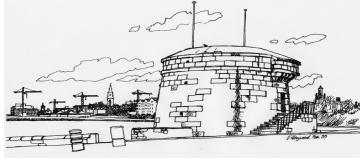


- 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration
- Irish Genealogical Project – C. & A.G. Report 2004
- 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the European Flag

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# The Gene Gazette

The Newsletter of  
the Genealogical  
Society of Ireland  
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## IRISH GENEALOGICAL PROJECT – TIME FOR ACTION

*A Further Damning Report from the Comptroller & Auditor General*

Another damning report by the Comptroller & Audit General on the Irish Genealogical Project (IGP) has increased calls for action by the Minister for Arts, Sport & Tourism, Mr. John O'Donoghue, TD, to finally bring an end to this embarrassing and very costly project.

### **"IGP - Value for Money?"**

The Irish Genealogical Project was established in 1988 as an employment training and tourism expansion initiative based on the computerisation of the church registers from each parish in Ireland. The computerisation was to have produced a resource for "roots tourism" with a central signposting system directing clients to the county of origin of their ancestors etc. A comprehensive service was planned based on a countrywide network of Heritage Centres offering research data for a fee. But by the end of 1996 when **Mr. John Purcell**, the Comptroller & Auditor General produced his "Value for Money" report on the Irish Genealogical Project management of this project was in a shambles. According to the report published on April 22<sup>nd</sup> 1997, public sector agencies in Ireland had expended circa Ir£15 million (circa €19 million) on this project from 1988 to July 1996 and yet, according to the report, only 29% of the records had been computerised by July 1996. In 1993 a company called Irish Genealogy Limited (IGL) was incorporated to function as the Project's co-ordinating agency, but it did not commence trading until August 1996 when a Chief Executive had been appointed. Again, according to the 1996 report, this company was to develop a marketing plan by June 1997. In 1996 it was found that *"the monitoring of the progress in implementing the project has been ineffective. No budget or measurable targets were set and the gathering of relevant management information was sporadic and generally ineffective"*. Whilst the Irish Genealogical Project (Heritage Centres) was originally established as a means of stimulating extra tourism revenue for the country, the 1996 report was scathing stating that *"no targets*

*have been set for these objectives and no mechanism is in place to measure the tourism impacts attributable to the IGP. Consequently, the likely effectiveness of the project in contributing to tourism growth cannot currently be established"*. The author of the 1996 report clearly left nobody in any doubt that radical steps were necessary to rescue the project and to ensure value for money for the Irish and European taxpayer.

### **"Slow Progress Reported"**

The latest report by the Comptroller & Auditor General makes for further depressing reading. The Department's Accounting Officer reported to the Comptroller & Auditor General that *"Of the total current estimate of 13.7 million church records, some 10.5 million (76%) have been indexed and inputted to the computerised database. The bulk of the remaining 3.2 million records require to be indexed and inputted. He noted that 19 of the 33 county based genealogy centres have inputted 100% of their church records. Work in the centres, carried out in the main by FÁS trainees, is well supervised and has been executed to an acceptable standard with an error rate of just 1.8% (against a norm of 3%)."* The report was considering progress since 1988 and, whilst, in the intervening years the Irish economy has changed utterly resulting in fewer persons available for this type of training based work, the Accounting Officer stated that *"This has resulted in records being indexed/input at a rate of just 1% per annum. This would require 20-25 years to complete the inputting of the 3.2 million church records outstanding. IGL is now contemplating completing the task mainly on a commercial basis together with some inputting by volunteers. In 2004, IGL estimated that if funding of the order €150,000 per annum were available and augmented by local area funding, some 90% of records could be indexed/input by*

*end 2007. To enable commencement of commercial inputting, IGL has allocated €75,000 for this purpose in 2005."*

### **"More Reports Commissioned"**

The Accounting Officer concluded by *"stating that the Board of IGL has now been left in no doubt that if the project is to be funded further, there must be a clear business strategy for completion in accordance with value for money principles."* and notwithstanding this clear warning, further reports have been commissioned by the Board of IGL from consultants to establish a business model for the delivery of its services etc. in relation to "genealogy tourism". The report states that the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism, **Mr. John O'Donoghue, TD** met with the Board of IGL in June 2005 and has asked the Board to revert to him with a sustainable business plan for completion of the project. On receipt of this plan, the Minister will then decide on whether or not to commission a separate independent consultancy evaluation of the project.

