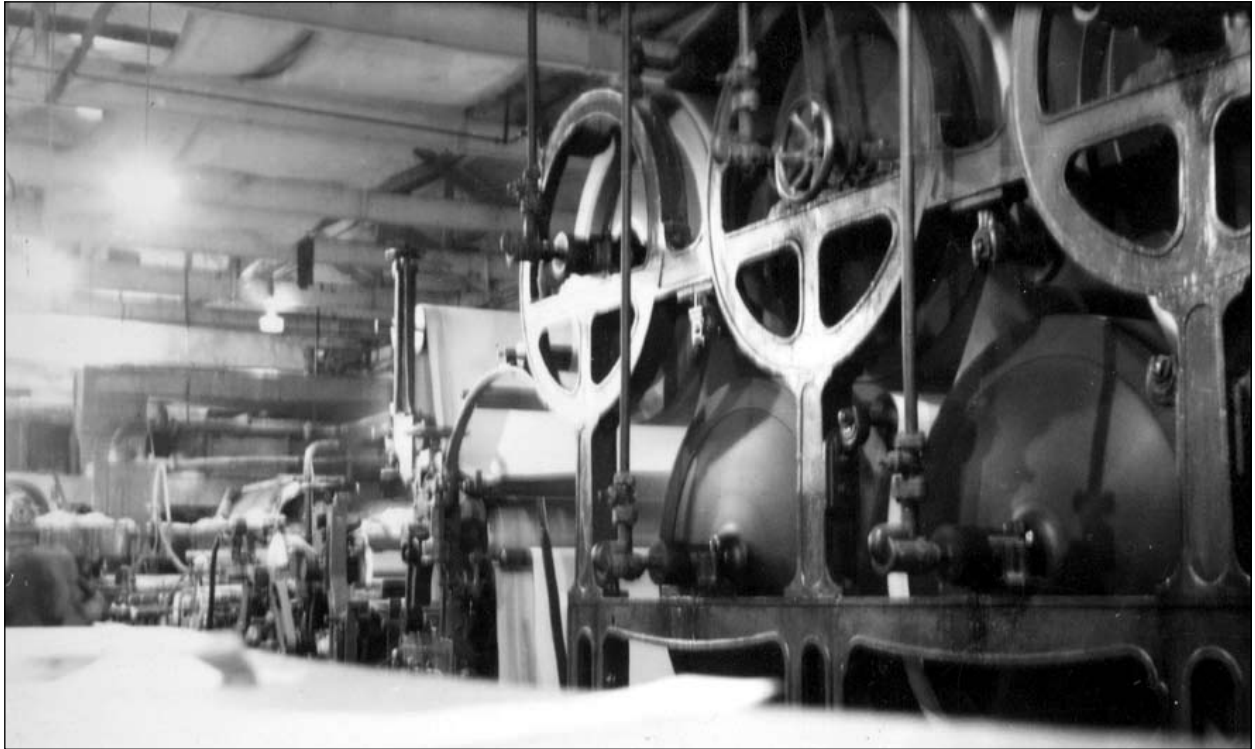
This is another view of the wet end of number one machine. You can see the deckle straps running on the front and the backside of the wire. They controlled the width of the sheet. Down at the end of the deckle strap you can see another view of the dandy.



The wet end of number one machine again with the machine man Jimmy Quinn in the foreground.



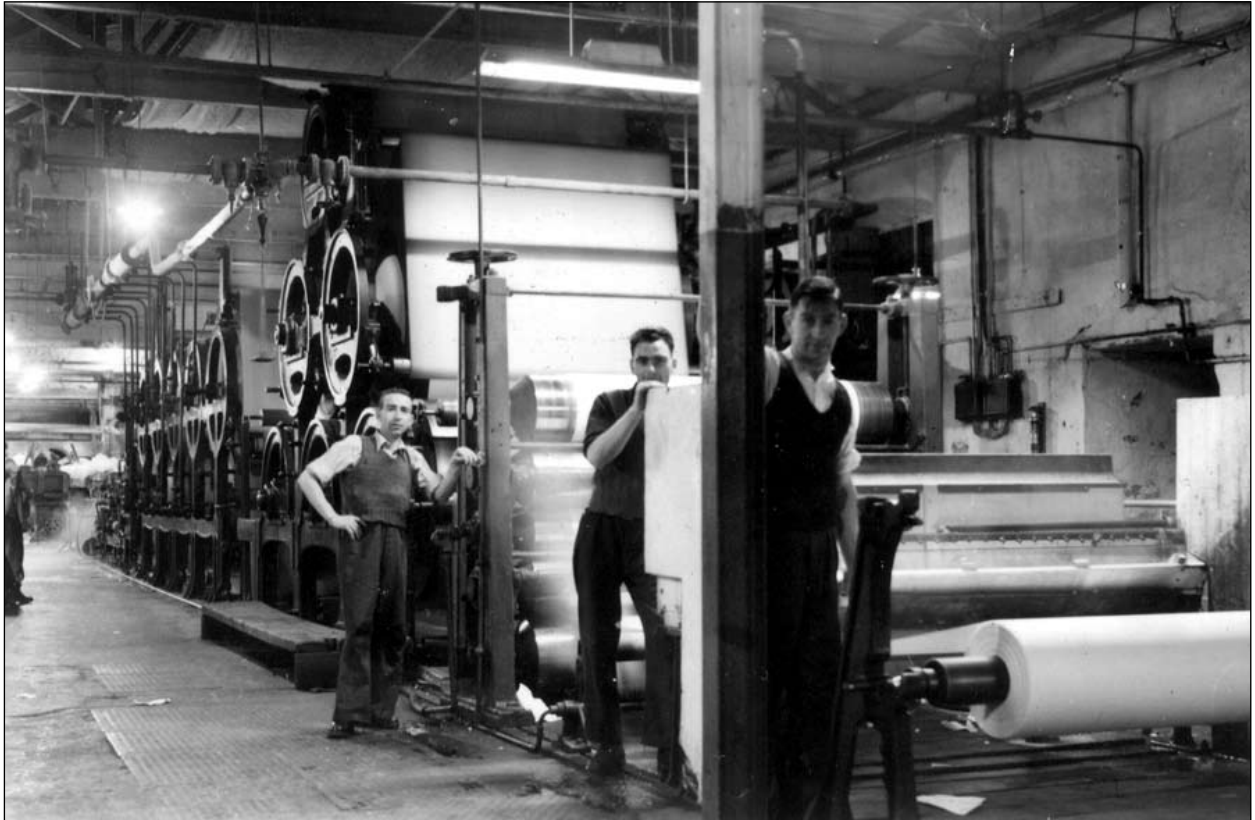
These are the first and second presses. Jim Mullally is standing with his hand on the wheel of the first press. The second press is the felt going up by his head and the paper can be seen going from the second press up onto the drying cylinders. The stuff on the handcart is paper in its wet form. It used be brought back up to the beating loft and reused.



