In this issue, we complete our townland trail with the three remaining townlands…..

Kilbarry (824 acres) Cill Barra - Church of St. Finbar. The church was possibly the first erected by the saint himself. The site is indicated and there are traces of Kilbarry graveyard. At the east side is Warrenscourt House with ruins of the original Warrenscourt. The demesne contained a deer park as well as three beautiful lakes. Warrens were descended from Robert Warren of in Cromwell's army and in 1649. The family pur- of the Muskerry cated estates in this parish. Warren was M.P. for to 1790 and was first en Corps of Yeomanry side of the townland is Carraig Bhuidhe (yellow or the west is Edergole - fork) with the remains of ring fort called Rath Ard fort of the fork. In the in 1790 Fr. Daniel scholar and poet. A O'Sullivan is sited on the village of Kilmurry to the Crossmahon (194 ghamhna—Mahon’s grounds of Crossmahon side is the site of an old called Kilshinshame—Cill of James the elder).

Glannarouge East (103 acres) Gleann na Ruaige—Glen of the rout. At the north side is Bealnablath crossroads - Bhéal Átha na Bláiche (opening of the ravine or hollow between hills).

Glannarough West (160 acres). Here stands the General Michael Collins (above) Monument.

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NEWSLETTER AVAILABILITY
- This newsletter appears twice annually
- It is kindly made available in all local shops
- It will soon be available on the www.kilmurry.ie website
- Contributions of articles and snippets very welcome
- The newsletter is free

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
- Townland Trail
- Society Officers
- Reading Room
- Kilcrea Outing
- Recent Events
- Museum Times

CONTACT
Contact any of the Society officers or members if you would like to contribute to this newsletter or if you have any comments or views about its contents.

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There were two schools in Kilmurry prior to the present school being built in 1955 and opened in 1956. The two schools were on either side of the churchyard with the girl’s school being on the right and the boys being on the left as you exit the church. The entrance to the church was straight in front of the church door.

The schools were two big square two-storey stone buildings built in the late 1860’s. The classrooms in both schools were on the first floor; all classes in both schools were taught in one room by two teachers. There were approximately 70-80 pupils in each school in the early 1900’s, however this had fallen to nearly half, a quarter of a century later. There was no access from the ground floor to the first floor in either school. Access to both classrooms was by big stone steps from the road: all steps had a flat limestone slab on top. There were approximately 14 steps to the boy school with three steps to the girls school. This was accounted for by the fall in the road. The steps to the girls school were just about where Seanó’s petrol pumps now stand and were regularly used for after mass political meetings or whatever issue seemed important at a particular time.

The ground floor in the girl’s the READING ROOM and an important part in the life of over many years.

There does not seem to be any it was called the reading been used for teaching adults years. It was used for teach-early years or religious in-took this class on Sunday at 12.0’clock.

All Schools were nondenomi-nation in those days and teaching of catechism was used as a library to some held there had the words stamped on them in both Irish they were purchased by the with funds from some other Macroom Poor Law Union, I stage.

Mrs Hallihan, Headmistress, influence on this project. Her books over many years. Master O’Connor, Headmaster of the boy’s school was also involved. As well as religion and reading, it was used by the Gaelic League for meetings, dances, step dancing classes, etc. In later years a dancing teacher from Donoughmore named John Sweeney was known to the class as “Johnny Jump Up”. There were several feiseanna held in conjunction with these classes over the years.

The venue was used for various meetings, scrioichts, card drives, plays, dances, concerts, etc. and would probably have corresponded to what we know today as a community centre. The entrance was then three steps down from the road. Despite this it has been described as dark and dismal. It was used to store coal and later turf, with a big heap of slack at the back. The girls were supposed to play there on wet days. The girls had to haul the coal up the steps from the reading grooms onto the road and then up three more to the classroom. There was a big open fireplace where the girls whitewashed the hob every Friday evening. They also cleaned the windows, etc.

The toilets in both schools were on the outside in a hut behind both schools with approximately 14 steps down from the
classroom. They were dry toilets, with ashes used to cover offending material. Boys and girls were not allowed to play at the same time. Girls were allowed out at 12 o’clock and boys at 12.30.

