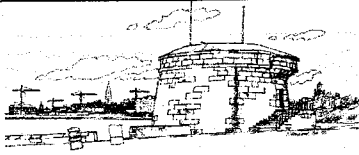


- Debate on the new Civil Registration Bill
- Notice of Annual General Meeting
- Official Opening of An Daonchartlann

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# The Gene Gazette

The Newsletter of  
the **Genealogical  
Society of Ireland**  
Volume 9 • Issue 2  
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## OIREACHTAS TACKLES CIVIL REGISTRATION *Statutory Advisory Committee & Dual Language Registration in Doubt*

The Oireachtas (Irish Parliament) is currently considering the new Civil Registration Bill which was promised nearly twelve years ago. Though, eleven years in preparation, including a sham public consultation process, much disappointment and dismay has been expressed by the genealogical community in Ireland at the contents of this Bill.

### *Second Stage Debate*

The second stage debate in Dáil Éireann witnessed a robust presentation by opposition Teachtaí Dála (MPs) of the suggested amendments supplied by the **Genealogical Society of Ireland** and by the **Council of Irish Genealogical Organisations (CIGO)**. Though, this Society is *not* a member of CIGO, it has been agreed to co-sponsor each organisation's proposed amendments and to share information on the issues raised in the interest of genealogy and in the public interest. The first item proposed by both organisations was the insertion of the place of birth, along with the date or year of birth, of the deceased on Irish Death Certificates. This point was conceded by the Minister for Social & Family Affairs, **Ms. Mary Coughlan, TD**, who undertook to amend the Bill.

### *Statutory Advisory Committee*

The amendments proposed by both organisations covered many areas of the Bill and included the most important issue of the establishment of a statutory Advisory Committee for the operation of the new Civil Registration Service. Such a committee was suggested by this Society in its submission to the public consultation process in May 2001. Whilst, the wording of the CIGO amendment seeks the establishment of a statutory committee with representatives from

genealogical organisations and others, the Minister is more inclined, she said, to establish a Users Panel to advise on certain matters concerning the delivery of service to genealogists. CIGO and this Society strongly advocate the establishment of a statutory advisory committee because anything less would be a worthless, toothless occasional talking-shop with little or no real function. Given the experience of nearly twelve years campaigning for an improved Civil Registration Service in Ireland, few if any of those concerned would accept anything less than a statutory Civil Registration Service Advisory Committee in line with those established by the National Cultural Institutions Act, 1997 and the National Archives Act, 1986.

### *Public Search Facility*

The promise by successive ministers that a public search facility will be maintained in Dublin City following the relocation of the General Register Office to Roscommon Town is now in some doubt. Though, the Minister has assured Teachtaí Dála during the Committee Stage on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2004, that "there is a commitment, and we do not need legislation on it, to retain that research facility here in Dublin. There was a concern that everything would be moved to Roscommon but there will be a facility in Dublin. All historical data will be available electronically by the end of 2004, and the facility will remain in Joyce House until all this work has been completed. It is envisaged that when the project moves completely to Roscommon, the Dublin research function can be located more suitably, and discussions are ongoing about a more appropriate location for a research facility.

The research facility will be retained in Dublin and, furthermore, the project has received European recognition for the work it has done due to its uniqueness and its customer service provision." The Minister is quite correct that the Bill makes no reference to an actual facility only to a search service. As it stands the "public search facility" could be only available in cyberspace and be limited to a credit card based pay-for-view service. The provision of a "walk-in" facility in the Nation's capital city should be safeguarded by its inclusion in the Bill as proposed by this Society.

**Irish Language Forenames & Surnames** Calling for "official status" to be given to the Irish language at European Union level, no matter how justifiable and worthy that objective is, overlooks the fact that here in Ireland there is little or no official recognition of the Irish language forms of our surnames or placenames. Whilst, **Minister Eamonn Ó Cuiv, TD** has announced that he will bring forward legislation to afford legal status to the Irish language forms of our placenames similar action is required in relation to our own names. The official recognition of the existence of the two possible versions of our native surnames we use in Ireland is called for by this Society in its proposed amendments to this Bill. On Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February at the **Dáil Select Committee on Social & Family Affairs** under the Chairmanship of **Mr. Willie Penrose, TD**, the Minister Mary Coughlan, TD, rejected the whole notion of "dual language" registration. Minister Coughlan said that "any event may be registered in either of the official languages and a certificate issued as per the registration. We have had much deliberation about this. The