### **"Time for Action, Minister"**

Anyone who has followed this sorry saga for the past number of years will be forgiven for the horrible sense of *"deja vu"* with previous Ministers also demanding sustainable business plans from Irish Genealogy Limited. However, this damning report, once again, focuses on the need for a radical overhaul of this project – something this Society has been calling for since the early 1990's. Indeed, following publication of the 1996 report, this Society publicly advocated the winding-up of Irish Genealogy Limited and the transfer of the control of each of the IGP Centres to the Public Library Service in each county. In the August 1997 issue of this newsletter the Society maintained that the same sanctions should apply to the IGP and IGL as would pertain in the commercial world should such a report be delivered by a company's

auditor. This time, following a second damning report and numerous calls for a sustainable business plan, the Minister must act decisively to bring this farcical situation to an end. It is abundantly clear from the 2004 report that the Board of Irish Genealogy Limited, consisting of various stakeholders, including commercial genealogists representing APCI and AUGRA and members of the Irish Family History Foundation (IFHF) representing the managers of each of the Heritage Centres, is incapable of providing effective governance of this increasingly costly project because of persistent disagreements between various stakeholders. The report states that in a letter of May 2005 which IFHF sent to IGL it maintained *“that the recording of new data had virtually stagnated in the past six years. The Index appears to be a big database due to the inclusion of records other than those on births, marriages and deaths and remains in a partially completed state and was unlikely ever to be completed.”*. Whilst, the report fails to provide any further information on the disagreement between the stakeholders, it appears that confidence in the structures has evaporated amongst certain stakeholders.

#### *“Transfer to Public Library Service”*

For the effective management of this State-funded resource, the Minister, on behalf of the Irish and the European taxpayers, should immediately order an audit of each centre, stand down the Board of Irish Genealogy Limited, make arrangements with his Ministerial colleague, **Mr. Dick Roche, TD**, the Minister for the Environment & Local Government for the transfer in to local authority control of each of the Heritage Centres, including the transfer of staff etc., transfer the “roots tourism” functions and resources of Irish Genealogy Limited to Fáilte Ireland and finally, wind-up Irish Genealogy Limited. Should legislative measures be required to secure the records and assets of each of the Heritage Centres for the State prior to their transfer to the Public Library Service – then Minister this must be a priority. Waiting for another damning report to fully appreciate the gravity of this situation is not an option and such a delay would certainly not represent value for money for the State.

### JAMES SCANNELL REPORTS....

**DR. HYDE PAPERS** During September the library of NUI Galway was presented with a collection of personal letters and other material by the family of Tom Morrisroe born and raised in Ratra near Frenchpark where Dr. Douglas Hyde, the first President of Ireland lived. Tim Morrisroe was a close personal friend of Dr. Hyde and this collection of Morrisroe-Hyde papers include an extensive collection of letters in Irish from

Dr. Hyde who taught Morrisroe Irish in addition to material relating to Dr Hyde’s visit to the U.S.A. to raise funds for the revival of the Irish language. **Tom Morrisroe** was a member of the Garda Síochána, stationed in Mayo and subsequently in Galway before his lost his life in a 1954 car accident. The collection was presented to NUI Galway’s James Hardiman Library which already hold 120 manuscripts collected by Dr. Hyde during his folklore studies and other related material. NUI Galway librarian **Marie Reddan** said that the collection of papers represented an important primary resource for research into the social, cultural and political history of late nineteenth century Ireland.

