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GENEALOGY
HERALDRY
VEXILLOLOGY
SOCIAL HISTORY
Heritage Matters
Book Reviews
Open Meetings
News & Queries

CONTENTS

<i>James Scannell Reports</i>	2
<i>British Defence Attaché Guest at Meeting</i>	2
<i>New Members Always Welcome</i>	2
<i>Twilight of the Chiefs</i>	3
<i>Centenaries etc. & the Genealogist</i>	3
<i>Diary Dates & Queries</i>	4
<i>Genealogy as an Educational Tool.</i>	4

Genealogy & Heraldry Bill, 2006

After many years of campaigning, we will shortly see the publication of the long awaited Genealogy & Heraldry Bill, 2006.

The draft text of the Bill and the Explanatory Memorandum were agreed by the Board of the Society last year and presented to Irish parliamentarians for their consideration. Meetings were held late last year regarding the sponsorship of the Bill. Then following the registration of the Genealogical Society of Ireland as a Nominating Body for the Irish Senate, it was agreed to initiate the Bill in the Irish Upper House.

This Bill is intended to regularise the delivery of heraldic services by the State which up to the passing of the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997 and more especially, since the implementation of Section 13 of the Act, were delivered by a non-statutory body transferred from British control on April 1st 1943 which became the *Genealogical Office* or the *Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland*.

Whilst, the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997 endeavoured to regularise matters by declaring that the non-statutory

Genealogical Office was a branch of the National Library it neither established such an office nor adequately provided for its functions. At the time of the Oireachtas debate on the 1997 legislation it was clear that the legislative compromise between "abolition" and "establishment" of the *Genealogical Office* was far from satisfactory and legally unsound in respect from whence the power to grant Arms was derived by the State.

Some may view heraldry as somewhat alien to the modern world or possibly, inappropriate in a republic. However, heraldry is part of our heritage and indeed, it is much in use throughout our daily lives from the Arms of the State, county councils, sports clubs, colleges and many state agencies. Irish people have a great attachment to heraldic symbolism as seen through the use of family crests and county or provincial crests by the GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) and other sports organisations.

Heraldry is also in use in many republics, some of our new members of the European Union have such incorporated on their

national flags whilst, outside Europe, it's used extensively in the United States of America and the Republic of South Africa. The latter having a Heraldry Act, a State Herald and a Bureau of Heraldry.

This Bill is intended to provide Ireland with a modern heraldic authority with a sound legislative basis for the delivery of heraldic and vexillological services to individuals, bodies corporate and institutions. The present situation is totally unsatisfactory as it places the continuance of the State's involvement in heraldic matters in considerable doubt.

The Bill also provides for the proper management and coordination of the delivery of genealogical services in the State and the formulation of policy, planning and the upholding of best practice, quality of service and customer care in the delivery of such services. The repeals and amendments are designed to facilitate the operation of an effective and modern Office of Arms and related services at the National Library. The full text of the Bill and the Memorandum will be available on www.oireachtas.ie

www.familyhistory.ie

Since the Annual General Meeting, **Iris O'Connor**, MGSI, the Society's Web Editor & Developer is totally revamping the Society's website. Iris decided to alter the appearance and content of the website in line with ongoing consultations with the members. Given that the Society's website is basically our "shop front" care must always be taken to ensure that it's up-to-date and

meeting the needs of our members at home and overseas. Ease of access to each of the sections and to the on-line research resources that will be gradually added is our priority, according to Iris who has designed and developed a number of exciting websites for the Southside Partnership. A new feature will be the uploading of the census information, miscellaneous events data and short articles

covering a range of interesting topics. Consideration is being given to wider "Members' Only" facilities and an on-line Members' Interests Directory. The number of visits to the website continue to astound and this expected to grow even faster with the additional resources planned. The new features will be rolled out gradually over the next few months. Why not checkout the website today?

James Scannell Reports.....

Publication of Police Intelligence Files

Some 19000 pages of intelligence records compiled by the Crimes Special Branch of the Royal Irish Constabulary between 1899 and 1921 have been published on DVD and CD format by Eneclann to mark the 90th anniversary of the 1916 Rising. Included are police intelligence files covering 450 Sinn Féin and republicans, including Michael Collins and Eamon de Valera. Surveillance reports on those involved in the 1916 Rising, the War of Independence and the republican movement of the time with the bulk of the material relating to the period 1917-1921. It excludes records compiled by the Dublin Metropolitan Police as most of the material held by the "G" section, the intelligence arm of the DMP was destroyed.