This is a view of the paper making machine. The second press and then the stack of drying cylinders are visible. These cylinders carried whatever pressure of steam was required to dry the sheet at any particular time, usually around 15 lbs. of steam.



This is a view of the second stack of drying cylinders and the stack of calenders, where John Quinn is standing. These are steel rolls and the paper had to be laced through them and then it came underneath the spray and up onto a reel.



This is another view of the machine room with the stacks of drying cylinders with Johnny Timmins standing beside the stack of calenders. Andy O'Connor and John Fitzgerald are next. The spray can be seen across from John. This is sprayed water onto the sheet of paper.



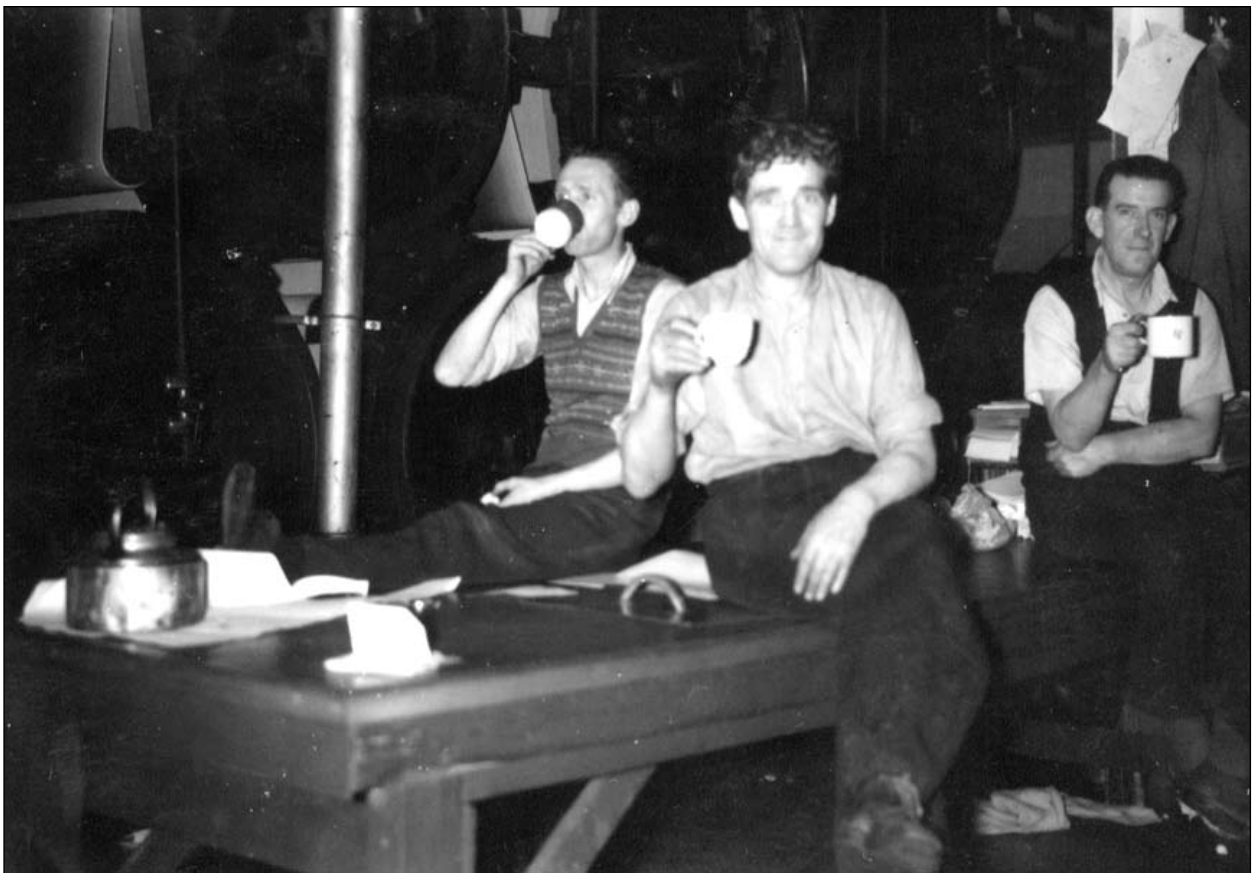
Dessie Reilly, who is machine man on number two machine has just turned out a piece of paper and weighed it and he's inspecting it there then for quality. Jim Mullally has just made a reel off number one machine and he's entering the weight into the book.