**GOLFERS ON STAMPS** In September An Post released 4 postage stamps celebrating the contribution of Irish golfers to the Ryder Cup and Ireland’s hosting of this prestigious golfing event next year at the K Club. The 2002 winning Ryder Cup team including **Darren Clarke, Pádraig Harrington** and **Paul McGinley** are featured on a 48c stamp while a second 48c stamp features **Eamon Darcy, Christy O’Connor jnr.** and **Philip Watson**. Featured on a 60c stamp are **Ronan O’Rafferty, Christy O’Connor snr** and the late **Harry Bradshaw** while a 65c stamp features a photograph of the K Club’s 18th hole, designed by **Arnold Palmer**.

**9/11 CHAPLAIN** On Sunday September 11 a peace garden to the memory of **Fr. Mychal Judge**, chaplain of the New York City Fire Department was dedicated at Keshcarrigan, Co. Leitrim. Fr. Judge was a frequent visitor to Keshcarrigan and made his last visit to Co. Leitrim in 2000. The memorial was unveiled by his sister Dymna Jessich who travelled from the U.S.A. to unveil the memorial. The attendance also included **Fr. Chris Keenan**, Fr. Judge’s successor as Chaplain to the New York City Fire Department. **“IRISH EXAMINER - 100 YEARS OF NEWS”** Edited by Des O’Driscoll, published by Gill and Macmillan, ISBN – 0 7171 3913 1, €24.99, hb, 220 pp, ills. This year Cork is the European Capital of Culture and as one of the many taking place there, the Irish Examiner, formerly the Cork Examiner and known locally as *‘da paper’*, has produced a remarkable book to commemorate 100 years of publishing in Cork containing a fascinating collection of articles and illustrations. All the word’s major events are included in this book ranging from the 1905 Russian Revolution to last December’s Tsunami. In between are stories recalling the loss of the Titanic (1912), Lusitania (1915), the opening of Tutankhamen’s sarcophagus (1922), the attempted assassination of Mussolini by Irish woman Violet Gibson (1926), the Depression of the 1930’, the Emergency and post-Emergency years and the many events that occurred from the 1950’s onwards. Each year recipes a double spread with the front page of the paper from that year and the leading stories on the page opposite. All in all, an the book

contains an excellent blend of articles, front pages, editorial comment and illustrations and is a kaleidoscope of Irish History spanning the past 100 years. Its one of these great books to send to Irish people and those interested in Ireland overseas especially Corkonians where ever they reside. A really excellent book as the material had been drawn from the archives of the Irish Examiner with the news stories and features shown exactly as they appeared. **IFHS SEMINAR** The Irish Family History Society will hold an All Day Seminar on Saturday October 8th at 10.00hrs in the Dublin City Library and Archive, 138-144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2. The programme is as follows – 10.00hrs Registration. 10.30 hrs Dr. Séamas O Maitiu, Local Historian on ‘St. Kevin’s Church and Graveyard – Camden Row, Dublin.’ 11.30hrs Ms Mary Belgan on ‘More Irish genealogy on the Internet.’ 12.30hrs to 14.00hrs Break for lunch – not provided. 14.15hrs Ms Ann Martha Rowan, Archivist, on ‘Biographical records at the Irish Architectural Archive.’ 15.15hrs Ms Patricia Moorehead on ‘A case study of a Dublin family with Cork ancestors.’ **DUBLIN HISTORICAL RECORD** Articles featured in the Autumn 2005 issue of the Dublin Historical Record published by the Old Dublin Society include the following – Oscar Wilde’s Friend and Benefactor, Helen Carew (c1856-1928) by James Robinson; The Meath Hospital Dublin by Dr. Peter Gatenby; Rocques’s Map and the History of Nonconformity in Dublin : A search for Meeting Houses by Dr. Kenneth Ferguson; The Augustinians in Dublin by Fr. David Kelly, OSA. Larkenism and then 1913 County Dublin Farm Labourers Dispute by Eugene Coyle; A Model Railway Shop in Phibsboro’ by Gerard McGowan; The One-Legged Sailor and the King by Cormac F.Lowth Copies of the Dublin Historical Record, price €15, available at the Wednesday night October / November meetings of the Society in the Dublin City Library and Archive, 138 –144 Pearse Street, Dublin 2, or by post €16.50 from James Scannell, PRO Old Dublin Society, 19 Hazelwood, Shankill, Dublin 18. **HISTORY IRELAND** Articles featured in the September / October issue of History Ireland include- Tom Barry and the Kilmichael ambush, by Meda Ryan; The Battle of Clontarf in Irish history and legend by Clare Downham; Napoleon’s Irish legacy : the bogs commissioners, 1809-14 by Arnold Horner; The Royal Dublin Fusiliers in the Great War by Tom Burke; How the great story could be better told : a critique of the ‘History of Europe’ by Desmond Fennell; Gaelic lordship and Tudor conquest : Tir Eoghain, 1541-1603 by Hiram Morgan; Sources – ‘Too old at thirty-three’ – the log of William Henry O’Brien, 1910-10 by Bernard Share; Interview – Pat Wallace; Reviews - TV Eye, Museum Eye, Bookworm and Books; From the files of the DIB. An excellent selection of articles as usual in this wonderfully produced magazine.

