

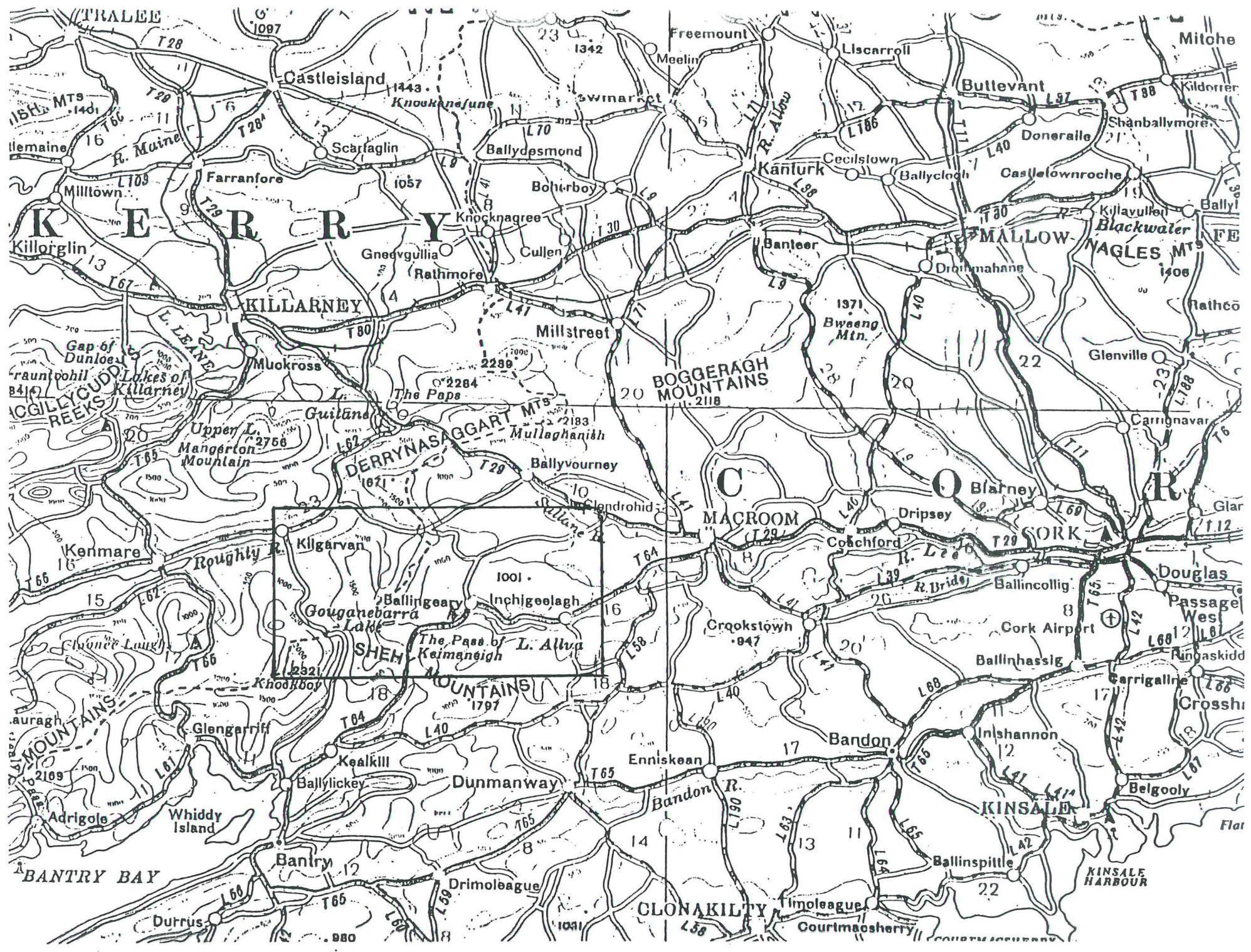
THE POETRY OF  
*Maura Bwee O'Leary*

*Fathers*  
❖ O'DONOGHUE ❖  
SWEENEY and BURKE



Gougane Barra, West Cork

Color photo by John Hinde F.R.P.S.





An Chéad Chló 1931

Ath-chló 1933

Ath-chló 1950

## FILÍOCHT

# MHÁIRE BHUIDHE NÍ LAOGHAIRE

First Printing 1931  
Second Printing 1933  
Third Printing 1950

The POETRY of  
Maura Bwee O'Leary

Oifig an tSoláthair,  
Baile Átha Cliath.

Father Donagh O'Donoghue, M.A.  
(an tAthair Donncha O'Donnchu, M.A.)  
Collector and Editor (Ed.)

Government Printing Office

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seller.

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## Introduction

The principal purpose of this Introduction is to show what steps were taken to provide a competent English translation of Filiocht Mhaire Bhuidhe Ni Laoghaire<sup>1</sup> (The Poetry of Maura Bhui O'Leary). Hereafter it will often be referred to simply as the Filiocht.

A secondary, if minor, aim arose once it was decided to explain my father's direct descent from Maura Bhui. The bonus in doing this, of course, is that it puts in place a branch of Maura's family tree which was unknown to Fr. O'Donoghue and consequently was lost to many other branches. To keep details to a minimum, the focus will be on my father. By using him as an example, my father's siblings' children (my first cousins) and other relatives will be enabled to trace their own relationships to Maura with certitude. Here and there a "human interest" touch will be related which may not seem to be advancing the main purpose of this project. But such an anecdote may remind a cousin or two of some similar episode that happened to them or their parents. Methinks that Maura Bhui would be the last to object to our sharing a meandering moment to smell the roses.

For the benefit of those people, mostly in Ireland, who have copies of the original Irish (Gaelic) text, a distinctive feature is provided through a second system of page numbering. In addition to the customary numbers in the upper left or right corners, an underlined number will be found on the left side of most pages. This number refers the reader to the corresponding page of the Irish text. Let us hope, furthermore, that this will facilitate any suggestions or corrections a reader may wish to offer. The reader will notice different spellings for some Irish names and words such as we see already in the Irish

<sup>1</sup> AN TATHAIR DONNCHA O DONNCHU, M.A., DO CHNUASUIGH,  
FILIOCHT MHAIRE BHUIDHE LAOGHAIRE, Baile Atha Cliath, Oifig  
an tSolathair, Ath-chlo, 1950.

(Father Donagh O'Donoghue, M.A., Editor, The Poetry of Maura Bhui O'Leary, Dublin, Office of the Publisher, Edition 1950, pp.95.)

and English renditions of Maura and Bhui. Pronunciation is a further handicap for one regrettably ignorant of the Irish language. The one defense that can be made here is that "Maura" and "Bhui", pronounced "Bwee", are the everyday sounds that were heard for the two names of our leading actress. Similarly, since the non-Irish reader will not be concerned about such matters as Irish accent marks, these for the most part will be omitted. A short list of English translations of Irish names in our text will be found on p. 91 (which is blank in the original). For consistency in the text we have stayed with the same spellings throughout -- that of the translator, Fr. Sweeney -- respecting from the beginning that he was not sure of the correct spelling or rendition of some words. A few of what appear to be more significant words concerning which he had spelling doubts are presented in heavier print in the text. This procedure is used throughout. The reader may also note the use of "the McCarthy" on page 2, par.1; "the" indicates paramount chief. Now, how did we become interested in the Filiocht in the first place?

In the summer of 1953 it was my indescribable joy to spend two weeks in Ireland with my father Alexander and my namesake uncle Richard. It was their only trip back to Macroom, "That spot of my birth, there's no equal on earth," as the song about nearby "Mount Massey, the Flower of Macroom" puts it. Except for a brief auto trip to Kenmare, Ballyvourney, Dublin, etc., almost all of our time was spent chatting with relatives and friends in Macroom, Inchigeela and Keimaneigh.

It was at Keimaneigh that the two Richards and Alexander strolled onto the field owned by another Alex Burke (Cf. P. 93, middle bloc), who was turning over some hay with a pitchfork "to catch the sun." Whether the three of them would have met one another as youngsters or not, they certainly knew of one another and, after a few words of identification, shook hands warmly. Stabbing the fork into the ground to punctuate the end of his day's work, Alex invited us into his home which is on property once owned by James and Maura O'Leary Burke. There

we met Alex's wife and daughter, both named Sile (Sheila), R.I.P., son Eilic (Alex), his wife Mary Horgan Burke and their children. It was a delightful surprise indeed to learn that Mary was so enthusiastic and knowledgeable about our Burke family history. That she was so well informed we soon came to appreciate as, showing us her copy of the book, she spontaneously gave us a hurried summary and interpretation of the Filiocht, which opened our eyes for the first time to this family treasure. Often she spoke familiarly of it as "The Red Book" because of its bright-red covers.

In this first acquaintanceship Mary referred to another cousin, a Dominican priest from Chicago, Fr. Colum, who had already visited them. (This was the religious name used in those preVatican II days of Fr. James Burke, O.P.) He is the grandson of the Alexander Burke of Chicago described on page 18.

Fr. Jim's father, John (Sean), is listed as the third child of this same Alex (Eilic) born in 1842, to Richard (Risteard de Burca), born in 1798, the fourth son of Maura, as outlined in subsection (D), P. 95. (Although there is no vertical line coming down from Eilic's name, the eleven children listed in the line below were his.) Before leaving Keimaneigh I took Fr. Jim's address and, in the course of these years, we have shared a great deal of information through correspondence, climaxed with his overnight stay here at Holy Cross in 1994.

In our visits, particularly around Keimaneigh, my father and uncle were relishing with their hosts the joyful reality of those happy days: "long-lost" cousins were filling in the missing years chatting about families and friends. The reunions culminated with a "Come-all-ye" going-away-party with "all the fixings." Accompanied with violin and accordion, jigs and reels were danced, and familiar old songs were sung as choruses joined in, such as for "Mt. Massey." My father, for instance, seated, sang and acted out a familiar old local song with exaggerated, comical gestures, "Waxing the Thread on My Knee." About the

light's early dawn, literally, things were quieting down and people were making ready to depart. Some dramatic sense told Sheila that the time had come for the hosting party to sing a fond farewell. As a hush settled over all of us, Sheila, in a strong, clear soprano voice sang The Battle of Keimaneigh. Although we Americans did not understand the Irish words, even we sensed the meaning as: "We'll fight and we'll win! We'll win the victory!" Sheila's soul-cry pierced through the quiet of that early morning, reverberating with some haunting appeal. It was a cry for courage, a cry to all the people of Ireland that Sheila poured forth. But there was more to it...It was the voice, the song, the echo of her great-great-grandmother that Sheila caught--the vibrant voice of Maura Bhui!

It was not until many years later that I was somewhat free of teaching and administrative obligations. A student I had taught at Holy Cross, Mark Heafey, was setting out to do his "Junior year abroad studies" in Ireland. I asked Mark to search for some copies of the Filiocht and, fortunately, he found a few. Although everyone at Keimaneigh was certain of our blood relationships, where were my father's immediate ancestors to be found in the Filiocht? Now with a copy of the text in hand, even one who did not know Irish could learn much from the three Appendices. In particular, the genealogical diagrams in Appendix C, pages 92-95, opened up a treasure and a sense of discovery not unlike that of an explorer first gazing upon the vast Pacific or, more aptly, opening up a translation from the Greek of the travels of Ulysses. A clue as to which of the many Alexs was my father's father dawned with the name Maire Nic Charthaigh (Mary McCarthy) married to Eilic in 1863, page 94(A), middle of the first row. My first cousin, Julia Finnegan Gralton, had told me many years earlier that her grandmother's name was Mary McCarthy. That this was indeed my grandfather became even clearer from the vertical line indicating the names of the two children from this marriage. Sile, born 1865, was my aunt Julia, and

Sean, born 1867, was my uncle John. When I showed this to Julia Finnegan, at first she seemed a bit surprised as she had guessed that her mother was born in 1867; but she did not really know. After the death of his first wife, this Eilic married Catherine Sweeney and had four more children, which facts, manifestly, Fr. O'Donoghue did not know.

Actually there was a fifth child, Mary, whom most of my generation had lost track of. We are indebted to Mrs. Kathleen Burke Card of Brockton for the following information on Mary and grandmother Catherine forwarded in a letter of April 3, 1992. Kathleen had spent much time with her father (my uncle Jim) in his last years and he spoke a good deal of his boyhood days in Ireland. His sister Mary, who was a few years younger than Uncle Rich, died at about 17 years of age some months after becoming "soaking wet" in a rainstorm returning home from a dance. Grandmother Catherine was born in 1852 and died in childbirth in 1894. The new-born boy did not survive either. Grandfather Eilic passed to the Lord in 1899 at the age of 72.  
Requiescant omnes in pace.

So now, in Eilic Burke, born 1827, his descendants can find the "missing link" to ancestors as remote as Maura Bhui's parents, born 1751. Would that space allowed us to provide a complete list of contemporary descendants. But the briefest enumeration of Eilic's six children and their descendants, with related "vital statistics," should enable their progeny to see the direct connections to their O'Leary-Burke ancestors. A simple, chronological pattern will follow here. If some item is missing, such as a marriage date, that is merely because it is not in my file.

A Concise Listing of the Children and Grandchildren of  
Eilic Burke, P. 94A, B 1827, D 1899  
Two Wives; Six Children

Note: Still another generation is now succeeding the generations descended from Eilic Burke indicated above. The families of this most recent adult generation are now raising their children -- "the coming generation." None of the children of these last two generations, however, are listed here. The reason is that, although there are complete dossiers on most of them, information is incomplete on a very few. For the sake of uniformity and clarity it should be least confusing to have the same cut-off line. Besides -- and this is the important point -- all the great-grandchildren of Eilic Burke and their children should easily be able to find their location in this up-dated extension of Eilic's genealogy, and, thus, through him, to trace their family roots back to his grandmother, Maura O'Leary Burke. Let us hope that present descendants will keep me -- or some interested descendant -- informed. The puzzling (and missing) connections of one branch hopefully are now clarified, and the torch can also be passed on to many other branches.

B = born; D = deceased; M = married; P = page

M Mary McCarthy (Maire Nic Charthaigh) 1863; D 1872 (?).

2 children:

(1) Julia (Sile). B Macroom, County Cork, 1865; D August 25, 1930. M John Finnegan, in Newburyport, Massachusetts, Residence: Bradford, MA. 5 children : Patrick Alexander, John, Julia (M John Gralton), Thomas, and Mary (M Andrew Cashman).

(2) John (Sean). B Macroom, June 24, 1867; D September 26, 1939.

M Mary MacNeil in Boston, MA, September 14, 1920. B Cape Breton Island, Canada, February 23, 1894, D February 29, 1980.

Residence: Charlestown, MA. 3 children: Alexander Paul (M Pauline Keane); Mary (M John Reid), and Lorraine (M Thomas Casey).

M Catherine Sweeney, B 1852, of Inchigeelagh, Co. Cork; M in 1874 (?), D 1894. 4 children:

(3) Margaret, B Macroom, December 22, 1877; D May 28, 1961; M Dennis Finnegan (bother of John) in Newburyport, June 18, 1906; B Kenmare, April 15, 1877; D December 19, 1967. Residence: Newburyport, MA. 2 children: Julia Marie, and Dennis Christopher (M Edna Hall).

(4) Alexander. (Keimaneigh visitor, 1953). B Macroom, March 10, 1880; D May 26, 1967; M Catherine Clare Downing in Newburyport, MA., April 21, 1908; B Kenmare, April 7, 1880; D January 10, 1956. Residence: Newburyport. 5 children: Alexander Bernard (M Margaret Reeves); John Francis (M Mary Reeves, sister of Margaret); Kathleen Josephine (M Warren E. Simmons); Richard Patrick (Keim visitor); Helen Mary (M Frederick T. Jones).

(5) James. B Macroom, 1882; D January 3, 1969; M Margaret Joyce in Newburyport, January 30, 1908; B Dunmore, Galway, 1884; D 1963. Residence: Brockton, MA. 4 children: Alexander Francis (M Hazel Berger); James Harold (M Evelyn Robinson); Viola Mary (M Patrick J. Celeste); and Kathleen Margaret (M Edward W. Card).

(6) Richard. (Keim visitor). B Raleigh (Macroom) 1884; D 1961; M Nora Creedon in Brockton, 1911; B Ballyvourney, Co. Cork, 1882; D 1950. Residence: Brockton. 4 children: Alexander Joseph (M Kathleen Eldridge); Richard Francis (M Margaret Kenney); John Edward (M Bernice Robinson, sister of Evelyn); Kathleen Elizabeth (M John Raymond Kenney, brother of Margaret).

The next step now was to discover someone with a fluent knowledge of Irish poetry who might render an appropriate English translation of the Filiocht. For pragmatic communication purposes, the translator (TR) hopefully would live nearby. (Later on, I was not surprised to hear from cousin Christopher Burke of Navan, Co. Meath, that he never heard of an English translation.) Fortunately, I was told of Fr. Sean Sweeney of the Society of African Missions, stationed in Dedham, Ma. He proved to be as competent as he is enthusiastic, and in jig time sent back chapter after chapter in an impressive translation. Just as all of us are indebted to Fr. O'Donoghue for his original work, so too do we readers of the translation owe very much to Fr. Sweeney. Let us all thank the Lord profoundly for both of them and for their expert work which means so much to us in particular.

The word "Redactor," though rarely used, should be apt to describe my function. Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary defines "redact": "to put in shape for publication; edit; revise." Towards the end of this introduction, to prevent possible confusion on a few comments, the initials RPB should doubly certify that a particular clarification is mine. We are pleased to acknowledge and to express our appreciation of the Gougane Barra photo by John Hinde Studios and of the section of map published by the Irish Government. As this is a humble, non-profit effort for private circulation to 150 people, we presume their permission and good will. May it promote further interest in their works. Not least meaningful, manifestly, is the far deeper debt and gratitude owed to the Irish Government Press for their implicit permission to utilize the original publication of the Filiocht.

Nearer home, we are personally and profoundly grateful for the patient secretarial assistance and typing of Mrs. Frances Ruggles and for the ever pleasant and efficient cooperation of Henry Roy, Manager of our Holy Cross Graphic Arts Department.

How deep is our gratitude to Seamus Burke, R.I.P., and his wife Jane. In my last visit when they realized I was staying at the Victoria Hotel in Macroom (where my father had worked as a boy), they insisted on hosting me in their exquisite home in Teergay, Macroom. Seamus, literally, chauffered us to all the family historical spots -- a kindness all the more appreciated because I had reached 75, and was caught by a new Irish law prohibiting people driving after that age. Seamus' brother Callaghan and sister Eileen Murphy and families are very friendly people and we spent many pleasant hours chatting with them. They live next door to one another on High Street, close to the center of town and up a steep hill.

Directly south from there a dirt road leads two miles or so to a house defended by a ten foot high stone wall as the road turns a corner leftwards. About 50 yards to the right of that wall are the remnants of a small stone house where my father and family lived. This spot dominates the crest of a high plateau that crowns a broad, sweeping valley. The wide hill slopes down like an open field to a quiet, winding river a half mile below silently flowing east and south as the hills rise gradually to the horizon beyond it. This is the famed River Lee...and lovely it is. Picturesque in truth was the setting of my father's boyhood days...even though, in those young years, he may have taken that for granted. As the brothers and sisters traipsed those two miles to school in fair weather and foul they would turn the corner at High Street. On a clear day, straight ahead, on the farther side of Macroom, they could marvel at the sight of Mount Massey looming large and protective. No wonder they sang their favorite song in praise of that scene with such enthusiasm.

Having made our excursion to the old Macroom homestead, we must not forget a parting kindness of Seamus Burke. Fortuitously, just before we drove to Shannon Airport, Seamus talked with Liam Milner of Mayfield, Cork City, on the telephone, and Seamus invited me to extend an introductory Ave atque Vale

greeting to Liam.

A few months later it was my special pleasure to meet Liam and wife Maura, their sons John and Richard and the latter's wife Eileen on the occasion of the parents' visiting this part of their family in Arlington, MA., near Boston. John is a businessman who works in South American countries and Richard is a nuclear scientist at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 1989, he was presented with the United States Presidential Young Investigator Award by President Bush at a ceremony in the White House. He has also been very active in the formation and functioning of an international group of 14 institutions collaborating in nuclear research in Hamburg, Germany, for which Richard is the U.S. spokesman. Since our meeting, Liam has sent me a dozen or so booklets and monographs on fascinating topics of Irish interest. Two of these he has authored himself. In the opening paragraph of his Preface to The River Lee and Its Tributaries<sup>2</sup> he states: "This work is a survey of the rivers of the Lee valley, and around them I have woven the more important historical landmarks, events and personalities connected with the region...now coordinated with original topographical research..." On page 59 there is an etching of the Pass of Keimaneigh and a reference to the Tithe War of 1822 "...remembered in that lovely song Cath Cheim an Fhiadh composed by Maire Bhui Ni Laoire."

