

SOUVENIR BOOKLET



Punt

John Kelly

Thomas Sheeran

Poyanne.

We'll have nice memories from Ballinacuck and from its people

SUNDAY, 9th OCTOBER, 1983

Jimmy Bralui

S. Barber
XX

PROGRAMME

Patrick Rehill

2.00 p.m.:

Unveiling of historical map at the 1798 Memorial Hall by Rev. Owen Devaney, Adm., Rathowen, Chairman, Longford Historical Society.

3.00 p.m.:

Blessing of memorial on the site of the Battlefield by His Lordship, Most Rev. Colm O'Reilly, Bishop of Ardagh & Clonmacnois.

3.05 p.m.

Unveiling of the Memorial Monument by His Excellency, M. Jean Batbedat, French Ambassador to Ireland.

Michael Linnon

Thomas Reilly
John Kelly
Joseph McVeigh

To John Curry

Sincerely,

Peter Dillon

Patrick T. Cassidy

Jean Batbedat

Cover Photograph: The Pikeman, Erected in 1928.

+ Colm O'Reilly

Handwritten signature

THE COMMITTEE

<i>Chairman:</i>	Rev. Sean Rooney, P.P.
<i>Vice-Chairman:</i>	John Carty
<i>Secretary:</i>	Jimmy Breslin
<i>Treasurer:</i>	Patrick Cassidy
<i>P.R.O.:</i>	Michael Lennon
<i>Members:</i>	Tom Reilly, Shanmullagh. Mike McNally, Shanmullagh. Padraig Rehill, Shanmullagh. Tommy Sheeran, Lettergeeragh. John Duffy, Lettergullion. Hugh McVeigh, Fardromin. Pee Dillon, Pikeman Bar.

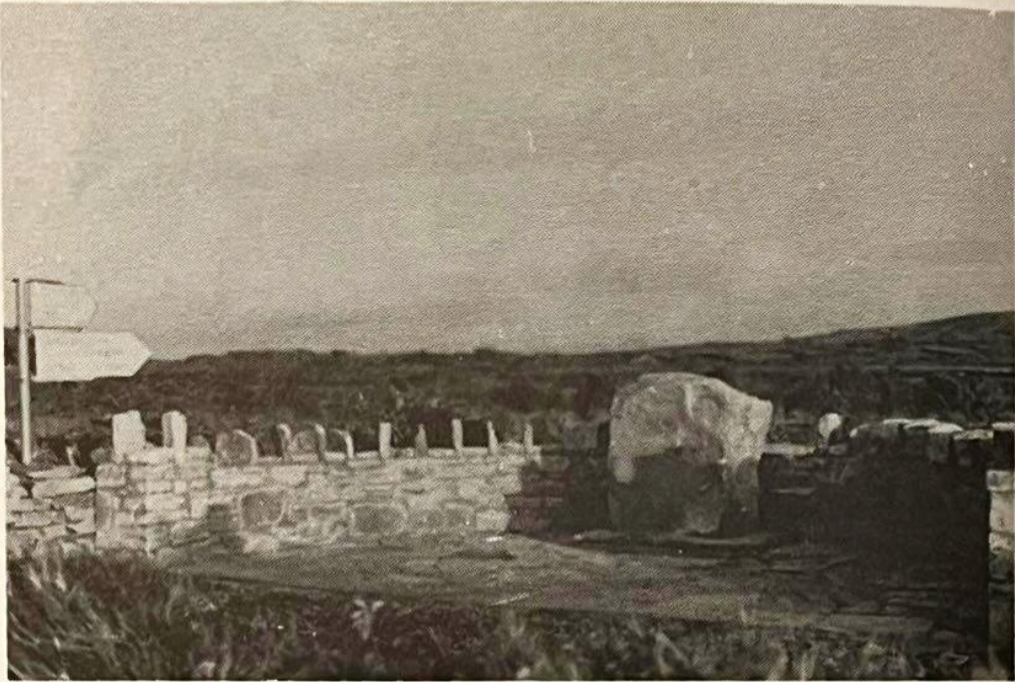
Acknowledgements

IT would be virtually impossible to list all those whose sympathy with the aims of this Committee and whose enthusiastic co-operation in this project have contributed to its successful conclusion today. In naming the following few we acknowledge a special indebtedness, and we salute them as representing all the others.

At the top of the list must go Tom Reilly, on whose land the new monument has been erected. Paddy Hart supplied the monolith which is the central feature of the monument. Midland Regional Tourism Organisation provided the site map and signs; Longford Co. Council was responsible for erection. Mrs. White, Mark McGuckian and John Carthy advised on wordings and inscriptions; the Rev. Chairman and officers of Cumann Seanchais Longfoirt were always available with suggestions and advice and Father Devaney supplied the major article for this booklet. We are grateful to him and to the other contributors.

The *Longford News* and the *Leitrim Observer* have kept the project before the public; this has been invaluable from the point of view of fund raising. To all who subscribed to our fund we now add public thanks to our previous individual acknowledgements.

To all our Mayo friends, represented by Noel O'Neill, Castlebar, and Jack McHale, Ballina — céad fáilte agus míle buíochas.



The R.T.E. series "The Year of the French" awakened many people to the involvement of the French in our struggle for freedom. The series covered the campaign of the French, under Humbert, and Irish forces from Killala until their defeat at Ballinamuck on 8th September 1798. It also brought to Ballinamuck quite a number of people who wanted to see where exactly Humbert was defeated.