### Sr. M. BERNADETTE DE LOURDES (1907-2005)

The death has occurred in Albany, New York on September 13<sup>th</sup> 2005 of Dublin born Sr. M. Bernadette de Lourdes, O.Carm., Vice President of the Genealogical Society of Ireland and life long advocate for the proper and dignified care of the elderly and infirm. Born in Dublin in 1907, **Kathleen Wisely** was the eldest daughter of **Edward** and **Kathleen Wisely (née Short)**. Kathleen travelled to the United States and entered the newly established Carmelite Order for the Aged & Infirm in 1932 and worked very closely with the Order's founder, **Mother Angeline Teresa McCrory**, in establishing many of the Order's long-term care facilities for the aged and infirm in the United States and, of course, here in Dublin Mother Bernadette was instrumental in the acquisition of the property, including the castle, at Bullock and the establishment of the wonderful facility at Our Lady's Manor in Dalkey. Mother Bernadette de Lourdes was, over her long lifetime of service, the administrator of many of the Order's facilities and, though, her accomplishments are too numerous to mention, they include the first Commissioner of Aging in the State of Connecticut; a founder and first President of the American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging; first woman elected to serve as President of the National Council on the Aging; and member of the Public Advisory Committee on Health, Education & Welfare; first woman nominated to serve as on the Board of Directors of the People's Bank; Chairperson of the Connecticut Governor's Advisory Committee on Aging; in 1965, for Mother Bernadette's contribution to the formulation and passing of the Older American's Act (which included the Medicare Bill), she was invited by **President Lyndon B. Johnson** to the Rose Garden for the signing of the Older Americans Act where she received the pen which was used to sign the Act from the President. Mother Bernadette's extensive list of memberships in professional organisations and demand as a public speaker, lecturer and seminar participant throughout the world earned her the reputation as the "Flying Nun". She was awarded two honorary degrees and written several monographs, articles and books. When she retired from her very active career, the then Sister Bernadette Wisely, became Archivist of her Order in Albany, New York where she worked tirelessly in the cause for the beatification of Mother M. Angeline Teresa – the Founder of the Order. As a regular visitor to Ireland, Sr. Bernadette became one of the first members of the Genealogical Society of Ireland and was an ardent advocate for the provision by the Society of an Archive and then the successful restoration of the Martello Tower at Seapoint, Co. Dublin to house the Society's Archive. She was elected to the position of Vice President of the Society and in 2004 was

awarded the GSI Medal for Services to the Society in Ireland and especially in the United States. Sr. Bernadette was always keen to offer advice and suggestions on the development of the Genealogical Society and was in frequent contact with the Hon. Secretary right up to her death at the age of 98 years. She will be sadly missed by all who came to know this remarkable, energetic and boundlessly resourceful servant of her community and champion of the dignified care and welfare of the aging and infirm. Sr. Bernadette Wisely was laid to rest at the Order's Motherhouse in Albany after a solemn concelebrated Mass on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> September 2005. The Society was represented at the funeral by **Mrs. Joan Merrigan, FGSi** where a wreath was laid on behalf of the Members. The President, **Mr. Tony McCarthy, FGSi**, Vice-Presidents, Cathaoirleach & the Board of the Genealogical Society of Ireland extend their deepest sympathy to the family, fellow religious and friends of Sr. Bernadette de Lourdes. RIP