GSI Website: [www.gensocireland.org](http://www.gensocireland.org)

question as to whether we could have two registrations, one as Gaeilge (in Irish) and one in English was raised on a number of occasions by Members. I have pondered on this topic for some time. The best advice I have is that a person can only have one definite name to determine who he or she is, in either English or Irish. On that basis the choice exists to register in either language, but not in both. It is a means of identification as to who one is. I am not in a position to accept that an option be provided for the issuing of a birth certificate in English and Irish". The members of the Select Committee, especially its Chairman, Mr. Willie Penrose, TD, took great exception to this very surprising disregard for the Irish language by a Minister who is a fluent speaker of the language and questioned the advice she received from the registrar that every child born in this country must be assigned one name, not two. Mr. Dan Neville, TD, stressed that opting to register in both Irish and English is not registering two individuals just one in two languages.

#### *What about An Taoiseach then?*

An Taoiseach, Mr. Bertie Ahern, TD, will, no doubt, sign countless European Union documents during the Irish Presidency using, in all probability, his Irish language form of his name Parthalán Ó hEachthairn, TD and yet, such a named individual would not be found in the Irish Birth Records, nor would a Birth Certificate be available in that version of the name – only in the English language version of his name – Bartholomew Ahern. Minister Mary Coughlan's ascertain that a person can only have one definite name to determine who he or she is, in either English or Irish, seems to be at odds with the listing of the Teachtaí Dála published on the Dáil Éireann website [www.irishgov.ie](http://www.irishgov.ie) as over 90% of 166 deputies are listed by forename and surname in the two official languages of Ireland. Does this mean that there could be a legal difficulty with official documents signed by Irish government ministers using the Irish language version of their name, whilst ordinarily using the English version in their daily lives? Are the names used when they were elected by the people in the General Election back in 2002 the only official ones, as the Minister seems to suggest?

#### *A Legacy of Colonialism*

This "dual-language" naming system is not unique to Ireland however it is a legacy of a colonial past where the English language advanced at the expense of the Irish language and its Gaelic civilisation. Our Celtic cousins in Scotland, Wales, Cornwall and the Isle of Man, all share this "dual language" naming system. Therefore, in Ireland, citizens should have the automatic right to register either the original Irish language version of their surnames or the English language variant of the original surname, or both versions and have such certified by the new Civil Registration Service. This is entirely possible without much difficulty as the whole registration process is now fully computerised and soon to be

officially launched in that format following the enactment of this legislation.

#### *Official Recognition Required*

Parents should be permitted to register the birth of their child using their usual surname with the option to include an Irish language version of the child's forename(s) and surname. Besides recognising the existence of these other versions of the names we use in our daily lives, this proposal by the Genealogical Society of Ireland provides for the production of official documentation for individuals seeking to use, for example, the Irish version of their name on their passport, whilst, maybe choosing to use the "English" version in other spheres of their lives. The same rights would be applied to minority groups if the Bill was amended to include such a provision as proposed by the Genealogical Society of Ireland.

#### *Ethnic Groups in Ireland*

As Ireland is now fast becoming a multicultural, multiethnic and multiracial society with many newly introduced religious beliefs and cultural practices. The new civil registration system must also accommodate the naming practices of our minorities, including, the possibility of registering a religious or traditional name in addition to the one normally used by the individual. Those of the Jewish faith, for example, should be permitted to register both the "English" version of their name and the Hebrew version. This would permit the Registrar General to issue certificates bearing both versions of the forename(s) and surname of such individuals availing of that right.

#### *Access to "historic" GRO records*

The Genealogical Society of Ireland maintains that an opportunity exists to provide in this legislation for a definition of "historic" records permitting such to be transferred to the National Archives after say, a period of seventy years. This would mean that microfilm copies of the original General Register Office records of births, marriages and deaths would be transferred each year from the General Register Office to the National Archives and the National Library to facilitate research of these records in a non-fragmented i.e. in a non-computerised format. According to the Minister by the end of the year all "historic" records will be computerised. However, such a computerised format will not facilitate certain localised searches which are important to medical, demographic, labour, social and genealogical research.

