

The History and Archeology of the Glann Area

Farming—A journey through time and how we got to here

The first evidence of people in Ireland dates to 10,500 years ago. Ireland and England were joined to Europe until 7,500 years ago when the seas rose cutting us off. The people then survived by hunting, fishing and gathering wild seeds and plants.

The first evidence of farming in Ireland dates to 4,200 BC. The climate was warmer then. Seeds and stock likely arrived by boat to the west coast from southern Europe. These Neolithic farmers (4000 to 2000 BC) were the first to start clearing forests. Some field systems were formed as evidenced by the Ceide Fields in north Mayo which date to 2,600BC. Stone and timber were used as tools during this time.

Bronze age farming (2000 to 1200 BC) heralded the era of stone circles wedge tombs and monuments like New Grange. Their distribution in Ireland is generally

associated with the presence of copper deposits. Carnseefin on the top of Glann hill dates to this time. Oxen were used to pull timber ploughs. The climate was nice at this time and there was a lot of prosperity. Fulachta Fiadh date from this period. There is evidence that one of these existed in Curraghduff East near its northern boundary with Farravaun (Lacey's Field). These were places where food was cooked in a pool of water heated by placing hot stones in the water to boil it. Towards the end of the bronze age vessels were first made and also at this time, the climate deteriorated leading to a decline in agriculture.

The Iron Age (1200BC to 400AD) reached Ireland around 850BC when farming implements and tools were first introduced. One of the main developments of this era was the rotary quern for grinding grain.

Carnseefin



Society changed with the on set of invading forces, greater land clearances occurred and the plough with a coulter was invented making it possible to till more difficult heavier land. But as now farming was largely pastoral with cattle being dominant.

Large hill forts and embankment of property became dominant, with much organisation of society and labour. Farming was quite intensive and prosperous.

Ringfort at Rathhill

Ringforts date from the early Christian period to the 14th century. They are characteristic of the Celts and are also to be found across mainland Europe. They were the family farms or homesteads of the well to do farmers of the time. They were circular enclosures 20-70m across made of an earth bank or wall with a ditch to protect the enclosure. There was a wattle wall on the bank with only one entrance. All of this was for protection from raiders. Many had an underground storage area or souterrain where



food was stored, or refuge taken in times of trouble. Buildings within the ringfort were made of clay or timber. The farm animals were brought in at night for protection. Bigger forts had an outer ring where the animals and farm hands stayed. There are three of these in the Glann area. Ringforts went out of use after the 10th century coinciding with the collapse of the Gaelic Tuath system to be replaced by open unfortified farmsteads. With the lapse of time they often became children's burial grounds and places where the fairies and leprechauns lived and had all sort of pisreoga attached to them.

After the Iron Age came the Medieval times and Christianity and with this reading and writing and records of farming activity. During this period pastoral

farming was dominant. Cattle were of immense importance and a sign of a person's wealth. Cows were a form of currency. Dairying came to the fore around the 2nd century AD adding even greater value to the cow. Land was valued on how many cows it could hold. Wealthy lords had huge herds which they traded for services and paid fines. Cattle raids were common so stock was usually herded and brought into safety at night, often into the outer ring of the fort. By the end of the 17th century a cow was given a value of one pound sterling. Milk and cheese formed a large part of the diet in Gaelic Ireland. Several drinks made with milk were consumed as were a big variety of cheese from soft to very hard. Fine preserved samples of these have been excavated from bogs where they were stored as bog is cool and sterile.

In the later Medieval period (1100-1600AD) Glann was part of the territory of Gnomore and later a constituent part of the lordship of Iarchonnocht. The Gnomore region is recorded in a fourteenth century topographical poem by Sean Mór O Dubhagain as being occupied in the 12th century by chiefs of the Meig Coc Rí and the O hAidnidh. The expulsion of the Ui Fhlaitbheartaigh from Mag Seola to the west across the Corrib in the late 13th century saw the establishment of the Gaelic lordship of Iarchonnacht which was to last until the mid 17th century. We have tried to document the land holders or Grantees for each townland in the Glann area around this time by referring to the Patent Roll 16 of James 1.

Society in Gaelic Ireland was made up of free landed elite, who were a minority, unfree cottiers tenants and serfs who worked the soil. There was ranking of nobles and of the commoners from king down to apprentice, all with a different amount of livestock and land and in the case of commoners amount of rent to pay. This was paid in the form of stock or produce. The lords who were conscious of their superiority had big farms which they rented out in part in return for labour and rent and usually never worked the land themselves.