Ballinamuck Community Association felt it appropriate that a monument be erected on the site of the battlefield itself, especially since most of the slaughtered rebels are buried there. The monument is a huge rock, the rock symbolizing struggle. Inset in the rock is a plaque with a simple inscription in Irish, French and English which reads,

To the memory of those who died at the
Battle of Ballinamuck on 8th September 1798.

The surrounding stone wall is capped and the floor of the area is flagged, all in the traditional manner. With the exception of the plaque, all the materials used are from the Ballinamuck area. The work involved in the erection of the monument was carried out by members of Ballinamuck Community Association.

Foreword

THE Ballinamuck Community Association has been in existence for less than three years. The first meeting of the Association was held in the '98 Memorial Hall, Ballinamuck, on 16th March 1981. Members of various organisations in the parish came together on that occasion, motivated by memories of the past and hopes for the future. In the discussion at that first meeting, the ideas, aims and ideals of that small group became clear To do everything possible to preserve the heritage of the past and to communicate to the young people of the area a knowledge of the past and to inspire in them a pride in their home area. For the future the Association set before its members a challenge — to consider what could be done to benefit the present community and to do everything possible to secure these benefits.

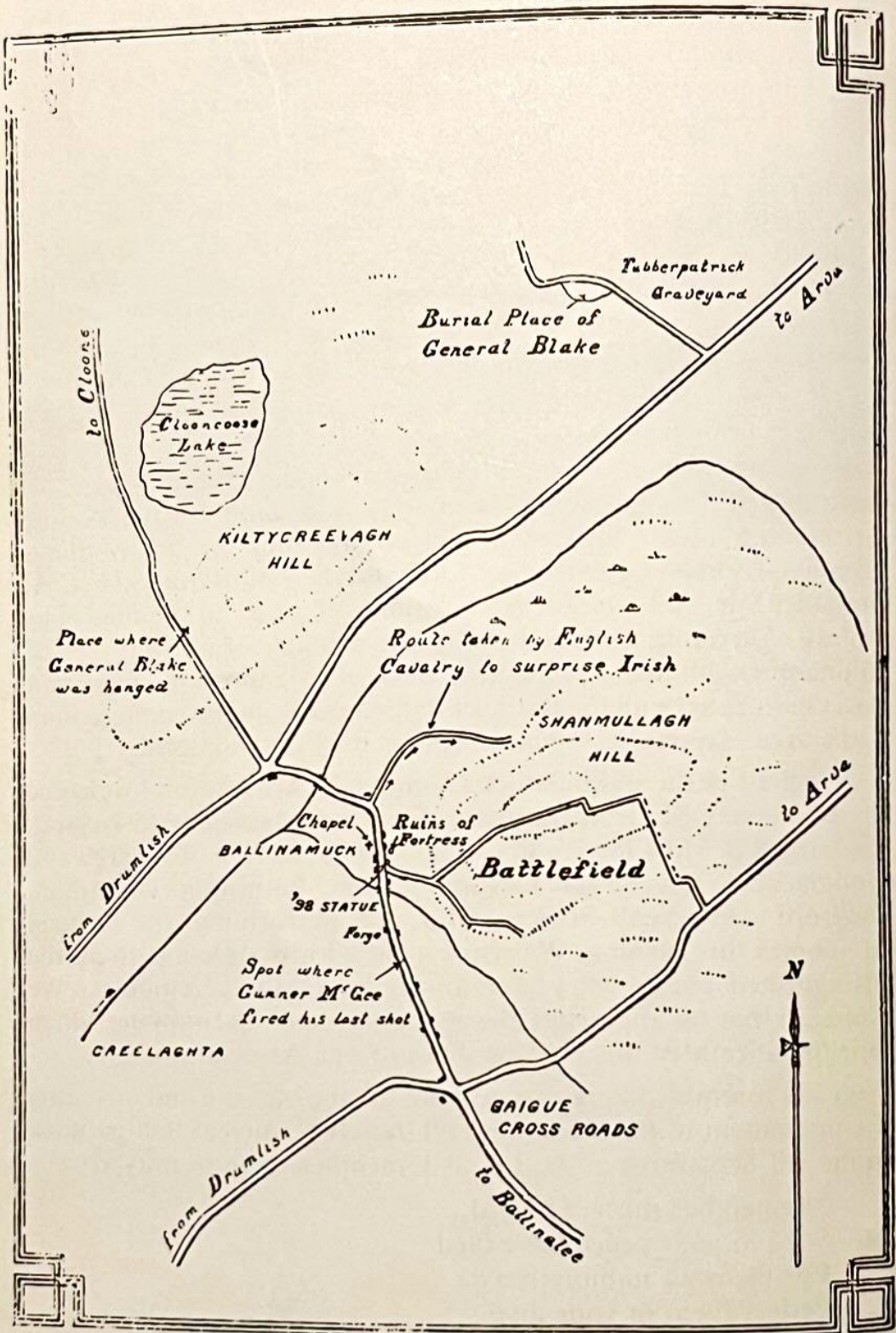
In the short period since its foundation the Association can be justifiably proud of its achievements. I congratulate the members on these achievements. I recall their first undertaking — the refurbishing of the “Wounded Pikeman” statue and the tidying of the surrounding area. Then, with the co-operation of the Midland Regional Tourism Organisation Ltd., and the 17th Battalion F.C.A. Ordnance Survey Team, the Association embarked on the ambitious project of erecting a monument to the memory of all who died at Ballinamuck on the 8th September 1798, signposting important places associated with the Battle of Ballinamuck and providing a map of the area. To-day sees this ambitious project completed.