In a second work<sup>3</sup> the brief introduction explains: "Now, he (Liam) embraces an entirely different art form, and applies it to a far greater canvas, one which literally encompasses the four corners of Ireland. Through the medium of pen and ink sketches...he succeeds in capturing the atmosphere, indeed the ethos, of those many places which are the very essence of

<sup>2</sup>Liam Milner, The River Lee and Its Tributaries, Cork: Tower Books, 1975, pp. 137.

<sup>3</sup>Liam Milner, Ireland's Heritage in Black and White, Cork: Tower Books, 1989, pp. 67.

Ireland's rich heritage." Each of his 78 sketches is accompanied by some pertinent observation and/or citation. The fifth etching, for example, cites the four opening lines of J.J. Callanan's locally famous poem, Gougane Barra. At the bottom of his sketch Liam makes a reflection which, we can be sure, grew out of his own walks and hikes in that area: "Gougane Barra, the source of the River Lee, abounds in beautiful scenery and many forest walks."

Cordially do we extend our profound gratitude to Liam Milner for his many personal kindnesses as well as for the high quality of his art and literary sense. What is striking to us is his esteem for the total beauty of this corner of Ireland from which Maura O'Leary evolved -- into those richest spiritual values for which she fought so fearlessly.

Very much could be written about beautiful Gougane Barra, which spreads into Keimaneigh. But, other than describing a couple of personally pleasant episodes, our focus must center on Maura Bhui. The color photograph, surely, is worth a thousand words, and more. Interestingly, Maura seems to take the beauty of nature for granted and concentrates on problems and people of her day. "Gougane" means the "cleft" and accurately describes the split in the low mountains there. St. Finbar (deceased c. 548) was a monk who, with some companions, lingered in this locale for a while before making their way to the mouth of the River Lee where they built a monastery. From this developed the city of Cork; fittingly, both the city and the county have St. Finbar as their patron saint. The first name "Barry" or Finbar usually identify a man as having a Cork connection. On a sunny, clear day, there is indeed some extraordinary, peaceful, charm reflected in the atmosphere and setting of Gougane Barra. This was brought home to me again in the following episode.

One bright summer evening in 1957, Fr. Terence Connolly, S.J., whom I had just met at Boston College, invited me for

a walk after dinner. I was aware that he taught English literature there and had written an authoritative, well-received book on the English Catholic poet Francis Thompson. He was also a popular lecturer who gave countless color-slide presentations on Ireland throughout New England. (This was a highly entertaining skill of various professional experts in pre-television days.) As the two of us took a leisurely stroll around the central quadrangle, he asked me where I came from and the like. After the usual preliminaries I mentioned that my mother came from Kenmare, Co. Kerry, and my father from Macroom, Co. Cork, adding that, thanks to Mary Horgan Burke, I knew that a great-greatgrandmother was a poetess who had lived in Gougane Barra. Immediately he stopped in his tracks exclaiming: "That's the most beautiful spot in Ireland." "Quite a tribute," thought I to myself, "from one who has traveled all over Ireland starting with the Lakes of Killarney just to the north."

Ragarding J.J. Callanan's 48 line poem with the unadorned title Gogane Barra (too long to reproduce and examine here), one may speculate if Maura's poems influenced its author. Callanan (1795-1828) was born in Cork City and attended Trinity College, Dublin, for two years. In a brief, undated biographical sketch of Callanan in Gems of the Cork Poets, the anonymous editor relates "Callanan tarried much admidst the glens and mountains of West Cork and scenes full of attraction for him...He became well-known for his national songs and legends." Whatever their differences in age and education -- Maura was only 21 years older -- certainly both were shaped by the same strong patriotic spirit of their day. Who knows? In his walks around Gougane, Callanan may readily have heard someone singing The Battle of Keimaneigh -- even from the lips of Maura Bwee? It soon became popular and was "in the air" when he was young. The Rising of 1798, encouraged partly, we like to think, by the success of the American Revolution, had burst out in their early years. Not unlike The Battle of Keimaneigh, Gougane Barra

builds up to a somber plea for freedom in Ireland "from the Saxon's dark bondage and slaughter." This is how Callanan puts it in lines 37-40:

Still, still in those wilds may young  
liberty rally,  
And send her strong shout over mountain  
and valley,  
The star in the west may yet rise in its  
glory,  
And the land that was darkest, be brightest  
in story.

May I close this section with a personally thrilling addendum? My uncle, father and I had spent a pleasant morning wandering about the chapel, old cemetery and environs at Gougane. As we were walking away, my father spontaneously, slowly recited the 48 lines of Callanan's poem by heart -- without a hitch. My uncle Rich and I looked at one another as though stunned. That was the first and only time I heard my father recite that poem, which he must have memorized by the sixth grade. Given the setting and occasion, I never asked him to repeat that delivery; a repetition could never match that once-in-a-lifetime experience. Even though he did not know one line of his own great-grandmother's poetry -- by Imperial Decree his generation, and how many others, had been forbidden to learn or speak their own language -- the spirit of Gougane Barra, and of Maura Bwee, lived on!

The mention of fighting for Irish freedom brings to mind that a treaty of peace was finally concluded with the British in 1922 -- 100 years after the Battle of Keimaneigh. How many heroes, and heroines, gave themselves, and their very lives,

for that cause in those tumultuous, intervening years? Thousands of histories and biographies have been trying to answer. One popular contemporary author, Tim Pat Coogan, has written a great deal about leading figures in recent decades. Before rounding out our research on Maura Bwee, let me jump ahead of the game with the briefest thumbnail sketch of one such leader who must have been an answer to her prayers.

Michael Collins<sup>4</sup> was born in 1890 and raised in Clonakilty, a town on the bay of the same name approximately 24 miles southeast of Keimaneigh. In his short life of 32 years he penetrated the highly organized British spy system working throughout Ireland from its center in Dublin Castle. He was the first leader to institute guerilla warfare, in which bands of Irish soldiers trapped many spies and traitors and, turning the tables, made raids on British military strong points. All the while he was "on the run," with an award of 10,000 English Pounds pledged for his capture dead or alive. Not least, as time went along the British realized he was the man they would have to work with, and he served as the leader of the Irish team in working out the peace treaty with the British under the direction of their wily Prime Minister Lloyd George. Thanks in great part to Michael Collins, Callanan's pleas may be paraphrased: Young liberty did rally, a star in the west did rise in its glory, and generation after Irish generation at last had the opportunity to be brightest in glory.

<sup>4</sup> A fascinating, highly readable biography has been written by Tim Pat Coogan, The Man Who Made Ireland: The Life and Death of Michael Collins. Published in the United States by Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1992, pp. 480. Coogan, Editor of the Irish Press for twenty years and contributor to several international newspapers, has also written objective, definitive histories on: The IRA; DeValera, The Man Who Was Ireland; and The Troubles, Ireland's Ordeal 1966-1996 and the Search for Peace.

Despite my good intentions of trying to limit this Introduction, let me mention one last discovery about Gougane Barra. Recently I was paging through A Literary Guide to Ireland<sup>5</sup> and came across this description of Gougane Barra (with which Fr. Connolly certainly would agree): "...one of Ireland's hidden treasures. Set deep in the scooped-out hollow is a small jewel of a lake, the source of the River Lee." The authors speak of "J.J. Callanan's lush Victorian poem 'Gougane Barra'" and how "penniless poets would meet in the forgotten hamlets of West Cork and East Kerry (surely Maura Bwee was among them)." Then came (for me) the surprising discovery. "One of the merriest firesides that ever was was in the cottage of 'The Tailor' of Gougane Barra; nor has there ever been a better storyteller than Timothy Buckley, the Tailor himself. ...In the thirties and forties (the writers) O'Connor, O'Faolain, and many others visited the cottage often, for the Tailor was a genuine shanachie, an Irish wiseman steeped in the folk tradition."

The Cahills continue: "It is all there in Eric Cross's book, The Tailor and Ansty<sup>6</sup> -- the delight in difference and in words and people...the bottomless store of wit, wisdom and memory, as various as the flickering fire." "The tailor died (in 1943), and is buried with Ansty in the shore cemetery of Gougane Barra beneath the tombstone carved by Seamus Murphy and with an epitaph by Frank O'Connor: A STAR DANCED AND UNDER THAT WAS I BORN."

Where was the surprise? Long before I ever visited Ireland, I had read The Tailor and Ansty. It had tickled me immensely, but I had long forgotten its setting. Now, thanks to the Cahills, I discover it was Gougane Barra! No wonder I was fascinated. The Tailor's charm had been spinning around some of our ancestors -- the Burkes and the O'Learys.

<sup>5</sup>Susan and Thomas Cahill, A Literary Guide to Ireland, New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973, pp. 59-62.

<sup>6</sup>Eric Cross, The Tailor and Ansty, Cork: The Mercier Press, 1970.

Let us close now with some citations from the most authoritative source on Maura O'Leary Burke one could hope to know. Permission has graciously been given to use these latest insights. But, first, some background should be provided about their author. One of the most pleasant experiences I had in my last visit to Ireland was to meet the family of Nan Burke O'Donovan and husband Peadar of Clontarf, Dublin. I am indebted again to Fr. James Burke for his lead. Nan's family is also directly descended from Maura's first son, Sean. Before retirement Peadar was a regional administrative supervisor for many years in the Irish educational system. He has completed a number of studies, including Irish Family Names,<sup>7</sup> a most informative little book. It provides excellent summaries of the histories of fourteen families with an expertise and style that only a scholar steeped in Irish language and history could produce. Among those families, in eleven incredibly condensed pages (69-79), he takes up matters bearing on the most notable Burkes and concludes with a brief bibliography.

Concerning the origin of the Burkes in West Cork, Peadar speculates on p. 78: "Many professional soldiers were Burkes, others O'Malley, etc. Some of them had even brought their families from Connacht and had spent over two years in West Cork. Are some of the West Cork Burkes descended from these professional soldiers? -- say, the Burke families in Dunmanway, Skibbereen, Whiddy, Coachford and the neighborhood of Macroom -- or were the ancestors of these families in West Cork before 1600?" Towards the close, the author spends most of the paragraph on "the famous James Burke of Skibbereen who married Maire Bhui Ni Laoire of Keimaneigh in 1792..." On pp. 167-168 Peadar speaks of three brothers O'Donoghue who were very much involved in Gaelic League activities and pioneers in the language revival. The third of these brothers is our author-editor. The word "Editor" will be used at times to refer to Fr. O'Donoghue.

<sup>7</sup>Peadar O'Donovan, Irish Family Names, Skibbereen, Co. Cork: Skibbereen Printing, 1991, pp. v, 169.

Two stone memorials pay tribute to Maura in that corner of the land she loved so dearly. In 1995 a beautifully crafted new headstone topped with a small cross was erected by relatives in Inchigeela Old Cemetery. Fr. Jim Burke, giving credit where credit is due, once remarked that "the whole project (and financing) was in Nan's (Burke O'Donovan's) hands." In the Skibbereen newspaper The Southern Star of August 19, 1995, a sharp, clear picture of the tombstone is presented together with an article by Peadar which briefly summarizes her life and the significance of her poetry; it also includes a tribute to Fr. O'Donoghue's anthology (our text). Peadar's style is so compact -- bursting with historically significant insights -- one can only hope that these will be expanded in permanent form. Following is the hastiest sketch of some points made in that article.:

"...tithes, a rent amounting to one tenth of his income, were levied on every Catholic, (and) were paid to the local Protestant vicar and the landlord towards the maintenance of the Protestant church." (No "separation of church and state" there! Moreover, did English rulers learn nothing from the American Revolution, the Boston Tea Party, and the refusal of colonists to pay unjust, exorbitant taxes: "No taxation without representation?")

"...the landlords were, in effect, the embodiment of British rule in Ireland...and wielded unlimited power."

"...In championing the cause of her oppressed countrymen, Maire Bhui pulled no punches and she does nothing in her poems to conceal her implacable hatred of English rule in Ireland as she experienced it. Her poetry must be judged in the context of its time and would be unlikely to find much favour amongst present-day ecumenists. Her poems were sung, recited or passed on orally and weren't written down for many years after her death."

...Mr. Peter O'Leary of Inchigeela is described as one who researched the Battle of Keimaneigh very well and told his story in an Irish Historical Journal, 1993. "Mr. O'Leary points out that the confrontation was really not a 'battle' at all but

"a series of skirmishes."

"...Maura Bwee's sons had taken part in the fighting and "had to go on the run with the other men of the district when Barry with his yeomen scoured the countryside, harassing the population and picking up suspects." (Yeomen were the landlords of the period -- descendants of English land-grant beneficiaries).

...Later, two of her sons were arrested, charged with Smith's murder (the English soldier killed in the battle), and spent nine months in Cork jail, in custody, awaiting trial.

..."They were defended by (Daniel) O'Connell and were discharged; in fact it was Maura Bwee's brother Conchubhair that was responsible for Smith's death. Maura composed a poem in praise of O'Connell to show her appreciation and thanks for saving the lives of her sons.

"...Others weren't so lucky. Suspects who had been rounded up and prisoners who had been taken at the Ceim and other places were tried by a special Commission of Judges in the Spring of 1822. Many were found guilty and hanged in public, including William Ring and Edward O'Brien who had taken part in the fight. Maura Bwee composed a special lament for Ring.

..."The bodies of those hanged were conveyed back to the Cork County jail, interred in a huge pit inside the gate called the Croppy Hole, where they moulder, forgotten. Instead of making some effort to reform the notorious land system, the English government continued with their Coercion Acts, transportation and hangings."

Scholar that he is, Mr. O'Donovan sums up his commentary with a striking observation. After all the years -- the centuries --of oppression building up ever more climactically against the Irish, he points out: "Maura Bwee's lifespan coincided with the darkest period of Irish history...Her last days in this life ebbed out at the time of the Great Famine; but her genius and her faith always looked beyond to brighter days."

Peadar closes his article with a paragraph in heavy print, emphasizing the point made earlier: "It is hoped that this brief profile of the poetess will help the younger generation to appreciate the freedom into which they were born and, what is more important, that they learn to use the legacy wisely. Any semblance of sectarianism, intolerance, bigotry or discrimination would be an abuse of that freedom and a negation of the ideals of those that fashioned it."

There cannot be a more fitting close to this Introduction than to speak of the other memorial honoring Maura Bwee. It is located in Keimaneigh just off the side of the road leading west toward Bantry, a few hundred yards from the home of Alex and Mary Morgan Burke. It faces the road leading to Gougane Barra a mile and more away. This monument is in the form of an oblong block approximately six feet high by three feet wide and about a foot thick set on a large concrete platform two feet or so above ground. The four sides are covered with variform slices of dark green Irish marble artfully fitted next to one another at different angles except for the stone tablet set into the front side. On this facade the tablet fits neatly into its top two-thirds with the tribute in Irish serving as the frontispiece of the monument. Here is the self-explanatory tribute kindly offered by Liam Milner:

To the east of this monument  
The Whiteboys of Ive Leary  
Did Battle with the yeomen  
In the year 1822, during the tithe war.

MAURA BWEE O'LEARY  
1774 - 1848

A poet who was born in Tureenanane  
And lived at the Inches  
Celebrated the occasion with the famous song  
The Battle of Keimaneigh.  
"Praise be to Jesus  
That we didn't regret the attack  
But commemorate the occasion with joy."  
This monument was erected by the people  
of this district to memorialize the event  
On the 150th anniversary of the battle.

---

Richard Patrick Maura Burke, S.J.

August 15, 1996

## THE POETRY OF MAURA BWEE O'LEARY

### PREFACE

#### The O'Leary Clan

P.5 The O'Learys were one of the clans (or septs) of Corca Laoighe, [Curk-a-Lee], i.e., West Cork. Extant accounts indicate that they were originally in possession of the tuath or district of Ross, called also Ross of the O'Learys - the present Ross-Carbery and its environs. They were driven there by the O'Donovans and the O'Collaines (Collins), two septs who were themselves forced from their lands around the River Maigue in Co. Limerick by the invading Normans.<sup>1</sup> The O'Learys were pushed northward to the Lee, whence the parish (of Inchigeelagh) extending from Toon Bridge Natanny to Keimaneigh, and from Shehy Mountain Knocknashehy to Toon River, became known as Ive-Leary, the land of the O'Learys.<sup>2</sup> The whole territory from Dripsey to the Bourne of Ballyvourney<sup>3</sup> was named at that time after its ruling dynasty Ui Floinn Lua, the territory of O'Flynn Lua, whose castle was in Macroom. The territory of Ive-Leary was a subdivision of this. The O'Learys built three castles on their lands,<sup>4</sup> one at Carrignacurra, another at Carrignageelagh, and the third at Dromcarra. Their first castle, built on a rock on the edge of the Lee, about a mile to the east of the village of Inchigeelagh, has the letters A L inscribed on a stone in its walls. They are taken

P.6 to mean Art O'Leary, who was, most probably, its builder.<sup>5</sup>

When the McCarthys took over Muskerry, they left the O'Leary heritage untouched.<sup>6</sup> It consisted of thirty townlands,

<sup>1</sup> *Vide "Parish of Inchigeelagh by John Lyons, P.P.; "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. ii, pp. 77, 78 seq.*

<sup>2</sup> *Vide "Topographical Directory of Ireland" (Lewis).*

<sup>3</sup> *"Irish Topographical Poems" (O'Donovan), p. 106 et n. p.*

*lxvii. Et "Gems of the Cork Poets," passim.*

<sup>4</sup> *"Parish of Inchigeelagh" ut supra et p. 108 et n. p. lxix.*

<sup>5</sup> *"Parish of Inchigeelagh," supre pp. 77, 78 seq. Vide aliter "Gems of the Cork Poets," passim.*

<sup>6</sup> *"Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. viii, p. 156 seq.*

free of rent, except for the usual tribute to the paramount chief. When, therefore, a new district chief took possession of his hereditary lands he had to pay the sum of four pounds nine shillings to the tanist (or deputy chief) of Muskerry who lived in the castle of Carrignamuck.<sup>7</sup> He had also to come to the aid of the McCarthy in the event of war.

The principal castle, that of Carrignacarra, was the seat of the prince of the district. He went by the name of O'Leary Meirgeach - the "rusty" (or the "crusty") one - which was the identifying epithet of all his sept. Here are some of the names of the other septs (or families): Leary "Art"; Leary "Bolgaighe" (of the small pox); Leary "Breac" (speckled); Leary "Bwee"; Leary "Cart" (probably from Mac Art - son of Art);<sup>8</sup> Leary Ceadach - possessing a hundred - (perhaps acres, or cattle); Leary "Ceithearnach," kern-like, - boor(?), outlaw(?); Leary "Na Cipe," of the stock or block; Leary "Clogach," the blistered one; Leary "Dana" (Bold); Leary "Dorcha" (dark one); Leary "Glas," (greyish or pallid); Leary "Mocheirghe" of the early rising; Leary "Riabhach" brindled; Leary "Ruadh," red haired; Leary "Runtach," the secretive(?). Leary "Bwee," is the family to which Maire [Maura] Bwee and her extended family belonged. ("Bwee" means yellow or sallow skinned. The usual anglicized form is "Boy," but to avoid confusion, I have kept Bwee throughout and Maura instead of Mary. Some of these epithets are capable of other interpretations, TR)

The fortunes of the O'Learys went up and down with those of the MacCarthys.<sup>9</sup> When Cormack, son of Teigue McCarthy, came into possession of Muskerry in the 16th century, he submitted to English rule and gave up his estates. The title and rights

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 245

<sup>8</sup> Mac Airt, is dócha.

<sup>9</sup> "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. ii., p. 34 *foll.*

P.7 of landlord were then conferred on him and he came into possession of his heritage again. Cormack Oge, son of Cormack MacCarthy, the 17th in succession, followed the same pattern.<sup>10</sup>

In the time of Queen Elizabeth I, Cormack, son of Teigue MacCarthy, and Dermot O'Leary of Inchigeelagh were "pardoned."<sup>11</sup> This MacCarthy received many "grants" of land as well. But, by way of return, both of these and some others had to supply one hundred and thirty-one cows each, for the support of the English Army in Munster. They had also to write off debts owed to them by the English Government.<sup>12</sup> After the defeat of Kinsale, MacCarthy submitted to England and was "pardoned." "Pardoned" also were Dermot Roe O'Leary and "Liosach" (of the liss or fort) O'Leary, as well as Sheila Murphy, wife of Dermot, and Elizabeth Crowley wife of "Liosach." They all had their property restored to them.<sup>13</sup>

When James I came to the English throne, many Irish chiefs submitted to him and, along with them, the MacCarthy, Cormack Oge, 17th Lord of Muskerry and also Teigue and Art O'Leary, Dermot, son of Teigue O'Leary, and Auliffe, (Irish Amhlásimh, now usually anglicized Humphrey, TR) son of Conor O'Leary of Inchigeelagh.<sup>14</sup> Their lands were then "granted" to each, but the rent was raised from 16 pounds to 100 on P.8 MacCarthy, (Donagh, son of Cormack Oge), the 18th landlord of Muskerry. The title Baron was conferred on Donagh MacCarthy in 1578 and later, in 1628, he was named Viscount of Muskerry. In the period of the war in the reign of King Charles I, Donagh was in command of the Irish soldiers in Munster. After the war, he was exiled and his lands forfeited.