The Martins, (Galway Tribesmen) who were of Norman origin were based at Galway city but established themselves in Connemara during the demise of the O Fflahertie Clan at the hands of Cromwell. The Martins reigned supreme for a period with their headquarters at Ballinahinch, and houses at Ross, Currarevagh, and Claremount. Simply put, their lavish lifestyle and the arrival of the potato blight,

resulted in their downfall. Their huge estate was put up for sale, and sold in 1872 to Richard Berridge a London Brewer.

Tillage did not prosper in Ireland again until the monastic settlements when new methods were brought from Europe by the monks. The mouldboard plough first appeared in the mid 7th century. Horses were not used until the 10th century and the harrow came into the tillage scene at that time also. The important crops were wheat for bread, barley for beer, oats for porridge and rye for bread and flax for cloth.

There was no hay saved as cattle and sheep were out wintered. Many perished during bad winters.

During the Iron Age and up to Medieval times most of the land of Ireland was unenclosed except for some land near the settlements where crops were grown.

During the early Christian period society prospered well although the landed did best out of the system. Change came about due to political unrest, disease and climate change, with the population of Ireland reduced by a third after a Yellow Plague outbreak in 680. Many monasteries were left derelict.

The Vikings and Normans arrived in the 11th and 12th centuries and brought change again to the system of farming. Dairying and tillage became more common and more land was enclosed. The native farmers were thrown off their lands by Anglo Norman lords. An English style system of square earth enclosures with Moate (Bailey and Moate) was established and the three field farming system imposed.

Sheep were more important to the Anglo- Normans and wool and sheep skins were exported. They introduced rabbits, pheasants and various fish species not found in Ireland. There was great prosperity again under Anglo-Norman agriculture with flax being an important crop for linen production. Bundles of flax buried in the bog were often unearthed when turf was cut by slane in the Glann area. Climate change occurred again in the 14th century and the Black death (1348) reeked havoc on the population, not helped by the Bruce invasion of 1315.

The better lands of the east, south east and north Munster were divided into big estates. Towns and settlements grew around these and field systems were developed.

Families forced to leave their land wandered the roads and unfenced areas with their herds of animals. They became known as Creaghts and were a nuisance

to the landlords. Various acts were passed to inhibit their travels. In other places the old Gaelic traditions were slower to change.

By the end of the 17th century, the English owned most of the land of Ireland and decided to set about improving agriculture and introducing better cropping methods. An English man by the name of Arthur Young went about promoting the Norfolk Rotation a four year rotation of wheat followed by roots followed by barley followed by clover. turnips, rye grass and red clover were new crops. New sowing methods and implements such as Jethro Tulls seed drill were also brought to Ireland. The Agricultural Revolution came to Ireland. The potato came in 1586.

By the end of the 1600s and early 1700s milk and potatoes were the staple diet of the majority. The potato contributed in no small part to the rise and fall of the Irish population over the next 300 years. Its ease of production, on lazy beds, suitability to the poorer marginal areas and great nutritious value contributed to the population explosion and ultimately its susceptibility to blight which wiped out half of the crop on its arrival in Ireland in 1845. Over reliance on the potato as staple food in the diet added up to disaster.

The population in the western part of the country exploded. Before the famine 1845-47 there was over 8 million people in the country two thirds of which depended on farming, with 45% of farms having 1-5 acres. 135,134 holdings had less than 1 acre.

Many of the small land holders or tenants were evicted during the famine, many died and many emigrated, so much so that the hill areas of the west coast were reorganised by the landlords and stocked with sheep from Scotland. A lot of land was laid down to grass and cattle and sheep and pig numbers flourished. Famine continued into the 1890s. After the famine the countryside was denuded not just of its people but of every bush and tree. They were either cut down to fuel households or eaten by wandering animals.

Ownership of land became a big issue after the famine and a series of land acts were passed from 1870 to 1933 the most famous being Gladstone's Land Act of 1870 which attempted to give legal status to the three Fs. Fair rent, Fixity of tenure and Free sale. The 1881 act achieved this. In 1891 the Congested Districts Board was set up to reorganise the haphazard way in which land was held into more compact and viable farms. This set about the

enclosure of land, building of roads etc. It was not until then that the poor tenant farmers got any right of tenure. The Land Commission took over this role with the 1923 act, continuing to divide up the big estates and make farms more viable.