#### *A Long & Hard Campaign*

Though, the Society on this occasion proffered five areas for amendment to this proposed legislation, it has campaigned hard for nearly twelve years for a modern civil registration service for Ireland. In general, the Society welcomes this legislation with the hope that the Minister will accept the amendments proposed by this Society and CIGO during the remaining stages of the Bill, especially by Senators during its passage through Seanad Éireann.

#### *Text of the Amendments*

This first amendment was worded by Stephen ffearry-Smyrl of the Association of Professional Genealogists in Ireland.

**OBJECTIVE:** To include in the Bill the establishment of an advisory body on a statutory basis composed of the representatives of the various bodies' corporate and others dealing with genealogy in Ireland.

**AMENDMENT:** (1) The Minister shall establish an advisory body, to be known as the **Civil Registration Advisory Body** (and referred to in this Act as "the Advisory Body"), to advise An tArd-Chláraitheoir (Registrar General) and An tArd-Chláraitheoir Cúnta (Deputy Registrar General) in the exercise of their powers and duties under this Act: (i) on all matters affecting civil registration, and (ii) about the provision of service by An tArd-Chláraitheoir, and the use of such by the general public, and (iii) about the care and preservation of any and all records held in the care of An tArd-Chláraitheoir. (2) The Advisory Body shall consist of a chairperson and not more than eleven other members, appointed by the Minister on such terms and conditions as shall be determined by him or her after consultation with the Minister for Finance. (3) (a) The members of the Advisory Body shall include at least one member from each of the following bodies, organisations or interest groups: (i) Adopted Peoples Association; (ii) Association of Professional Genealogists in Ireland; (iii) Council of Irish Genealogical Organisations; (iv) Genealogical Society of Ireland; (v) Irish Family History Society; (vi) Law Society of Ireland; (vii) National Archives of Ireland; (viii) National Library of Ireland; (ix) Public interest nominee. (end text) The Society fully supports this amendment as it represents the minimum acceptable by the overwhelming number of genealogists in Ireland.

#### *GSJ AMENDMENTS*

The following is the text of the various amendments proffered by this Society in addition to supporting the CIGO/APGI amendments including the one above.

**OBJECTIVE:** To provide for the optional registration of an Irish language version of the forename and surname of a child by the parent, guardian or qualified informant in addition to the English language version. Also, to allow for the registration of both an Irish and English version of the forename(s) and/or surname of an individual already registered in only one language. *Relevant Section:* New Section in Part 3 or addition to Section 25.

**AMENDMENT** (1) Any registrar shall, on application to him or her in writing, in a form standing approved by An tArd-Chláraitheoir or a form to the like effect, by the parents, the surviving parent or the guardian of a child, on payment to that registrar of the prescribed fee, register an Irish language version of the forename and/or surname of the child in addition to the given forename and surname

normally used in the English language. (2) Any registrar shall, on application to him or her in writing, in a form standing approved by An tArd-Chláraitheoir or a form to the like effect, by any person that has been registered in register of births and on production to that registrar of such evidence as appears to him or her to be satisfactory and on payment to that registrar of the prescribed fee, register an Irish language version of the forename and/or surname of that person in addition to the given forename and surname provided at the time of the original registration of this birth. *(end text)*  
**AMENDMENT:** Insert in to the First Schedule Part 1 – “optional Irish language version of the forename(s) and/or surname of the child.”

**OBJECTIVE:** To provide for the optional registration of other given, religious, traditional, ethnic or cultural forename(s) and Surname of a child by the parent, guardian or qualified informant in addition to the English language version. Also, to allow for the registration of versions of the forename(s) and/or surname of an individual already registered in only one language to meet the cultural or religious requirements of ethnic minorities within the State. *Relevant section:* New Section in Part 3 of the Bill OR an addition to Section 25