<sup>10</sup> "MacCarthy," *vide* "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. ii., second series, pp. 17, 18.

<sup>11</sup> "Cal. of Inq. Post Mort.," *vide* "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. iii. *El Smith's "History of Cork."*

<sup>12</sup> "Fians of Eliz.," *vide* Ap. A. vi.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> "Cal. of Inq. Post Mort.," *vide* "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. lii, p. 93.

But he supported the second King Charles of England when war was declared on him. In consideration for this aid, King Charles II bestowed on him the title of Earl of Clan Carthy in 1660. He died in 1665. After his death his wife, Eileen, came into possession of his estates.<sup>15</sup>

The clan of O'Leary Buidhe held eight townlands in 1641. Dermot, son of Teigue, son of Dermot Buidhe, and Auliffe, son of Donagh O'Leary, had Drom na hEaglaise (? Church-ridge) and Gartnaray. Donagh Oge, son of Dermot Buidhe O'Leary held Monneyvardry East, and the same Donagh, with Dermot, son of Fineen O'Leary, held Derryreardon North and Derryreardon South, in Glenacunny. Derryglass and Drumcotty were in the possession of Dermot Oge Buidhe O'Leary. At the same time, Conor, son of Meirgeach O'Leary, Donal, son of Auliffe O'Leary, and Fineen, son of Donal O'Leary, owned Cloughbarry, Tooreenduff and Tureenanane. Gortaneedin and Gortnalour Lower belonged also to Fineen. Conor Meirgeach O'Leary was in possession P.9 of Carrignacurra when disaster struck in the aftermath of the war of 1641-1652, and Conor was banished. But when the change came, with the advent of Charles II, he was pardoned and his possessions restored to him.

Conor Meirgeach loaned a large sum of money to the father of Fineen, son of Donal, with the proviso that in the event of both of them dying without male issue, his and his son Fineen's land and possessions would become the property of himself, Conor, and his family.<sup>16</sup> Fineen did have a son, Conor. Nevertheless, Fineen made a will in 1663,<sup>17</sup> bequeathing Gortaneedin, Gortalour (Lower) and Tureenanane to Teigue O'Leary of Carrignacurra, son of Conor Meirgeach. The will

<sup>15</sup> *Vide Smith's "History of Cork"; "MacCarthy." vide "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," Second series, vol. ii, pp. 17, 18.*

<sup>16</sup> *Vide Ap. A. i.*

<sup>17</sup> *Vide "Index Test," "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. iii., p. 119.*

stipulated that Teigue would give 10 pounds or its value in livestock to Conor, Fineen's son. Thus Tureenanane came into the possession of the O'Leary Meirgeach clan.<sup>18</sup> In 1677, Teigue O'Leary got a ninety-nine year lease on that land and on the other townlands in his possession, at a rent of 24 pounds per annum. He died in 1683 or some time close to that year. After his death, his eldest son, Conor, took possession of the property.

When war broke out between King William and King James, Donagh, the fourth Earl of Clan Carthy, sided with King James. The latter failed and fled. When Cork City was taken in 1690,

P.10 MacCarthy was seized and imprisoned. He was later exiled to Germany. King William pardoned him. He was given 100 pounds a year, but forfeited his land, most of which was sold in 1702 to an English firearms manufacturing company for the sum of 181,460 pounds-8s-4d. "The Hollow Sword Blade Corporation" it was called. The Government owed it 97,000 pounds, and the land was handed over in lieu of the money. This corporation sold the land again. In 1721, his title was restored to MacCarthy, but not his lands. He had a son, Robert, Captain on a warship. Robert tried to recover his estate but failed. He died in 1734 at the age of 84. With his death the title became extinct.<sup>19</sup>

When disaster struck the MacCarthys, misfortune befell the O'Learys. Conor Meirgeach, son of Teigue, was deprived of his castle at Carrignacurra,<sup>20</sup> which was given to English soldiers.<sup>21</sup> Eventually, a soldier's barracks was built near the grounds.<sup>22</sup> It was a small structure with a fence around it for the use of a company of foot soldiers.<sup>23</sup> Gradually,

<sup>18</sup> "MacCarthy," "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol ii., *vide* "Ancient and Present State of the County of Cork," *ibid. passim.*

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* "Ancient and Present State," etc.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid. et* "Gems of the Cork Poets," q. v.

<sup>21</sup> "Hib. Gazeteer," p. 259.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Vide* "Barrymore," p. 161.

the old castle disintegrated. The English Government established a Guaranty Commission for the lands taken from the Irish chiefs. This Commission sold the estate of Conor Meirgeach to "Hollow Sword Blade Corporation" who, in turn, resold it. It finally fell into the hands of an Englishman named Masters - the new "Master" of Carrignacurra.

P.11 Masters had a house built there, near the old castle, in 1723. It was rather large, 60 feet long by 24 feet in width. He had a loft built and the roof slated. "Castle Masters" it was called. In 1777, the owner, Jasper Masters, built an addition to the house and greatly improved it. He had one son and two daughters. The son's name was Stephen Masters. He was killed going through the stable door while on horseback, and the elder daughter became the heir. She married a man named Pyne, one of the Pynes of Ballyvodaun.<sup>24</sup> On his marriage, he took the name Jasper Masters Pyne.<sup>25</sup>

Meanwhile, Conor Meirgeach was at Carrignacurra. He made a will before he died in 1699,<sup>26</sup> wherein, he left all his possessions along with the townland of Tureenanane to his two sons, Dermot and Conor. They were infants, so he appointed Ceadach O'Leary to direct them. Both Ceadach and the children filed grievances with the Guaranty (or Security) Commission. The Commission sided with Ceadach. In 1713, two men, James O'Hea and Thomas Warner, came to arbitrate the case between Ceadach and Conor's children. It was agreed that Ceadach should get 127 pounds-1s-11d. There was one Humphrey Massey from Macroom who had a claim for debts on those townlands. Ceadach and the Conor children agreed to sell the lease P.12 of the townlands to Massey. Ceadach received 127 pounds-1-11,

"Arthur Pyne fear an tighe i mbliain a 1821, *vide* Census 1821."

"Index Test," *vide* "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. iii., p. 119.

"Vide Ap. A., iv.

the amount due him, and the children 62 pounds-10-0. It appears that young Conor got the land of Carrignacurra by some kind of lease. He made a will in 1753,<sup>27</sup> leaving Carrignacurra to his son Teigue. It seems most likely that the family of O'Leary Buidhe got possession of Tureenanane around this time. They had held Derry na Glass from the time of the English King, Charles I. In 1700, Dermot Buidhe was in possession of Derry na Glass and Inchidiragh hill. He made a will that same year,<sup>28</sup> bequeathing all his possessions to his wife for the benefit of his children. It seems most probable that their children (Dermot's grandchildren) were the ones who came to ownership of Tureenanane. Dermot Buidhe O'Leary was born there in 1751.<sup>29</sup> Maura "Bwee" was his daughter.

#### The Family of Dermot Bwee

Dermot Bwee and his wife Siobhan (Johanna) were of the same age. (Dhiarmid or Diarmuid is often anglicized to Dermot as we see here in Appendix A, p.84; in turn, it sometimes appears as Jeremiah, as in the census of 1821, Appendix B, p. 87, TR). They had five sons, namely, Teigue, Sean, Dermot, Conor, Richard, and three daughters, Maura, Nell and Nora. They had fifty acres of land. Some members of the family appear to have been of the lively, dashing kind. This is clear from a song composed by one of them, Dermot Jr., Maura's oldest brother, in which he says:

"I cannot gainsay it - I'm lively and carefree,  
For that is the way with O'Leary Clan Bwee."

<sup>27</sup> *Vide Ap. A., iii.*

<sup>28</sup> *Census 1821. Ap. B., iv.*

<sup>29</sup> *Vide Ap. B. i.*

*Vide Ap..B. i.*

P.13 Another brother of hers, Teigue "Bwee," sings:

"A thirst greatly plagues me, and with cards  
I am keen -  
With the "five" and with tables (Backgammon)  
as good as you've seen;  
Ships laden from Spain here safely I'd steer  
And a curse on the barmaid, my plea she won't  
hear." (Literally, a  
tormented heart on the tavern woman that she  
doesn't give me a wink, TR).

Teigue was married in the parish of Bantry to a woman of the Murphys. He had a small farm, but when adversity struck, he was put out of house and home and ended up as a traveling pedlar in the area. Young Dermot was born in 1775. His father gave him a small piece of his land - twelve and a half acres all told - and had him settle down in the village. Eileen Cronin was his wife. Conor, born in 1792, was married to a woman of the Coakleys in the neighborhood. He received the other half of the land. Adversity hit both brothers and they were evicted from Tureenanane sometime around 1820. Conor took a job as a herder of cattle afterwards. Richard, the youngest, was born in 1795. He turned out to be a sporting "blade" who never settled down. Nell was married to Teigue O'Leary of the "stock" from Rossmore about two miles east of Inchigeelagh. His descendants are still there. Nora lived at Inchediraghill with her husband, Donal O'Connor. They were evicted also.

Tureenanane came into the possession of Michael Murphy, "of the bog" (Mona, from Moin, peat, bog, TR). The rent was too much for him; he couldn't meet it. He was about two years

there when he was thrown out. Custom had it at that time, that anyone who could pay the rent could take possession of the farm -"grabbing" (cuntail) they called it. This was how Donal O'Sullivan got the holding of Tureenanane. He paid 24 pounds to the landlord and took possession. Conal belonged P.14 to the clan D'aonbhuidhin (Danevween, i.e., "of the one or single band or company"), but this was popularly changed to Diomhaoin, "idle". From that time on and for quite a while there was great hostility between the Clan "Bwee" and Clan Diomhaoin (Dee Veen). Maura "Bwee" was no laggard, with her verses, as witness:

The Bright Lord of Glory knows contrast between  
The family of Moin and the Clan of Dee Veen.

And of the Clan "Bwee" she said:

They were forced from their farm with clubs  
and firearms  
With no hope of restoring them ever again.

They would attack the Clan Deeveen in this fashion:

Come let us rout them! (Ruagarom, not a dictionary word, but the meaning is obvious, TR). Come let us rout them!

Come let us rout them, the Clan of Deeveen!  
Come let us rout them, pitiless bounders!  
Sad is the house of the Clan Leary Bwee.

One Sunday, Maura and Donal encountered each other at the church and began to exchange insults. Here is what Maura said:

An ignorant lout (Lit.: having no use for a woman, TR) is Donal Deeveen.  
Bandy-legged tout, unmanly and mean;  
The young heifer's milk to drink he'd not dream,  
But hawk it, each minute, up and down the boreen.

This is how Donal answered her:

You lie, you bragging old hag of Clan Bwee,  
He and his kind far outclass all your breed,  
They're kindly, large-hearted with "lashings"  
                                to eat,  
And none of them ever had to live in a creel  
                                (Lit.: a barrel, TR).

P.15 Thus they reviled each other for quite some time. The wrangling reached a peak when Donal O'Sullivan was seized one foggy night on the hillside, as he was making his way home. The O'Leary Bwees were charged and some of them jailed. But the feud did come to an end, and in this fashion - so the story is told. Seamas Burke, Maura Bwee's second son, died as a young man. One of his brothers went to Inchigeelagh, accompanied by a neighbor, in order to dig the grave. As they were journeying home by way of the Graig, on the west side of Inchigeelagh, their horse took a seizure and fell dead on the roadway. A brother of Donal O'Sullivan lived at the Graig and his house was closest to them. Burke was reluctant to go to the house, but he persuaded his companion to go and ask for a horse. He did so and got the loan of a horse and both got home. It is said that that put an end to the feud. It appears to have ended as all feuds eventually end. "Quarrels have periods of abstinence." The O'Sullivans are still living in Tureenanane.

### Maura Bwee and Her Family

Maura Bwee O'Leary was born in Tureenanane in the year 1774, and it was there she spent her early life, until she married Seamas Burke around 1792. He came from Skibbereen, a horse dealer by trade. (Information from Nell ? daughter of Maura, grandmother of Callaghan O'Callahan of Gortluachra). He often came around. At that time, there used to be a "gathering" every Sunday evening at Gortluachra P.16 west of Keim. Maura and Burke met there; they fell in love with each other and Maura eloped with him to Skibbereen. They were married in Inchigeelagh. They purchased a small farm at Oilean Aibhneach Beag (? Avnagh Beg Island) local pronunciation probably "Ayneebeg," TR) near Ballingeary and settled down there. (Oilean=island; aibhneach=fluvial; beag=small. Illawnaynaghbeg ? This place name occurs often in the text. I haven't come across the modern anglicized form as yet. The editor in a footnote says the Cronins live there now, TR). There is a ford on the Lee at that place which is called "Burke's Ford" ever since. They did not remain long there. Burke had some money and he bought out "all the Inches," i.e., Inchibeg and Inchimore near Keim. He had a farm of 150 acres there. The "Inches" are pretty, sheltered villages along the banks of the Lee. They (the couple) became quite wealthy, with numerous cattle and horses for work, for riding and racing. But despite all that, they never lost the old spirit and never failed to be moved to compassion by a poor man's plea. They lived at Inchimore where the farm house stands today. There, all the children were born.

They had a large family, six sons - Sean, Seamas, Michael, Richard, Alec and Patrick - and three daughters, Eileen (=Nell?), Maura and Joan. Sean was born in 1793. He married Nora Cronin from Gurteenacurra in 1818. They had six sons -

Michael, Richard, Seamas, Alec, Patrick and Conor, and three daughters, Maire, Nora and Brigid. Sean and his wife and eldest son, Michael, lived with the parents until the second son, Richard, was born at Christmas 1819. His father then gave him half of Inchibeg and built a house for him in the lower

P.17 (northern) part of the village, where Richard Cronin lives today. They were evicted after some years and went ("West") to the parish of Skull, where his descendants still live. He died as a young man. He was the subject of the "Keening" song composed by his mother:

"O Sean Burke, my heart's grief for you!"

Maura's second son, Seamas, was born in 1794. He was quite rakish as a youth. He married a Gobnat Burke from Inchishingane, near Macroom, in 1833. His father gave him grazing rights for a couple of cows, and got him settled down in Inchimore. Michael, the third son, was born in 1796. When Sean settled down in Inchibeg, Michael married into the home of his parents in 1819. He was married to Nell O'Sullivan from the parish of Bantry. She was one of the O'Sullivan Cnamhaigh ("big-boned" - nickname for a branch of the O'Sullivans, TR). Michael had had in mind to marry a girl with a big dowry but Maire advised him to marry Nell as she had the backing of powerful friends and relatives should trouble arise, (Lit.: for the day of the quarrel, TR). It was for her that Maura Bwee composed the song:

"Nell O'Sullivan Cnamhaigh is a gentle  
swan-like maid..."

At any rate, he took her advice and married Nell:

"One Sunday morning early from over Keim,  
we meet  
A gentle-mannered maiden with toothsome  
smile so neat;  
The lustre-red of berries glowed on her fresh,  
soft cheek,  
As skipping o'er the dew, she swept young  
Michael off his feet."

Michael had two sons, Sean and Seamas and six daughters, Maire, Eileen, Siobhan, Kate, Fanny and Peg. Maire was the eldest, and the only one born when his father had him settle down on the second portion of Inchibeg. A house was built for him on the spot where the Burke residence is today. After some P.18 years, he was evicted and emigrated to New England (Sasuna Nua, could mean U.S.A. in general, TR). He returned to Ireland a few times and died at Cloughvarry.

Maura Bwee's fourth son Richard, was born in 1798. He married a Siobhan (Johanna) O'Callaghan from the Macroom area, around the year 1829. The lower (northern) part of Inchimore was handed over to him. He had seven children, Sean, Seamas, Michael, Eileen, Siobhan (Johanna) Alec and Peg. He (too) was thrown out and emigrated to New England (or U.S.A. ? TR).

Alec, Richard's youngest son, was born in 1842. He took up the brick building trade in Chicago and accumulated quite a lot of wealth from it. He came to Ireland a couple of times. On one such occasion he erected a monument over the graves of the Burkes in the old cemetery of Inchigeelagh. This was the inscription on the tombstone:

Pray for the repose of the souls of  
Richard Burke  
and his wife  
Johanna Callaghan  
of Inchibeg  
R.I.P.  
Erected to their memory  
by their loving son,  
Alexander Burke  
Chicago, U.S.A.

He died in 1914. He left some money in a will for the erection of an altar in the church at Inchigeelagh (built since by Fr. Burts). Left behind him were his wife and eleven children. One of these, Richard, became a Justice of the Peace. Another son, Alec, was a doctor.

P.19 Alec was Maura Bwee's fifth son. He came into possession of his father's house and the second portion of Inchimore. Around the year 1842, he married Maire Callaghan from Cushduff in Killmichael. He had eight children, Sean, Eileen, Michael, Brigid, Seamas, Siobhan, Richard and Alec.

Maura Bwee's sixth son, Patrick, was a strong, hearty lad but "a little on the simple side." (Lit.: "he wasn't too coherent in himself," TR). He lived all his life with his brother, Alec. Nell was married to Conor Hallissey in Toonadromaun. Maire married a Teigue Brady (?) in Gurttafluddig. And Siobhan was married to Donal Burke in Whiddy Island.

The elder Burke had divided all the land of the Inches among five sons. The landlord was a Captain Wallace who lived in Macroom. He accidentally fell out the window of the bank and was killed. He had a brother residing in Glanmire near Cork City, and when he got the news, the shock killed him. The

place was up for auction then and was purchased by the Pope family of Waterford. Those raised the rent on Burke - 140 pounds on all the "Inch" lands. There was a butter merchant named Donal O'Sullivan in Cork City at that time who had a claim for debts on the place. Some people said the Burkes owed him 100 pounds. At any rate, life soon became difficult for them. The elder Burke and Maura, his wife, were still generous and with ample means - a trait that never left them. After the battle of Keimaneigh, the family members were on the run for quite some time and that left the work at home in arrears. Then, to crown all that, came the bad harvest. Things were going against them until finally they culminated in the year of the famine, 1847. Some time in that year, the bailiff P.20 arrived and drove all the Burkes from the "Inch" lands. The rent was lowered on the farm Michael had, and the elder Burke and his wife and the young Alec, with his wife and children, were allowed to remain there. That is still the residence of the Burkes at the present day. It was not known exactly when Maura Bwee died. She lived most probably a year or two after the famine of 1847. I have heard that she composed a song around that time for some one who had abandoned the Catholic faith and had joined the Protestant church. I have not been able to confirm this or to come across more than a couple lines of the song. This is how it goes:

O Donagh, the report has filled me with  
anguish  
That you've turned from the fold and joined  
the speakers of English.

She died in the spring time and was buried in the old grave-yard of Inchigeelagh in the grave of the Burkes.

When the Burkes were ousted from Inchimore the land was

"grabbed" by Sean Roe (Red) Walsh who then took possession. This man had a daughter, Kate, who married a Sean Corcoran. The farm was not long in their possession when they sold out. About thirty years ago, it was bought by a Conor (O') Lucey, one of the Luceys of Ballyvourney. One of his sons holds that farm at present. None of the O'Leary Bwee remains there and none of her family inherited her talent for poetry. As the saying has it: "When poetry falls on a woman, it is finished." (Quote from Dermot Riordan, Inchibeg).

P.21

### The Life and Times of Maura Bwee

Maura Bwee was a child (of five) when the Yeoman Corps was formed in 1779.<sup>1</sup> The war between England and America was in progress that year and most of the military had gone to participate in it leaving scarcely anyone at home to defend the country. The Yeomanry were founded for the purpose of its defense. Volunteers turned up in increasing numbers until 1783, when they numbered 100,000 men. The Earl of Charlemont was in charge and the officers were from among the gentry. They had reached such a peak of power and strength by 1783 that they could demand, from the Government, the enactment of new laws. They held meetings at certain specified places and a representative assembly at the Royal Exchange in Dublin to put their demands in effect. Flood (Henry, Anglo-Irish politician) brought the Reform Bill before Parliament, but was defeated by eighty votes. From that time on, the volunteers began to lose credit. The gentry retired from them and the Government finally suppressed it.

<sup>1</sup> "Vol. Corps in the County of Cork," *vide* "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. II., p. 328 *foll.*

They had horse and foot soldiers. There was a cavalry regiment in Muskerry at that time called the "Muskerry Blue Light Dragoons." These were founded May 1, 1778. Their leader was Robert Warren of Ballygallda. (Lit.: "English Town" or Newtown ? TR). Their uniforms consisted of blue breeches, creased, a white stripe down along the seam, and a white jacket with a blue stripe on the seam. There was another band of soldiers in Muskerry then too, named the "Muskerry Vol-  
P.22unteers." This one was formed in 1779, with Thomas Barter as their Captain. Their uniform was, blue breeches with a brown stripe along the hemline, and a brown jacket with red edging. A company of about sixty or, perhaps, a hundred of them were stationed in the barracks in Inchigeelagh. They were called "The Inchigeelagh Volunteers" and were under the command of Jasper Masters. The other officers were John Boyle of Drumgarra, second in command; Benjamin Sweet, standard bearer; Edward Weeks, chaplain; William Grainger, medical officer, and Henry Grainger, scribe (secretary). There was a band of Yeomen in Bantry also, founded in July 1779, with Hamilton White in charge.