Dublin City Library & Archives

John Grenham, Genealogist in Residence, at the Dublin City Library and Archive, Pearse Street, Dublin 2, has been working on a digitalisation project for the Dublin City Electoral Rolls. All the information from the Electoral Rolls spanning the years 1937 – 1942 inclusive is now available in the Reading Room of the

Library. By clicking on name you can open up an image of the original document. Currently 1.3m names are included which will be loaded with additional years as they become available. The Library has also acquired some issues of the 19th century newspaper "Hue and Cry - The Police Gazette" which consists mainly of descriptions of criminals and suspects on the run in Ireland plus lists of all those who have deserted the militia and provides some fascinating stories and nuggets of information on Ireland at that time. During 1866, the front page deals with the Fenian James Stephens who escaped from Richmond Prison the previous November for whose capture a reward of £1000 was offered. John Devoy is described as 'rather sullen looking' which a Patrick Curran is described as having eyes 'red from excessive drinking'. Other descriptions relate to the identification of stolen property. The range of crimes covered is a wide one and include assault, robbery, burglary, infanticide and murder

"Diarmait – King of Leinster"

Written by Nicholas Furlong, published by the Mercier Press. This is the first and only biogra-

phy of Diarmait Mac Murchada, King of Leinster, considered to be one of the most misjudged and damned but dominant figures in Irish history. He became King of Leinster by chance when a series of fatal family mishaps resulted in him being elected to power aged 16 in 1126. Nicholas Furlong provides the reader with a thorough account of his life where his actions and decisions are examined in the context of his questionable personal traits and character and his effect on the political turbulence of the time. At one stage of his life, as the ousted of King of Leinster, he enlisted the aid of King Henry II of England to assist him in regaining his throne which resulted in the Norman invasion of Ireland in 1169, for which, he is remembered and reviled in Irish history. As Furlong points out, he was no "Mr. Nice Guy" as he is recorded as having two wives at the same time, raping an abbess, abducting Dervorgilla, the wife of his bitter rival. Furlong provides the reader with a subtle, compassionate yet realistic examination of the man behind the legend. Another excellent Irish History / Biography title from the Mercier Press.

British Defence Attaché Guest at Meeting

The Cathaoirleach of the Society, Rory Stanley, FGSI, warmly welcomed the British Defence Attaché, **Col John Steed** and his wife as special guests at the Society's Open Meeting last month. This very well attended meeting heard a fascinating talk by **Mr. Pat Lynch** of the Royal British Legion (Republic of Ireland) Branch on the erection of the Irish National War Memorial at Islandbridge in Dublin. This memorial was dedicated to the circa 40,000 Irishmen who died during the First World War mainly in the British armed forces. The Ireland the veterans of the Great War of 1914-18 returned to was radically changed both politically and culturally since the Easter Rising of 1916. The results of the 1918

General Election overwhelmingly endorsed the 1916 Proclamation of the Republic and on January 21st 1919, Ireland declared her independence under its own parliament Dáil Éireann sitting in Dublin. This heralded the War of Independence ending with the Treaty with Great Britain that precipitated a bitter, though short Civil War. The young Irish Free State had much on its agenda, not least, economic recovery following years of the Troubles. Bitterness born of the Treaty and the Civil War became deeply rooted in Irish politics. In to this strange and sometimes hostile environment the issue of remembering Ireland's fallen of the First World War crept slowly on to the public agenda. Mr.

Lynch's talk detailed the negotiations, planning and funding of this All-Ireland War Memorial in the run up to the outbreak of World War 2. It was interesting to note the level of cooperation between the then Taoiseach **Eamon de Valera, TD** and representatives of veterans organisations in both parts of Ireland. Poignantly this talk was delivered just five days before the large military parade was held in Dublin to mark the 90th anniversary of the Easter Rising in 1916. Addressing the meeting, Col. Steed spoke of the new era of mutual respect and cooperation between Ireland and the United Kingdom and praised the professionalism of the Irish Army and looked forward to the parade.