**AMENDMENT:** (1) Any registrar shall, on application to him or her in writing, in a form standing approved by an tArd-Chláraitheoir or a form to the like effect, by the parents, the surviving parent or the guardian of a child, on payment to that registrar of the prescribed fee, register another version of the forename and/or surname of the child in addition to the given forename and surname normally used in the English language. (2) Any registrar shall, on application to him or her in writing, in a form standing approved by an tArd-Chláraitheoir or a form to the like effect, by any person that has been registered in register of births and on production to that registrar of such evidence as appears to him or her to be satisfactory and on payment to that registrar of the prescribed fee, register another version of the forename and/or surname of that person in addition to the given forename and surname provided at the time of the original registration of this birth. (3) Where any alternative or additional forename(s) and/or surname is registered under subsection (1) or subsection (2), then the existing entry concerned shall be retained in the register, the alternative or addition shall be deemed for all purposes to be and always to have been part of the original entry and the forename(s) and/or surname in the register may not be further changed, altered or added to.  
**AMENDMENT:** First Schedule Part 1 Insert: “optional alternative, religious or cultural version of the forename(s) and/or surname of the child”

**OBJECTIVE:** To ensure that a “walk-in” search facility be maintained in the City of Dublin in accordance with the promises of

successive Ministers to the genealogical community in Ireland and to ensure the continued integrity and close association of our national repositories situated in our Nation’s capital city. *Relevant section:* Section 53

**AMENDMENT:** (5) A public search facility shall be maintained by An tArd-Chláraitheoir and be situated in the City of Dublin to provide for the needs of genealogical and other research by members of the public on the payment to the registrar of the prescribe fee.

**OBJECTIVE:** To provide for the definition of “historic” records and for the transfer of microfilm copies of the indexes to and registers of births, marriages, deaths, divorces and nullities of marriages, after a set period of years, to the custody of the National Archives and/or the National Library of Ireland. *Relevant section:* Section 58  
**AMENDMENT:** (k) the Director of the National Archives of Ireland and the Director of the National Library of Ireland for the purpose of providing access by the public to microfilm copies of the indexes to the registers of births, deaths, marriages, divorces and decrees of nullity of marriage and microfilm copies of these registers after the expiry of a period of not less than seventy years since the date of the original registration.

#### GRAPHIC FAMILY TREE SERVICE

##### VISUAL ARTIST & GRAPHIC DESIGNER OFFERS THIS SERVICE AT REASONABLE AND AFFORDABLE COST

Artist based in Dún Laoghaire will work with you to produce a beautiful graphic presentation of your Family Tree in full colour, with all your photographs of family members included. All you have to do is complete a standard family tree chart or Birth Brief and send all relevant photographs, clearly identifying the individuals as per the chart. Each person will be framed, and the complete document printed on a textured background, with Crests and any text you may require - you decide the level of information to be included. We will work in close consultation with you at all stages of the project. Costs are based on the number and quality of the images involved. Confidentiality and security guaranteed. We also specialise in Photographic Restoration. CONTACT Frankie Lee at 087.782 0932 or E-mail: frankiezee@eircom.net for more information and quotations.

#### 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. The Society will keep these exchange rates under constant review to ensure acceptance of payments in these currencies. These rates apply to all purchases and membership subscriptions transacted in the currencies concerned. Alternatively why not pay by Credit Card – MasterCard or VISA via the Website?

#### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE

Irish based Members living in either the Republic or Northern Ireland are reminded that their Annual Membership Fee falls due on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2004. The Annual Membership Fee for Irish based Members (ROI & NI) is just €20.00. For overseas Members the Fee due on the anniversary date of joining is now €25.00.

#### GSJ QUARTERLY JOURNAL

Vol. 4 No. 4 – Winter 2003/4

Once again, this Society has produced a very high quality issue of its Quarterly Journal with many fine articles on a range of topics of interest on Irish genealogy and heraldry. These include: 1891 Ardee Union Board Of Guardians – Condemned Cottages -**Brendan Hall** The Police In Arklow – 1891 To 1911 - **Seán MacBrádaigh, B.A.** Transcription Of Graveyard Inscriptions From Devinish Island, Lough Erne - **Gaye Ashford Bradys** In The Meath Remnants – Census Of 1821 **Seán MacBrádaigh, B.A.** Census Extracts 1911 Dunsany Village, Co Meath -**Margaret Conroy** Dublin Street Names - **G.H. O’Reilly** In Search Of A Franciscan In Kilmacow - **Ignatius Fennessy OFM** The Shooting Of D.I. Hunt - The Official Version **James Scannell** - Precedence Amongst Ladies - **Brendan Hall** - Derrynacong - Nineteenth Century Records - **Dennis Ford** The Ubiquitous Byrnes - **Seán MacBrádaigh, B.A.** Kings of Arms and Heralds - **G.H. O’Reilly.** The Journal is available for purchase on an annual basis via the Society’s Website: [www.gensocireland.org](http://www.gensocireland.org) The Editor always welcomes articles for publication. Contact **Margaret Conroy, MGSJ** on e-mail: [mmeconroy@eircom.net](mailto:mmeconroy@eircom.net)