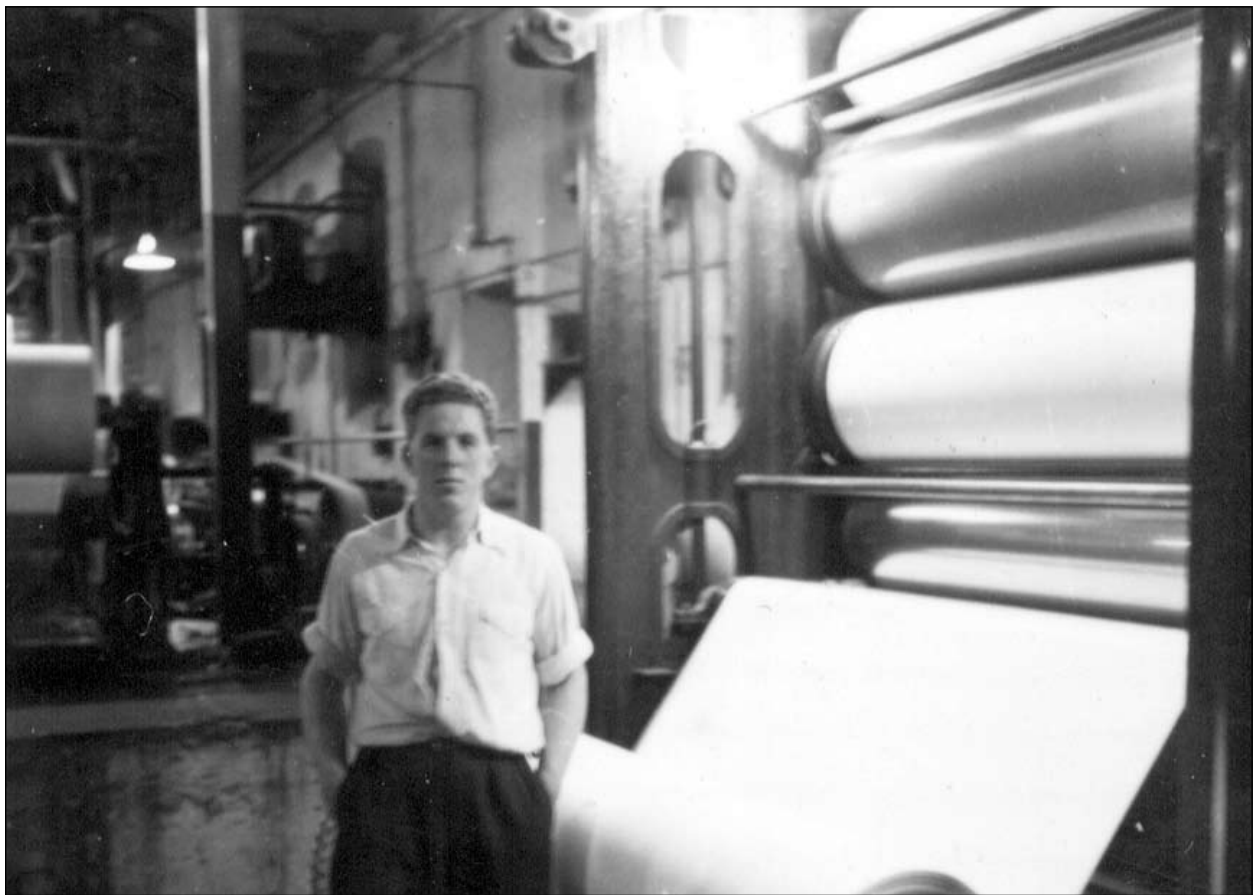
This is the reel machine and a reel, which has just come off number one machine, ready to go onto the calender. To the left-hand side of the pillar are the cylinders of number two machine with the pulp nearer to the left over the drying cylinders.



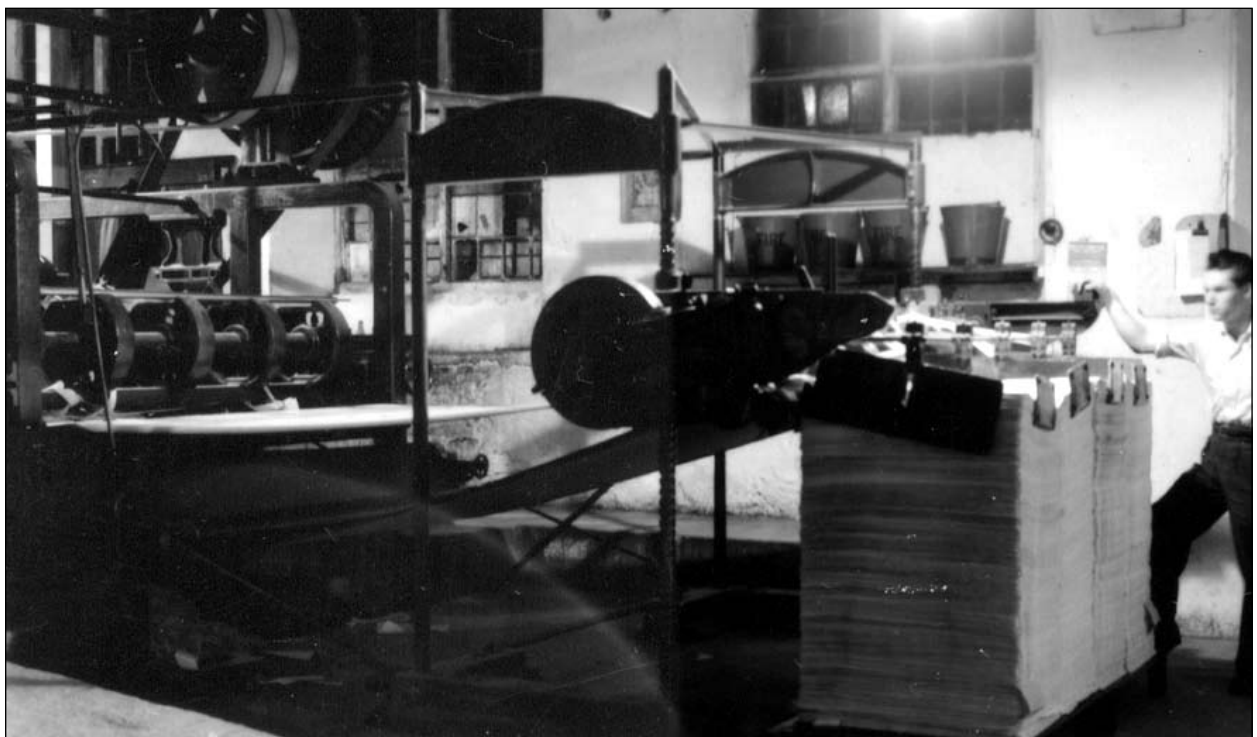
This is number one calender with Tony McDermott and Jim Grace standing at the reel. These calenders were used to put the glaze on the paper. There were steel rolls and the two big rolls that you can see behind Jim's head there were rolls made of a very hard cotton. They put the glaze on the paper. The degree of glaze was achieved by levers at the back of the back of the calender. Weights were put on or taken off to suit the glaze that was required.