New Members Always Welcome

Membership of the Genealogical Society of Ireland is open to all persons with an interest in genealogy, heraldry, vexillology or social history whether based in Ireland or overseas. The Society strongly advocates the "Principle of Public Ownership & Right of Access" to our heritage in all its varied forms. Therefore, members are always encouraged to contribute to the heritage resources of future generations by recording their own family history, story and lore for deposit in the Genealogical Society's Archives or publication in the Society's bian-

nual journal. As members of the Genealogical Society of Ireland we appreciate the importance of our heritage not only to people in Ireland, north and south, but also to Ireland's vast Diaspora. We have links with similar organisations overseas and we exchange journals with over sixty societies. Our activities are many and varied—full details on the website. For many, membership of this Society, means playing an active and vital role in the study and promotion of Irish heritage. Membership Packages. **Ireland:-** Offering ordinary membership

of the Society, Membership Card, voting rights, use of the Society's Archive, monthly newsletter by mail, biannual Journal by mail, and the right to purchase the Society's publications at Special Members' prices of up to 50% off selected publications. This also includes an optional second Membership Card for a household member, including voting rights, for an all inclusive cost of just €30.00 per annum. **Overseas:-** Offering the same at €40.00 per annum. Join OR renew membership on line on the Society's website—www.familyhistory.ie/shop

Twilight of the Chiefs

The publication last year by Maunsel & Company, Dublin of *"Twilight of the Chiefs—The MacCarthy Mór Hoax"* by **Seán Murphy, MA** was unfortunately ignored by most in the world of Irish genealogy and heraldry. Whether, the issues raised by Mr. Murphy were either too embarrassing or too recent for some could have been a factor. Certainly his revelations on the extent of the hoax surrounding the "courtesy recognition" of Terence Francis McCarthy by the State as *"The MacCarthy Mór"* and possibly others requires serious consideration. Brushing the "bogus chiefs" issue under the Irish heraldic carpet clearly is not the solution which should follow the decision on July 23rd 2003 to discontinue the State's "courtesy recognition" of Gaelic Chiefs. Mr. Murphy's very detailed reports published in this book make for fascinating and compelling reading. A professional genealogist and lecturer in Ireland, Mr. Murphy has undertaken this research over a number of years. His findings raise many, often difficult, questions as to how this whole debacle could have occurred in an Irish office of state and indeed, lasted so long. Seriously damaging

the reputation of the Office of the Chief Herald of Ireland, this scandal also caused anguish amongst those who were allegedly deceived by the "bogus chiefs" into supporting their spurious and ridiculous claims to ancient Gaelic prerogatives and privileges. The holders of the undisputed claims to Gaelic chiefship, most of whom were recognised in the 1940s, were cut adrift by the government's decision which was based on the advice of the Attorney General. This is unfortunate as many of these fine and honorable gentlemen reside outside Ireland and yet, represent Europe's most ancient genealogical lines. Mr. Murphy besides chronicling the unmasking the various pretensions of the "bogus chiefs" examines the efforts to regulate the Office of the Chief Herald by Section 13 of the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997. The detailed debate conducted in Seanad Éireann at the time this legislation was going through the Irish Upper House was certainly well informed and a credit to the Minister and Senators, especially Senator Paschal Mooney. In providing a well researched and detailed study of the passing of this legislation, Mr.

Murphy has given us the opportunity to examine the issues in further detail. His use of the Irish Freedom of Information Act, 1997 has provided a unique insight into the attempts at official level to deal with the issues and certainly, his tenacity has been rewarded. However, other files he maintains are still "closed" to professional and independent genealogical examination. This is unfortunate and possibly unwisely now giving, as it does, rise to further suspicions. Mr. Murphy's contribution to the debate surrounding the delivery of heraldic services by the State cannot be underestimated. He has provided a detailed account deserving of the fullest examination by all who have an interest in Irish heraldry. He proposes a number of innovative solutions to restore and enhance the reputation of Irish heraldry and the Office of the Chief Herald. Any future publication dealing with Gaelic chiefs or Irish heraldry must, of necessity, take full account of Mr. Murphy's extensive work on these subjects. Available on Amazon.com at a reduced price of US\$51.71 ISBN 1-930901-43-7 (hb). RRP US\$64.95. It is also available from www.academicapress.com

Centenary Celebrations & Commemorations

The marking by the State of the 90th anniversary of the Easter Rising in 1916 was widely viewed as a prelude creating the tone for the centenary in 2016. The event on Easter Sunday was attended by tens of thousands lining the streets of the capital and watched with pride by millions on television. The Irish Army, Air Corps, Naval Service and members of An Garda Síochána (Police) joined by Irish UN veterans marched through Dublin City centre in a colourful and very dignified military parade. The centenary of the Rising in 2016 will be but one of a number of key centenaries all very significant and yet, some quite controversial and still bitterly divisive. However, the new

dispensation permitted on the island of Ireland following the Belfast Agreement of 1998, can and should see all shades of opinion respectfully marking their own significant dates. The powerfully symbolic presence on the viewing stand at the General Post Office in Dublin on Easter Sunday of Col. John Steed, British Defence Attaché, in full uniform saluting as the parade passed was carried by most media in Ireland. This alone spells hope and yet, celebrates considerable achievements by the British and Irish governments in recent years in the cause of peace and mutual respect and understanding. Politics aside, the heritage value of the event was immense with further records for