### SPECIAL CEREMONY

As reported last month, the Board has decided to host a Special Commemorative Ceremony on **Tuesday 25th October 2005** to mark the 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Society's foundation, the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the adoption of the European Flag and the election of our new President, **Mr. Tony McCarthy, MA, FGSi**. The venue will be the Church of Ireland (Anglican) Parish Church of Monkstown, Co. Dublin where **Sir William Betham** – former Ulster King of Arms, was a churchwarden and where a stained glass window has been dedicated to him depicting his coat-of-arms. This is certainly a fitting venue in which to mark the adoption of the European Flag as it was designed by a successor of Sir William Betham in 1955 the then Chief Herald of Ireland, **Mr. Gerard Slevin**. The ceremonies will begin at 19.30hrs and will include a short Inter-Faith Service of Remembrance for all of our ancestors, the Annual Presidential Invitation Lecture, the awarding of a new Annual Publication Award, the inauguration of the new President, new Fellows and special ceremonies marking the two important anniversaries. All of our Members and friends of the Society are invited to attend this special service. The Society is sincerely grateful to **Rev. Kevin Dalton** for permitting the Society the use of this stunningly beautiful church of exceptional architectural quality.

### USD & UKP CURRENCY RATES

The exchange rate for persons paying by check or cash in US dollars **€1.00 = US\$1.25** and similarly for those wish to pay in British pounds **€1.00 = 0.70p**. Alternatively why not pay by Credit Card – MasterCard or VISA via the Website? The Society's uses both PayPal and conventional Credit Card payment systems on the website so your transactions are conducted at the going bank rate and not at the above rates which apply only to cheques.



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### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

The October Board meeting decided to review the Annual Membership Fee structure at the next meeting. Though the Membership Packages proved popular and represented value for money, the administration of the system required some review. Suggestions on "streamlining" the system were received, however, Board members were asked to formulate proposals on this issue for the November meeting in order that any changes will come in to effect on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2006.

### AN DAONCHARTLANN

The opening times of the Society's Archive are subject to alteration. Therefore, members and visitors are advised to phone ahead to ascertain the current opening times. Telephone **+353.1.204 0464**. for info. When travelling to the Martello Tower at Seapoint it is always advisable to do so by public transport as follows: **DART** (suburban rail) to **SEAPOINT** station – turn left on exit and left again to small laneway over railway on to Brighton Vale and then right – approx. 3 to 4 minutes walk. **DUBLIN BUS** – route no. **7** to **MONKSTOWN ROAD** getting off at Monkstown Valley and walking through Belgrave Square East and Belgrave Place to the seafront – approx. 4 minutes walk.

### DIARY DATES

**Tuesday October 11<sup>th</sup> 2005**  
Evening Open Meeting. 20.00hrs  
Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education,  
Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire  
Bus: 7, 7A, 46A, and 75.  
DART Monkstown/Salthill Station.  
Speaker: **James Scannell**  
Topic: *History of the Rathdown Workhouse*

**Tuesday October 25<sup>th</sup> 2005**  
Monkstown Parish Church (C. of I.)  
Anniversary Ceremonies (see article)  
19.30hrs – 21.30hrs

**Tuesday November 8<sup>th</sup> 2005**  
Speaker: **TBA**  
Topic: *see website for details*

**Weds. Oct. 26<sup>th</sup> & Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup> 2005**  
Morning Open Meeting 10.30hrs  
The Port View Hotel  
Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire  
Discussion Group on Family History