Jim McDermott and John Quinn having a break on the night shift.



Another view of number one calender with Frank Kavanagh.



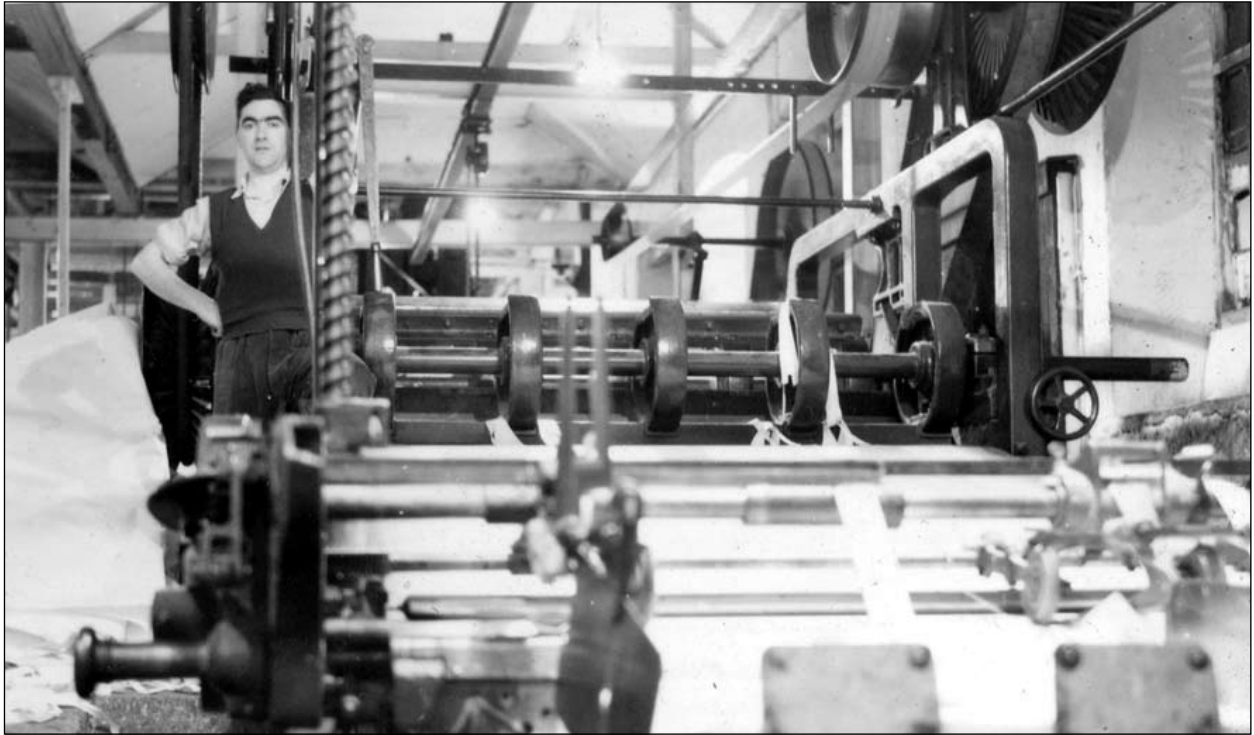
Tom Gahan is pictured at number one cutter. This cutter cut all the paper from number one machine.



Kit Brady at number one cutter with the circular knives across on the right and the chopping blade on the left. The circular knives cut the sheet lengthwise and the chopper cut them off to the length that was required.



Another view of number one cutter with Willie McEntee. The roll of shavings at the back are shavings from the Cutter. They have to be brought back up to the beating loft and reused.