In 1796, England declared war on France, Spain and the Netherlands, and the majority of the military were engaged in the war. The Irish people deemed it an opportune time to seek their rights. Drilling went on throughout the country and preparations made for battle. News came from France of a fleet coming to their aid, and from day to day, they awaited its arrival. The poets fired their enthusiasm for the prospective help. And Maura Bwee was not tardy with her verses. This is how she expressed it in the song "On A Sunny Hillside":

To each on the road bring the news that they  
come!

They're coming in force with powder and  
bullets and gun!

Swift doughty supporters - Louis and Spaniard  
as one

To Banba's green shore in full hope, by the  
grace of God's son.

When the help would come, England would be beaten and the  
P.23 Gaels in control. In the song "The Dawn of the Day" she  
sings:

Would you like to come into this inn,  
With me a while to stay?  
My answer was: I cannot stop,  
For it is the Harvest Day;  
The Duke of York and his troops are quashed  
By the true prince of the Gael.  
And in one year more the boors will bow,  
And that's no idle tale.

And again in the song "Seo Leo, a Thoil" (which may be rendered,  
"Come Now, My Dear"):

Our foes next year will be beaten and sore,  
And city's streets will be free of smoke,  
And prize not hinted is yet in store,  
The daughter of the Duke for a pet on your floors,  
So come, my lad, and cry no more.

A verse from her song "On A Sunny Hillside" indicates the heart-break and despair of the people of Ireland when the promised help had failed:

My warrior sweet, of the fleet don't talk  
any more,  
So distressful to me the grief it has brought  
to our shore;  
The winds blow so fierce o'er the deep,  
to scatter them sore,  
And our men chained they keep, like the queen  
on the far lands of yore.

When the English Government saw the danger ahead, they mustered the Yeomen again. The Muskerry Yeomen were marshaled, with Augustus Warren at their head. They were formed in 1796.<sup>2</sup> They set watch for the leaders of the rebellion, spying on them and arresting them as opportunity served them. They also carried dispatches from place to place. After the war, they were disbanded.

P.24 The British Government passed the "Act of Union" in 1800. This resulted in the deprivation of all power on the part of the poor Catholic population. They were at the mercy of the English and the landlords. Their most galling injustice was the tithe system. They had to contribute one-tenth of their labor to the upkeep of the Protestant church. Collectors were appointed to gather the tax, which meant that still more was exacted.<sup>3</sup> At last, the patience of the people was worn out and they rose up to defend themselves. The O'Learys were not found slack. They were not at all well equipped; however,

<sup>2</sup> "First Muskerry Cavalry" (R. Day), *vide* "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. ii.

<sup>3</sup> "Muskerry Yeomanry and their Times" (Gillman), *vide* *ibid.*

they grabbed their scythes and pikes and obsolete guns.

When the British found that the Irish were about to engage them in battle, they called for reinforcements.<sup>4</sup> The Yeomen were called up once more; there was a Yeoman Corps formed in Muskerry and another in Bantry. They had cavalry and foot soldiers. They were supplied with arms and uniforms, swords, pistols and guns from a carbine company then in Cork City.<sup>5</sup> They had barracks in Macroom. The Corps was at half strength usually, except when otherwise called upon. They had another, smaller barracks in Inchigeelagh housing a company of them. There were soldiers in Ballygallda and sometimes a company of the "Rifle Brigade" was stationed at Inchigeelagh. That same year, the Yeomen were about sixty strong in Muskerry with Sir Augustus Warren at their head. And here is a list of the others in that Corps at that time:<sup>6</sup>

P.25      Samuel Swete, John Rye, William Busteed, Richard Ashe, Lewis Gollock, John Warren, Edward Ashe, St. George Brown, Philip Cross, Thomas Gollock, John Bowen, S. Rye Coppinger, William B. Crook, H.I. Lindsey, S.E. Galway, R.B. Crook, Nicholas Kirby, S.G. Woodley, Somers Payne, B. Swete, John Williams Jr., H. Cross, Browning Drew, R.N. Nettles, John Tonson Rye, Thomas Lindsey, R.H. White, H.H. Good, Thomas E. Crook, John William Carey, John Williams, John Williams Jr., Peter Williams, Robert Hedges, Charles Colthurst, Herbert Gillman, George Rye, Somers Payne, Thomas Coppinger, John Barter, Richard Ashe, Henry Ashe, John Pyne, Abraham Good, Thomas Gollock, Edward Hayes Good, John M. Brooke, Thomas A. Brown, M.H. Warren, B. Furlong, Thomas S. Good, Thomas Hedges Eyrie, Henry Good, Thomas Gollock, Francis Woodley, Thomas Radley, Daniel O'Connor, James Gollock and John Orpen.

<sup>4</sup> "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. ii., n. 13.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, n. 18.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, vol. II., no. 13.

In 1822, the "WhiteBoys" searched the parish of Bantry for arms and uniforms. News of it spread; the Yeomen got wind of it and set out after them. Foot soldiers accompanied them; Barry from Carrigageela was their guide. When the WhiteBoys got word of the pursuit, they started to blow the trumpets and got together east of the Keim around the villages of Tureenannane, Cloughvarry, and the "Inches" at the foot of Dookill.<sup>7</sup>

P.26 The road lay then on the hillside and over the valley where the new road<sup>8</sup> now lies. The WhiteBoys stayed on the south side of the road until they saw the soldiers coming from the right and left of them; then they lay in ambush for them. When the Yeos and soldiers heard the blast, they lay low.<sup>9</sup> The WhiteBoys thought that they were all killed and ran towards them. The soldiers jumped up and fired at them, killing two of them, Auliffe (Humphrey) Lynch from Darry (Dairigh) in the parish of Toonadruman, and Barry O'Leary from Geary-an-Tornora. Then the fighting began. Seamas Walsh of Tooreenduff was one of the fighters. He finally encountered a soldier named John Smith of the Rifle Brigade who was loading his gun. He pulled the trigger twice on the soldier, but his gun failed to fire. Before the soldier could load his gun, Seamas jumped on him and struck him with the butt of his gun, knocking him down.<sup>10</sup> Conor Bwee O'Leary, a brother of Maura Bwee, was present. "Mercy, boys! Mercy!" cried Smith. "The devil have mercy on you!" shouted Conor Bwee, as he stabbed him with his bayonet.<sup>11</sup> With their firing equipment now used up, the WhiteBoys began to retreat. Two of them were dead and one of the English. But the upshot of the fight soon was seen when the tithing was

<sup>7</sup>Told by Donagh Lynch.

<sup>8</sup>Lord Bantry & Capt. Hedges marked out the road;

<sup>9</sup>Barry built it.

<sup>10</sup>Donagh L., nephew of Auliffe, killed in the battle.

<sup>10</sup>Informant.

<sup>11</sup>Informant: Dermot Riordan.

reduced for the people of Ive-Leary.

The story of the battle is well known to all from the song Maura Bwee composed. The battle was fought right P.27 before her eyes, and right well and fully she describes the coming of the enemy, the warning given and the progress of the fight:

When I heard the fighting rage ahead,  
With neighing steeds in measured tread,  
The mountain shook with thunder dread -  
Not soothing was the roar!  
As down they bore on us like wolf-hounds  
raging mad -  
And my heart's grief, those brave men lying  
in their gore.

Near and far the tidings spread,  
And farmers each to neighbor said:  
"The battle's joined - where men have led,  
Come quickly to the fore!"

Too soon by force of numbers our people  
are surrounded,  
In the dew of early morning driven out  
their door;  
Barry, the bum bailiff, Barnet, Beecher  
hound them,  
Hedges, White (confound them!) and many  
thousand more.

Humphrey Lynch was buried in Ballyvourney, and Barry O'Leary in the old cemetery in Inchigeelagh.<sup>12</sup> Smith was buried for a few days in Tooreenduff. His body was then taken surreptitiously during the night and buried in the "Bulrush-Marsh." There is a hole in Gortluachra bog where the body was buried and it is called "Smith's Hole" ever since. When the fighting eased and the place was discovered, the body was removed and buried in the old cemetery in Inchigeelagh, and a monument erected over it. The inscription reads:

P.28

Here rests the remains of John Smith, late  
of the 39th Reg. Aged 32 years. This stone  
was erected to his memory by Major Logan's  
Comp. 23rd Batt. Rifle Brigade, in testimony  
of the high esteem they hold the 39th Reg.  
A.D. 1822.

After the battle, the White Boys were "on the run."<sup>13</sup> Some prisoners were taken, among them Liam O'Rinn (William Ring) from Keimcurvooley. He was the subject of Maura Bwee's song:

Housewives are moaning in the Glens of Ive-Leary.

It is clear from the song that some of her family were also "on their keeping":

<sup>12</sup> Informant: Donagh Lynch.

<sup>13</sup> Informant: Sean Moynihan.

I sigh for your parents with you on your  
keeping,

Crying in vain are your bed-mate and wee one;  
And why I'm unable each day to be near you:  
My time is all taken with tending my dear ones.  
(Lit: "my calves," a term of endearment, TR)

Seamas Walsh was a fugitive for five years. He was finally pardoned through the good offices of John Warren of Kerry and Captain Hedges.

The story of the battle will endure because of Maura Bwee's song. Any happening before or after that year is reckoned by the year of the battle. It was the biggest event in the lives of the local people. It is said that the battle was prophesied: "A battle will be fought in Keiman-eigh", it says, "and a man will be killed there who was never yet born." The prophecy, it is said, referred to Barry O'Leary, because he was taken from his mother's womb.

P.29 With the postponement of the tithe laws, the Yeomanry were dissolved. But around the year 1843, the Irish were united in heart and mind against the "Act of Union," and in favor of Catholic Emancipation. The gentry became alarmed. Sir Augustus Warren called on the Yeoman Corps once again. A hundred men assembled, thirty-five of whom had belonged to the old Corps. They were called "The Muskerry Union Yeomanry."<sup>14</sup> They were not established, however, since there was no war. Short of war itself, there was at that time an extraordinarily keen determination among the Irish people. There was a wonderful spirit there, and Maura Bwee did her own part to ensure that this spirit would remain alive in their hearts. This is how she expressed it in the song, "O Mary O'Leary from the Mouth (entrance) of the Keim":

<sup>14</sup> Vide "Cork Historical and Archaeological Journal," vol. ii., n. 18.

A report came to my hearing lately,  
From a plover a-playing in Doohill;  
To sons of Erin will come the day, when  
The bears are beaten truly;  
The bold Repealers in force prevailing,  
With the gracious God's approval,  
And Saxon speakers get rude awakening -  
Showers of grape shot through them.

#### Maura Bwee and Her Poetry

Sallow complexioned, dark haired, strong and rather tall (described by Dermot Riordan) - such was Maura Bwee. Her sallowness was what she was oftenest reproached with. But that complexion of hers was part and parcel of her inheritance and of course, "If it's a sin to be sallow, thousands are damned." She was generous and large-hearted. Seldom would the plea of the poor be refused by her. She was a woman of the land and, therefore, she knew the meaning of poverty, the hardships and the (enforced) ignorance that afflicted her countrymen. She was an intelligent woman, although unable to read or write. It was a matter of deep anger and resentment for her to see the English riding high and mighty while the poor Gael was held in contempt. She saw all of this quite clearly. Small wonder then that, very often, she would give vent to her feelings in words such as these:

But havoc and quaking be dogging their door!

It is difficult for us to appreciate fully the mentality and life of the people of those days. The poor Irish peasants were prostrate - crushed, beaten, pressed to the ground. They were barely able to keep body and soul together. It was Maura Bwee, and poets like her, that kept alive whatever spark of courage remained. They called out to them, stirred them up, revealed prophecy to them. They taught them to be patient and prudent while waiting until help arrived. And the help was the landing of the French. They would bring them freedom, they thought.

The means used by the poets to spread the good news was the "Vision" poem. The poets would, at that time, compose aisling, (pronounced, "ashling") or vision poems, but not in the same manner as the poets of the earlier period who were depending on the Stuarts. Now it was the French who would

P.31 come to free them. Not that they had any great love for the French; it was understood simply that they would come to the rescue. When, therefore, the poets sang their songs it was Ireland they addressed, under the image of a maiden. They sang of the brightness of the sun, the beauty and freshness of the day, the sweetness of bird's song. These lull the poet to sleep and in his dreaming he sees approaching him the most beautiful maiden that ever was seen. He is filled with wonder and awe of her. He asks for her name, the family and country she belongs to. After her recital of some adventures, he recognizes her. She is Ireland! She reveals to him the depth of her emotion and the secret of her heart.

She was condemned and driven from house and home. But soon would come the day of her redemption. When the French landed on Irish soil, she would be freed. Maura Bwee's aisling is perhaps one of the best examples:

By the sunny hillside as my kine I moved  
from the fold,  
A young maid I spied of blythe and  
beauteous mold;  
Her soft cheeks would rival for brightness  
the berry and rose,  
And her tresses so shining reached right to  
the tip of her toes.

To greet her I came with the aim that I  
might her beguile,  
Hoping further to share in her favors and  
win her bright smile.

"Come with me today and stay to rest for  
a while,  
In a feather-bed safe, if you care, for a  
month at a time."

"Don't mock me, my dear," said she,  
"I've not come to play.  
I don't know your people or the street or  
home where you stay;  
But I must with speed get to reach all of  
Ireland today,  
To tell them the Fleet is in Whiddy with  
all its array."

- And more of this kind. In the aislings or vision poems and in her other songs for the most part, this was her theme. In "The Battle of Keimaneigh" she sings:

P.32

They come at length in strength, the brave,  
In strong, fast ships that skim the waves,  
Stout-hearted French who flinch not e'er  
                            with righteous sword;  
Cities will surrender and in embers they will  
                            glow,  
For the respite has ended, so tremble, ye foes!

Maura Bwee and contemporary poets might perhaps be criticized for quenching any spark for independence held by the Irish people at that time, making them depend on help from overseas, instead of urging them to gain their freedom on their own resources. But the poets spoke in deadly earnestness. They knew how weak the Irish people were and that they could not win without some sort of help. Another point: The poets continued with the vision poem because the people liked it.

It kept the spirit of patriotism alive in their hearts. It helped to keep them familiar with the old learning and scholarship. They liked its style and its scope. So, instead of the old method of verse-making, the poets adopted this new style of song-making with its rhythm and strong accentuation, both of which were based on the popular music of the time. The people sought it (they "went for it"). Small wonder then that we find this type of song so frequently in the works of Maura Bwee.

She was one of the people and always oriented towards the people. She described her country's story as she saw it.

Ireland was her love. And that love pervaded her story all through her life. She made her (Ireland's) story known to the people, and their love for their native land was intensified as they came to realize her distress. No wonder then - the many vision poems she has left us and the beauty, the richness and fluency of her speech.

P.33 But her work was not confined to vision poetry. A woman of the people, she described their life as she saw it. She knew everything that moved or stirred them. She has left us, therefore, songs of devotion and mourning, songs of love and merriment, keening verses, ballads of drinking songs, of pleasure and revelry.

Whatever direction the Irish people have taken, they brought God with them. No matter how heavy the burden of oppression, they never lost hope, or their trust in God. They disparaged the English, not only through motives of patriotism but also because of their false religion. Religious sentiments are often to be found in Maura Bwee's songs. Here is what she says in one of them:

I have heard from the prophets, and  
St. John has discussed it,  
There's respite no longer, but reckoning  
in store;  
Doomed for the slaughter, those big-bellied  
butchers  
Who spurned Christ's passion for orgies  
and sport.

And rendering thanks to God for the victory in Keimaneigh, she says:

Praise to the Lord Jesus, no reprisals have  
 we known,  
 And can speak of it gleefully, secure in  
 our home.

Themes for the dirge or lament were never lacking to the poets, and Maura Bwee was no exception. It would be hard to surpass the lament she made in behalf of her son's wife in its profoundness and range of emotion:

Stay ye away, ye gentle young criers.  
 Don't tread on the grave my brave one  
 lies in.  
 For he was my loved one, my mate truly  
 plighted,  
 My first love and late, since the days of  
 my childhood.

Nor did love songs elude her. She was wont to speak with the womenfolk; she knew how to get the message across to them. This is how she expressed it in the song Berta Cruadha, "Hard Plight":

P.34

O maiden mild, there's many a lying  
 Promise fine, but baseless,  
 Men make; so find from the church, in time,  
 The way to bind - or chase - such.  
 They'd promise Ireland's wealth in kind  
 For ever thine and paid for;  
 But be advised, don't take their line;  
 They're not the kind to play with.

And in Fainne an Lae, "The Dawn of Day," she says:

O, bonny maid of form more fair than snow  
on sunlit hill,  
You've left my heart all torn apart with  
naught to cure my ill;  
I'd marry thee in poverty and seek no  
dowry still -  
But I'm bound to wed a pretty maid,  
though it be against my will.

Often she cast aspersion and mockery upon the ascendancy class who kept the Irish underfoot. She would indulge in jest for the sake of jest among her own people and often composed funny verses for their pleasure. But terrible was the invective she poured out on her enemies. It will suffice to quote a verse from her song, "The Poor Gaels Are Tormented":

May scourge and wounding and terror consuming  
Befall that group, their booty and might;  
The hang-man, with rope wrapped round their  
throats -  
And the Lord withholding his eyes from their  
plight.  
And, moreover, may Oscar bend over,  
Plying his strokes till worn his scythe,  
And in place of our youths, lying in gloom,  
Theirs be the doom of endless night!

The people of Ireland were not noted for temperance at one time in their lives. One might cavil at how much given to

merry making, pleasure and revelry they were. The hard condition of their lives was the cause. Destitution and distress threatened them, and, needless to say, such a situation tends to drive people to despair. The poet would express high regard for the one who would entertain him lavishly in the tavern. It became a custom among them. But we should not judge that kind of revelry by the standards of today. Let us listen to Maura Bwee's song "The Poor Gaels Are Tormented":

P.35

When we overhaul them, let nobody talk of  
A pint or a quart to put on the score,  
But barrels, full tall ones, piled in the hallway,  
For thousands of callers, gallons galore!

In Maura Bwee's poetry we find laughter and gloom, hope and despair. And if there be more of gloom and despair in it, let that be charged to the state of the times. It was one of the gifts of the olden days that poets like her should arise to keep the light of faith and the spark of courage alive in the hearts of their Irish contemporaries. And if Ireland's sons and daughters still cling to the old traditions, let Maura Bwee be recognized as deserving our thanks for her contribution. She was always there to counsel and encourage her neighbor. Her songs were sung at market and fair and at fireside. If a goodly amount of the ancient literature is still extant among them, she played a significant part in preserving it. If the Gaelic language is alive and vigorous in that locality, fair credit is due to Maura Bwee. She enhanced it, polished it and broadened its scope. She made of it a suitable vehicle for the spoken word. When poetry of those times is assessed, a well-deserved niche will be reserved for Maura Bwee. She will be honored and esteemed by the Gaels of Ireland.

### References

Maura Bwee could not read or write; neither could more than very few, of her place and time. It was therefore by way of oral recitation that these songs have come down to us. They were naturally subject to alterations over the years. Each P.36 one has his own version of a story. The songs are still on the lips of the people.

When the Gaelic League was founded more than thirty years ago, a new spirit took hold of the speakers of Gaelic. They sought to read and write it. They wanted to know literature. They well understood that literature was at death's door and they set about trying to save it. There were some people in West Cork at that time, among them Donal Lucey and Conor A. Cotter who wrote a good deal. They also collected a good number of Maura Bwee's songs. I have had the good fortune of getting hold of these manuscripts and they are now in Cork University Library. Whenever the songs deviate from the version in the MSS, I have followed the latter as being the best. There are twelve books in all which contain much of the poetry of the local poets. Donal Lucey compiled nine of them and Conor A. Cotter the three others. All of the poems are written down phonetically and in Roman type. There are eight books of these to which reference will be made in this way: D.L. 5 i.e. Book I, written by Donal Lucey. C.C. i.e. written by Conor A. Cotter. I.L. i.e. Book I, page 5, and so on. References will be made to others from whom I received songs as follows: D.A.C. i.e. Dermot A. Cotter; C.O.M. i.e. Conor O'Moynihan; M.O.S. i.e. Michael (Sheahan) Hyde. As far as possible, I have arranged the songs chronologically.

Father Donagh O'Donoghue  
(An Tathair) Donncha O'Donnchu.

P. 37The PoemsAr Leacain na GreineOn a Sunny Hillside

## I

On a sunny hillside yesterday  
 As I was rousing my cows,  
 A fair lady I saw, modest, well-mannered,  
 Comely and young.  
 The blush of berries was on her face  
 And her countenance like the rose,  
 And her abundant tresses flowed down  
 To the clasps of her shoes.