Farming flourishes during the first world war because of the demand from Europe for all kinds of produce. It declined again in the early 20s as agriculture recovered in Europe. During the great depression of the 30s free trade came to an end. Ireland was importing all its wheat and flour, most of its sugar and much of its butter and bacon. In 1932 De Valera decided to impose a 5% levy on all imported goods and the land annuities which the state agreed to pay to England were withheld, this amounted to £5m pounds at the time. This resulted in the English putting 20-40% tariffs on Irish export to Britain. During the 2nd world war prices again rose with tillage getting a big boost as it became compulsory. After the war Britain again set up protectionist policies for its own farmers making trade more difficult. Some agreements on cattle allowed a certain amount of exports. In 1963 Ireland joined the EEC or common market which brought Irish farming to its current developed modern state.

The seeds of modern farming were sown in the 1890s with the formation of the Coop Movement under the guidance of Horace Plunkett whom set about educating farmers and encouraging cooperation. The dairy industry flourishes after the setting up of the coops. Education of farmers was recognised as key to spreading modern scientific farming methods. The RASI (Royal Agricultural Society of Ireland) and the RDS whom were inspired by Wm. Blacher were first to encourage farming societies to send Agricultural Advisors about the country.

A man named John Wynn Baker is attributed with being the founder of the first formal education of young farmers. Many schools were set up about the county in the late 1800s. Teachers had to study agriculture as part of their training. A small piece of

land at Glasnevin was bought and set up to represent a small modern freehold, where teachers and instructors were given instruction. This later became the Albert College where our first Agricultural Advisors were trained. In 1926 a Faculty of Agriculture was set up at UCD and Dairy at UCC. In the mid 1970s the Albert College closed, becoming part of UCD with the building of the new Ag Block at Belfield. A larger farm (Lyons Estate) near Newcastle was earlier purchased for research and practical training. Between 1904 and 1906 Agricultural colleges were set up at Athenry, Clonakilty, Mountbellew and Ballyhaise to train apprentice farmers. In 1958 An Foras Taluntais was established to carry out research. This became ACOT for a while and is now Teagasc which has an advisory role as well as research.

Before the advent of tourism and tree planting in the late 50s and early 60s fishing and farming were the main ways of making a living in the Glann area. The way of life would have been very subsistent with each family hoping to provide what it could from the land and or the lake. Turf and firewood were cut to provide heat for the winter in the open fire and for cooking both winter and summer.

Interestingly during the war in the forties when fuel was scarce a few bob could be made from producing charcoal. The Joyce family in Shannawagh produced charcoal at this time. It required some skill to produce the product correctly as the charring process had to be very carefully controlled. Charcoal, which is rich in carbon, is produced by partially burning timber, under conditions where air is restricted so that the wood is only partly burned. Charcoal heats to 1000 degrees Celsius when burned and was the fuel used in smelters during ancient times.

The Glann people of the time were not much more than one generation away from Famine and cottier times. They were poor in money terms; they were establishing themselves as free holders of their properties. Ireland as a state was establishing itself and struggling to get on its feet.

A Memoir from the '40s

In a speech on the 17th of March 1943, De Valera declared, “The Ireland that we dream of would be the home of a people who valued material wealth, only for a basis for right living, of a people who, satisfied with frugal comfort, devoted their leisure to the things of the spirit—a land whose countryside would be bright with cosy homesteads, whose fields would be joyous with the sounds of industry, with the romping of sturdy children, the contest of athletic youth and the laughter of happy maidens”.

The athletic youth and happy maidens didn't dance at the crossroads, but danced at night in Cricklewood and Kilburn, slaved all day at menial tasks and sent money to the family at home. The men from the west spent the rest of the money in pubs to stave away the loneliness, rather than return to grotty lodgings, if they could get lodgings, as landladies put signs outside saying “No Irish, No dogs” etc. So Dev's dream was a mirage.

In the 1930s, '40s and '50s, the men from the West gathered in groups passing around butts of woodbine cigarettes before deciding to emigrate, as there was no work for them. They took the cattle boat to England.

The women followed, clutching their cardboard suitcases, and found themselves in an alien environment far from the wide open greenness of home. As children in Glann, we had no concept of the hard work that went into making a living on a small farm. We roamed free. The animals were our friends, not mere units of production. In Spring we watched the crows following the horse and plough picking up tasty worms. Lime was mixed with the soil to make it less acidic. The lime was taken from our lime kiln where the limestone was burned. Last year's potatoes were cut into segments,

each segment had to have an eye, then put down at regular intervals, and ploughed in. As they grew, they were sprayed with bluestone to keep away the dreaded blight. The corn was spread by hand over the ploughed fields, and then harrowed. The harrow was a heavy frame with iron teeth for breaking up sods or removing weeds.

