

## OLD KILLYON CEMETERY CO. MEATH, IRELAND

On a beautiful day in 2001, I had the honor of working with the master of local history, Frank Kelly of the parish of Kildalkey. Properly outfitted for a day of cemetery archeology, discovery, and transcription, we drove up to the gates of a private estate along the road in the Hill of Down area. Having been taken to the Old Killyon Cemetery before by my dear friend Breda Potterton, we had been accustomed to leaving the car at the gate and walking the quarter mile or so to the cemetery. The sign at the gate indicated that only those with business within could drive through. As Frank and I approached the gate, Frank said, with a twinkle in his eye, "That's us! We have business within." I got out and opened the gates, and on we drove.

Frank suffered from bad joints but that didn't stop him from bending, kneeling, and digging. Literally no stone was left unturned, nor bush left unexplored. We were like kids in a candy store, savoring each inscription that we were able to decipher. When we finished, we were dirty but exhilarated. We had recorded a small piece of history and transcribed the names and dates of residents of the local community who were our forebears. Frank knew every inch of the area. He drove down a dirt road that was barely wider than his car and that was boarded on both sides by a wire fence. Then the road opened up and he brought me to a field where there was a large rock. It was a Mass Rock--that is, a rock that was used as an altar for the celebration of Mass during the years when the Catholic faith was outlawed. I look back on that day with great fondness and wish there could have been more.

Frank Kelly was loved, respected, and honored by all who knew him. He volunteered whenever needed and initiated many projects. In recognition of a life of giving, and self-sacrifice, Frank was the guest of honor at a huge ceili organized by Breda Potterton. The whole town turned out, and Frank was entertained by local singers, poets, and dancers. Frank Kelly of Cloneylogan, Kildalkey, Co. Meath, died at the age of 83 on October 8, 2006. May he rest in peace. And thank you, Frank, for the day in Old Killyon Cemetery.

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Within the present-day boundaries of the Old Killyon Graveyard and just a few yards from Lady Well is the ancient church of St. Liadhan, which is now in ruins. The east wall, which contains an arched window opening, remains, along with a small portion of the north and south walls. Along the end of the north wall are two steps, which comprise the entrance to the tiny church. To the left of the steps is a holy water font, its basin smoothly carved into the stone.

Located within the grounds of Killyon Manor, the burial ground once included Lady Well. Now a barbed-wire fence encompasses only three sides of the graveyard. According to local folklore, monks from Donore Abbey chose this site for a "daughter house" because it was a secluded spot and a mere day's walk from the mother house in Donore. Legend has it that a priest was inspired to dig for water during the celebration of Mass. This provided the site with fresh water which the daughter house had lacked up until that time.

Several yards south of the Old Killyon Graveyard and Lady Well flows the River Deel, and across the river the Killyon Manor House is within shouting distance.

Old Killyon Graveyard contains many uninscribed rough stones as well as boxwood bushes that were used as grave markers by those who could not afford to purchase a headstone. One such grave is located in the southeast corner of the graveyard. A large but trimmed boxwood marks the grave of Michael Keegan, father of Katie Keegan Doyle who now lives in Ballivor. The grave, also covered by small white stones, continues to be maintained by Mrs. Doyle and her family. Michael Keegan was the brother of my great-grandmother Delia Keegan.

Josephine Murtagh Canty, a Kildalkey resident, believes that her ancestors are also buried in this graveyard, but thus far no marker containing the Murtagh name has been discovered. It would be valuable if others who know of ancestors interred here would provide as much information as possible, such as names and approximate dates of death. And for those current residents of the surrounding areas who recognize their ancestors among these pages, we would be delighted if you would contact the compiler (Rosemary Ardolina of Queens, New York or, locally, Breda Potterton of Kildalkey) so that the information you provide about your forebears can be preserved for future generations.

Considering the small size of the graveyard, it would not take much effort to put it in the attractive condition that those interred there deserve. When I visited Old Killyon Graveyard in January 2001, the holy water font at the entrance to the church was undisturbed, as it had been for hundreds of years. Nine months later, however, it was overturned and broken. The repair of the fences would contribute greatly to keeping out the sheep and rams, and cutting back the grass and shrubs would very likely uncover additional headstones.

The first headstone listed below is located within the chancel and contains a list of Dominican friars who were reinterred there.

1. IMD Christians To God your daily Homage Pray for the following fathers Pray.  
Rv. Vincent Cusack died June 5, 1737 age 72.

Rv. James Dalton D.D. died May 9, 1743 age 84.  
Rv. Francis Lynagh P.P. & P.G. died Ober 28, 1750 age 99.  
Rv. Mich. Wynne P.G. died May 5, 1758.  
Rv. Jas. Flinn V.G. Rathum died March 17, 1775 age 54.  
Rv. Thos. Miffsey P.P. & P.G. died Oct 1, 1786 age 97.

Requiesant in Pace

This monument was erected at his own expense in pious remembrance of the above brethren by the Rev. Micheal Fleming P.P., Vicar-Forane of Meath P.G. and Prior of Donore, April 17, 1787.