On behalf of the Ballinamuck Community Association I welcome His Excellency M. Jean Batbedat, French Ambassador to Ireland; His Lordship, Most Reverend Colm O'Reilly, Bishop of Ardagh and Clonmacnois; Rev. Owen Devaney, Adm., Rathowen, Chairman, Longford Historical Society who are performing the official ceremonies this evening. We also extend a warm welcome to all the distinguished guests who have joined us for the ceremonies. We assure all that we appreciate the encouragement and support which their presence here this evening gives to our Association.

We are assembled here this evening for the blessing and unveiling of a monument to the memory of all those who died at Ballinamuck on the 8th September 1798. Let us remember them in prayer.

“Remember those, O Lord,
Who in your peace have died
For them we humbly pray:
Perfect them in your love
O may we share eternal day
With them in Heaven above.”

Sean Rooney, P.P.
Chairman



Map of the Battlefield: Ballinamuck, 1798.

BALLINAMUCK AND '98

Fr. Owen Devaney, Adm., Rathowen.

*' Through the sweet county Leitrim to Granard our way we took,
And were attacked by the army at the village of Ballinamuck.
We fought with good courage, but defeated we were on that day,
We were forced to retreat, no longer our heroes could stay,
But the brave Longford heroes to fly from us they never could,
They never could yield till they'd lose the last drop of their blood.'*

THE battle of Ballinamuck began about 9 o'clock on the morning of Saturday, 8 September 1798. By noon, the French, commanded by General Joseph Amable Humbert, and numbering about 800 of the 1,099 that had landed in Killala Bay on 23 August, after a token resistance, surrendered to the vastly superior forces of the Viceroy and Commander in Chief, Lord Cornwallis, and General Lake. 500 of the 1,500 Irish insurgents, including deserters from Lord Granard's Longford militia after Castlebar, lay dead on Shanmullagh, among them pikemen whose weapons had been for a hammered out locally at Art Fury's forge.

'98 has passed into Irish History and local legend as 'The Year of Liberty' and 'The Year of the French', when rebellion broke out in Dublin and south-east Ireland as well as Ulster between the time of the scythe and the sickle, when, in the words of John Clancy of Cloone recorded by Richard Hayes, 'there never fell a shower of rain from March to November'. Rebellion resulted from repression by militia and yeomanry and was stirred up by the United Irishmen and the Catholic Defenders in the hope that Napoleon would strike at England through Ireland. But by August Napoleon had set out for Egypt and had already suffered a set back at the Nile. The rebellion was effectively over by the time Humbert arrived as an advance force for a promised larger invasion that failed to materialise, and Cornwallis, who replaced Camden as Viceroy in June, was imposing a new discipline on the army.

Longford had been organised for action by, among others, Denis Lambert Redmond, numbering among its local leaders the Presbyterian brothers, Alexander and Hans Denniston, Alexander Cromie, Pat Farrell of Ballinree and O'Keeffe of Ballinlough. Insurgents poured into the county from Westmeath, where Wilson's Hospital had been commandeered, when the news broke that the French had landed, inducing Humbert to abandon a move towards Sligo and Ulster in favour of a rapid march towards Granard in a bid to reach Dublin.

But at Granard a few days before Ballinamuck the rebels met the

same fate as those at Vinegar Hill, this time at the hands of the Cavan garrison led by Scottish Major Porter with the Argyll Fencibles and local yeomanry, just as Lord Longford had put down those in arms at Wilson's Hospital.

Meanwhile Humbert, as yet unaware of the collapse of the midland revolt was en route to Granard from Dromahair via Drumkeerin, Ballintra and Drumshanbo. By now Cornwallis with 12,000 and Lake with about the same were setting up a pincers movement against the French and their ill equipped allies. Humbert, the former skin dealer from Lorraine, who had accompanied Hoche and Tone to Bantry Bay two years earlier, probably was well aware of the futility of his position when he camped at Cloone on the 7th September, and local tradition claims that the local priest, Friar Dunne, impressed upon him the need to refrain from acts of provocation against the local landlord, lest, in the inevitable aftermath, reprisals would be visited on his people.

Humbert has been blamed to some extent for delaying his departure from the Camp Field at Cloone and allowing Lake's vanguard under Crawford to be on his heels with Cornwallis a few miles to this right. His progress was further impeded by being deprived of the cannon chains in Cloone, where they were supposedly dumped in a well. Straw ropes were a poor substitute and the French were forced to jettison some cannon and ammunition in Keeldra lake.

Having crossed the Longford border the battle was joined at Kiltycreevagh. Not surprisingly accounts differ as presented by French, English and Irish chroniclers, the Irish side being largely oral tradition and often ignored by historians on that account. It is known that near Kiltycreevagh Humbert's rearguard, commanded by Sarrazin was first harrassed and ultimately tricked or forced into surrendering to Lake's advance commander, Colonel Crawford, before the battle proper was joined. It appears that Lord Roden, General Craddock and Captain Pakenham believed a general surrender was taking place and Craddock received a shoulder wound as General Blake of Kilcloon, Co. Mayo, opened fire.