Turnips and cabbage were also sown. Bacon and cabbage was a favourite meal in those days, with a big dish of Kerr's pinks.

Summer was for cutting turf to keep the home fires burning. Turf was cut with a sleane and the sods of turf spread out on the bog to dry. They were then footed—the sods put up against one another like a pyramid, so that the wind would blow through and dry them.

The children helped with this spreading and footing—fresh air sharpened the appetites. They were ready for the tea and sandwiches that my mother brought. When the turf was dry the donkey was pressed into service, as the bog was too soft for a horse and cart. The donkey with baskets on either side stepped gingerly over a kish that was made of boards and covered with straw and rushes to get him over a wandering stream and on to the road. The turf was stacked in the haggard.

Summer was hay cutting time. The hay was cut with a scythe, a long handled implement with a hand grip, and a long curved blade. After cutting, the hay lay in swathes which had to be turned occasionally to dry, before being piled into hay cocks. Later, it was brought by horse and car and put into the hay shed ready for winter feed for the animals.

Autumn was corn cutting time, again with a scythe. The corn was left to dry, then tied into sheaves, before

being brought home to be threshed. Great excitement heralded the arrival of the threshing machine, a cumbersome vehicle. All the neighbouring men arrived to help. The grain was fed into bags while the straw was kept for bedding for the animals in the winter. There was a party in the house afterwards, plenty of egg sandwiches and currant cake washed down with Guinness. Meanwhile, the sparrows, starlings, and crows descended on the stubble and had their own party on all the grains of corn that were left. Afterwards, my father brought the bags of corn to the Mill in Moycullen to be ground into oatmeal. Going there by horse and cart took a full day out of his busy schedule.

In October, with winter approaching, the potatoes were dug. Digging them with a spade was backbreaking work, while gathering them and piling them into bags was no easier. The cold wind nipped at fingers, while boots were covered with wet clay. The horse and cart brought home the bags, where a pit had been dug for the potatoes. They were thrown into the pit, covered with clay and straw which kept them fresh for the year.

In winter, when the North wind blew, and flurries of snow occasionally covered the fields, there was no rest for the farmer. The cows were brought in at night and had to be milked morning and evening. Straw was laid on the floor of the cowhouse for their bedding. The horse and cows and donkey were fed at night with great armfuls of hay. Meanwhile, the cattle and sheep were left out in the fields and had to be fed with bundles of hay and turnips. The horse's shed and the cowhouse were cleaned out every day and great shovels of dung were piled outside the back door of the cowhouse.

This cow-dung was scattered over the fields in spring to enrich the soil. The horse's dung, I believe, was great for roses!! No artificial manure was used, so I suppose our parents and grandparents were the first organic farmers.

In Winter and Summer the farmyard was a hub of activity. This was the woman's domain. Pigs grunted in the pighouse, hens cackled and squabbled, geese and ducks quacked and gobbled, the rooster crowed, while the gander hissed at anyone who came near. The geese were kept in their own garden, known as the gander's garden. Dogs barked, cats, in between having cat naps and caterwauling at night, slunk around, keeping mice and rats at bay. The dogs were on guard duty, keeping an eye out for the fox, as well

as shepherding the sheep from field to field.

Quite a menagerie, but a menageire that had to be fed and watered. Big black pots bubbled over the open fire, full of spuds for the pigs. The hens, ducks and geese were fed with leftovers and bread mixed with oatmeal and they gobbled up every crawling thing. Sometimes the hens made a foray into the kitchen, but were dispatched by my mother with a broom. The rooster woke us at dawn, with his cock-a-doodle-do to remind us that he was in charge of his harem. My mother wondered what he had to be proud of. The hens did all the work, laying eggs that were the most beautifully packaged food ever produced. We all knew when an egg had been laid, as the hen cackled triumphantly afterwards, before strutting out to her mates to tell the news.

We were dispatched in the evening to gather the eggs, which were eaten at breakfast with brown bread and homemade butter, yummy!! In the evening the hens were locked into the hen house. That was also the children's job. Sometimes a recalcitrant hen squawked and cackled, reluctant to go to bed, like a naughty child, but was finally rounded up and shut in.

Monday was washing day. Water was carried in from the gully nearby in iron buckets and boiled in the big black kettle over the fire. Clothes were washed in a tub and scrubbed on a wash board with sunlight soap. They were hung out to dry on walls and hedges, or if it rained near the fire.