## II

I would fain have come over to her  
 To welcome her with a kiss,  
 But I feared she might be some ethereal woman  
 Who had come my way.  
 I did not recognize her despite all that  
 Was said in the Province\* about her -  
 Her person, her mien, her beauty  
 Her fame and her form.

## III

I sat down beside her  
 And started to flatter her.  
 And again, soon after, I thought of  
 Sharing fellowship with her a while:

\* The footnotes are gathered at the end of the individual poems. RPB

P.38

"If you're tired from traveling, stop off  
 And come with me for the day,  
 And you'll get a bed - not a straw one -  
 For a month, if you wish it that way."

## IV

"You are jesting, my dear," said she,  
 "And you have no cause (to do so) with me,  
 Seeing that I do not know where  
 Lies your home or your habitation.  
 For I must go to the North of Lorc's Plain<sup>1</sup>  
 With the news  
 That I have seen the Fleet in Whiddy  
 Equipped in full power."

v<sup>2</sup>

"O gentle, strong one, of the Fleet  
 Do not speak to me till I die.  
 For it pains me to see the thousands  
 That are distressed in its wake.  
 They were scattered, alas! by the wind  
 Which sent many of them astray,  
 And in shackles they sit,  
 As happened to the regal lady far away.

## VI

"Each one that you see explain to them  
 The gist of the news  
 That in full strength they are coming,  
 Well supplied with bullets and shot -  
 Stout-hearted supporters, hastening, Louis<sup>3</sup>  
 And the Spaniard<sup>3</sup> complying -

To Banba<sup>4</sup> they are coming without delay,  
 By the grace of God's Son."

P. 39

## VII

"Indeed, if your narrations are true,  
 My stately, gentle maiden,  
 We shall have land without rent,  
 Without tax or dispute.  
 We shall have wheat and butter and salted meat  
 On the table for ourselves.  
 And Merrymakers will be draining  
 The quarts and calling (for more)."

---

\*Coic in the text, modern Irish Cuig, 'five'. I take it for Cuige, 'a fifth', i.e., a Province of Ireland, in this case, Munster.

<sup>1</sup> "Lorc's Plain," poetic name for Ireland.

<sup>2</sup> Stanza V seems out of place in this context. I would suggest that it belongs to another song (not listed) dealing with the aftermath of the armada.

<sup>3</sup> "Louis" - Louis XVI, and "the Spaniard" - indicating French and Spanish military aid. TR

<sup>4</sup> Banba is another name for Ireland.

Fainne an LaeThe Dawning of the Day (A)

## I

'Twas early morning as I was tending my stock  
 And driving them out to pasture,  
 That I encountered the stately maiden of mirth  
 Crooning (now) and crying.  
 When I heard the voice so pleasing to me,  
 I eagerly drew close to her.  
 The largest tears were on her soft cheeks,  
 How pitiful she was, weeping so far from home!

## II

Wavy, flowing, thickly ringleted  
 Were her tresses falling down.  
 Trimly set was her slender waist  
 And her eyebrows neat and fine.  
 With brightest teeth and sweetest lips  
 And her two breasts round, upright -  
 "Indeed, O woman, grand would be your love  
 In the early dawning day!"

P.40

## III

"Are you the clever Cearnet<sup>1</sup> who shaped the mill  
 Out of her acute mind?  
 Or, are you the lady brought over the waves  
 Who sparked the Battle of Troy?  
 Or, is it true that you are the one  
 Who won that most precious apple  
 Over all the women in the world?  
 How lovely and sweet are her looks

And her love  
In the early dawning day!"

## IV

"O clever hero of merry words  
I am not any one of those.  
I am a maid without any spouse  
Though long have I been in anguish.  
Bear then the news that I was enslaved  
By wicked, perverse hordes.  
(But) now in truth the time has come:  
We will have Erin in full sway."

## V

"If you would wish to come into this tavern  
And share friendship with me for a while?"  
The answer she gave: "I cannot stay,  
The harvest is spreading behind me.  
The Duke of York and his troops  
Are being ravaged  
By the true Prince of the Gael.  
And by next year the boors  
Will lie prostrate.  
That is the true account of my tidings."

<sup>1</sup>Cearnet, Irish form: Cearnait, (Kairnit). The editor gives as reference Keating's Foras Feasa ar Eirinn. See: Translation by John O'Mahoney, Publisher: Patrick Harety N.Y. 1857. Title: The History of Ireland. Cearnet was the beautiful captive daughter of a Pictish King (of Scotland), enamored by King Cormac MacArt. His lawful wife, Ethni Ollamda, compelled the girl to grind "nine pecks of grain" every day on the quern or hand-mill. Bearing Cormac's child and unable now to "work at querning," she approached the King who immediately "sent to Alba (Scotland) for handicrafts men, to construct a mill," thus relieving her from her drudgery. Ibid. TR

P.41Fainne an LaeThe Dawning of the Day (B)

## I

One early morning (as I lay) on my soft bed,  
 I heard the voices of the birds.  
 I bethought myself that I should go  
 And let out the stock to graze.  
 I met her (then), her tresses on her lap,  
 As she gently combed her hair -  
 The gifted maiden of form more fair  
 Than the swan on fish-abounding stream.

## II

My heart quaked as I asked her  
 What country the lady was from:  
 "Are you the pearl of mirth who fled  
 From Greece  
 And left Troy in ruins?  
 Or Deirdre<sup>1</sup> who gave heart's love and affection  
 To Naoise<sup>1</sup>, who died because of her?  
 Or the woman who, by the beauty of her form,  
 Won the apple in keen competition?

## III

"Are you the clever Cleena<sup>2</sup> who wrought  
 bewitchment and distress.  
 Or the lovely Aoibhill<sup>2</sup> without deceit?  
 Or the fair maid of the tower who crossed  
 Over the sea,  
 And left thousands in feeble state?  
 Or the woman in the hill who subdued the hounds -  
 The one called Cuileann<sup>3</sup> the mild -

P.42

And put Finn<sup>3</sup> in the stream in helpless plight,  
And left the Fiana<sup>3</sup> in tears?"

## IV

She said to me, "Kind Sir, sit down,  
Till I explain my situation.  
I am not the maid who rode over the sea,  
Or sparked the Battle of Troy,  
But a true born native of Ive-Leary,  
Of noble Gaelic lineage.  
And my coffin make, if I am not wed  
By early dawning day!"

## V

"O pleasing maid of form more fair  
Than snow on a sunny hill,  
You have left me sick and sore  
With little rest from pain.  
I would marry you without a farthing,  
And I would not ask for cows or dower,  
But I am already vowed to a pretty young  
Woman of this neighborhood."

---

<sup>1</sup>"Deirdre" and "Naoise": principals in the well-known tale of love and treachery, laid in the time of "The Red Branch Knights of Ulster."

<sup>2</sup>"Cleena," Irish Cliodna, and Aoibhill (Ee-vill) goddesses of ancient Irish Lore.

<sup>3</sup>Cuileann (Cullen) this name I do not recall. Finn is the famous Fionn Mac Cumhall, (Finn MacCool) of Irish lore. The Fiana (Fee-na) his band of warriors. TR

P.43

Bearta Cruadha  
Hard Plight

I

One evening late as I went alone  
Across the dewy narrows,  
The radiance from Phoebus, without cloud  
Or eclipse, was softly approaching me;  
There was chanting of birds on the  
Tops of the branches, and in the pool  
The fish were stirring,  
When I saw beside me the stately maid  
Who pierced my side with Cupid's arrow.

II<sup>1</sup>

"You'll have from me full fields of  
Cattle to count, with no tax or rent  
Demanded; the cup and plate you  
Could run a race with, held in  
Your hand so easily.  
You'll get the ring that Finn took  
Into the water with him, to be each  
Day on your finger;  
And you'll receive, my dear, all I have  
Promised, if you solve my hard  
Plight for me. (Refrain).

III

"And you'll get, my dear, the sharp-edged  
Spear, held once by the famed and  
Mighty Achilles, with the point of  
Which he laid out low the great  
Hector over in Troy,"

P.44

"The silken pennon that was wrapped  
 Around Helen as she crossed over the sea.  
 And you'll receive. . . . etc.

## IV

"And you'll get, my love, the valorous blades<sup>2</sup>  
 That were kept in the misty dungeon of  
 Lough Lein, and the gold-topped sword  
 Which I had not yet promised you,  
 Brought by Talc Mac Treoin to Ireland.  
 You'll receive from me the apple the  
 Three women disputed about  
 Which was won at Court by Venus.  
 And you'll receive. . . .etc.

## V

"You'll get, my love, the golden bracelet  
 That brought about tumult and havoc  
 In the conflict in France with Bona(part)  
 Who was subdued by Louis the Great, (sic),  
 And who sailed into Spain with armed forces  
 Leaving a hundred men to perish.  
 And you'll receive. . . .etc.

P.45

## VI

"You'll get the magic hood of the fairy woman  
 Whose name was Cleena, the fair one,  
 Who gave it with love to her kindly spouse  
 Whose good looks she concealed from hundreds.  
 You'll get from me the Fleece - which I don't tell  
 Of - that Jason took aboard from Greece with him.  
 And you'll receive. . . .etc."

## VII

"You'll get from me the Boeotian cow,  
Guarded by the great Argos.  
She had clover and excellent provisions  
(But) succumbed to the music of Orpheus.  
You'll have Bran and Sceolang<sup>3</sup> that brought  
Down so much game,  
And often made sport for the Fiana.  
And you'll receive. . . .etc.

P.46

## VIII

"You'll get Donal's horse which never needs rest  
Or eats any food or meal;  
He would speedily on the road set out  
Under a cloud of mist to Lough Lein.  
(You'll get) the singing blackbird from Carnacrone  
And the great giant of the sheep.  
And you'll receive. . . .etc."

## IX

My stately maiden, there will be many a promise  
False and baseless, made to your face.  
But without the clergy's binding don't yield  
To any man,  
And you will gain the prize like Una.  
If he should promise you Ireland,  
Every sod of it,  
To be yours without dispute or squabble,  
Take my advice, do not believe the rake,  
With such as him avoid all intimacy.

---

<sup>1</sup>I suspect there is a stanza or two missing between I and II. TR

Certainly, this smart observation of the TR is correct. At the close of the pastoral scene in Stanza I, a young man's heart is pierced with Cupid's arrow at the sight of the stately maid. From Stanza II through VIII, his desperate, Hard Plight is poured out, promising her everything under the sun if she will marry him. Note that the last promise in Stanza II is repeated at the end of every stanza through VIII indicating this whole poem would have been sung by some accomplished singer, joined in chorus by the audience with the entire refrain "And you'll receive from me...etc." from Stanza II through VIII. In Stanza IX, the poet addresses the stately maiden with a stern, and laughable, caution: If he should promise you all of Ireland, don't believe the rake... (keep away from guys like him). Any man who is serious about marriage will take the proper steps that lead to the altar. With that kind of suitor "You will gain the prize like Una." RPB

<sup>2</sup>Luana "blades," swords, (?) may also mean "champion."

(Ed.)

<sup>3</sup>"Bran and Sceolang," the two famous hounds of Finn MacCool. TR

P.47Seo Leo, a ThoilHush, My Love

## I

God love you forever, my little lad!  
 You are worried and weary and worn.  
 If you come with me you'll find shelter  
 And caring,  
 And you'll get a prize you yet haven't heard of.  
 So hush, my love, and cry no more.

## II

You will get from me a fine herd,  
 Of cattle to provide you with milk,  
 And also the bull to charm them.  
 You'll get horses to plough the grassland -  
 And red wine and white on your table.  
 So hush, my love, and cry no more.

## III

You'll get the helmet and the shield  
 From the Great Simpleton<sup>1</sup>  
 And the apple from the fair young lady.  
 You'll get the dog of liveliest motion  
 Which the hero held in leash behind him.  
 So hush, my love, etc.

## IV

You'll get the horn with delicious drinks  
 That used to bewitch the thousands.  
 You'll get that mansion of Dun an Oir<sup>2</sup>,  
 Which the Great Ogre used for his pleasure.  
 So hush, my love, etc.

## V

P.48 You'll get the fleece that was bathed in gold,  
 That Jason took on board ship over the sea.  
 You'll get the horses draped in satin  
 From the son of King Derg - long meant  
 For you.  
 So hush, my love, etc.

## VI

You'll be given Macroom for sure, to provide  
 You with shoes,  
 And the Drohid<sup>3</sup> by way of provision and food.  
 Dublin will be yours for hunting and sport,  
 And the great (county of) Limerick for your stock.  
 So hush, my love, etc.

## VII

You'll get Beara to provide fish for your table  
 And the wide market place for meat.  
 You'll have the harbors with their  
 Sailing boats,  
 And Ive-Leary for its berries and nuts.  
 So hush, my love, etc.

## VIII

By next year the boors will be grieving,  
 And city and town cleared of smoke and fog.  
 You'll have a gift I haven't told you  
 Of yet:  
 The Duke's daughter in your chimney-  
 Corner to amuse you.  
 So hush, my love, etc.

## IX

Don't cry any more, let me not see your tears,  
 For yonder crew will be wiped out  
 Before Autumn comes.  
 Their eyes will be dripping and  
 Their voices will falter.  
 And we will have their coaches,  
 To enjoy their jiggling and rattling.  
 So hush, my love, and cry no more.

---

<sup>1</sup> Usual title, "The Great Fool." See The Ossianic Lore and Romantic Myths of Medieval Ireland by Gerald Murphy, (p.39), 1961, Sign of the Three Candles, Dublin.

<sup>2</sup> Dun an Oir: "The Fortress of Gold."

<sup>3</sup> Drohid: An Droichead "the bridge." Perhaps Clondrohid near Macroom. TR

An BurcachYoung Man of the Burkes

## I

P.49      Young man of the Burkes from Keim,  
               Where the deer wander at will,  
               Return and bring back with you a woman  
               Who will be amenable to your wishes.  
               Do not leave that girl behind you  
               Because of a small dowry:  
               If her kin were at your side in a quarrel,  
               You would emerge victorious.

## II

Were it not for life's misfortunes  
 And her father's death,  
 There would be stock in abundance there  
 On the rich, smooth meadowlands.  
 She would be riding at her ease  
 In a suit of costly silk,  
 With a feather-bed beneath her,  
 And a curtain closed around her.

## III

Michael Cnawwig's daughter, Nell,  
 Is a well-mannered swan-like maid,  
 Kin of upright, generous men,  
 Ever worthy of fame and respect.  
 Bright well-furnished rooms (are theirs)  
 And herds of milking cows.  
 Famous (are) their household women  
 For providing abundance of bread.

P.50

## IV

O man of the Burkes, down there  
 At the border of Lough Lua,  
 You will deeply regret it, if you abandon  
 The maid of pretty tresses.  
 A quiet and pleasant wife she would be,  
 This handsome, cheerful maid,  
 Whose sway is rightly acknowledged,  
 From the foot of the glen to the bay.

## V

On God's own Sunday morning  
 She came toward us over the Keim,

The mild-mannered, gentle, well-known girl,  
With the pretty, close-set teeth.  
The bright lustre of berries was on  
Her fresh, soft, smooth cheeks.  
Light was her step atop the dew,  
As she swept young Burke away.

---

P.51

Tuireamh Sheain de Burc

A Lament for Sean Burke

(first version)

I

O Sean Burke, my grief for you  
Pierces my heart!  
O fresh slender sprout of the lightsome body;  
Whiter your waist than I have seen on any man,  
And to think I have come too early to announce  
Your day!

II

Sweet was your speech, modest and seemly;  
Fine was your person, wherever you stood.  
It is my anguish that I have not gone into  
The grave with you!  
Alas! my sapling, your head on the  
Cold ground!

III

Raise your head till I tell you of my plight  
That I am left without a husband or a son,

Or anyone.

This great congregation has come at your bidding.  
Only arise to your feet and they will free you!

## IV

My three brothers have traveled, their horses  
Exhausted.

Two from London and the third from Ireland,  
With writs duly sealed,  
Bringing from the king a free pardon for you.

## V

My grief, five hundred fold that it wasn't Alec  
Who was taken,  
Or Eamon, since he is the best of them,  
Or fair-headed Terence, foster child of my mother,  
And Sean Burke allowed to come safely through!

P.52

## VI

"Fie! Fie! my dear daughter, Mary,  
If you are distraught, don't lose your shame:  
It's easier for you to get a husband than  
Three brothers.  
And praise a hundred fold to (the Virgin) Mary  
That my sons have come safe."

## VII

You would not say that mother, indeed,  
If you were (with him) in London,<sup>1</sup>  
Where would I get a finely fitted cloak  
Imported from Spain,  
And suits of clothes surpassing all others  
Wherever I'd go?

## VIII

(I've had) from him gloves for my hands  
 And rings without number,  
 And pearls to wear whenever I'd choose to;  
 Fine shapely boots you've not yet heard  
 Me mention,  
 And hats for my head for outings and  
 Sporting events.

## IX

I'd have finely milled flour which had  
 Been sifted through arches,<sup>2</sup>  
 Delicious roast beef and games of backgammon,  
 Spirited stable horses for riding,  
 And leave to sleep securely between  
 His two arms.

## X

Small is the wonder that I am weary with sorrow,  
 For often I saw you at the door of the Courthouse.  
 Crowds riding by and crowds dismounting,  
 The tables outspread and the lights never  
 Quenched.

P.53

## XI

I have walked with you through thick  
 And thin,  
 Enduring the tempests of the great ocean;  
 Over to Bristol<sup>(1)</sup> and back to Listowel,  
 Or over to Dublin to study poetry.

## XII

Stay away from him you green colored  
 (Hawk)moths,  
 Do not be walking on the grave of my hero  
 For he is my lover and my bed-mate,  
 And my first wedded husband since I  
 Was a child.

## XIII

O ladies, don't you feel for me pity,  
 As I weep so lonesomely on the grave  
 Of my loved one.  
 I have a lock of his hair stowed  
 In safe keeping,  
 And a puppy from his kennel  
 Held fast in my bosom.

---

<sup>1</sup>"London" ? the text: Oilean an Tnama, 'Island of the Thames.'

? Tnama is probably a misprint for Thama, better: Tama.

<sup>2</sup>"..."through arches." The phrase occurs also in the second version, referring perhaps to the arch-like structure of whorls or reels in the grinding machinery ? TR  
 Note: The second version given explains some of the obscurities in the first. The Editor received the second version from Johanna Kelleher who attributed the whole poem to Maire Bwee. (TR, from Editor's note, p.74).

Caoineadh Sheain de Burc  
The Keening of Sean Burke  
(second version)

Sean's wife lamenting him:

"O Sean Burke, my grief for you  
Pierces my heart.  
O fresh, slender sprout of the lightsome  
Body,  
Whiter your waist than I've seen on  
Any man,  
Though you have come too soon to  
Announce to us the day.  
Raise your head until I tell of my plight -  
That I am bereft of husband, of child,  
Of every one.  
A great host is coming at your bidding -  
Two from London and three from Ireland;  
My three brothers, their horses exhausted,  
With writs duly sealed,  
Bringing from the king a free pardon  
For you.

P.54 "Little wonder that I am weary with sorrow,  
For often I have seen you at the  
Door of the Courthouse  
Crowds on horseback and crowds dismounting,  
Your tables outspread and your lights unquenched.  
O a thousand pities your death, my Burke.  
My direst regret (is) that Alec isn't

In your place,  
Or Eamon since he was the best of them,  
Or, fair-haired Terence, my mother's dear  
Foster-son,  
And Sean Burke to come back alive."

Her mother was listening to her and spoke:

"You are a foolish woman, my daughter  
Most dear,  
And if you are distraught, do not  
Lose your shame;  
It is easier to find a husband  
Than three splendid brothers.  
And a hundred praises to Mary  
That my sons came safe."

The wife again:

"O little mother, you yourself would  
Not say that,  
If you were with him in the little  
Island of Mona  
Where a cloak would be prepared  
In Spain for you;  
Fine milled flour, sifted through arches,  
Freedom to go riding on stable horses  
And to sleep securely between his two arms.

"I would walk through thick and thin with you.  
I would go with you on the tempestuous sea,  
To Bristo(l) or to Listowel,  
Or to Dublin of the large city gates,

"And woe is me that I haven't gone into  
 The grave with you!

Alas! my darling, your head on the cold ground!

P.55

"O ladies, make room for him,  
 And let him begin his rest.<sup>1</sup>  
 For there is not one drop of blood in him  
 But the noblest,  
 The blood of lords and earls of the land,  
 The blood of the justiciary to whom all  
 Would curtsy.  
 And the blood of the Geraldines to blazon  
 Through it all.

"Move away from me you green-colored  
 (Hawk)moths<sup>2</sup>  
 And do not settle on the grave of my hero.  
 For he is my husband and my bed-mate,  
 And the first lover since I was a child.  
 O ladies! do not pity my grieving,  
 As I weep so lonely on my lover's grave,  
 A lock of whose hair I have  
 In safe keeping,  
 And a puppy from his kennel  
 Held fast in my bosom."

<sup>1</sup>This might be rendered "Let (me) be the first to describe him," but I prefer the first choice.