As Humbert sought the advantage of the heights of Shanmullagh above Cassidy's farmhouse beyond Dolan's crossroads, Colonel McDonnell of Carnacon, who later escaped from Ballinamuck to France, took command of the Irish. Meanwhile on the roadway near the chapel, supposedly burned by John Brock on the same day though its existence at the time is now in some doubt, the pikemen, under Blake, took up positions alongside Captain Jobit, Humbert's subsequent archcritic and detractor. Once Jobit surrendered General Blake, in the words of Hayes, 'retreated with the cannon eastwards and took up a new position near Gaig'. Thus two sections of the French had surrendered. Lake now attacked Shanmullagh encircling it only to be resisted by McDonnell's pikemen. He (McDonnell) was

later praised by General Fontaine for showing himself a 'superb tactician', leading the pikemen who 'repulsed the English cavalry who three times charged and three times retired with loss'.

Soon, however, Humbert's forces wilted under the cannon charge and the cavalry who 'with a terrible war-shout galloped towards Humbert's lines'. The English view later was that 'so overwhelmed were the French that they threw up their arms with caps on them yielding themselves prisoners'. A contemporary print shows Humbert offering his sword to General Lake. Cornwallis is, incidentally, absent from most accounts of the battle itself. Cornwallis was, of course, a veteran of sixty, who had surrendered to George Washington at Yorktown in 1781, while Humbert (pronounced Um-bear if we are to trust RTE!) was only 31 and destined to help in the suppression of a revolt in Haiti, fight against General Pakenham again at New Orleans and in the Mexican war against Spain before ending his days at New Orleans as a teacher of French and fencing.

Humbert was a commander of considerable brilliance and bravery but his efforts to seek clemency for his Irish allies at Ballinamuck has often been questioned. Certainly the defeat at Ballinamuck was inevitable given the arithmetic of the situation and the failure of the planned invasion to follow. His action in protecting his aide, Bartholomew Teeling, was admirable, especially by opting to go with him to Longford jail (surely its most distinguished night guest!) and engineering his short lived escape next morning, rather than joining his colleagues as prisoners-of-war.

But from an Irish point of view Ballinamuck will forever remain inseparably linked with the names of General Blake and the gunners named McGee and Casey, and their stand against Lake's cavalry at Gaigue, cutting lanes through them with one chain ball and exploding an English ammunition waggon with a second. General Blake, who "led his pikemen across from Gaig to Mullagh hill", as the ballad tells, arrived too late. When the Gunner McGee's supplies ran out pots and kettles were smashed and used as ammunition. The deed of the day was probably when the stock of one of the wheels was blown off by a cannon ball two insurgents (others say four) shouldered it and had their backs broken by the recoil. The Gunner McGee was sentenced by a drumhead courtmartial to be hanged, most say at Ballinalee, a few at Longford, being buried at Bully's Acre or the Mall, depending on the story. There is pathos too in General Blake's end. Ordered to be hanged he asked to be allowed to rub soap on the rope to hasten his end. He is said to have been waked in McKenna's barn. His grave at Tubberpatrick marked by a fine Celtic Cross by Coffey of Creeve is, strange to say, the only identifiable resting place of a patriot hero who died at the battle of Ballinamuck, and consequently a place of pilgrimage for nationally minded people ever after.

Ballinamuck is an event of national and international as well as local importance, arguably the most significant and tragic yet inspiring episode in the annals of Co. Longford. As an object of study it deserves more investigation, for little has been added to our understanding of it since Richard Hayes's 'Last Invasion of Ireland' in 1939. Unlike some historians, Hayes has taken into account local tradition 'ballad and story, rann and song', though by consigning much of his material to appendices the total impact of his research has been somewhat diffused, while it remains a source book for local research.

Much more could have been done to draw up an inventory of those reputed to have participated in the battle not alone from Longford and Leitrim but from the west as well, in view of the vast 'fall out' of story and anecdote that followed the event, though much untapped material exists in the Folklore Department of UCD. Nor are we yet in a position to say how well military historians have established the components of the English forces in terms of regiments, militia and yeomanry, apart from believing that the Dublin, Armagh, Monaghan, Tipperary, Kerry militias were present as well as a motley assembly known as Hompesch's Mounted Riflemen, the Horn-speechers and Roxburghs.

Indeed the literature at local level inspired by the great event has been scant and superficial. Maria Edgeworth, who visited the scene with her father, viewing it naturally through Anglo Irish eyes, was romantically attracted by the military blackberry picking presence, though blind to the Irish tragic aftermath which never became for her an engaging obsession. Padraic Colum, though rooted in North Longford and sympathetic to its folk mind, has passed it by without at least a commemorative tear. The time was, of course, past for a Gaelic response of the *tír grá* or *caoineadh* variety. There are extant and growing less extant by the decade many ballads crying out for collection. One may ask why no poem or elegy of real worth ever flowed from the pen of a north Longford or south Leitrim hedge school master in the Moyne Latin school area, comparable, say, with O'Tuairisg's 'An Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh'. Leo Casey's 'Rising of the Moon', penned in the Fenian context of 1865, has the spirit of '98, though its connection with Ballinamuck is tenuous indeed.

The terror of Ballinamuck lasted for weeks as croppies were chased and cut down or summarily tried and hanged. The woman who gave the soldier the noggin of milk and then dispatched him with a blow of her pounder on the windpipe comes through as a convincing character in a dozen variants on the tale. The terror was probably all the greater in that the Ballinamuck hinterland was then populated by a refugee people from Ulster shortly before '98 and the cruelty visited on them almost certainly was a factor in their equally savage reprisals against the Protestant population in the fourth decade of the last century.