When the cows were milked the cream was skimmed off the top and put into an earthenware crock until there was enough to put in the churn. The churn was like a slim waisted barrel and had a lid with a hole in it. A dash was inserted in this hole and the lid closed. A dash was like a broom handle, with a circular flat piece of wood at the base. We all took a hand at bashing the dash up and down. Any person who came into the house had to take a hand while the churning was going on, or else the fairies would take the butter. Then there was the usual salutation "God Bless the Work".

Churning over, my mother collected the big lumps of butter which had formed and put them into a wooden basin and washed them thoroughly with sparkling spring water. Washing over, the butter was salted and thumped into shape. No creamery butter ever tasted as good as our home made butter. The buttermilk that was left also tasted delicious and was great for settling the stomach they said. My mother

also used the buttermilk to make the brown bread. The dough was placed in an iron oven with live coals underneath and piled on top of the lid.

On fair days cattle and sheep were rounded up and brought into Oughterard to be sold. Deals were done, money changed hands, luck money was given back to the buyer. My father bought groceries, tea, sugar, flour and whatever else was needed. He didn't buy meat, as a poor pig would sometimes be slaughtered and a hen or a duck also came to a sad end and provided meat for the growing family. Shopping done, he went into his favourite pub, and came home in great form—"Maith go leor," as my mother called it.

In the long Winter nights light was provided by candles and paraffin lamps. As children we listened to ghost stories around the blazing fire, of headless horses, banshees, wraiths and spirits roaming the countryside. Ghosts haunted our imaginations—they usually hid in dark corners or under beds. The winters back then seemed to be colder—ice covered the ponds and we spent a lot of time sliding and slithering on them.

At Halloween the children ducked for apples in a basin of water and fought over the ring in the barm brack. Young fellas ran amok throwing turnips and cabbages at front doors and frightening the inmates.

In the midst of hail, rain and snow Christmas arrived like a beacon in the darkness. There was the big shopping for the making of the Christmas cake. A big Christmas box was given to us by Joyces in Oughterard. What happened to Christmas boxes? Candles were bought, especially the big red candle which was placed in a scooped out turnip in the kitchen window. The smaller ones were placed in every window sill in the house.

Plucking the goose was a big event. Feathers and down flew around the kitchen. The wings were kept for dusters. We looked forward to the making of the Christmas cake. We took a hand at beating the eggs, already looking forward to the licking of the bowl when the cake was safely in the oven. The scent of cloves hung around the kitchen.

Christmas Eve was magical. All the candles were lit, and they twinkled in every window. Holly and ivy were piled on the dresser and on the mantel. Pictures sagged under greenery. There was no Christmas tree ablaze, but outside in the inky darkness the stars shone like myriads of crystal. The goose lay ready for tomorrow's dinner on a platter surrounded by its

giblets; the Christmas cake took pride of place on the dresser. The candles flickered, the fire blazed, the holly berries blushed, the crickets chirped. All was ready for the coming of Jesus, my mother said. I'm afraid all we thought about was the coming of Santa, as we hung up our stockings on the chimney breast.

St. Stephen's Day arrived, when the wren boys came a calling, dressed outrageously, pretending they had a 'wren caught in the furze' and looking for hand outs.

Besides helping with the hay and the turf, children went to school, usually wearing hand-me-downs from older siblings. My mother used the old singer sewing machine to make dresses for the girls from paper patterns. Money was scarce, and my father was a dab hand at putting new soles on our shoes. He slipped the shoe onto a last, cut the leather to fit, and hammered in sprigs to keep it in place. In Summer the children threw off their shoes, and walked in bare feet. Walking on soft mossy grass was great, but walking on gravelly roads was another matter.

The school was heated by turf brought in by the parents, and stored in the turf shed, as we called it. The fire was very welcome, as some children had to walk miles in hail rain and snow in Winter. No mollycoddling of children then, but they did get a mug of cocoa at lunch time. The spring water from Clancy's field was boiled on the fire, condensed milk, sugar and cocoa was put in. It was very welcome, especially in Winter. The children sat at desks with inkwells. Pens and ink were used on headline copies to improve their writing. Now and again the nibs had to be replaced. The arrival of the Biro marked the end of pen and ink. At the end of their time in school they did an exam called Primary Cert and were given a certificate to show that they passed. Before my time, algebra and geometry were also taught. In those days the sanitary conditions were Dickensian. A dry toilet was located in an outbuilding for the teachers only.