<sup>2</sup>"(Hawk)moths" above and in stanza XII of version one: The editor notes (p.74) that the rare word cana, plural canaithe, is glossed 'moth' 'moths' by Donal Lucey. Niall

O'Donaill in his Irish Dictionary (1977) gives Conach "a hawkmoth," etc. Dinneen (Irish English Dictionary, 1927) gives cana 'a wolf cub, a large fish,' 'a moth or bookworm.' I can't find a plural in -aithe, but I have no doubt that moth or hawk moth is the correct term. Hence, I would correct my version on p. 33 of the original as above, instead of "chanters" - from can, canaim, 'chant,' 'I chant,' sing, etc. TR

Cath Cheim an Fhiaidh

The Battle of Keimaneigh

I

By the river of Glankeim in Ive-Leary  
 Is my dwelling,  
 Where the deer repair each evening  
 For peaceful repose.  
 There was I pensively pondering  
 Things over,  
 Listening in the woodlands to the  
 Sweet chant of birds -  
 When I heard the battle drawing near,  
 Horses neighing in wild refrain.  
 With the roar of guns the mountain quaked -  
 Not pleasing was that sound!  
 Fiercely they came upon us like a pack  
 Of maddening hounds,  
 And my grief those heroes in sorrow  
 Laid low!

P.56

II

Not a woman or child was left in the homesteads.  
O the cries they raised and the loud,  
Constant wails!  
As they watched the yeomen in force  
Closing around them,  
Shooting and loading and firing their way.  
The noise was heard far and wide.  
Each man said he must get there.  
"Ready! Quick! the battle's on.  
Come! Let's join the fray!"  
Exultantly came the heroes to join  
Their fellow Gaels,  
And they routed the fat bounders  
In wild disarray.

III

'Twas short till the full force  
Arrived to surround us,  
Leading out our people in the early  
Morning mist -  
Barry, the bumbailiff, Barnet and Beecher  
Hedges and White, and with them  
Thousands more.  
May the King of Might bring them low,  
With loss of fame, respect and store,  
To flaming fires mid torments sore,  
Ever without relief!  
To Jesus, praise a hundredfold.  
They did not retaliate,  
And we can make merry and  
Narrate it at our ease.

## IV

This very year now the big louts  
Will be running.  
We'll bury them in ditches  
Beneath mud and mire.  
We'll seek no Court or state,  
But the gallows set high for them,  
The hemp neatly twined, to wreak  
Our revenge.

P.57  
'Tis they hold the rod and wicked is  
Their rule -  
In elegant coaches furnished so fine;  
With all kinds of foodstuffs  
For banquet and feasting  
On the tables of boors.  
I'm assured by every sound author  
That Pastorina has foretold,  
Before the end of harvest,  
They will pay for their carousing.

## V

There was Smith lying supine on the  
Dark-heathered hillside,  
Unsightly his appearance with his buttocks exposed.  
May Calvin's alien offspring find no better bargain.  
Who to Christ never yielded, but to pomp  
And carousing  
Armed hosts will come with glee,  
On speeding ships, for long they ride -  
The men of France who have never quailed,  
All geared for the fight.  
Cities will surrender, 'mid flames of

Flashing fires:  
The long respite is over and terror  
In store.

## VI

So, beloved sons of Erin, don't flinch,  
Don't surrender.  
Fast the time is coming when your work  
Will all be done.  
Take heart and courage, let this  
Brood be banished  
To where they'll be a-scorching  
Among the fiery flames.  
Your pikes be readied, clean and bright.  
Don't stand back, press to the fight.  
Help is coming as God so wills,  
And lay low the swine!  
Push boldly on for your ancestral homes.  
It is time to repossess them;  
The wait is over-long.

## VII

P.58 I'll cease now from verse-making.  
Old age is drawing closer;  
My heart's too full of malice  
For the big-bellied gang.  
No more I wish to say of them -  
Let not that relieve them -  
But havoc and terror come down  
On that band.  
Vain be their stand behind their guns,

Nor shelter find by crag or hill  
Where the speeding fox was often trailed  
To where his cries would lead.  
Every stout-hearted hero will be there,  
With his pike and spear in hand.  
Nor fear reprisal ever, or pay for  
The deed.

Caoineadh ar Liam O'Rinn

A Lament for William Ring<sup>1</sup>

I

Women are wailing in the glens of Ive-Leary,  
And loved Gougane Barra is all covered  
With clouds -  
All because of this hero lately departed -  
For William Ring my thousand fold grief!

II

I feel for your father and mother  
Without you,  
For your bed-mate and child crying  
Out for you.  
The reason why I had not come to see you -  
I was every morning on the watch  
For my dear ones.

III

God be your judge, you who strike down a  
Young man  
And not have him buried along with

His comrades in the graveyard,  
 But in a cleft by a ditch, unscreened  
 From the elements,  
 With not even moss to cover your breast.

---

<sup>1</sup>The editor notes that this apparently is only a part  
 of the original song. (p.76). TR

P.59

An Cruiscin Lan

The Full Jug<sup>1</sup>

I

On a lovely sunny morning by the side  
 Of Knocknabooly,  
 I saw a stately maiden, her robe wet from  
 The rushes.  
 Pureness and brightness on her cheeks  
 Glowed together.  
 She left my mind in torment,  
 And I fear I shan't endure long -  
 And "Let's pass around the jug again  
 And let it be full!"

II

Politely I asked of the poised, lovely lady:  
 "Who are your relations, and where do you  
 Hail from?  
 Are you a wandering woman with  
 No husband there to trace you,  
 Or is it true that you are Cearnet

"Who built solidly the great mills?"  
 And - "Let's pass around. . . ."etc.

## III

"My gentle-mannered, young man, I am  
 None of those you have mentioned,  
 But a woman of the noble Gaels who is  
 Sorely afflicted.  
 My true name is Erin, by Charlie's son  
 Rejected,  
 My lands possessed by brutes  
 Given to plunder and destruction."  
 And - "Let's pass around. . . ."etc.

P.60

## IV

I gave her a handshake and a welcome to  
 My fair one,  
 Asked her to stay till daylight in  
 Peace and contentment;  
 And I'd make for her a bonfire  
 Happily on the hilltop,  
 So we could have our day,  
 And the devil take the gentry.<sup>2</sup>  
 And - "Let's pass around. . . ."etc.

## V

"I cannot stay the night with you,  
 Though I've need of relaxation.  
 I must travel to Lorc's Plain,  
 For I've come with information  
 That the Saxons and their brood here  
 Are doomed to extirpation,  
 And the Gaels to take their mansions -

"Which brings me to exultation."  
And - "Let's pass around. . . ."etc.

---

<sup>1</sup>"Croosh-keen Lawn," a popular refrain.

<sup>2</sup>Lit.: "let the gentry go a-chasing." TR

P.61

A Mhaire Ni Laoghaire

O Maura O'Leary

I

O Maura O'Leary from the mouth of the Keim,  
Where the harmless deer is stirring.  
Have you really died, for I have not heard  
One sound from your lips emerging?  
Or have you seen any wayfarer, early  
Or late,  
In this valley beside Doughill  
Who would bring any news of life's  
Happenings -  
That the Gaels were in sore affliction?

II

"I have heard some news for you now  
Of late  
From the golden plover in Doughill,  
That a time would be set at once in Erin  
When the bears would all be routed;  
That the Repealers would arrive  
In full array  
And with God's aid to steer them,

"Leave English speakers wineless, and  
Feastless,  
With a volley of bullets to wake them."

## III

Success and long life to that golden plover  
Who brought to you this story,  
In love and friendship, above all,  
Irish women,  
O flower and pride of authors,  
Since you have been so easy and  
Kind to the bears  
As to lay them low with powder!  
Their day has come by grace of God's son  
Who first marked their time of accounting.

P. 62

## IV

A hail of bullets and sharp pike thrusts  
Will pierce their brutish bodies;  
Sticks and stones from all hands flung  
And God's curse down upon them.  
Faint they will lie under scorching sun,  
Without a soul in the world to tend them,  
Their hounds and beagles and horses spent,  
With no voice or cry left in them.

## V

Our people are crushed in dire distress,  
By rent and taxes broken,  
While the boors strut tall in lighted halls,  
Though their respite now is over.  
Their "feast" at table will be bare potatoes,

With salt that's full of rubbish.

Nor content I'll be with all their need  
Until they die of hunger.

## VI

If I were being waked, the tobacco cut,  
And candle burning brightly,  
And heard our afflictors were on the run,  
I would rise in strength to smite them.  
I pray the Lord I shan't go to the grave,  
Till I see that gang prostrated,  
And their corpses count in bog holes  
Drowned,  
Or by high hedges laid fast.

P.63

## VII

"O fine man's son I have heard of you,  
That at home you are highly thought of.  
May you flourish in joy with heirs at your call,  
So you'll never flinch or falter.  
If we were to meet at a tavern seat,  
I'd stand you a foaming quart, son,  
And shake your hand and drink your health,  
With plenty of punch to call for.

## VIII

"O fine man's son who deserved no blame,  
You've been princely, frank and noble.  
I will no more in verses speak,  
I'm old, dull, worn and weak.  
I give you at once the victor's branch,  
Its base and tip and laurels."<sup>1</sup>

"Keep up your heart, this coming year,  
The boors will start their bawling.

## IX

"Indeed, my love, if true your words,  
My youth again you'll find me,  
To notch the score on the wives of rogues  
Who eat flesh meat on Fridays.  
They say - who know - those will come to  
Woe,  
Who are given to inebriety,  
Who do not heed the upright priests  
And walk the road that's righteous."

---

<sup>1</sup>Lit.: "its bottom, its top and its apples." TR

P.64Ta Gaedhil Bhocht CraidhteThe Poor Gaels Are in Torment

## I

The poor Gaels are in torment, afflicted  
Most sorely,  
Hauled daily to court to double their woe;  
Spendid young men, hanged high on gallows  
And cast at once into the "Croppy Hole."  
Ships are filled with those being transported -  
My grief for you ever! - under many a yoke.  
Let the respite be short till you get  
Retribution -  
And that is in Your hands, O Lord of Hosts!

## II

I have heard from the prophets that St. John  
 Has told us  
 That the time of withholding has drawn to a  
 Close;  
 That ripe for the slaughter are those hulks  
 Of thick haunches  
 Who have discarded the Passion  
 For orgies and sport.  
 Any one of their party surviving the  
 Slaughter,  
 A beggarman's sack in his hand will he hold.  
 Empty that hand, no alms will it carry,  
 But beatings and brandings his lot ever more.

## III

In this very year the hubbub we'll witness  
 When the bears will crumble, crippled by blows.  
 We'll have bonfires ablaze high on the hilltops,  
 With horns playing music for joy uncontrolled.  
 Women and children, till they are wearied,  
 Rocks from the fields at the brutes  
 They will throw.  
 And if the High Son allows, may these  
 Fall in prostration  
 As thickly as rain on the misty knoll.

P. 65

## IV

May felling and wounding and terror abounding  
 Befall that crowd in the midst of their store;  
 The gallows all set, their necks with  
 Ropes 'round them,  
 And may God on their torments slight  
 Heeding bestow.

And in place of our youth left there to languish,  
May that gang be in anguish till Doomsday comes!

## V

I pray to my master to shorten the waiting,  
Till the tables are turned and we can have sport:  
- When they're wineless and beerless,  
Weakened and wasted,  
Left without status and friends in court;  
- When that swarm of knaves are cast  
Into a quarry,  
And their backsides uncovered by sod or stone;  
While the Gaels 'round the table proudly regale me,  
And I with them gladly respond to their toast.

## VI

May I not be put under, or the green  
Sod put above me,  
Till I witness the rout of the  
Big-bellied boors;  
Till I see running headlong our  
Heartless oppressors  
Who kept in affliction our fathers before.  
When that day comes on them, let  
None of you squabble about a pint or a quart  
To be put on the score.  
Full barrels brought in and piled on  
The platforms,  
Will supply all callers with potions galore.

---

P.66

'Se mo Bhroinchreach  
It's My Deep Regret

Teige Bwee, brother of Maura Bwee, cecinit (sings) (CCT).

Note: "cecinit" is Latin for "sang." Hence, here Maura depicts her brother, Teige, singing...in mock self-deprecation? RPB

I

It's my deep regret that I am not Donal by name.  
 I would clear ground for barley and I'd mow  
 The hay;  
 Your cattle I'd lead beneath leafy trees  
 And shake off this cloud that mars my  
 Heart's<sup>1</sup> Ease.

II

When I sit by the bar, not a coin in my hand  
 I stamp up and down, my hat on the stand -  
 Says the right regal hero (the barman ?) the  
 Best of his class,  
 "Come on up, Teige Bwee, for you a full glass."

III

If I am Teige Bwee, my heart is quite white,<sup>2</sup>  
 And with my fine hand a fair letter I'd write.  
 Two smooth-cheeked maids are vying to be  
 First<sup>3</sup> -  
 My heart's grief! they're the reason  
 Of my downfall and thirst.

P.66

## IV

A vile thirst pursues me and with  
 Cards I play tricks -  
 With the five, or backgammon  
 As keen as the next.  
 Vessels from Spain I would bring  
 To the cove,  
 And heart's torment on the barmaid  
 Who refuses me a drink.

## V

Long and keenly I've courted the slow-gazing  
 Maids,<sup>4</sup>  
 Long indeed, my leap over the river in spate.  
 My liteness of limb a hero would make  
 And the speech of seven languages,  
 I would fluently read.

P.67

## VI

English or Latin, quite well I could read.  
 It pains me to be unable to reach for a beer.  
 The shirt off my back's with the barmaid  
 In pawn,  
 And when I call for a drink she says,  
 "Pledge me some more."

## VII

My pledges are impounded, as often they've been,  
 By sellers of whiskey and brandy and beer.  
 When parched, I bang three times  
 On my cane,  
 But nobody heeds me or offers a dram.

## VIII

I drink in Cashel and in Waterford,  
Which has left me, alas! without silver  
Or gold.

No barmaid from Cashel to Bealanaleague  
But scornfully utters my name, Teige Bwee.

## IX

If I am Teige Bwee, then know how things  
Stand:

I would sell off my breeches if the  
Need would demand.

I've been often left flat by yon pensive-eyed  
Maid,

And down in Kilmurry, a whole barrel  
I've drained.

---

<sup>1</sup> More literally "and lift off the cloud from my whispering heart."

<sup>2</sup> ... "my heart is whiter than chalk."

<sup>3</sup> ... "vying with me in turn."

<sup>4</sup> Lit.: "Long, smooth and keen was (my) love for the slender maidens of the lingering gaze." TR

A Dhiarmuid Ui Laoghaire  
O Dermot O'Leary

Dermot, oldest brother of Maura Bwee, CCT

I

O Dermot O'Leary, to the ringleted maiden  
 Your looks and your ways do excel.  
 But her people doubt that, given the dowry,  
 You would spend it wisely and well.  
P.68 For you are light-hearted, free of all care,  
 Fond of the damsels and sipping of ale.  
 That of rakes it is stated you are the greatest  
 Of all in Ive-Leary in your day.

II

"Freely I state it, I am somewhat care-free,  
 For that is the nature of folks of Clan Bwee.  
 But let not your folks doubt it, if given  
 The dowry,  
 That I wouldn't spend it wisely, indeed.  
 I'd mow the meadow and not chop off my limbs.  
 I'd fight any man at the fair on the green,  
 And as freely I'd court a colleen."

III

"Perhaps if we met in the ale-house alone  
 And I hand you the dower and me you'd disown;  
 My dad would be raging, my mother upbraiding,  
 And you'd leave me in tears ever more!"

## IV

"Indeed, my fair one, if you'd share my  
Way, then  
You'd never feel foolish, or fear  
To hand over cattle - to me a  
Slight matter -  
Though many would value the deal.

P.69  
I'd rather a gracious young mild-mannered maid,  
With beauty to please me and skill at  
Her trade,  
Than a purse-proud virago or miserly matron  
Who never drank six pence worth of ale.

## V

"Look at my clansmen, my friends and companions,  
Who in the tavern to no one would yield.  
They would rush to attack in the heat  
Of the battle  
With cudgel in hand or wielding a sword.  
Yet with wines and meats their board  
Is replete,  
And children, well cared for, sit down to eat.  
So don't heed your parents if they should complain.  
Our life, still, will bear fruit sweet."

---

O Dermot O'Leary- A Literal Translation

(Note: Our TRanslator, Fr. Sweeney, added this more refined rendition of this poem. It is to be remembered that an ale-house in Ireland, as in England, is generally also called a "public house," and is a place, like an American ice-cream shoppe, where a mother might stop in, when shopping with her children, for a cup of tea. RPB)

## I

O Dermot O'Leary, the maid of the tresses  
Has told me that she likes your looks  
And your ways; but her parents say,  
If they were to give you the dowry,  
You would not put it to wise use,  
Because you are light-hearted and easy-going  
In your ways, fond of the girls and sipping  
Of drinks, and everyone says you are  
The biggest rake that was in Ive-Leary  
In your time.

## II

"I admit it myself, I am a bit carefree,  
For that is my heritage from the Clan Bwee.  
But don't believe your parents that, if  
They gave me the dowry, I would not  
Put it to wise use.  
  
I would hoe and dig and build a fence,  
And I'd mow the meadow without chopping  
Off my limbs. I would fight any man  
In the middle of the fair and no less would  
I woo a colleen."

## III

"Indeed, my kind man, I would walk  
 Through life with you were it not to  
 Be judged a foolish deal for me.  
 There is many a quiet, mannerly maiden  
 You promised explicitly<sup>1</sup> you would  
 Never deviate from your word.  
 And, if we were to meet together in a  
 Public-house by ourselves and I were to  
 Hand you the dowry, and (you found)  
 You didn't like my ways - My daddy  
 Would be raging<sup>2</sup> and my mother upbraiding,<sup>2</sup>  
 So you would leave me crying bitterly  
 Forever."

## IV

"Indeed, my fair lady, if you would walk  
 Through life with me, you wouldn't  
 Say it was a foolish deal for you  
 That mountainy heifers be given over  
 For my counting, though a hundred of  
 My sort it would please.  
 I would rather a fair maid, well-mannered,  
 Pretty and young, whose beauty and  
 Carriage and work I'd admire,  
 Than a purse with a virago<sup>3</sup> or one  
 Got from a miser who never drank  
 Sixpence (worth) in an ale house.

## V

"Look at my people, my friends and my  
 Ancestors, who have never given way in  
 A tavern, but were going about

"Fiercely under the heat of battle.  
They have cudgel and sword in hand.  
Yet they have salt meat and wines on the  
Table, and well-cared for children<sup>4</sup>  
Sitting down to eat. So don't  
Believe your parents, should they be  
Telling you that it will not be  
So with us yet."

---

<sup>1</sup>"Explicitly" - Lit.: "from your mouth."

<sup>2</sup>"Raging": the text has, 'jealous of me';

"upbraiding": ag pleidhe liom, 'discussing with me.'

<sup>3</sup>"Virago," ladharnach? I take it to be a local  
variant of bladhrach, 'shouting' 'bellowing: hence  
a shrew.

<sup>4</sup>"Well-cared-for children." Lit.: "children of careful  
housewives." TR

Ar Leacain na Greine  
"On a Sunny Hillside"

I got this song from Jeremiah A. Cotter from Currihy West. It would appear that the song was composed around 1797.

IV - 3. Clar Luirc - The Plain of Lorc, a poetic name for Ireland. Leary Lorc, son of Iugane the Great, High King<sup>1</sup> of Ireland about the year 300 A.D.

IV - 4. Fleet. On December 14, 1796, the French with a great fleet departed for Ireland. Hoche was in command and his ship was "La Fraternité." A storm struck them; some of the ships were scattered, others sank and some others came into Bantry Bay. Thus failed the "Armada." On December 28, of the same year, the survivors returned home.

Faoide. Whiddy: Whiddy Island in Bantry Bay near which the French arrived in 1796.

VI - 3. Laoiseach: Louis XVI of France. Name given to the "Armada" in the poem.

Spainneach. The Spaniard - indicating the whole nation. At that time, England was waging war on France and Spain and the Netherlands. The Irish people were depending on aid from these against England.

VI - 4. Banba. Another name for Ireland. Called also "the Banba."

<sup>1</sup>"High King." Modern historians disclaim any such title - until about 10th century. TR

Fainne an Lae  
"The Dawning of the Day" (A)

D.L. Donal (Daniel) Lucey. Book VI, pages 1-5. Vide "A Small Collection of Songs." III, P.12. The song appears to have been composed a few years before the "Rising" of 1798.

III - 1. Cearnait. See The History of Ireland (Keating) under the reign of Cormac MacArt. (See note in translation of the text). TR

III - 3. An Bhe. The Lady, Helen, wife of Menelaus, King of Greece. She eloped with Paris, son of Priam, King of Troy. She was the cause of the destruction of Troy. After a ten years' siege, Troy fell to the Greeks, who burned the city.