2. Alice Duff erected this stone in memory of her husband Mathew Duff late of Kilcock died Dec 31, 1790 age 37 years. His father James & Mary his mother & his children viz Patrick & Thos. May they rest in Peace.
3. Erected by Richard Murray in memory of his father Darby who departed this life March 11, 1804 age 69 years and of his mother Mary Murray who departed this life May 10, 1792 age 36 years.
4. This erected by James Bermingham IMO his wife Elizabeth Birmingham in memory of his wife Elizabeth Birmingham alias Murry who departed this life (6) May 1777 age 55 years. Also his too daughters.
5. Erected by Bridgid Flanagan, Donore, in loving memory of her parents Patrick & Margaret Flanagan. Also her brother John who died Oct 20, 1899 age 66 years.
6. Sacred to the memory of John Flanagan died 21 Aug 1867 age 64 years for the last 9 years of his life he faithfully discharged the duties of teacher of the Ballinbarna National School in this neighborhood.
7. Erected by Richard Herbert in memory of his father Thomas Herbert who died March ?, 1782 age 80 years.
8. Erected by Michael O'Neill of Rossin in memory of his father Bartholomew O'Neill who died 15 Oct 184(6) age 47 years. Also the remains of his beloved uncle the Rev'd Michael O'Neill who died 24 Jan 1824 age 38 years & his grandmother Mary O'Neill who died 25 April 1810 age 54 years.
9. In loving memory of Minnie O'Keeffe, Cloneycovan, Ballivor d 6 Feb 1979. Also her brother John.

10. (Headstone is part of the wall of the church) Erected by Simon Hannin in memory of his beloved wife Catherine who departed this life on the 16 Oct 1856 age 68 years. Her father Mr. Christopher O'Reilly of Ballerstown who departed this life on the 7<sup>th</sup> March 1852 age 84 years.
11. (Just outside the iron fence) Erected by Sarah Dunn alis Lyas in memory of her husband Thomas Dunn Feb 21, 1782 age 45 years.
12. Erected by William Dunn in memory of his son Martin Dunn who died June 30 age (18) months & his Rosieriety (?) 1764.
13. This stone is erected by Mary Querk alis O'brian in memory of her dear husband John Querk who departed this life 1753 age 55 years. Requisant in Pace.
14. Erected by Patrick Dunn in memory of his beloved father John Dunn died ? 18, 1785. Also in memory of his beloved children Patrick Mary & Mich'l Dunn.
15. This erected by Cormick Wheeliaughan in memory of his daughter Bridget who died July 9, 1762 age 15 years.
16. The body of Cormue'r Wheliaghen lies here with his ancesters since the year 1773 age 69 years. Requisant in Pace. Erected by his son Thomas Whelighen.
17. Here lies the body of Jane Leech who died June 4, 17?6 age 4(1) years. Erected by his son Patrick Leech. May he rest in peace. Also Peter Leech 1812 age 72 years.
18. (Top of headstone contains shamrocks and hearts) Erected to the memory of Peter Hickey who died May 12, 1869 age 28 years. Also the infant children of George Hickey. Upon whose souls sweet Jesus have mercy.
19. Have mercy on the soul of James McCabe who died 1<sup>st</sup> April 1806 age 55 years. His wife Ann Dixon 19 Nov 1827 age 71 years.
20. William Ennis departed Dec 20, 1757 age 52 years. Also Catherine his wife departed Dec ? 1758 age 50. This was erected by her son Andrew Ennis.

21. Erected by \_\_\_-iard Davis in grateful memory of his parents Patrick Davis who departed this life Feb 16, 1839 age 59 years. Also his mother Mary Davis who departed this life Mar 4, 1829 age 49 years. Also his daughter Mrs. Mary Doran who died Dec 5, 1856 in the 21 year of her age.
22. Erected by Ellen Davis in memory of her beloved husband George Davis of Killyon who died 24 Oct 1866 age 42 years. Richard d Ju\_\_ 1866 age 62 years.
23. Erected by Rich'd Davis in memory of his father & mother. Also his son Ja's (?) age 22 and his daughter James d March 8, 1796.
24. Erected by Simon Farrell who died Mar 20, 1741 age (did I do this - where is it?)
25. Remember not thou ---- God of truth for (just as) follies of your youth (Salv). Erected by Thos Stapleton in memory of his father James Stapleton who departed this life ye 30 Sep 1796 age (64) years.
26. Momento M---- This stone was erected by Mary Cullen in memory of her husband Patrick who departed this life Nov 20, 181(7) age 26 years. Also their children who died young.
27. Erected by Thos. Curran in memory of his son Patrick died June 1781 age 12 years.
28. This stone erected to the memory of Elener Lynch departed this life Mar 1786 age 76 years.
29. Erected by Christopher & Patrick Cusack of Monemore in memory of their beloved parents who died 19 Feb 1892 age 81 years. His wife Bridget Cusack died Dec 23, 1886 age 77 years.
30. Erected by ----- r---n Obrien alias Cusack in memory of her husband Mark O'brien d Dec 1, 1771 age 40 years.
31. Erected by Matthew Leech in memory of his father (Joseph) (Remainder submerged below ground level)
32. Erected by Laurence Collyn in memory of his father Patrick Collyn who departed this life 23 Oct 1776 age 51 years. Also his brothers and (remainder submerged below ground level)