The names of the teachers who taught the generations are still remembered. Miss Corbett taught my father and his peers. Mrs Morrissey (nee Clancy) and her son taught my older siblings. Then there was Mr and Mrs Divilly. I remember Miss Nolan, and then of course there was Miss Hession. A J.A.M, a junior assistant mistress, she was a fixture in the school and she taught the infants and First Class. Miss Hession lived in digs in Mon's house, which was beside the Church. The other teachers lived in "The Residence" near the school. Last, but not least, was Mrs Manning who taught there

until the school was closed in nineteen seventy two. I think the heart went out of Glann with the school closure. No more shouts, fights, taunts and laughter from school going children. No Holy Communions or Confirmations in the Church. The children were bussed to Oughterard where they mixed with other transplants from surrounding areas. The school was renovated and is now a family home, with a splendid view of the Lough Corrib.

If we didnt have First Communion or Confirmation in the Church we had the Mission. When the Redemptorists arrived with their fire and brimstone sermons they put the fear of God in everyone. Of course the sexes were segregated, one week for the men and one week for the women. Sex was the theme of many of their sermons, no fumbling in haysheds, no kisses or cuddles after a dance were allowed. If couples indulged in those pastimes Hell and damnation awaited them. The women wondered what was said to the men. 'Ah shure,' one old woman said 'they will blame the women anyway'.

We were called "The Glanners", and as a close knit community, we knew everyone for miles around. We shared in the sorrows and joys of our neighbours. The death of the old was accepted, having been in God's waiting room for a while, ready to be called. A wake was held in the home of the deceased. The neighbours rambled in. There was plenty of Guinness, sandwiches, tea and sherry for the ladies. After extolling the virtues of the deceased, the Rosary was said. They had great faith in the after life. As Ansty said of the tailor when he died, "there will be great talk in Heaven tonight".

But when a young man, Stephen Joyce was struck by lightening as he worked in the forestry, and a young schoolgirl, Mary Feeney died when she jumped off a lorry as she was coming from school, the shock and grief were great. They will be remembered always as they were, young and vibrant.

So life went on. With no television or internet, with its twitter, google and facebook, children roamed free, getting into trouble climbing trees, stealing apples, swinging on ropes stretched between two trees, or messing around on the lake shore trying to whistle through a bulrush. They picked blackberries, mushrooms and hazel nuts in season, and certainly lived a healthy life in the open air.

The adults made their own amusement. Dances were held in selected houses, where they danced the

half sets and the waltz to the music of the melodeon, played by James Sullivan. There was an interval for songs and recitations.

Good singers like Bride Clancy and Cassie Sullivan sang "Oh play to me Gypsy" or "Danny Boy" while a few of the men and especially John Edward Joyce recited "The green eye of the little yellow God" or "Dangerous Dan McGrew". Singing and recitals over, dancing started, again with shouts of "Round the house, and mind the dresser". Those dances lasted into the small hours. I wonder what the Redemptorists would have said? "Occasions of sin", of course.

John Edward Joyce organised a Sports Day, held in this large green field in Rinneroon, overlooking the lake. There was great excitement on the day as the young men competed in the high jump and the long jump races, and of course the tug of war. The children gathered around the stall and spent their few pennies on a job lot of sweets, lollipops, and liquorice sticks. Incidentally, John Edward's mother was the last person to be buried in Inchagoill.

As Glann Church was a 'chapel of ease' we had Mass only on a Sunday. The new church was built in 1960 and was called 'The Lady of the Valley'. In olden times people from Durrus rowed over for Mass. Sunday was a special day, as the families walked to Church spick and span in their Sunday clothes. Hats or scarves were obligatory for the women, while the men removed their caps on entering the Church. Some of the 'hard chaws' knelt with one knee on their caps, ready for a quick exit. Sometimes, during the sermon they left for a quick puff of a woodbine. There was segregation of the sexes in the Church as well. The women moved to the right hand of the aisle, while the men took the left.

As well as Mass on Sunday the stations were held in houses that were a long way from the Church. The inmates of the selected house went into a frenzy of cleaning, white-washing, painting, and banishing poor spiders who thought they had a home for life. After Mass there was a big breakfast. Afterwards the family breathed a sigh of relief that everything had gone well.

Slowly life changed. Men and women cycled to dances in O Sullivans dancehall in Oughterard. The Durrus people no longer rowed over the lake to Mass. The all-Ireland football matches were broadcast on the radio, and eagerly listened to on Sunday afternoons. Electricity arrived, and banished the ghosts. Water