#### DIARY DATES

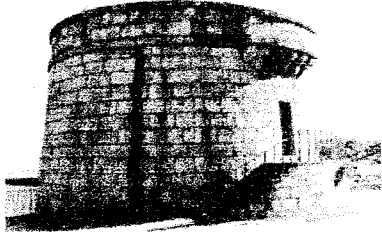
**Tuesday February 10<sup>th</sup> 2004**  
 Evening Open Meeting. 20.00hrs  
 Dún Laoghaire College of Further Education,  
 Cumberland Street, Dún Laoghaire  
 Bus: 7, 7A, 46A, and 75.  
 DART Monkstown/Salthill Station.  
 Speaker: **Bro. Thomas Connolly**  
 Topic: “Christian Brothers’ Allen Library”

**Tuesday March 9<sup>th</sup> 2004**  
 Venue as above  
**Genealogical Society of Ireland**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
 Speaker: **Rev. D. Levistone Cooney**  
 Topic: “The Irish Palatines & Methodist Records”

**Weds. Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> & Mar. 24<sup>th</sup> 2004**  
 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*

## AN DAONCHARTLANN



The Board of the Society has chosen Wednesday September 15<sup>th</sup> 2004 for the official opening of An Daonchartlann. A new sub-committee of the Board under the chairmanship of our Leas-Chathaoirleach, Séamus Moriarty, MGSi, will commence the detailed planning of the event, including the commissioning of a commemorative medal, producing the commemorative booklet and the compilation of the guest list. The arrangements for the official reception, the actual ceremony and whether a suitable multi-faith element could be included in the event will be the responsibility of this sub-committee. Further details on this important date in the life of our Society will be made available in the coming months as the sub-committee gets to grips with its exciting brief. The members of the sub-committee have been initially chosen from the current members of the Board, however, it is envisaged that other members of the Society will be invited to join this sub-committee shortly. Recently, our Cathaoirleach, Rory Stanley, FGSI, raised the European Union flag over the Tower to mark the Irish presidency of the European Union for the first half of this year. This large (4ft x 8ft) flag is very clearly seen by the thousands of commuters using the DART (suburban rail) every day on their way into the City of Dublin. As reported last month, the fitting out of the building is presently underway with Barry O'Connor, FGSI, designing and building many of the interior features of the Archive, including work benches, service desk and a beautiful surrounding rail for the new spiral staircase. As always, our Members and friends of the Society are invited to help with this Phase 2 or refurbishment stage of the project. One way of helping is to become a sponsor. Each sponsor may have either their own name or that of a loved-one entered in the *Commemorative Book* and on a scroll that will be permanent memorial in the Tower. For just €100.00 (US\$125.00) per name, this is a special and worthy manner in which to remember an ancestor, to honour a friend or loved-one or to memorialise your family ties with Ireland. Another way of helping is to send what you can as donations no matter how modest are all very welcome. Donations should be sent to the Hon. Secretary at the address below with details of the name or names to be entered on the scroll and published in the commemorative book to mark the official opening of "An Daonchartlann" in September 2004.

## JOINING THE SOCIETY

The Society always welcomes new Members from Ireland and overseas. If you wish to join, it's easy - just log on to the Society's Website or write to the Membership Officer, Mrs. Annette McDonnell, MGSi, 4, Kippure Ave., Green Park, Dublin 12, Ireland. You may also contact Annette by E-mail via the Hon. Secretary GenSocIreland@iol.ie Membership of the Society is open to all with an interest in genealogy, heraldry (including vexillology) and social history. A laminated Membership Card featuring the Society's heraldic badge "the Mungovan Badge" will be forwarded to each new Member by mail. Overseas Members and those Irish Members living outside Co. Dublin receive the monthly newsletter "The Genie Gazette" by mail each month.