genealogists and historians coming on-stream. This is an exciting period for the genealogist as the family story of persons caught up or willingly participating in these historic events is readily accessible. A vitally important opportunity to link person, place and time connected by significant periods of our history. Whether it be the labour movement, women's rights, the language movement, the national cause or the Great War—all provide not merely a backdrop to the lives our ancestors, but real stories to explore and record for future generations. Maybe the National Library should create a unique National Biographical Dictionary to receive and record these stories for the future.

Evening Meeting Convener Appointed

The Society hosts two Open Meetings each month—details on page 4. These meetings are designed to provide information on research techniques, resources and opportunities for members to share information and research problems. Having hosted such meetings since 1991, many different and sometimes very unusual aspects of genealogy were discussed. Starting this year a précis of the previous month's talk is published in this newsletter. At the April meeting of the Board, **Séamus Moriarty, MGSI**, Leas-Chathaoirleach (Vice-

Chair), has agreed to become Evening Meeting Convener and to arrange speakers etc. The Guest Speaker for the May 9th Open Meeting will be **Brian McMahon**—topic *"The Eccentric Archbishop Whateley of Stillorgan"*. 8pm.

SOME QUERIES RECEIVED

DAVID JOHN ROBB, 6, Fleming Road, Bishopton, Renfrewshire, PA7 5HW, Scotland Wrote: - I've traced my paternal line to my great great grandfather **Alexander Robb**, born Londonderry in 1804 to Richard Robb & **Sarah Hislop**. Alexander's wife, **Margaret King**,

was from Fife (Scotland), but parents could have been from Ireland. She was born circa 1820. My grandfather John Robb had a first cousin Mary Robb in Donegal Street, Belfast. This would suggest relatives there at the time. Mary's married name was **Forrest** and she died in Stirling in 1936. Any assistance appreciated.

STEPHANIE SYMONDS, (Mrs) 8, Bass Highway, Wynyard 7325, Tasmania, Australia. E-mail: sas11@dodo.com.au Wrote: Seeking information on my maternal grandfather **Francis Holmes** whose birth place is given Dublin, occupation nailer etc on the 1851 Census for Staffordshire, England. Married at Leek on February 2nd 1849. Any information please.

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www.familyhistory.ie/shop**DIARY DATES***Tuesday May 9th & June 13th 2006***Evening Open Meeting***Dún Laoghaire Senior College**Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire**20.00hrs—22.00hrs**Wednesday May 24th & June 28th 2006***Morning Open Meeting***Port View Hotel, Marine Rd., Dún**Laoghaire**10.30hrs—12.30hrs**Contribution €3.00 p.p.**(Coffee/Tea included at Morning Meetings)*

QUERIES

ANNE FULLAM GOEKE, 647 Salls Road, East Chatham, NY 12060, USA. E-mail: acfullam@mhonline.net Wrote:- Seeking information on **Martin Fullam**, a brickmason, b.1782? Dublin. Last known address 13 Vicar St. Dublin. Widow **Sarah Collins Fullam** b.1796 listed in 1851 as head household. In 1852, emigrated with last child Martin b.1839 to New York City. Older children emigrated April, 1849. A daughter Henrietta Fullam b.1822 returned to Ireland. On 23 July 1849 married **John Cannon**, a tin-plater. He died 15 Dec. 1864. On 22 Jan. 1866, she married **Joseph O'Regan**, a cooper. Any info. please.

PATRICIA QUINN MEIGS, P.O. Box 1985, Canon City, CO 81215, USA E-mail:- patty719@msn.com Wrote:- Seeking info. on the Quinn family of Donegal and the **Overn** family of Down. Great grandfather **James Quinn** born 1828 in Ballintra, Donegal. Came to America with several brothers circa 1844-1848. Father **John or Patrick Quinn**, mother **Bridget Murphy**. Possibly from Tyrone. ANY connections to **James Overn**, born 1798 in Cloughenramer, Co. Down. Married **Ann Granger**, born 1800, Cloughenramer. Family left Down for America in 1835. Any relatives still in Down? Any information, please.