*Contribution of €3.00 at each meeting  
Coffee/Tea served at Morning Meetings*

## QUERIES RECEIVED

**SHARON L LANDINGHAM**, 29962, Cool Meadow Drive, Menifee, California, 92584 USA E-Mail: slandingham@verizon.net Wrote:- I am looking for any information on Michael Patrick **Casey** b 1819 m 1840 to Margaret **Buckley**. children baptized Catholic in Clooneveigh, Ennistymon, Co. Clare, Ireland. James Casey 1841 and Mary Ellen Casey 1843. The family left Ireland about 1847, to Quebec, Canada to Boston, Mass. the mother died there within 3 months. I would be most grateful for any help on this family as I have been working on this for a number of years and don't know what to do next. I will gladly help with any research here.

**MARY SCULLY** 78 Gunambi Street, Wallsend NSW Australia 2287. E-mail maryjscully@bigpond.com.au Wrote:- I am desperately searching for a birth or locality of Bernard **Scully** b. 1807 - 1815 Kildare, Ireland. His parents are listed a Thomas Scully and Betty **Haiden** on his Bounty Immigration Papers. Emigrated Australia in 1839 at the age of 20 years, on board the Bounty Ship 'North Britain'.

**MAUREEN BREEN**, 8/131, Blackwall Road, Woy Woy, 2256, NWS, Australia E-mail peoples@tpg.com.au Wrote:- I am seeking information re William **Anderson**, Coach builder approx 1840 in Dublin; born early 1800's; married to a Letitia **Dingle**; And a son William, born 1815?, married in 1840 to a Sarah Ann **Reynolds** in Dublin. Son William and Sarah thought to have immigrated to Port Adelaide (Australia) in 1840/41.

**PAMELA MOORE**, 9817 - 75 Avenue, Grande Prairie, Alberta, Canada, T8V 4X1 E-mail:- maperoom@telus.net Wrote:- I am enquiring about my grandfather, Eugene **McCarthy**, born around 1884 or 1885, possibly in January, in Kingstown / Dun Laoghaire. He had one brother, Bob, and sisters Cissie, Dolly Margaret and Kathleen. He married an English woman and died in England between World War I and World War II. I am hoping there are some descendants left in the area, or even more info on that branch of the McCarthy family.

**BEVERLY ANDERSON**, 1199 Yosemite St. Seaside, CA 93955 Email bev@mbay.net. I am looking for information on my Grandmother Angel **Fennelly** born approx. 1871 in Queens County (Laois) Ireland, parish unknown. She immigrated to America approx. 1881 with her mother 2 brothers, one named Joe, and 3 sisters. Any information that could provide such as birth records, Mother's and Father's first names, greatly appreciated.

**PATRICIA QUINN MEIGS**, 495 N. Reynolds Ave., Canon City, Colorado 81212 U.S.A. E-mail:- patty719@msn.com Wrote:- Looking for **Quinn** family from County Donegal. My information is as follows: John Quinn, born ca. 1785-1795. Married Bridget **Murphy**, born ca. same. Son James Quinn, born 1828, Ballintra, County Donegal. James

left for America in 1844-1846 (an old letter says 1844) and docked in Boston. (we have no positive proof of this yet.) James never returned to Ireland. Other children: Donal, Mary Anne, Catherine, Kathleen, Rose, Edward, Patrick, William, that we know of. There were probably about 14-16 children. Any info. on this Quinn family appreciated.

**MICHAEL PATRICK KENEFICK JR.**, 4488 Darley Court, Hilliard, Ohio, USA 43026 E-mail:- kenefick@copper.net Wrote:- I would like to "hear" from any potential relatives, especially in Ireland. To date I have found about 47 or so spellings of **Kenefick**. Some spellings are bad transcriptions on USA Census. Some are more common than others. Any info. much appreciated.