## FEBRUARY GENIE UPDATES

**PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY** James Scannell reports that the Photographic Society of Ireland celebrates 150th Anniversary. During the 1840's, the emergence of various photographic technologies and processes attracted great interest in Ireland with the patented calotype negative process, invented by Englishman Henry Fox Talbot who had a keen interest in both art and science, being of particular interest. Following the relaxation of his patent, photography became increasingly popular and in the 1850's a number of photographers used to meet at William Allen's apothecary shop in Henry Street, Dublin. Arising from these meetings, it was decided to establish the Dublin Photographic Society in Leinster House, Dublin, then owned by the Royal Dublin Society on the 8th November 1854. The newly formed Society met on a monthly basis to discuss new advances the photographic field. In 1858, the Dublin Photographic Society changed its name to the Photographic Society of Ireland (PSI) and some 150 years later is still in existence and active in new developments in photographic technology. The Photographic Society of Ireland has a vast collection of material containing many important examples of mid 19th century photography and compliments the collection of the National Library of Ireland covering the same period. Along with modern prints, the Photographic Society of Ireland Collection holds examples of cased photographs, salt prints, albumen prints, glass plates and lantern slides. Of particular importance are 2 albums of salted paper prints by John Shaw Smith, an amateur photographer who took these photographs between 1850 and 1852 while travelling in Egypt and Palestine. Also of importance are 12 portrait and allegorical photographs taken between 1860 and 1870 by Julia Margaret Cameron who was regarded as an important and influential English photographer. The 2 most unusual items in the Collection are Alfred Werner's mammoth portrait of Maude Gonne and its corresponding glass negative. The contact

platinum print, which measures 5ft 6ins x 3ft 2ins, was created by contacted printing from the glass plate negative, and was carried out by Werner in 1893. Later that year, Werner won a gold medal for his work on the portrait at the Chicago World Fair. Access to the Photographic Society of Ireland collection is not yet available to researchers and members of the public and when it does become available, access will be on a restricted basis due to the extremely delicate nature of many of the older items. During 2004, the collection will be processed and catalogued. In November 2004, a short exhibition will be held in the National Photographic Archive to commemorate the Photographic Society's 150th anniversary.

**INFLUENZA 1918** James Scannell reports on a Monument Commemorating the 1918 Influenza Victims. Just outside a housing estate in Castlebar, Co. Mayo, a limestone memorial has been erected to several hundred victims of the 1918 Influenza outbreak often referred to as the 1918 Spanish Flu epidemic. Many of the victims who were residents of the nearby St. Mary's Hospital, were buried without ceremony or head / gravestones at Aghlish. The memorial project was funded by the Western Health Board and Mayo County Council with Castlebar Town Council providing the manpower for the project. At one stage in 1918 on the Western Front, daily fatalities on all sides from the Spanish Flu exceeded those resulting from enemy action.

**GSI LIVERY FLAG** Order a GSI Livery Flag to fly at your home or business. Measuring (3ft x 5ft) at just €90.00 each incl. delivery. Made by Dublin flag makers, Timothy O'Regan. As a GSI Member, this Livery Flag would be great at your next family gathering. Contact the Hon. Secretary.

**SPECIAL THANKS** The Board of the Society wish to extend its special thanks to R. David Locke, MGSi for his kind donation of a microform reader to the Society's Archive. The reader was collected from Mr. Locke's home in England by Pat Callery, MGSi over the Christmas period and brought to Ireland.

**BOOK REVIEWS** Held over until March.

## EDITOR'S NOTE ON QUERIES

Queries from Members and friends will be published in "The Genie Gazette" provided that a full postal address is provided with each query. Queries with just an E-mail address will NOT be published. **REMEMBER**, this Society does not undertake commercial research assignments. **HOWEVER**, by placing a query with an offer of reciprocal research in your part of the world, publication can assist in the location of a Member or other reader willing to undertake research for you. The terms governing such reciprocal research are entirely a matter for the parties concerned and, therefore, the Society is not responsible in anyway for such arrangements. Please note that queries for this month have been held over until the March issue due to the lack of space available. Apologies. *Editor.*