H. MYRON BOHN JR., PO Box 78, Footville, WI. 53537-0078, USA E-mail:- synod@ticon.net Wrote:- Seeking any information or sources on my great grandparents. **Jeffery Donahue** was born May 7, 1848, in County Kerry. His mother was **Hannora Bagley** and was born about 1818. **Walter F. Lucas** was born Dec. 4, 1843 and left Ireland on board the ship Denmark in 1870. The Denmark went to Liverpool and then to the USA arriving Jan. 20, 1870. Any help you can give me including addresses I can write to would be greatly appreciated.

SARAH MORPHIS-DAUBACK, 106 South Laurel Street, Bryant, Arkansas, USA 72022 E-mail:- sdauback@sbcglobal.net Wrote:- information on my G-G-G-grandfather, **Jonathon Milton Burgess** born in Ireland around 1780 (d. in SC, USA around 1827), married **Ruth Elizabeth Blackstock** around 1804 in Jackson Co., Alabama, USA, Ruth was born 1785 in South Carolina, USA. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

DIANA YANG-MYRE, 85, Towers St, Ascot, Brisbane, Queensland, 4007, Australia E-mail:- dymyre@hotmail.com Wrote:- Seeking details of **Peter McCann** or **McCann** and **Mary Fitzpatrick**. Peter was tried at Monaghan Assizes c 1797-98 for robbery and transported to Australia on the Minerva arriving January 1800. Peter may have been born c1769. Peter McCann married a convict woman, **Mary Fitzpatrick**, tried in Waterford and transported on Atlas 1 to Sydney Cove 1802. Mary born c1787 and came from Clonmel, Tipperary. Peter and Mary had two children, Nicholas and Catherine. Any information regarding Peter or Mary highly appreciated.

NOTA BENE:- Queries are only published at the discretion of the editor and where a mailing address and e-mail address are provided.

Genealogy as an Educational Tool

Adult education and indeed, the return to education following retirement is now a very exciting and welcome feature of modern Irish life. This has much to do with the major economic changes in Ireland over the past fifteen years or so and indeed, it has been central to government policy for decades. Education means empowerment and mobility for women, young mothers and now increasingly, retirees of both sexes. The terms "life long" and "continuing" education very succinctly capture the essence and the vitality of this important aspect of modern Irish society. Though, for many in Ireland this is now the norm, it is not so for some very vulnerable sections within our communities. State and local education and training agencies have become increasingly aware of two such groups within our society—senior citizens and young adult males under 25 with minimal formal education. The latter group has experienced a virtual exclusion from the workforce in certain areas and when in employment, low skills and poor education restrict mobility and erode any job security. Whilst imaginative and innovative steps are now targeted at these young males, the retirees or seniors with limited or no formal education require similar intervention and assistance to enhance the quality of their lives. Some may indeed wish to return on a part-time basis to the workforce, others and possibly the majority want education as a key to inclusivity in the

lives of family members in our modern Ireland. Literacy skills are a must for entry into formal adult education and indeed, many local initiatives aimed at improving literacy skills are extremely successful. Some dealing with the practical application of literacy which many of us take for granted, others deal with a "social" literacy through book or writing clubs. The Genealogical Society has always advocated the use of family history as an educational tool for young and the not so young. Familiarity with the subject matter coupled with a requirement to interact with family and friends in the recording of the information makes genealogy an ideal educational tool. Visiting repositories and searching records under a mentoring scheme would create and develop a self confidence and an ability to utilize freely available resources. The burning desire amongst us all to record and pass on our family's story is the driving force behind most entrants to the world of genealogy, irrespective of education. But genealogy is only the key to a world of learning where local history, social history and other disciplines easily invite investigation. Indeed, this route to further education has seen hundreds of persons take up formal courses in genealogy and local history in University College Dublin and Maynooth. Some of the most exciting and well researched material published nowadays on local history is by mature students and gradu-

ates of such courses. However, the absence of a structured genealogy course as part of an adult literacy programme is certainly regrettable. The resources are readily available and bodies such as this Society can and should assist in the production of such courses or specific family history modules for adult literacy classes. Genealogy as an educational tool offers inclusivity at a number of levels and is ultimately rewarding for the student and their families. In meeting a social and educational need, this is important.

AN DAONCHARTLANN

The Society's Archive is based at the restored Martello Tower at Seapoint, County Dublin. "An Daonchartlann" as it is called, is open to members and visitors at various times during the month. As it is entirely staffed by our volunteers, the times of operation may vary. Therefore, the Archivist, **Mr. Séamus O'Reilly, MGSi**, advises all intending to visit the Society's Archive to telephone (01) 202 0464 to ascertain opening times. Persons visiting the Martello Tower are advised to use public transport—DART (rail) to Seapoint Station approx. 4 minutes walk.