33. This monument erected by Peter Cullen in memory of his father Nicholas who departed this life 15 Mar 1800 age 60 years. Also his wife (remainder submerged below ground level)
34. Erected by ?----- Ann Bermingham alias (Folaid) April 17, 1800 age 46 years. (remainder illegible)
35. Son John Hevey departed this life 1 ? 1809 age 23 years. Also lies here more of his children.
36. Erected by M. Glennon in loving memory of his father Mathew Glennon who died 12 Jan 1908 age 84 years & his mother Mary Glennon. Also his children James died 19 Oct 1900 age 1 year & 9 months. Mary died 19 Oct 1900 age 4 months. Mathew died 29 May 1902 age 8 months. John died 17 Dec 1907 age 10 years. Bridget died 23 Jan 1908 age 4 years.
37. Erected by Mathew Glennan in memory of his deceased friends & relations. Also his father Thomas Glennan departed Mar (1)4, 1797.
38. Gloria in excelsis Deo. Erected by Edward Dunn in memory of his father who departed this life Jan 5, 1805 age 65 years. His sister Ellen Dunn died Aug 15, 1812 age 52 years & his brother John Dunn died 23 Mar 1820 age 18 years. Also his children who died young.
39. This monument was erected by Catherine Magh—\_in memory of her father James Scot & his family. Also Mary Carny age 65 years. James Carny departed this life March 1835 age 45 years. Anne Carny departed this life Apr 185(4) age (6)0 years. May they rest in peace.
40. Erected by James Bryan in memory of his wife Rose Bryan who departed this life Apr 18(17) age (37) years. Also his son John Bryan departed this life (May) 16, 1797.
41. (Top of headstone broken off) in memory of his father John Feagan who departed this life Mar 19, 1800 age 66y. Also his mother Christ'n Feagan alias Malone departed this life Mar 16, 1800 age 66 years. Also his brother Robert Feagan departed this life Mar 19, 1791 age 22 years. Also his sister Mary Daly alias Faegan departed this life Nov 30, 1792 age 32 & his brother James Faegan (broken here and lower section found behind large boxwood bush near back fence) departed this life Sep 20, 1801 age 23 years. May they rest in peace, amen.
42. (In front of large boxwood near back fence). Draw near dear friends & cast an eye, Pray for us, Prepare to die. Read here thy doom

& know thou must one day like us Return to dust. T.F. & his family.

43. Erected by Mathew McBride in memory of his beloved mother Mary McBride who departed this life June 16, 1862 age 82 years. Also his brother Francis who died May 2, 1866 age 66 years.

44. Erected by Jas Dunn in memory of his wife Meary Dunn alias Feagan departed Aug ye 9, 1797 age (2)4 years. Thou glorious queen of heave my Reaglions (?) of light \_\_\_\_\_ for the sour of that \_\_\_\_\_ Rest in peace.

45. Erected by Marc Quin in memory of her husband John Quin who departed this life ? 1802 age 77 years. Also her son Patrick who departed this life Oct the 20 179(8) age 21 years. Also her son Mathew who departed this life Jan the 26 1803 age 26 years.

46. Erected by Edward Neary in memory of his wife Elizabeth Neary who died July 28, 1898 age 46 years.

47. (Broken stone) son Alex Brown, nowmer in drogheda has erected this stone.

48. Erected by Patrick McBride in memory of Laurence Kelley who departed May the 10, 1793 age 60 years. His daughter Ann Kelly departed Mar 16, 1794 age 25 years. Also his wife Julia Kelly allias McNally departed (Mar) 8, 1788 age 52 years.

49. Erected by Edward O'Shaughnessy & children in loving memory of Mrs. O'Shaughnessy died 29 Jan 1898 age 57 years. Edward O'Shaughnessy died 200 Aug 1918 age 80 years. Johanna died 29 June 1941. James died 6 Dec 1942.

50. (Metal cross & piece of slate. The metal cross contains a hand written inscription) In loving memory of Elizabeth Conlon who died 11 Jan 1953 & her husband Patrick of Derryconnor, Ballivor who died 4 May 1957. May they both rest in peace.

51. Metal cross - no inscription.

52. (Located in the middle of a large boxwood beneath the window opening of the church) Erected by Peter Shurlock in memory of his father & mother & brother. Also his son Mathew Shurlock who departed this life Oct 12, 1845.

53. Erected in memory of Elizabeth Keegan who departed this life on Dec 7, 1859 age 73 years.

54. Erected by Mich'l Dixon in memory of his wife Margaret Dixon alias Malone departed this life May 2, 1797, age 67 years.

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