P.71 III - 5. An t-Ubhall. The Apple. Venus, Juno and Minerva were three beautiful goddesses and no one knew which one was the most beautiful. This caused contention among them and they took the case to the court. Paris was the Judge and a golden apple was to be awarded to the one judged most beautiful. Venus won the apple.

V - 5. The Duke of York, the English leader in the War with France in 1793.

"The Dawning of the Day" (B)

D.L. (Daniel Lucey) Book III, pages 13-16. I received another version from Conor (Cornelius) O'Moynihan from Kilkenney. It will be referred to as: C.O.M.

II - 2. Pearl of Delight, Vide A, III, 3.

II - 3. Deirdre, foster-child of Conor MacNeasa, King of Ultonia ("Ulster"), and wife of Naoise. Vide "The Sorrowful Fate of the Children of Usnagh."

II - 4. The Woman, Venus.

III - 1. Cliodna. Cleena. Libra, chief physician of the Tuatha De Danann, (People of the Goddess Dana), had three daughters, one of whom was Cleena. She eloped from "The Promised Land" with Ciabhan Mac Eachach (Kee-vawn Mac A Kh-akh) Imderg, and landed at Glandore where she was drowned at Tonn Teide (Tonnededy). The place has been call Tonn Cliodna, the Wave of Cleena, ever since. She is the Queen of the Munster Fairy host and is supposed to dwell at Carrigcleena (Carraig Chliodna) (Cleena's Rock), near Mallow.

III - 3. Cuileann tseinh, "gentle Cuileann," Vide Laoidhe na Seilge "The Lay of the Hunt." (No details given). TR

Bearta Cruadha  
"Hard Plight"

D.L. (Daniel Lucey), Book VI, pages 52-59. Stanza six is at the end of the book, and stanza nine is to be found at the end of Book III. I have received another version from Jeremiah A. Cotter from Currihy West, but there are three stanzas missing, and the last stanza is entirely different. It will be referred to thus: D.A.C.

I - 3. Phoebus, a name given to Apollo, son of Jupiter and Latrona. He was often called the sun-god.

I - 8. Cupid, son of Venus.

P.72 II - 5. "The Ring," Vide "The Lay of the Hunt," or ("The Hunting Lay").

III - 2. Achilles, i.e., the bravest hero of the Greeks in the Battle of Troy. He killed Hector, the most valiant hero among the enemy.

III - 6. Helen - Vide above.

IV - 1. Luana. Glosses at the end of this stanza in the ms: "Lann," a sword; leann, a coat of mail; luan, a hero,

champion; Crodha (Croga) "valiant."

IV - 4. Talc MacTreon, Vide "The Discourse of Oisin (Ossian) with Patrick."

V - 2. The Apple, Vide "Dawning," (B), III, - 1.

VI - 5. Fleece - Reference to Jason and the Golden Fleece.

VII - 1. The Cow, given by Juno to Argos to watch over. Minerva put his hundred eyes to sleep and killed them.

VII - 2. Argos, son of Avestor, a huge giant with a hundred eyes.

VII - 4. It is indicated here that it was Orpheus who put Argos to sleep with his music. Actually, it was Minerva herself that did it.

VII - 5. Bran and Sceolang, i.e., two hounds of Finn MacCool, head of Fiana.

VIII - 1. Feoise. Ms. feiste, glosses: feisim, I rest; feiste, accommodation, entertainment; fois, leisure, rest. (Textual note - Donal's horse never needed rest). TR

VIII - 5. The Blackbird, Vide "The Blackbird of Doire an Chairn." (See Dr. Sigerson's translation "Blackbird of Daricarn" in e.g. Thomas MacDonagh, Literature in Ireland, Dublin, 1916, p. 172). TR

Seo Leo, a Thoil  
"Hush, My Love"

D.L. (Daniel Lucey), Book III, pages 31-39. Another version of this song is in print - by Sean O'Cuir (O'Keefe), Vide Twenty Poems.

An Burcach  
"Young Man of the Burkes"

C.C. (Cornelius Cotter). Book I, pages 24-26. I received

another version of this song from Johanna Kelleher ("The Priest's Johanna") (i.e., Housekeeper for the Priest). It will be referred to as S. Ni Ch. Another stanza from Nora Cronin, Richard Cronin's wife, of Inchibeg, goes like this:

"The poor woman going the road,  
Or a widow with a family,  
But would receive an alms for God's sake,  
And another free charity:  
  
A clean and stainless little barrel  
And flannel<sup>1</sup> shirt in which to sleep.  
And (the donor's) soul will see God's face  
If these words are true."

P.73

Lines 1 and 2 of the same stanza were given me by Johanna Kelleher thus:

- Line 1: "No beggar woman" (instead of "no poor woman").
- Line 2: (Refers to the grammatical formation and makes no change in translation, TR).

I - 1. "O young (man of the) Burke(s)," or "My dear Burke," according to many others. Michael Burke was the third son of Maura Bwee. (See the Preface). Keim, i.e., Keimaneigh, a passage through the mountains between Parish of Bantry and that of Inchigeelagh. Doughill Hill is to the south of it and Dereenaglass to the north. There is a new roadway through the Pass, called by English speakers the "Prince of Wales Route." It was designed by Captain Hedges from Macroom and Lord Bantry, and built by James Barry of Inchigeelagh. The old road went by the slope of Doughill on the higher level. (See Preface). The Pass is about a mile in length and about one hundred feet in height from top to bottom. The name Keimaneigh covers all the townlands east of the Pass. It was in those

<sup>1</sup>Plaineid, should probably read plaincead, a blanket or plainin, flannel. TR

townlands the Battle of Keimaneigh was fought, and there too lie the "Inches," i.e., Inchibeg and Inchimore where dwelt the Burkes. The beauty and wonder of the Pass have often been described, Vide Alice and Una - D.F. MacCarthy; The Felon's Track, etc. At the mouth of the Pass a huge rock can be seen as one travels eastward, and the legend has it that a deer chased by hounds leaped from the rock right across to the precipice on the other side of the Pass. This spot is called Leim an Fhia (Lame-an-ee-a) "The Deer's Leap."

I - 2. Faction Fighting. This was very common throughout the district within the past hundred years. On Fair days and market days, and sometimes on Sunday evenings, the commotion would occur. St. Finnbar's Day was noted for squabbles between Kerry and Cork factions at Gougane Barra. In 1817, the Bishop of Cork put an end to the religious observance at Gougane because of faction fighting.

II - 1. Nell, (daughter) of Michael Cnamhach ("Big-Boned") (O'Sullivan). Nell Sullivan, wife of Michael Burke, Maura Bwee's third son, daughter of Michael O'Sullivan from Bantry Parish.

P.74 IV - 2. Lough Lua: a lake situated between the villages of Inchigeelagh and Ballingeary. It is about six miles long and half a mile wide. Vide History of Cork (Cusack). Keimaneigh is about three miles west of the edge of Lough Lua.

IV - 8. "From the neck of the Glen to the Bay," i.e., the length of the Parish of Bantry.

V. I received another version of this stanza from Cornelius (O) Moynihan, from Kilkenny. It will be referred to as C.O.M.

Tuireamh Sheain De Burca  
"Lament for Sean Burke"

D.L. (Daniel Lucey), Book VIII, pages 26-36. I have included the two versions because of the great difference

between them. The second version I got from Johanna Kelleher. Johanna says that Maura Bwee herself composed the whole lament but pretended the speakers were Sean's wife and her mother. Sean was the eldest son of Maura (Vide Preface). Sean O Cuiv had the second version printed in Glor na Ly (Glor na Laoi - the voice of the Lay) in September, 1912.

III - 3. Sean Burke was said to have been associated with the "Whiteboys," and that he was captured and condemned to the gallows. His wife's three brothers (it was said) went to England and obtained his pardon from the King, but failed to arrive back in time to save him from death.

XII - 1. D.L. has a gloss here: cana, a moth, canaithe, moths. (See footnote by TR at the end of the poem). TR

Cath Cheim an Fhiaidh  
"The Battle of Keimaneigh"

D.L., Book II, pages 39-45. The battle was fought in 1822 (Vide Preface) and it appears that the song was composed sometime during that year.

The song has been widely published, e.g., in Duanaire na Gaedilge (sic) (Gaelic Anthology), Iris Leabhar na Gaedhilge (Journal of the Irish Language, originally titled The Gaelic Journal); an Claidheamh Soluis (Sword of Light - official organ of the Gaelic League); Ceol Sidhe ("fairy music"); Ceal ar Sinsear ("the music of our ancestors"); the Story of Ive-Leary, etc. There are so many variations in print that I have thought it better not to attempt any change of text. I have therefore simply followed D.L.'s ms. His version is the best and most authentic of all I have seen.

P.75 III - 3. Barry: James Barry or "Big Barry" as he was called. He was born in 1761. He was bailiff and tithe collector, land-

lord and High Sheriff of the County. He lived at Carrignageela, where he had a hundred acres of land; and he had another farm of one hundred and eighty acres at Killhana in the Parish of Kilmichael. (Vide Census 1821). He had four sons, John, James, Nicholas and David; and five daughters, Mary, Brigid, Nora, Sarah and Eileen. (Footnote, Census 1821). He was very powerful and a great oppressor of the poor. He fought on the side of the English at the Battle of Keimaneigh, and thereafter was in pursuit of the Whiteboys. During the year 1822, the Whiteboys attacked his house and knocked down part of it. The house was rebuilt and lengthened. It was sixty feet long and thirty wide and had an attic. It was known to English speakers as Kilbarry House. The half-crumbled walls, and the gate posts are still to be seen on the roadside near the house. Barry left to his son Nicholas the farm at Carrignageela. He owned two-thirds of all the townland there. The young Carolans and Captain Mitchell were the landlords (Ordinance Survey, ca. 1840 - Footnote). "Big Barry" was buried in a tomb in the old graveyard at Inchigeelagh. The inscription on the flagstone of the tomb reads: "The burial place of James Barry of Kilbarry and family, and of Mr. Owen Riordan late of the City of Dublin, who departed this life on the 1st of January, A.D. 1822, aged 85 years. R.I.P."

The people have many a tale to tell about "Big Barry." Here is one: Barry was buried in the morning of the day of his funeral, and an old woman of the Clan Bwee was buried around mid-day of the same day. After having buried her, the funeral participants gathered around Barry's tomb. One of the Clan Bwee stood on the flagstone of the tomb and said, "Yes! there you are now as weak and as feeble as the old woman we ourselves have brought. A bold man you were at the Battle of Keimaneigh, and now, may the d---l take your soul off with P.76 him!"

V - 1. Smith, an English soldier killed at the Battle

of Keimaneigh. (Vide Preface).

V - 3. Calvin, i.e., John Calvin, who started the heresy known as Calvinism.

V - 8. Porc: a fat pig. The poets used such epithets as "swine" and "boor," etc., as contemptuous terms for the English.

Caoineadh ar Liam Rinn  
"Lament for William Ring"

Nora Cronin of Inchibeg, Richard Cronin's wife, supplied me with this song - God rest her soul. Apparently it is only a portion of the song.

I - 2. Barra: Gougane Barra is about a mile to the north of Keimaneigh. The place was put under the protection of St. Finbarr around the year 1700, when pilgrimages began to be made to the sacred isle.

I - 4. Liam O'Rinn (William Ring). Vide Preface.

II - 2. Your nurse, i.e., his mother.

II - 4. Dam' Laoghannaibh, (Literally: "of, to my little calves"), i.e., my dear ones. Some of Maura Bwee's own family were involved in the battle and were fugitives for a long time afterwards.

An Cruiscin Lan  
"The Full Jug"

D.L., Book III, pages 17-21. I have received two other versions of this song, one from Michael "Roe" Hyde<sup>1</sup> (O'Seitheachain) from Ballingeary, and the other from Johanna (Siobhan) O'Leary, wife of John (Sean) Moynihan from Currahy West. Siobhan's version has an additional (stanza)<sup>2</sup> and if this addition (and variant in stanza V) may be deemed authentic, and this seems to be the case, then this song was composed

about the year 1843. References are to M.O.S. (Michael Hyde) and S.Ni.L (Siobhan O'Leary).

II - 4. Cearnet. Vide Keating, The History of Ireland (Already noted in footnote with the text). TR

III - 3. Mac Shearlais: son of Charles: Reference to the "Pretender."

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<sup>1</sup>The surname Hyde, Gaelicized by popular etymology as O'Seitheachain from seithe (Sheh-heh) "hide." TR

<sup>2</sup>In a footnote, p.60, the editor gives Siobhan's variant in V. Substantially, instead of "That the English and their brood, etc.", she has: "That O'Connell of Iveragh will be there victorious (Literally: having won the day) and dismal as death are we to see this brood in hardship. So pass around, etc. The extra stanza of S.Ni.L (Siobhan) reads: "I'll cease composing poems - I'm sick, sore, in torment, and the English with their wealth will everywhere be roasted, and the Gaels will take possession, which makes me exultant, So pass around the jug. . ."

A Mhaire Ni Laoghaire  
"O Mary O'Leary"

D.L., Book II, pages 47-55. Heading the ms. of the song are the lines: "Mary Burke, of Keimaneigh, composed seven stanzas of this song and Denis Lynch, Ballyvourney, composed the first and last stanzas. It appears to have been composed P.77 about the year 1843. I got another version of the song from Michael Roe Hyde of Ballingeary - which will be referred to as M.O.S. The order is I, II, IV, VI, VII, IX, III, VIII with another stanza which is somewhat coarse.

I - 6. Doughill - The hill of Doughill, south of the Keim; 1555 feet in height.

II - 5. Repealers - Followers of Daniel O'Connell in his effort to repeal the Act of Union, (i.e., one Parliament in London for Great Britain and Ireland). TR

VI - 1. Tobacgearrtha: "Cut tobacco." It was the custom in Ive-Leary (and indeed in most parts of Ireland) at the death of a person, to have the body placed - "laid out" - on boards or on a bed in the kitchen, with cut-up tobacco on a plate, snuff on another and a lighted candle on a table beside the bed, or board, on which the corpse was laid. The tobacco and snuff were for those attending the funeral, on the understanding that they would pray for the deceased.

Ta Gaedhil Bhocht Craidhte  
"The Poor Irish Are in Torment"

Jeremiah A. Cotter provided me with this song. Jeremiah says that he himself got it from Nora Sullivan, wife of Timothy (Teigue) Mangan from Tir na Spidogy (or Tur na Spidogy). It is said that Maura Bwee composed this song on her death bed. One night when she was very ill and her son was sitting by the fire, some strangers came in from the road and asked the son for a drink of water. They sat by the fire for a while and then began to speak in derogatory fashion of the Irish people. The mother heard them from her bed and called out to her son and asked him to bring her down to the fireside. He did so and when she was settled by the fire her response to the strangers was to compose this song for them. I have another version of this song from Cornelius Moynihan. Reference: C.O.M.

I - Cf. Daithi O Bruadair (David O'Bruadair) (Gaelic poet of West Cork): "Not a foot of land was left to them,  
As alms from the state, not material  
For a bed,

That would allow them grace and a haven  
To permit their sailing safe to Spain."

IV - 5. Oscar, son of Ossian, killed at the Battle of Gawra. Jeremiah (Dermot), son of Seamas O'Connor of Derrynasaggart, in Ballyvourney, responded to Maura Bwee with the song "Cois Abhann Ghleanna an Ghaorthaidh. (Beside the River of Glan na Geary). D.A.C. (Jeremiah Cotter), Book II, pages 80-82.

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Se Mo Bhroinchreach  
"It's My Deep Regret"

D.L., Book II, pages 26-32. An account of Teigue Bwee.  
Vide Preface, 1--.

A Dhiarmaid Ui Laoghaire  
"O Dermot O'Leary"

D.L., Book II. pages 33-37. An account of Dermot Bwee.  
Vide Preface, 1--.

Cois Abhann Ghleanna An Ghaorthaidh

(The editor includes these verses because, supposedly, they are the poet's response to Maura Bwee's song, as mentioned above. The only connection I can see is probably one of emulation, but it is of interest as another example of the aisling or "vision" poetry, TR).

Cois Abhann Ghleanna An Ghaorthaidh  
"By the River of Glenageary"

Jeremiah (Dermot) son of Seamas O'Connor, CCT

I

By the River of Glenageary  
 And the Paps of Clydagh,  
 As I was meditating  
 Quite early in the day,  
 The bright rays from Phoebus  
 Enveloped me (completely),  
 And from the branching tree-tops  
 Came the birds' sweet lay.  
 Then did gloom vacate my soul  
 As echoed true each sound of old  
 With joy on joy as wish could hold,  
 While matchless music played.  
 As on I strolled there did appear  
 A form fair in outline clear;  
 In brightness and in splendor  
 She is the gentle, stately maid.

II

Long, ringletted, wavy  
 Her tresses combed (so carefully)  
 The plaited strands were reaching  
 Right down to the floor.  
 In banded tufts intriguing  
 With pearly tints a-gleaming,  
 Tumbling to the fringes  
 In fine folds of gold;  
 Curling, flounced, of flexing weave  
 In buoyant, sun-tipped tripping leaps,

P. 79

In sweeping, shapely, shimmering heaps,  
Like the clear moon's glow.  
So luxurious her ringlets  
Like the fleece, close-fitting,  
Which gleefully the Victor,  
Jason, took on board.

### III

On forehead fair, were pencilled  
Eyebrows fine and slender.  
The berries' red with lily  
On her features strove.  
All nature's green grew dimmer  
Before that peerless vision,  
Her teeth in dainty splendor,  
And sweet lips like the rose.  
Her neck like snow on mountain crests  
On gentle shoulders graceful rests,  
Firm and full her fair white breasts  
As on a flawless mold.  
Myriad hearts lie wounded  
For love of her clear beauty,  
And an arrow forth Cupid  
Has pierced through my own.

### IV

I asked the fair maiden,  
"Are you Venus, the famous,  
Or Pearl of the great heart  
From Aeneas of Old?  
Or Lasair<sup>1</sup> pure, or Helen,  
The cause of Trojan quelling  
Whom Paris from her dwelling

"Brought with him on board?  
 Are you the dread ringleted one,  
 Or the maid who left Finn's men undone  
 For hate of him who tracked her home,  
 The brave Talc MacTreibin?<sup>2</sup>  
 Are you Juno or Blathnaid,<sup>1</sup>  
 Or the girl who loved Naoise.<sup>2</sup>  
 Through whom the hosts have fallen,  
 Or Cearnet once more?"

## V

Fluently spoke the fair one  
 "You saw not I am of Gaery,  
 To the Emperor related  
 And Kings of the hosts.  
 My rightful name is Eire  
 And exiled my mate is,  
 Friendless and forsaken  
 Scorned and dethroned.  
 (But) Afar the chiefs will rally 'round,  
 For sheltered bays their barks are bound,  
 While war will rage in western towns  
 And fast will fall the forts.  
 The brutes will be deprived of  
 The homelands of Ireland's sons,  
 With Innisfail rejoicing  
 As the joyous news unfolds.

## VI

"From Barters, Waggit, Davis,  
 Beamish (too), and Beecher  
 Eggar, also Gielding.  
 Constant tears will flow;

"So, Herbert, Wallace, Leader,  
Reaneys and the Readys,  
The Whites and the Deaneys,<sup>3</sup>  
Kenzies (too) and Stowel;  
So (too from) Townsend, Hassett,  
Orpen, Spears,  
Gorden, Atkins, Latoneers,  
Gooleys, Grainger, Johnson, Seers,  
Aires and Bland and Bowen;  
The Crooks and the Lawtons,  
Travers, Kilcoffer, Fielding,  
The Hungfords and the Hawkses,  
Baldwin and the Doads.<sup>4</sup>

## VII

"And in Banba will be havoc  
'Mid the flock of foreign Calvin,  
As in Israel it happened  
With Moses to the fore.  
As Egypt's hosts were caught fast,  
Cast helpless in the waters  
While the rod of God's anointed  
In outstretched hand He holds.  
To the battle front will Bonaparte  
Lead warrior hosts all poised to start,  
To crush our foe who cared for naught  
But gorging and carouse.  
Mary's monks will chant their praise,  
In sweet hymns their voices raise  
And the Prince of blood royal  
Will receive the crown."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Lasair and Blanthnaid: are girls' names.

<sup>2</sup>Talc MacTreoin, the son of Treon, from Irish mythology.  
Naiose, from Irish mythology.

<sup>3</sup>I have transposed these names for the sake of rhythm.

<sup>4</sup>"Doads." Probably recte Dodds. I have kept the long o  
sound for the vowel rhyming.

<sup>5</sup>The text has "(that) they will get their crown." TR

## 80 MÁIRE BHUIDHE NÍ LAOGHAIRE.

Is mo chéile gur dibreadh  
 Gan téada gan chaoirse  
 Le dí-mheas ón gcoróinn;  
 Beidh uaisle is flatha ag teacht a gcaim  
 Go cuanta mara ar bharca ag triall;  
 Buailfid catha i mbéalibh thuar  
 'S is tréan a leagáid póirt.  
 Beidh brúidigh gan fhagháilthas  
 I n-áitreacha tdd Chlanna Gaoideal  
 I gcuigíbh Inis Fáilbhe  
 Is is áthas mo scool.