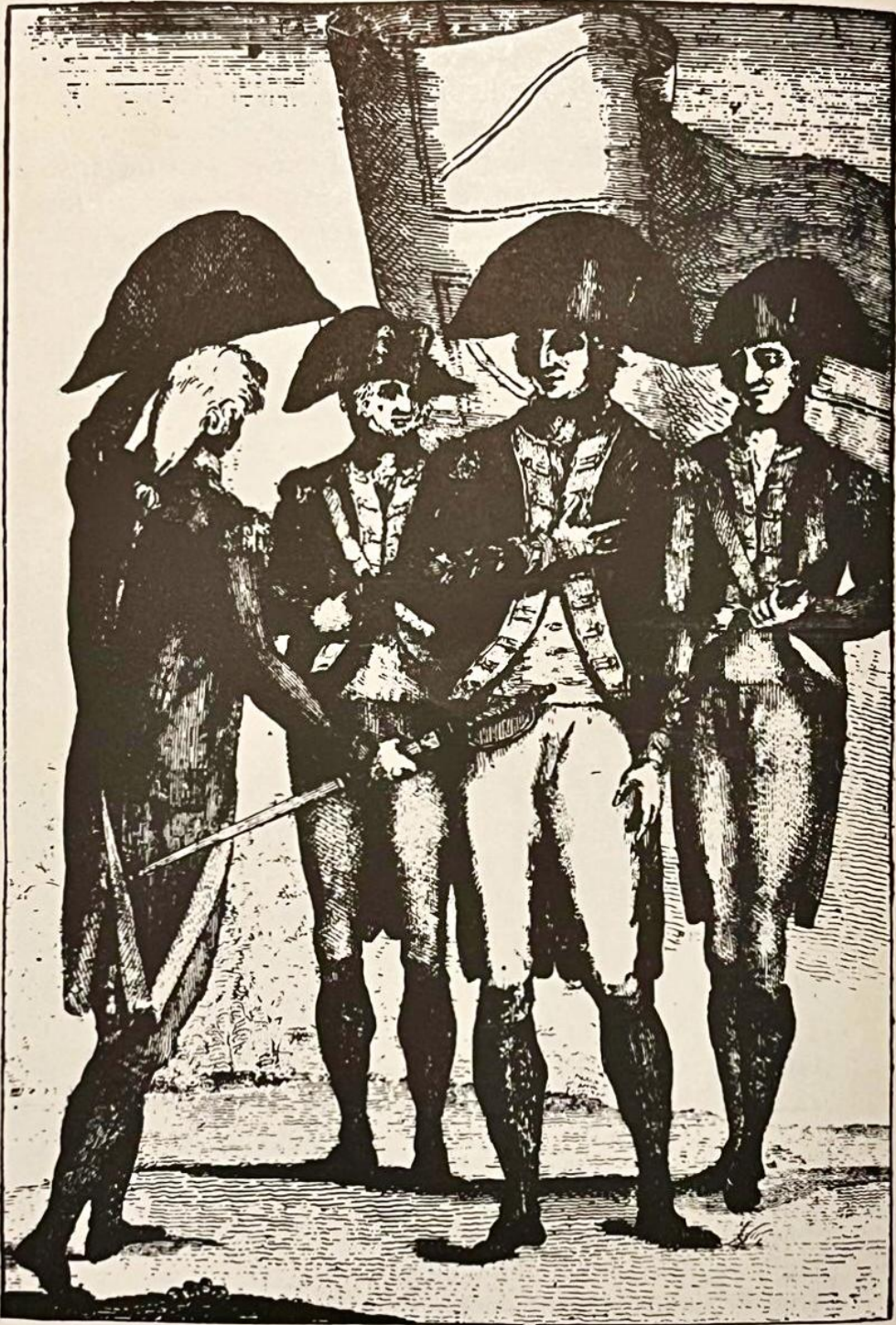
One would always like to know more. Did the people assemble for Mass on the next morning, and if so, what words did the priest say? Did Art Fury's forge continue to beat out more pikes to put in the thatch now that there was blood on the bog? Did any of the western insurgents settle around Ballinamuck? It is probably not cynical to suggest that Ballinamuck is a small episode in a war between the super powers of the day, England and France, with the Irish as pawns in the game. The stereotype of Irish history is hard to break: a gallows at the bottom of every page with a croppy at the rope's end. It was no wonder "little organisations" multiplied in the decades that followed.

Appendix:

Some of those mentioned by Hayes and others on the Irish side at Ballinamuck:—

General George Blake, Garracloon, Co. Mayo.
Bartholomew Teeling, Humbert's aide, executed?
Col. James J. McDonnell, Carnacon, escaped to France.
Matthew Tone, captured and later executed.
Capt. James O'Dowd. Executed.
Col. Austin O'Malley. Escaped.
Joseph O'Malley. Killed.
Gunner James McGee. Executed.
Gunner Casey. Executed?
Robin Gill, Fardromin.
Edmond O'Reilly, Shanmullagh. Killed.
Art McWade, Gaigue.
Bryan O'Neill, Drumderg. Escaped.
Patrick Coyne. Escaped.
Six of the Murrays of Drumshanbo. One escaped.
Thomas O'Cahan, Co. Leitrim. Escaped.
Terence McGlavin. Killed.
Capt. Lynch, S. Leitrim. Escaped.
James Fullam? Ex Longford Militia.
O'Rourke and son of Garradice. Killed.
"Johnny the Outlaw" Gibbons.
Sallet/Saulet, Irishman in French army.
Byrne (alias La Roche) aide to Humbert.
Mullrine, Cloone. Escaped.
Tom Gilheany, Drumkeeran. Escaped.