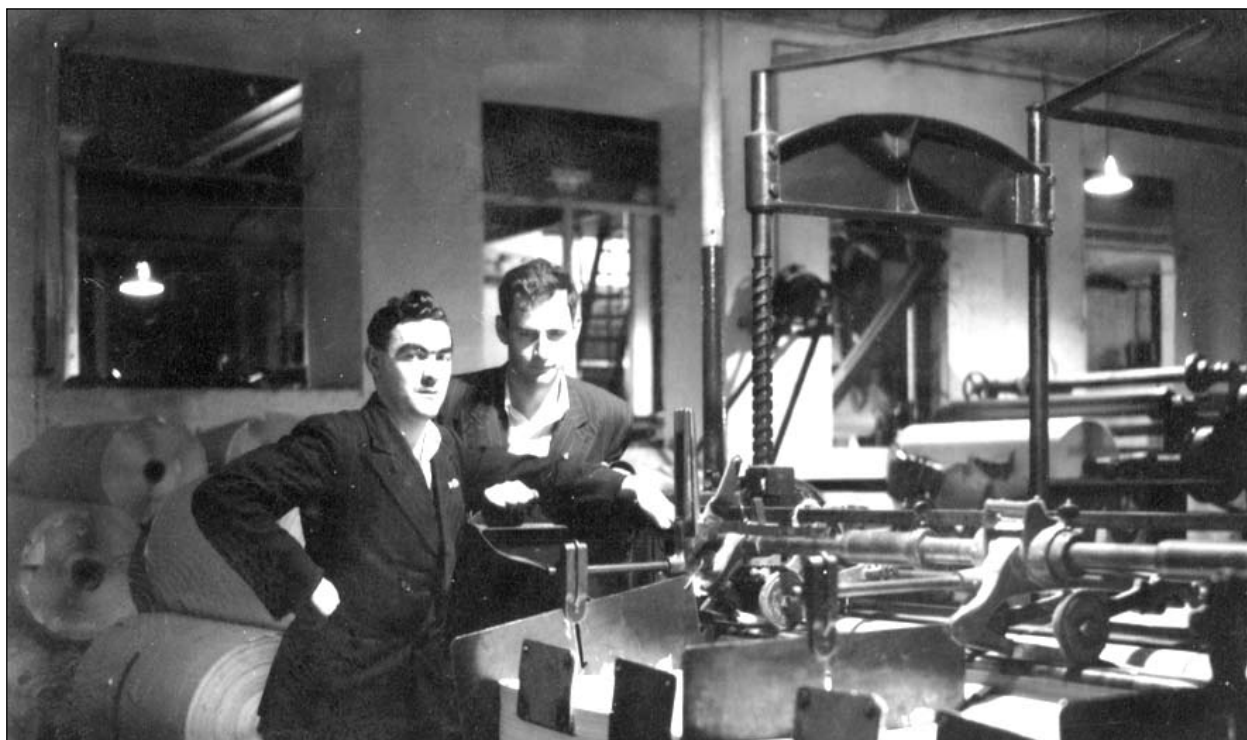
Number one cutter with Tony McDermott.



Number one cutter with Paddy Fitzgerald.



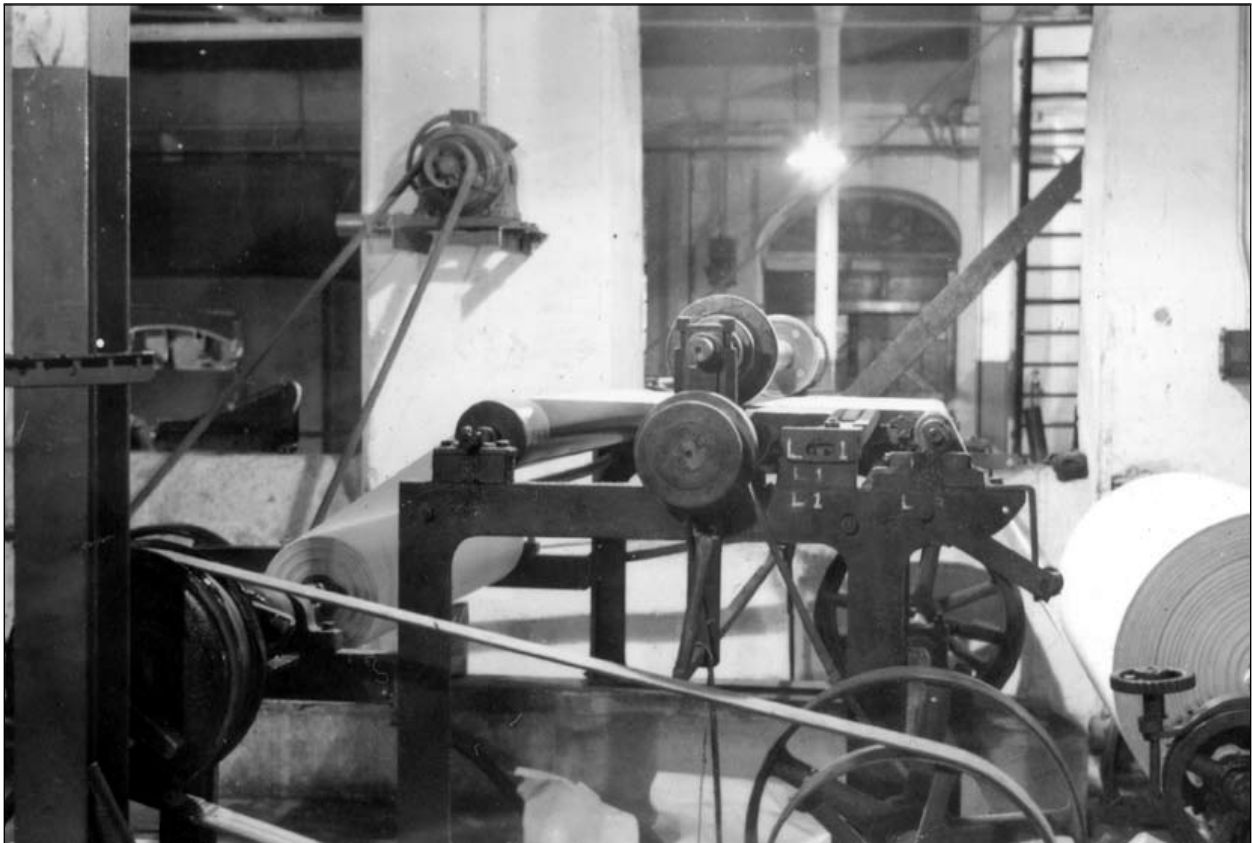
Andy Kelly at number one cutter.