Both boys and girls were expected to provide sticks or kindling to light the fire and they often went down to Warrenscourt Wood to gather sticks. The ground floor of the boy’s school was known as the Coach House, there was a fine entrance door with a curved or round ornate top. There was room to take in a horse and coach or trap. But very little use seems to have been made of it.

Prior to these schools being built, boys were taught in a private school by a Tim Sheehan who lived in a house where the church car park now stands. Here was a room annexed to the house which seems to have been used solely for this purpose. The teacher was paid by the parents, but he also had a farm. He was grandfather to Tim Sheehan whom I remember living in the same house. He may have been the first headmaster in the new boy’s school. I do not know if there was a girl’s school in Kilmurry prior to this. There were a number of hedge schools in the wider area before this.

Teachers who taught in the girl’s school:
Mrs Hallihan, Kilmurry, nee Walsh Kilmurry
Mrs Tom Wall, Clomacow, nee Fitzgerald, Ballymichael
Miss Bina Fitzgerald, Ballymichael
Mrs Rooney, nee Dromey
*Miss Molly O’Connor, Kilmurry
Mrs Ahern
Mrs Cronin, Kilmurry - nee Barrett, Kilmichael.
Mrs Murphy, Dooniskey, nee Lordan, Newcestown.
*Miss O’Connor, Macroom left under the Marriage bar - married Paddy Coakley, Ballinagree.

On 25th March the Society visited Kilcrea Castle and environs and heard an excellent talk by Kilmurry Historian, Michael Galvin. A summary of his talk is presented here, alongside a photograph taken on the day.

Kilcrea Castle was built in 1463 by Cormac Laidir McCarthy who also built Blarney and Carrignamuc (Dripsey), castles. The carved head high on the walls is thought to be a likeness of Cormac. Cormac was a powerful Normanised Gaelic magistrate, a great patron of the church he completed the Franciscan Abbey at Kilcrea in 1465.

Cormac was murdered in Carrignamuc by his brother Owen and sons in 1494 in a family internecine struggle for power quite common in at the time. He was buried near the high altar of the Abbey as was customary for the founder. Thence the tomb was preserved for the chieftains of the McCarthy clan. Cormac Laidir’s son, Cormac Og avenged his death in 1497 defeating the Earl of Desmond at Mourne Abbey. Cormac Og; his son Teague and grandson Dermod also lie in the tomb. Dermod’s son Cormac of Blarney was the last to be buried there in 1616.

Through the 1400’s, 1500’s and 1600’s the castle did not feature in any major battles.

In 1589 the castle became vacant since Sir Cormac McDermot McCarthy, the new chieftain,
transferred to Blarney so that Queen Elizabeth placed a garrison there. Cormac og, a minor McCarthy occupied it and died there in 1602.

Following the Nine Year’s War at the Flight of The Earls following The Battle of Kinsale the English demanded the surrender of all the McCarthy castles. Kilcrea was surrendered to Colonel Slingsby following which the monks were displaced, (always under McCarthy protection)

In 1614 Sir Anthony Chichester committed the Abbey to the care of Sir Cormac McDermot McCarthy now turned Protestant on the condition that the friars would not remain and that only Protestant tenants would be allowed.

Sir Cormac died in 1616 and by the time of the Confederate Wars, 1641-52, his grandson Donogh was chieftain.

Captain Bailey, (Castlemore), garrisoned Kilcrea Castle for Cromwell and together with the married-in Ryes became the principal landlords.

The castle itself was granted to Rear-Admiral Sir William Penn together with Macroom.

Penn was dismissed by Cromwell in 1655 and the castle was granted to Roger Boyle, (Lord Broghill), who switched sides again and was made Earl of Orrery by Charles II. But fortunes changed for Orrery with the Restoration in 1660 when Charles II replaced Cromwell’s parliamentarian Commonwealth.

Now Donough McCarthy, former Lord Muskerry, got his lands back as the new Earl of Clancarty while Penn got lands in Shanagarry.

Following the Williamite-Jacobite wars at the very end of the 1600’s McCarthy power collapsed and their lands confiscated to the Hollow Sword Blade Company which had financed William’s campaign. Kilcrea Castle was now purchased by Capt. William Hedges who built Snugborough House to the south.