I am sure in the years to come this list will be greatly expanded. I hope it will.



*The Surrender of the French General Humbert
To General Lake at Ballinacree September, 8th 1798.*



The '98 Memorial Hall As It Was.

This old photograph shows one of the two towers which were a feature of the building when it was an R.I.C. barracks. (See Padraig Rehill's Ballinamuck - Place of Interest, page 14.

AN GUNNADÓIR MAC AOIDH

I mBaile na Muc Dé Sathairn a chailleamar an lá,
Nuair ghéill an ginearál Franncach is a shaighdiúrí don námhaid.
Bhíomar féin ar Sheana-mhullach os comhair airm mhóir an Rí.
“Go ndírí Dia an t-urchar,” ars an Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh.

Do réab an liathróid iarainn a bealach tríd an aer ;
Do bhuail i measc an phúdair is séideadh é go spéir ;
Is d'éirigh ceo an phléasctha gur chlúdaigh sé an ghrian.
“Mo ghrá go deo an t-iarann,” ars an Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh.

Ach b'shin an liathróid deiridh bhí fágtha againn ar chlár ;
Do bhriseamar buicéidí, potaí, ciotail, cannaí stáin,
Baineadh tairní as bróga, cuireadh cnaipí ins an líon :
“Tá goile láidir ag an gunna,” ars an Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh.

Briseadh carráiste beag an ghunna le hurchar na nGall ;
Bhí an roth ina smidiríní, bhí an bairille ar sceabha.
Do léimeadar chun ghíomha Taimí, Paidí agus Liam.
“Cuirigí na guailí fúithi,” ars an Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh.

“Seo chugainn an Coirnéal Crawford!”—chuir sé lasán chuig an
bpoll,
Is a Dhia ! nárbh uafásach an t-ár imeasc na nGall—
Píosaí de photaí réabtha ina gceathanna le gaoith.
“Tá tasc ansiúd don tincéir,” ars an Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh.

Ach nár thrua linn an t-amharc nuair ghlan an smúit ina dhiadh !
Bhí an triúr fear gan anam—Taimí, Paidí agus Liam !
Do ghluais na mílte Sasanach dár n-ionsaí ar gach taoibh :
“Tá deireadh leis an gcluiche,” ars an Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh.

I mBaile na Muc Dé Sathairn a chailleamar an lá :
Ach ar éacht an Ghunnadóra beidh trácht go lá an bhráth,
Ar chrann boltraí a crochadh é 's an ghrian ag duí a luí :
“A Chríost bí liom den dul seo,” ars an Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh.

—Eoghan Ó Tuairisc



The McGee Gun

We are indebted to Jack Mac Hale of Ballina, the present owner of the gun, for this remarkable photograph, and for the loan of the McGee gun for our exhibition. He tells us that it was one of only two cannon that the French-Irish forces had when they arrived in Ballinamuck. They had abandoned their other heavy pieces during the forced marches of the previous four days, including the English cannon captured at Castlebar. The McGee gun was British made, but was not one of the pieces captured at Castlebar. In fact it was one of a French battery taken ashore at Kilcummin when Humbert landed. More than likely it had been captured, possibly from a privateer, in an earlier naval skirmish.

After Ballinamuck an ironic twist brought the gun back to Killala, where it was mounted at Palmerstown House, the home of the then Lord Lieutenant, Lord Palmerstown.

The gun is mentioned in Eoghan O Tuairisc's poem 'An Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh' on page 12.

The photograph shows the proud owner with his very historic and well preserved piece.

Ballinamuck — Places of Interest

Padraig Rehill, B.A., H.Dip.Ed.

AN historical map of Ballinamuck has been erected in the village to aid the visitor in his or her discovery of places of historical interest.

It is concerned primarily with the events of 1798 and is in two parts. One part covers the route taken by Humbert from Killala to Ballinamuck, the other part covers the events at Ballinamuck itself. It also points out other places of historical interest unconnected with the battle.

The first thing to catch the eye of the visitor on entry to the village is the statue of the pikeman. The monument, designed by a Mr. B. Hynes from Dublin, represents a wounded pikeman clutching the broken shaft of the pike and facing his adversaries defiantly. Across his forehead is a bandage and his clothing denotes the peasant style of the period — the kneebreeches and brogues. It stands 14ft. high and is of Sicilian marble with a base of Irish granite. The surrounding railing was made by Paddy Gorman from Fardromin.

The '98 Hall standing behind the monument was first an R.I.C. barracks. It was built by the King-Harmans in the mid 19th century. It was in fact a fortress with two towers which have since been removed. It is said that the Board of Works in London sent the wrong plan to Ballinamuck and sent to India the plan which should have come. The barracks was attacked and burned by the I.R.A. on 10th June 1920; this accounts for its altered structure. It wasn't the first barracks in Ballinamuck, there was one at the other end of the village at the entrance to the Shanmullagh road. At that time the village extended to there but it was razed by Lord Lorton in 1839 when he sought to clear the poorer tenants of his estate.

In 1834, a church was built in the village on a plot of land given by Mary Anne Breslin. This site was where the present church is situated. It was small and had a thatched roof. The people made application to the Bishop, Dr. O'Higgins, for a Curate. Their request was turned down as there was a church in Monaduff, a short distance from Ballinamuck. The following Sunday a number of people turned out and stopped some of the congregation from going to Monaduff. In a short time a Curate was appointed. His name was Fr. Moran. Around the time of the Famine in the 1840's efforts were made to improve the church. A new one was begun beside the old one. It was completed in the 1860's after Bianconi, the Italian, donated £50 for the roof.