**MAX MCALLISTER**, 444 Washington Blvd. Apt 3451 (07310) USA E-mail:- macmax@comcast.net Wrote:- I'm an US-based genealogical researcher for the Clan McAllister and specifically focused on the South American branch. I have been able to trace **McAllisters** from "Ireland" to "Argentina" and I have a full genealogical tree for the McAllisters that emigrated after the Great Famine. Trees go from 1750 to 2005. In addition, we have other families on file, from A to Z that can be searched for free. Now I am focusing my efforts in "linking" the first generation of Irish McAllisters (son of Scottish McAllisters) with their "Scottish" ancestors. We certainly know that 2 Scottish McAllister brothers emigrated and entered by Northern Ireland (Co. Antrim) and later moved to Dublin around 1710-30 (they emigrated to Ireland after the Glencoe Massacre 1692). These 2 brothers were Charles & James or John or "J..." and that settled in Donabate. Co. Dublin after 1730. They married two (2) sisters named Ann and Charlotte **Cassidy**, both from Staffordstown, Turvey, Donabate. Co. Dublin. Would be great to know if any someone else is also research a similar path as well as receive suggestions on how to conduct this specific search. Any information greatly appreciated.

**JOHN MCQUAID**, 24 Burton Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, LE13 1DJ, England E-mail:- j.mcquaid@ntlworld.com Wrote:- I would be interested in any information on my grandmother and/or family of, Elizabeth **Derham**, born about 1870 - in Skerries Co. Dublin, died 26/08/1919. She married my Grandfather, Patrick **McQuaid** in 1897 and lived in Dublin. Any information please.

## TORPEDOED

### *The RMS LEINSTER DISASTER*

The story of the sinking of the mail-boat just off Dún Laoghaire on October 10<sup>th</sup> 1918 & Ireland's greatest sea disaster.

€25.00 (plus €5.00 p+p Ireland)

**Philip Lecane**, 77, Windsor Drive, Monkstown, Co. Dublin, Ireland

E-mail: [Leinster@familyhistory.ie](mailto:Leinster@familyhistory.ie)



## 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADOPTION OF THE EUROPEAN FLAG

On October 25<sup>th</sup> 1955 the Parliamentary Assembly of the **Council of Europe** decided to adopt a design for a European Flag. That design featured twelve golden stars on a blue field representing time – months of the year and points of the clock on a blue field representing infinity or space. The symbols cleverly and yet, simply represent an ever evolving Europe over the course of time in unity, peace and prosperity. This design was presented to the Vexillological Committee of the Council of Europe on November 12<sup>th</sup> 1954 by the Chief Herald of Ireland, the late **Gerard Slevin** and was adopted by the Parliamentary Assembly the following year. The final decision on this new symbol for Europe was taken by the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on December 8<sup>th</sup> 1955. It was subsequently agreed by the European Parliament to use this design for the flag of the European Community which it has done since 1986. As reported last month that following representations by this Society to the Lord Mayor of Cork, the **Cork City Council** decided to commemorate the life of Mr. Gerard Slevin, the former Chief Herald of Ireland and designer of the European Flag. At the time of writing we have no firm details as to the manner in which Slevin's native Cork is going to mark this anniversary, however, it is hoped that the local **Cork Genealogical Society** and the President of the Genealogical Society of Ireland, **Mr. Tony McCarthy, MA, FGSI** will be available to participate in the ceremony. In the meantime, the Minister for Arts, Sport & Tourism, **Mr. John O'Donoghue, TD**, has informed the Society that he has requested the Board of the National Library of Ireland to mark the occasion in a suitably fitting manner. However, though we reported earlier that the Irish postal authority, An Post, confirmed that it would be unable to provide for the issuance of a Commemorative Stamp, An Taoiseach, **Mr. Bertie Ahern, TD**, has informed **Senator Paschal Mooney** that he has requested An Post to include this subject in its 2006 programme of commemorative stamps. It is hoped that the British Prime Minister, **Mr. Tony Blair, MP**, whose government currently hold the rotating Presidency of the European Union, will schedule a suitable event to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Adoption of the European Flag as an important occasion for all Europeans in this ever evolving continent of ours.