VI.—Beidh BARTERS, WAGGIT, DAVIS  
 BRAMISH agus BRECHER  
 EGAR agus GIELDING  
 Ag sfor-shileadh dheor  
 Beidh HERBERT, WALLIS, LEADER,  
 Réinigh agus Ridigh,  
 Déinigh agus Faotigh,  
 Closigh agus Stowel,  
 Beidh TOWNSEND, HASSETT, ORPEN, SPEERS  
 GORDEN, ATKINS, LANTONEERS,  
 Gúlaigh, GRAINGER, JOHNSON, SEERS,  
 AIRES, BLAND is BOWEN,  
 Crookigh agus LAWTONS  
 TRAVERS, KILCOFFER, FIELDING,  
 HUNGFORD agus Hawksaigh  
 BALDWIN agus Doid.

VII.—Is, i mBánba, beidh lémirsrios  
 'Dir thréadta Chaillbhían chaoithigh,  
 Mar a dhéanadar na hiosraíos  
 Is Maois aca beo;  
 Nuair a chartuigh insa tréanmhuir  
 Na hEigípts gan bhrígh ionta  
 Le haontoil Mhic Iosa  
 Do shín slat 'na dhóid;  
 Beidh BÓNA ag teacht chun catha rian  
 Na sluaigíte dragan ag teacht 'na dhinidh  
 Ag tuargain ghaala nár sheachain niall  
 Ach craos agus póit;  
 Beidh Uird Mhuire ag rádh a gceacht,  
 Is dáin bhinne cantáinn ghrinn,  
 Agus Priúnse dbon Árdshuil  
 Go bhíagáid a gcoróinn.

V—7. Caoíse ? coimhíse.

## APPENDIX A.

I

IN NOMINE DEI. AMEN. \*

I Fyneeme Mc. Daniel Leary, of Gort Ineedene, in the parish of Inshygeelagh, Barrony of Musky and County of Corke, Yeoman, in my perieck sence and memory though weake of body doe make my last will and last testament as followeth, the 2 day of January, 1663: Imprs.: I committ my soule to the Almighty and doe desire my boddy may be burried in my parish Church of Inshygeelagh, ffor the love and natureale affection I ever bore unto Teige O'Leary of Carrignycorry and for the like love and affection my father had unto Cnogher O'Leary, father unto the said Teige and specially in consideration of a considerable sume of money my father receaved from Cnogher O'Leary the said Teige father upon condicon the reversion should be in him and his beires, of what estate wee had, my father and I dei without issue male. I leave and bequeath unto the said Teige O'Leary all my right by the, and interest in the five gnives of GortIneedan, Turreneneneane, and Lower Gortmu Leare to inure unto him the said Teige his heires and assignes for ever.

If the said Teige O'Leary doe recover the said five gneeve from his Magties or any other therein concerned, I desire the said Teige O'Leary whome I doe appoint my executor of this my last will to pay unto my natureale sonne Cnogher O'Leary the sume of ten pound in cattle or money in eaverale gales. To pay unto Cnogher O'Myneghane two shillings. To Daniel Morgagh O'Leary two pound. To Mahone Mc. Scane two shillings. To Shayly ny Daniel O'Leary halfe barrall of oatenmeale. To recover towards the payment of the above sumes twelue shillings and seaven pence due to me from Daniel Mc. Donnagh Carthy.

81

\*The Latin words in capital letters, here at the heading of Appendix A, render the strongest possible solemnity and sincerity to the wording of these last wills: "IN THE NAME OF GOD. AMEN." RPB

<sup>1</sup>Cnogher O'Leary: This is an early anglicized form of Conchubhair, or Crochur, now Con(n)or. In Munster "Cornelius" is usually substituted; this is familiarly rendered "Corney." TR

<sup>2</sup>Gneevies (or gnives), from the Irish Gaelic "gniomh," a land measure: one twelfth of a ploughland, i.e., 50 acres. (Cf. P.87 of our Gaelic text). A ploughland is usually called a "hide" in early English law, varying in size, but commonly consisting of 120 acres - enough land to sustain a household. References: Domesday Book and old English land charters. TR

## 82 MAIRE BHUIDHE NI LAOGHAIRE.

To recover from John Ryne four shillings and six pence.  
This is my last will wh. I desire to be attested by the  
now witnesses.

his  
FFYNEENE X O LEARY.  
mark

Being present:

OWEN FYELD.  
his

DANIEL X McCARTHY.  
mark

II

## WILL OF FININE O LEARY.

In the name of God I Ffynnynt Mc Teige oge O Leary  
beinge impotente and weake of boddy butt soonde of witt  
and memory I doe make this my last will and testament  
in maner followenig:

Imprimis: I bequeath unto Shyly ny Leary my married  
wifte the third pte. of my lands in lewe and consideracon  
of her joynture during her naturall life together with all  
my corn and household stufte and also all my cattle greate  
and smalle.

Ite.: I bequeath unto Teige O Leary half a greeve  
of my sd. land after the death of the sd. Shyly according  
the lease given by me unto the sd. Teige.

Ite.: I further bequeath unto the sd. Teige O Leary,  
his heires, executors and assignes one greeve and three  
pts. of a greeve of my said land for the terme of fifty  
and one years from my death forth being in consideracon  
of many good greeves and moeys and other goods by me  
reced at the hands of the sd. Teige and Margare: Leary  
his mother.

Ite.: I bequeath unto Ffynnyne Mc Teige Leary my  
grand child half a greeve more of my sd. land after my sd.  
wifte's death together with three pts. of a greeve more of  
the sd. land after my one death it being in consideracon  
of twelve pounds sterg. by me promised unto Ellen ny

## MAIRE BHUIDHE NI LAOGHAIRE.

83

Fynnyne the sd. Ffynnyne's mother my one daughter for the  
term of forty one yeares paying his porportion of the  
Earle of ClanCarthy cheeffe rent and all other contyz.  
charges payable there out.

In witness wheresof I have hereunto putt my hand and  
seale the 13th of Apprill 1670.

his  
FININE X O LEARY.  
mark seale.

Being present:

GEORGE LOMBARDE.

DOM. THYYRE.

JOEN ROCHE.

I doe hereby certifie to all whom it may concerne that  
I have pictt and appointed me well beloved frind Teige  
Mc. Auliffe Leary of Gorthin in the parish of Inshiglagh  
to procure and gett an administration out of ys bishopes  
Court in my name and in the name of those named a long  
with me in my husbands will latte deceased by name  
Finine M Teige Oge Leary of the above mentioned lands as  
appears in the will and the ministrition. I doe further  
impound and authorise my said well beloved frind Teige  
M Auliffe Leary to act doe and proceed for me and in my  
name in this behalf and in all my Temeñementes what so  
ever in as large and ample a manner as if I were personally  
present my selfe all which is and will be allowed confirmed  
and ratified by me as witness my hand the 13th of february  
1670.

her  
GILYIN SHANE X ALS LEARY.  
mark

Being present:

AULIFFE OGE O LEARY  
TEIGE OGE O LEARY

his  
X  
mark

## III

3

## WILL OF DERMOT O LEARYE ALS BOY, 1700

In the name of God, amen.

The will and last testament of Dermot Lery als Buy of Inshidiraghill and Dirreenaglass:

I Dermot Lery als Buy of Inshidiraghill and Dirreenaglass in the parish of Inchigeelagh and County Cork doe hereby att my last will and testament will and bequeath my soul to God Almighty and body to the earth from whence it came, and as for my worldly effects I hereby will and bequeath all my worldly substance (viz.) all my goods, chattels, debpts, dues, and demands, deeds, leases, assignments, profits of lands, rents or tenements which is now present or in my custody or possession or shall hereafter come to the advantage or profit (in any wise) to my heires or executors, I do hereby will and bequeath all these and every of these att the will and pleasure and command of Ellen my wife and doe hereby will and bequeath her the said Ellen to be sole heire and executor of all these and every of the forementioned effects (viz.) goods, chattels, lands, leases, debpts, and demands, deeds, assignments, profits of rents or tenements during her life to be and belong unto her and att her disposall, all moneys claiimes and interests hereditary belonging to my sons or daughters alleading thereunto notwithstanding, and that the said Ellen shall pay and make satisfaction for all debpts, bills, dues and demands lawfully (in any wise) due from me to any person or persons, and likewise doe hereby declare to be due unto me as followeth (viz.):

	L	s.	d	g
From Bryn Doriss .. .. ..	1	0	0	0
" Cornelig Mc. Der. Mc. Arte .. ..	1	13	0	0
" Daniel Mc. Teige Mc. Dermot .. ..	0	6	3	0
" Aulif Mc. Dono. & his brother .. ..	0	4	0	0
DERMOD LEARYE ALS BOY				
his X mark.				

Being present:

TEIGE MARINANE

DONOGH CRONEENE.

Probate of this will was granted the 25th July 1700.

<sup>3</sup>O Learye Als Boy: I take this "als" as an abbreviation of "alias," meaning "in other words," as at the bottom of the previous page. TR

Note: This usage of "Boy" (for Bwee or Bhuidhe) provides a striking example of the precise epithet which identifies Maura O'Leary's family and lineage, as we have seen from the beginning. Cf. page 2, paragraph 2. RPB

## IV.

## ABSTRACT OF WILL OF CORNL. O LEARY OF CARRIGNACORRA, GENTLEMAN, 1753.

Bequeaths to son Timothy O Leary all leasehold lands of Carrignacorra, as also household goods and cattle, except £400 to my two daurs. Nelly and Julian carrying 6 per cent. interest. Should they cohabit with my said son then she or they are to pay him £8 per year for their diet, he allowing them £4 off interest for their clothing. Bequeaths to daur. Ellen O Leary orse Wholahane one English shilling as a memorial of her bad behaviour and disobedience; to niece Mary Lery 2 newmilk cows (alias Mc. Aulife); leaves £20 to be disposed of for charitable purposes for the good of my soul as my Exors. shall think fit. My will is that my two daurs. shall have the use of two riding horses as long as they live with my son.

Cornl. O Lery of Ballymurphy, Dennis O Lery of Coggan, Charles O Lery of Demryancannig and Timothy O Lery of Glasheen as Exors.

Witnessed by Donough Leary, Chars. Carthy, John Leary.

## V

## ABSTRACT OF WILL OF ELIZABETH O LEARY THE ELDER, 1759, OF GLASHEEN.

Bequeaths soul to God; body to be buried as her children shall think proper; all her worldly substance to her best friend Morgan Donovan of Ronan's Grove, beseeching him to make over the profits between her four children Henry, Daniel, Richard and Elizabeth, and making last request to him to act as a friend. 14 April, 1759.

Witnesses: Tim Leary, Dennish O Leary.

Morgan Donovan renounced his right.  
Probate granted to Tim O Leary of Glasheen  
in Par. of Inchigeelagh as husband of  
Elizabeth O Leary, the only daur.

## SLOCHT AS CAL. OF FIANTS OF ELIZABETH.

- (1) 2264 (1537), 1573, 8th May.  
 Pardon to Chogher M'Dermode O Leary of Inshygeylaghe in consideration of their having given 131 cows for the army in Munster and in consideration of their having released all debts due to them by the Crown, and all exactions and cesses for the Queen's Service in Munster, which had been taken from them.
- (2) 3121 (2623). Grant under Queen's letter 2 (2), May XIX. 1577 to Cormock M'Teige M'Cartie of the whole preceptory of Morne Alias Manister ne Monye, Co. Cork, \*\*\*\* rectories \*\*\* of Incheglinagh alias Inchegeylagh.
- (3) 6467 (5237). Pardon to Cormock Mc Dermod Mc. Cartie of the Blarnin, Co. Cork, esq., \*\*\*\* Cormock M'Teige M'Owen of Macroom, \*\*\*\* Dermod Roe O Lerie of Inchigilagh and Lisagh O Lerie of same, gentlemen—Ellis ny Crowlie, wife of O Lerie, Shelie ny Morroghoe, wife of Dermod Roe O Lerie. Conditions: provisions for security to be given before the President, etc. of Munster, and provided that they appear and submit themselves before the President, Chief and Second Justice and Attorney of the Province of Munster within three months, and be sufficiently bound with securities to keep the peace and answer at sessions in the several counties where they dwell when called to answer the demands of any subject according to Justice. The pardon shall not extend to any in prison, or on bail to appear, or any priests, Seminaries or Jesuits, nor include intrusion on Crown Lands or debts to the Crown. The exception for murder is added to the usual clause excluding from pardon treason against the Queen 5 life—17 Feb., XLIII (1600—1).

<sup>4</sup>The translation of "Sliocht," etc., is: "Extract from the Calender of the Grants of Land (Fiants) of Elizabeth" (1533-1603). TR

<sup>5</sup>Note: the omission of "'s" after the word "Queen" occurs in the original text. RPB

## APPENDIX B.

## I

## CENSUS OF 1821.

## TOWNLAND OF TUREENANANE.

(1)—Jeremiah Leary, 70, farmer. 25 acres.  
 Joana " 70, wife.  
 Corns. " 29, son.  
 Richard " 26, son.  
 John " 41, son.  
 Jeremiah " 6, grandson.  
 May " 10, grandaunt.  
 Ellen " 7, "  
 Elain " 6, "  
 Joana " 4, "  
 Timothy Coakley, 26, house servant.  
 Hanna " 26, house maid.  
 Jeremiah Cronin, 70, strolling beggar.

(2)—Jeremiah Leary, 36, farmer. 12½ acres.  
 Ellen " 31, wife.  
 John " 4, son.  
 Joane " 5, daur.  
 Mary " 2, "

## TOWNLAND OF INCHYMORE.

James Burke,	50, farmer.	150 acres or 3 gns.
Mary "	47, wife.	
MI.	"	25,
Rd.	"	23,
James "	"	27, sons.
Elick "	"	17,
Patk.	"	13,

What a crowning irony that the oldest printed date regarding the O'Leary-Burke lineage (May 18, 1573) came from the viciously Catholic-persecuting, Irish-hating Elizabeth, "Queen of Ireland" ... so styled, egotistically and sycophantically. (Because of her actions, she was excommunicated by St. Pius V in 1570.) Ironic, furthermore, is the fact that, whatever her orders prohibiting pardons to "any priests, Seminaries or Jesuits," it was two priests, Fathers O'Donoghue and Sweeney, who, while bringing Maura's poetry to the public at large, also revealed Maura's contempt for the alien imposter ... a contempt continuously and unjustly aroused in her people long before and after her day.

Not least ironically, one may ask: What kind of pardon, could Queen Bess ask of the Lord? What kind would an infinitely wise God grant? RPB

Incomplete List of Some First Names in  
Appendix C and Their Equivalents in English

P. 91

Brighid	= Bridget
Cait	= Kate; Kathleen
Crochur	= Con(n)or; Cornelius
Diarmuid	= Dermot; Jeremiah
Domhnall	= Donald
Donnchadh	= Donagh; Dennis
Eilic	= Alex; Alexander
Gobnait	(?)
Inghean	(?)
Maighread	= Margaret
Maire	= Maura; Mary
Micheal	= Michael
Neil (f)	= Nell
Neil (m)	= Neil; Cornelius
Nora	= Nora; Honorah
Padraig	= Patrick
Risteard	= Richard
Seamas	= James
Sean	= John
Sile	= Sheila; Julia
Siobhan	= Joan
Tadhg	= Timothy; Teige

In Appendix C the reader will notice that in the Irish edition the four pages were presented in a vertical format. This horizontal presentation should make for more convenient reading.

## APPENDIX C.

I

## AN CLANN BUIDHE

(1)

P. 92

DIARMUID BUIDHE R. 1751 + SIOBHÁN A BHEAN R. 1751.

(2)	Máire, r. 1774 + Stámas de Búrca r. 1771	P. 1792	Diarmuid, r. 1775 + (Eibhlís Ni Caróinín)	Tadhg. + (Ingean Úil Mhurchú)	Seán, r. 1780	Crocháir, r. 1792 + (Ingean Úil Chaochlaicí)	Neil + (Tadhg Ó Laoghaire)	Risteárd, r. 1795 + (Ingean Úil Liatháin)	Nóra + (Domhnall Ó Crocháir)
(3)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)				
	Seán, r. 1793 + (Nóra Ni Caróinín) ?	P. 1818	Séamas, r. 1794 + (Gobnáit de Búrca)	P. 1833	Micheál r. 1796 + (Neil Ni Shuilleabhaín)	P. 1819	Risteárd, r. 1798 + (Siobhán Ni Cheallacháin)	P. 1829	Eilic, r. 1804 + (Máire Ni Cheallacháin)
	Neil, r. 1806 + (Crocháir Ó Mháilleagáis)	P. 1832	Máire, r. 1813 + (Tadhg Ó Murchú)	P. 1835 ?	Siobhán, r. 1815 + (Domhnall de Búrca)				Pádraig, r. 1808

R, r (rugadh) = was born      (+) (posadh) = married

P. (posadh) = married and date

- (1) The Clan Bwee. Dermot Bwee, born 1751, married Johanna, born 1751.
- (2) Maura (the oldest child), born 1774, married James Burke, born 1771, in 1792. In the same row are listed Maura's seven brothers and sisters, spouses, etc.
- (3) The second row lists the six sons of Maura, spouses, etc., and the third, short, row gives the names of her three daughters, spouses, etc.
- More detailed information on (A), (B), and (C) is furnished on P. 94, and on (D) P. 95. On P. 93, below, the present owners of the Burke property in Keimaneigh - Alex and Mary (Horgan) Burke - are indicated in the bottom lines by the name "Eilic." They trace their ancestry to Maura through her fifth son, born 1804, as outlined under (E) on P. 92 above. RPB

P. 93

Seán, r. 1843 + (Sile Ni Cheallacháin)	P. 1873	Eilic + (Sile Ni Mhurchú)	Micheál r. 1849	Brighid, r. 1851	Seamas, r. 1852	Siobhán, r. 1854	Risteárd, r. 1857	Eilic, r. 1861
Sile	Eilic	Seamas	Micheál					

MAIRE BUIDHE NI LAOGHAIRE.

(2)

(A).—SÉAN, r. 1793 + NÓRA NÍ CHRÓINÍN, P. 1818 (?)

(4)							
Micheál, r. 1819	Risteárd. r. 1819	Séamas, r. 1822	Máire, r. 1825	Eilic, r. 1827 + (Máire Nic Chárthaigh) P. 1863	Pádraig, r. 1830	Eibhlín, r. 1829 + (Domhnall Ó hUallacháin) P. 1845?	Brighid, r. 1833
Nóra, r. 1835	Crochúr, r. 1838						
		Síle, r. 1865		Seán, r. 1867		Donnchadh, r. 1846	

(B).—SÉAMAS DE BÚRCA, r. 1794 + GOBNAIT DE BÚRCA, P. 1833.

Séamas, r. 1834	Pádraig, r. 1836	Brighid, r. 1837
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(C).—MÍCHEÁL DE BÚRCA, r. 1796 + NEIL NÍ SHUILLÉABHÁIN, P. 1819.

Máire, r. 1820 (Seán Ó Séaghdha) P. 1840?	Eibhlín, r. 1822?	Siobhán, r. 1827?	Séamas, r. 1832	Cait, r. 1835	Fainche, r. 1838	Maighréad, r. 1840
	Seán, r. 1843					

Síle, r. 1845

(4) Eilic (Alex), born 1827, married Mary McCarthy in 1863. They had two children: Síla (Sheila or Julia), born 1865 (or 1867), and Sean (John), born 1867 (or 1869). After Mary's death, Alex married Catherine Sweeney [in Skull or Inchigeela (?), probably between 1870 and 1875 (?)]. They had four children:

- (a) Margaret, Dec. 22, 1877 - May 28, 1961, married Dennis Finnegan, June 18, 1906.
- (b) Alexander, March 10, 1880 - May 26, 1967, married Catherine C. Downing, April 21, 1908.
- (c) James, 1882-1969, married Margaret W. Joyce, 1908.
- (d) Richard, 1884-1961, married Nora Creedon, 1911.

(D).—RISTEÁRD DE BÚRCA, r. 1798 + SIOBHÁN NÍ CHEALLACHÁIN, P. 1829.

(5)						
Seán, r. 1830	Séamas, r. 1834	Micheál, r. 1836	Eibhlín, r. 1838?	Siobhán, r. 1840	Eilic, r. 1842	Maighréad, r. 1846
(6)						

Risteárd (Giúistis) | Siobhán | Seán | Máire | Séamas | Maighréad | Eilic (Dr.) | Eibhlín | Cait | Pilib | Minetta

(E).—MAIRE DE BÚRCA, r. 1813 + TADHG Ó MURCHÚ, P. 1835?

Síle, r. 1836.

r. = rugadh ; p. = pósadh

(5) This Eilic, born 1842, was the father of the eleven children listed in the line below, and is the same person described in our translation, pages 13 and 14, with the familiar name - Alexander Burke.

(6) The third child of Eilic, Sean (John), was the father of Fr. James Burke, O.P. and siblings, of Chicago. RPB