The courthouse was not used as such after independence but the Free State Army used it as a military barracks for a short period.

The most important historical site outside the village is the

battlefield. It is now adequately marked with the new monument and signs point to where Humbert surrendered and to the croppies' graves. On the road to Cloone, to the west of the village, are signs pointing out where the first shots were fired and where General Blake was hanged. General Blake was buried in Tubberpatrick cemetery along the Arva road, his grave is marked by a limestone monument made by a Killoeman called Coffey.

Along the Gaigue Road leading into the village is a sign pointing to where the famous Gunner McGee made his last stand. This area, called Creelaughter, has other sites of historical significance, the most obvious is the Black Fort. This is a ring fort which was a habitation site for a number of families ruled over by a Chieftain. It consists of an earthen bank surrounded by a ditch. They were used for protection for both people and animals. The date of this one is unknown but the majority are dated between 500-1200 A.D., some being of early Iron Age.

The Mass Rock at the fort is from Penal times. It dates from early 18th Century when the Penal Laws were enacted. There is another Mass Rock and also the ruin of a church in the townland of Drumbad. Between the roadway and the Black Fort can be seen what was the old road leading into the village. Along this road stood Furey's forge where, according to tradition, the pikes for the battle were made.

In the townland of Lettergullion is a sweathouse. This was where the people went to sweat out their aches and pains centuries before the arrival of modern medicine. It is still in good repair.

Although this is not an account of events which happened in Ballinamuck down through the years, I think the agrarian troubles which occurred in the mid 19th century deserve brief mention.

Between 1835 and 1839 Lord Lorton attempted to remove the poorer tenants and replace them with Protestant tenants who would be more prosperous and well disposed to him. The locals resisted this and their vengeance resulted in the deaths of a number of Protestant tenants — Brock, Moorehead, Cathcart, Morrison and Cole. Others were attacked and their animals were mutilated. As mentioned already, Lord Lorton razed the village in 1839 because convictions were not forthcoming, and also, because the leases had expired since 1838. The church was saved from destruction by Fr. Moran, C.C.

I should add that it would be impossible to deal adequately with each site or point of history mentioned in an article like this, some of lesser importance I haven't mentioned at all.

Galldú agus Ath-Ghaelú

John Carthy

CURSAI meadarachta b'fhéidir a ba shiocair leis an leagan 'Baile na Muc' san dán 'An Gunnadóir Mac Aoidh' le Eoghan O Tuairisc ar leathanach 12.

I mBaile na Muc De Sathairn a chailleamar an lá

Isé is cóngaraí don Bhéarla 'Ballinamuck' ó thaobh na fuaimne de, agus, go deimhin, dá mbeadh súil ag O Tuairisc chuige, bheadh an leagan sin le feiceáil aige agus é ag druidim leis an baile ar an mbóthar ón Chluain, agus arís nuair a shroichfeadh sé an crosbhóthar ag an '98'. Ar an taobh eile dhe, dá mba ó chrosbhóthar na Géige a bheadh a thriall chífthead sé 'Beál (*sic*) Atha na Muc'. In 'Place-Names of County Longford' le kSeósamh A. Mag Dhuibhne¹ tá 'Béal Atha na Muice' agus in 'Ainmneacha Gaeilge na mBailte Poist'² tá 'Béal Atha na Muc'. Is suimiúil agus is fiú a choinneáil i gcuimhne gurab é 'Béal Atha na Muice' roghnú an choiste don inscríbhinn ar an leacht cuimhneacháin atá le nochtadh inniu.

Maidir leis an dá litriú 'Béal' agus 'Béal' níl aon tabhacht ag baint leis an difríocht óir ba inmhalairtairthe 'a' agus 'u', agus le roinnt scríbhneoirí na linne ní raibh in úsáid an 'u' ach nósúlacht. Sé 'Béal' an litriú caighdeánaithe. Fágann sin go gcaithfear rogha a dhéanamh idir 'Béal Atha na Muc' agus 'Béal Atha na Muice' — caithfear a chinntiú cé acu ar thug 'An Mhuc' tábhacht don áth agus don áit no an raibh an tath tábhachtach mar áis do mhuca uilig an cheantair.

Tá údarásacht an chéad leagain 'Béal Atha na Muc' láidir. San Réamhrá do 'Ainmneacha Gaeilge na mBailte Poist' deirtear linn gur . . . *ainmneacha oifigiúla Gaeilge* . . . atá sa Liosta agus gur . . . *socráíodh (iad) le comhairle, ar bhonn taighde ar fhoinsí scríofa agus ar fhianaise áitiúil, ón gCoimisiún Logainmneacha*. . . Sin focal údarásach na Roinne agus, i ndeireadh na dála, an Rialtais, ar an seéal. Ach níl aon eolas againn ar ché ghlac comhairle no cé lenar glacadh; cé na foinsí scríofa a hiniúchadh no cén fhianaise áitiúil a mheádh.