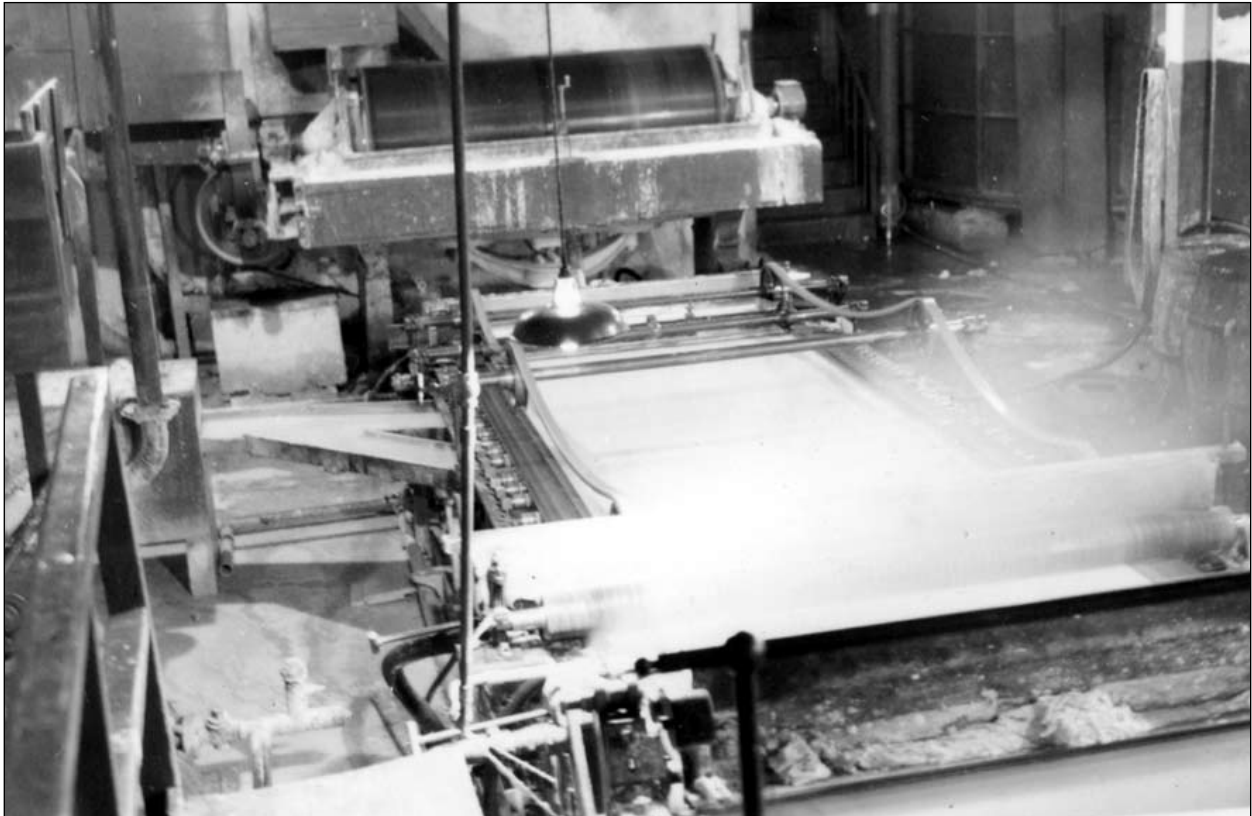
Tony McDermott and Kit Brady at number one cutter.



Kit Brady, John Phelan and Andy Kelly taking a rest, lying in the shavings.



This is the reeler. Paper was going out on reels, so they had to be trimmed. The circular knives are on top. They cut the reels to the required width.



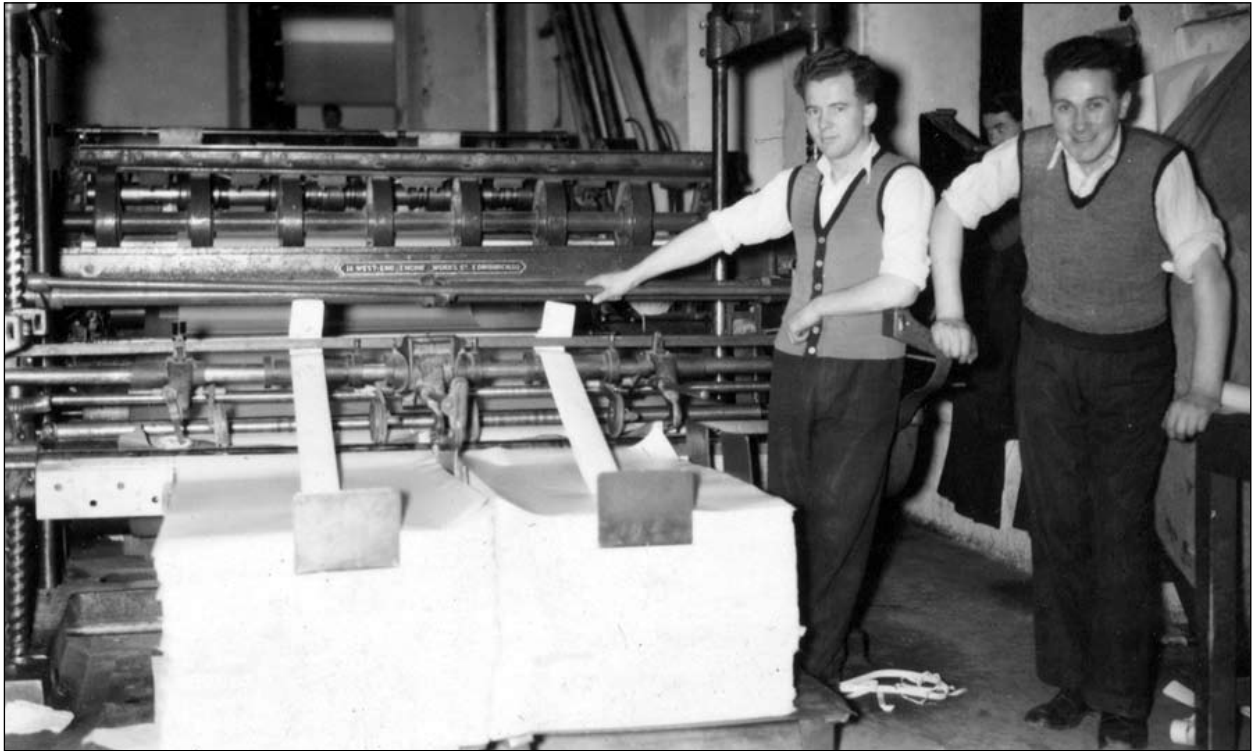
A view of the wet end of number two machine with the strainer at the far end.



Johnny Timmins, sizer man, is standing at the sizer. The sizer was a vat full of warm size. Paper was put through it and then it was fed under the drying hood where there were drying fans.



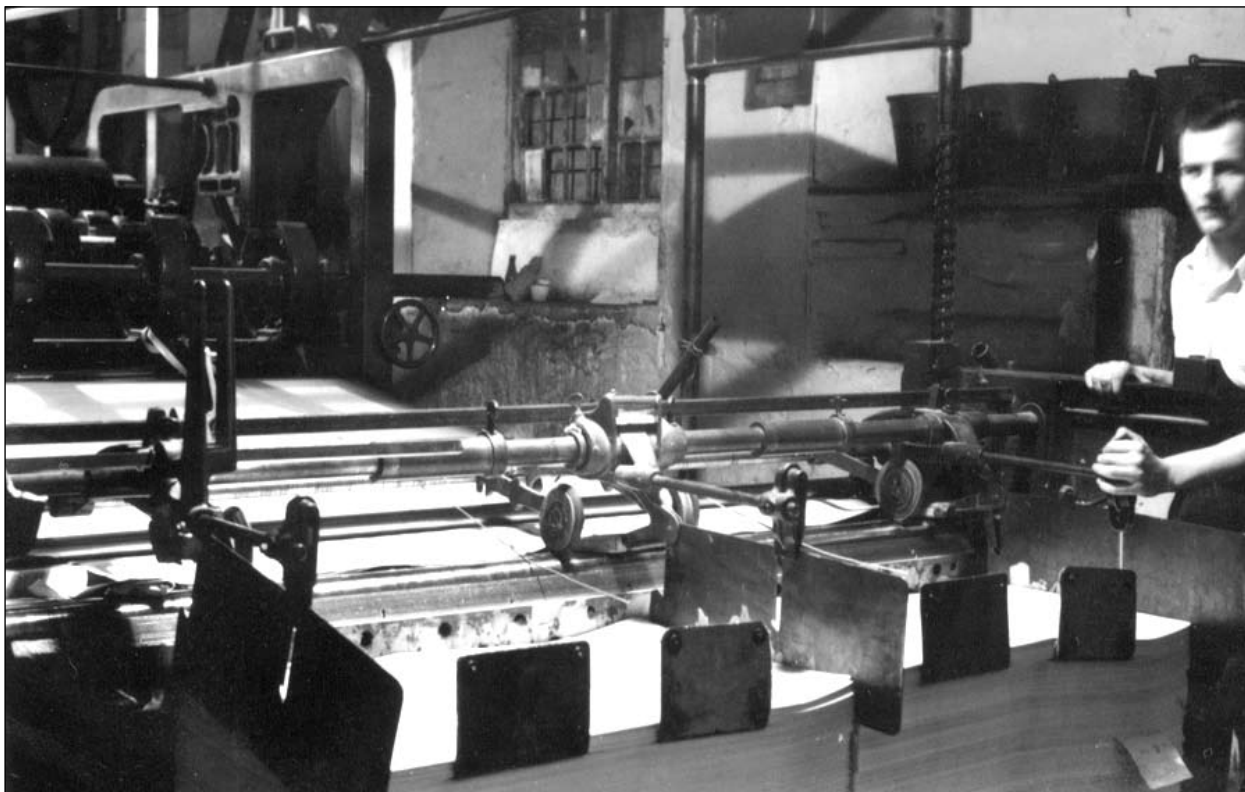
Another view the sizer with paper going into the sizer.



Sam Crofton and John Gray at the West End Cutter. This Cutter cut all the paper from number two machine. The paper being cut on this Cutter had to be cut to register, which meant that if the sheet was supposed to have four water marks we'll say such as Swiftbrook Bond in each sheet. The mark was able to move up and down in the sheet and it had to be kept centred and that was the job to keep an eye on that and if it was going off centre there was a wheel on the side of the machine and you just adjusted that to get the water mark square.



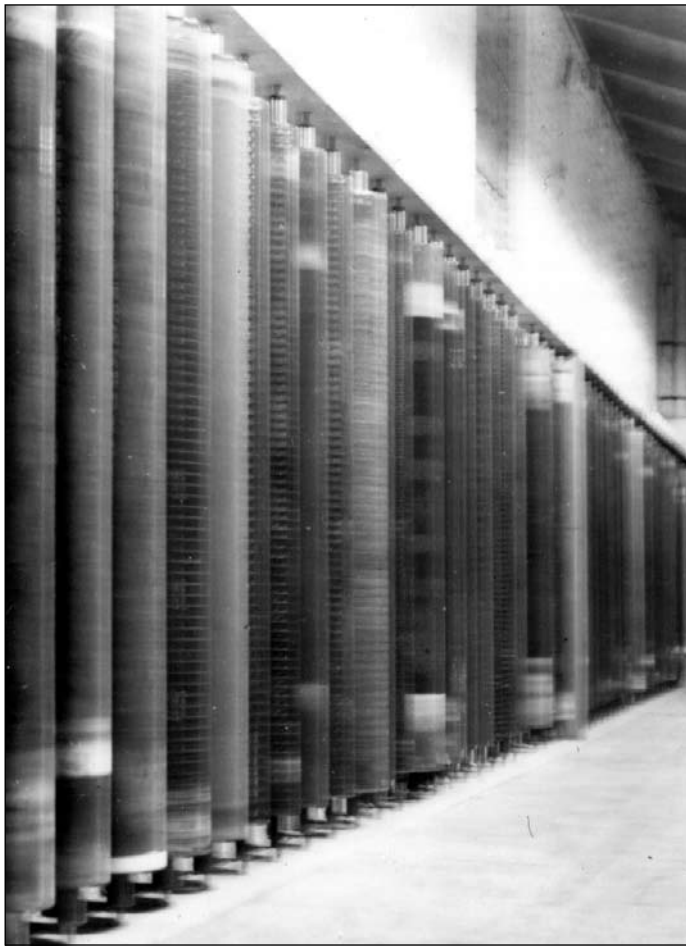
The glaze room crew having their tea break: Tom Walsh from left, Joe Keogh, Jim Gray, Joe Timmins, Willie McEntee, Dessie Murray, Kit Brady and Tony McDermott. In the mill at that time the crew of the machines in the machine room and the glaze room had to eat their food on the job. Up at the machines you could not shut down the job to have your break. In the glaze room you could shut down a job to take your break.