Ceann de na foinsí scríofa ar chóir do thaighdeoir no coimisiún ar bith a chíoradh abea 'Place-Names of County Longford'. Faoi Ballinamuck sa leabhar deir Mag Dhuibhne

An mhuc dhiamhrach seo chuaigh sí i mbun oibre ag Scairbh in gCo. an Dúin; lena tochailt mhúnlaigh sí clais (*fosse*) mhór a dtugtar 'Dane's Cast' uirthi agus 70 no 80 troigh ina leithead . . . An tainmhí aisteach seo deirtear gur lean sí ag tochailt roimpi gur shroich sí Loch Gamhna, ait a maraíodh í. Má's fíor ní foláir no gur lean muc dhiamhrach eile den obair óir is féidir an

⁴ chlais Chéanna a leanúint ó dheas ó Loch Gamhna go dtí Loch Cill an Atha agus gairtear Gleann na Muice Duibhe uirthi aig's na sean daoine. Tugtar Dunchladh uirthi freisin agus b'í an teorainn idir cheantair ársa Bhreifne agus Anghaile í.

Sa bhliain 1938 tháinig muintir na háite agus na mílte nárbh iad le cnéile anseo chun '*Cuimhniughadh Puiblidhe ar '98 ag Béal Atha na Muice*' a chomóradh cosúil leis na searmanais inniu. Foillsíodh leabhrán chiumhneacháin³ agus b'shin an fhoirm den ainm a bhí ar an chlúdach — Béal Atha na Muice — Bhí ar an Choiste Chiumhneacháin sin daoine ón cheantar go raibh sé d'oiliúint iontu agus i dteideal acu an fhoirm ba chruinne agus ba chiallmhaire de ainm an bhaile a shocrú. Bhí múinteoirí mar Seán Bohan, sagairt mar Michael Kearney, dlíodóirí mar Frank Gearty, agus bun-áitritheoirí an cheantair mar J. F. Linehan agus J. J. O'Neill ina measc. In alt le L. Mac G. (Liam Mac Gleannáin?) ar Anam na Saoirse sa leabhrán sé Béal Atha na Muice an tainm a úsáidtear. Is deacair a dhéanamh amach cé'n 'fhianaise áitiúil' a fritheadh don fhoirm oifigiúil.

Bhí an dá rogha ag coiste an lae inniu agus an fhoirm chúí á socrú acu. Bhí an dá fhoirm ar eolas acu agus, dála a naithreacha agus a sean-aithreacha chreid siad gurbh é ba bhun leis an ainm bunúsach go bhfuil Ballinamuck mar Bhéarla air ná treasnú dochreidte úd na tíre ag An Mhuc Dhubh agus láthair an bhaile a bheith ar raon na muice duibhe chéanna. Má bhí áth thar abhainn san áit fadó agus an baile ag béal an átha cá hionadh go dtabharfaí Béal Atha na Muice ar an bhaile? Ar aon chuma sin mar is áin leis an choiste é. Amhail an mhéar láimhe san Rubaiyat d'fhéadfaí a rá fúthu: Scríobhann siad; agus iar scríobh, imíonn; amhail Píoláit d'fhéadfaidís féin a rá: Atá scríofa a bhfuil scríofa; agus amhail Habacúc d'fhéadfaimis-ne focal an Tiarna a ghlacadh chugainn féin: 'An té a ritheann, léadh sé'.

Bheadh sé roisiúil in éinne againn fir Bhéal Atha na Muice no na rudaí a ghní siad a cheistiú!

¹ Place-Names of the County Longford, Rev. Joseph Mac Givney; Dublin, James Duffy & Co. Ltd., 1908. (as cló).

² Ainmneacha Gaeilge na mBailte Poist; Baile Atha Cliath, Oifig an tSoláthair, 1969.

³ Souvenir Programme; Longford, C. E. Dann & Son, Printers, 1938. (as cló).

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They come to support your courage, to share your dangers, to join their arms and to mix their blood with yours in the sacred cause of liberty.

They are the forerunners of other Frenchmen, whom you shall soon enfold in your arms.

Brave IRISHMEN, our cause is common. Like you we abhor the avaricious and blood-thirsty policy of an oppressive government. Like you we hold as indefeasible the right of all nations to liberty. Like you we are persuaded that the peace of the world shall ever be troubled as long as the British ministry is suffered to make with impunity a traffic of the industry, labour and blood of the people.

But exclusive of the same interests which unite us, we have powerful motives to love and defend you.

Have we not been the pretext of the cruelty exercised against you by the Cabinet of St. James? The near-felt interest you have shown for the grand events of our revolution, has it not been imputed to you as a crime? Are not tortures and death continually hanging over such of you as are barely suspected of being our friends?

Let us unite then and march to glory.

We swear our most inviolable respect for your properties, your laws and all your opinions. Be firm, be masters in your own country. We look for no conquest than that of your Liberty; no other success that we desire.

The King your chain is arrived. Our triumphant troops are now flying to the north to tear up the roots of the wealth and tyranny of the British. That frightful colossus is mouldering away in every part of the world. Let the Irishman be so much to separate himself or such a hapless of his country. If such a man be, brave he betrays and let his property become the reward of those generous men who know how to fight and die.

Irishmen, recollect the late defeats which your enemies have experienced from the French; recollect the plains of Honscoote, Toulon, Quiberon and Ostende; recollect America free from the moment she wished to be so. The contest between you and your oppressors cannot be long.

Union, Liberty, the Irish Republic. Such is our shout. Let us march. Our glory is in your happiness.

I gcuimhne na mairbh a d'éag
ag Cath Bhéal Atha na Muice
ar an 8ú Meán Fómhair 1798



A la mémoire de ceux
qui sont morts à la
Bataille de Ballinamuck
le 8 Septembre 1798



To the memory of those who died
at the battle of Ballinamuck
on 8th September 1798