Kit Brady at number one cutter.



A view of the finishing house during the dinner hour when there were very few people about. This is where the women sorted, counted and packed the paper.



A view of the dandy room. This is the room where the dandies were kept. The dandies were the instruments used to put the watermark in the paper. There was one dandy there with the name of the previous owner of the mill, McDonnell, on it. This family owned the mill before Mr. Horsborough and his company took it over. The family died out and it was left to the last surviving member, a Jesuit priest. As he could not take over the mill, it had to be sold.



John Phelan, weighing himself on the scales in the finishing house during the dinner hour.



Kit Brady posing at the guillotine during the dinner hour.



May McGuirk at work catching and counting the sheets of angle. This paper was cut at an angle. It was her job to catch it, count it and then when a ream was ready Kit Brady would take it out and pack it.



The three boiler men during the summer holidays, when they used to get extra money to crawl up the flues and clean out the soot. In the background can be seen the oil burner boiler with the back doors open as the brickwork and the pipework are being repaired during the holidays.

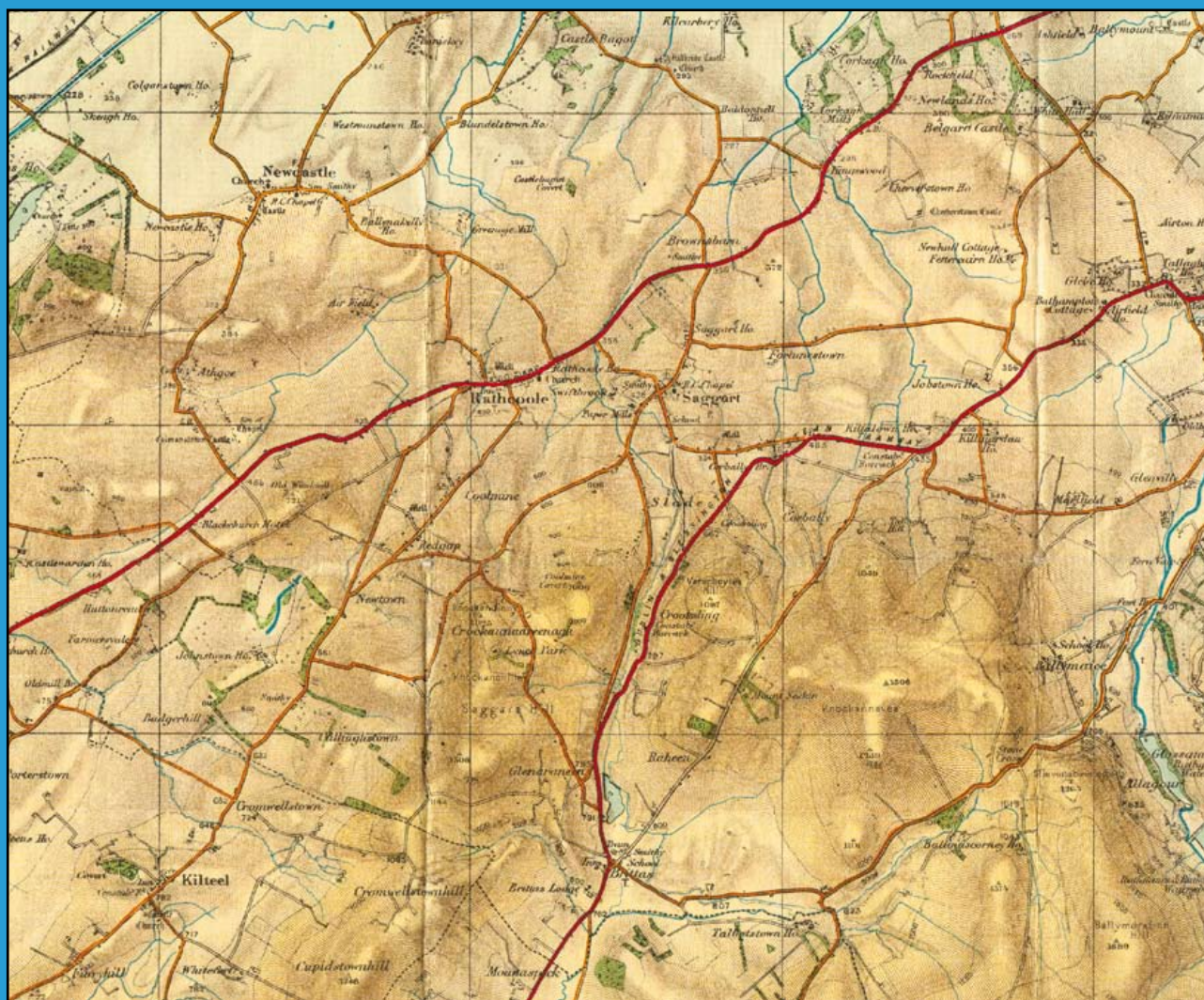


Another view of the three boiler men in front of the coal burners. At their feet can be seen the manhole where they had to get down and work at cleaning out the flues.



Mr. Willie Green, the night watchman. As part of his job at night, he went around the factory and wound clocks at different areas, to show he had done his rounds.

Map on back cover: Portion of Ordnance Survey 1 inch map of Dublin District, revised in 1898, published 1918.



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