

Dr. William Moran

Dr. William Moran is remembered by the people of Tullamore with affection and respect. To many parishioners he was seen as a character and there are few of the older parishioners who have not some humorous story to relate concerning him. Dr. Moran came to Tullamore from Trim in October 1949 where he had been parish priest. He was a native of Castletowngeoghegan near Tullamore and was educated at St. Finian's (Navan) and Maynooth College where he was ordained in 1910. He received a doctorate in divinity in 1913 and after four years as a curate in Mullingar and Collins town he was appointed professor of dogmatic theology in Maynooth in 1917. In 1932 he became prefect of the Dunboyne establishment and librarian in 1932. From there he moved to Trim and in 1949 to Tullamore.

Although a competent parish administrator who gave his full support to the local schools building programme of the 1950s, Dr. Moran was happiest among his books and produced a number of books and pamphlets on religious topics including his well known catechism. He also published a number of historical articles including this booklet on the history of Tullamore in 1962. But if Dr. Moran was interested in the past he was also a forward thinking practical man. He seemed to take a special delight in running the annual Corpus Christi procession from the organ gallery of the church with the 'Tannoy' system he purchased in 1951. With this system Dr. Moran could broadcast a Maynooth choir for the procession together with a taped recording of his own sermon while he walked around the church and listened, presumably, admiringly, to the whole event. With his background in theology and his wide reading, Dr. Moran had no shortage of material for his sermons and was a fascinating preacher who held the congregation spellbound for the duration of his homily.

Dr. Moran celebrated the golden jubilee of his ordination in June 1962 and sung a high mass in the presence of Dr. Kyne of Meath and Dr. Cronin of the Philippines. The sermon was preached by Dr. Philbin of Clonfert. After a short illness Dr. Moran died at the age of 79 in October 1965. Although he had been responsible for many improvements at Clonminch cemetery he desired to be buried in the church grounds in a plot chosen by himself. His funeral was attended by thousands of parishioners and about 150 priests, many of them old students of the former professor. His tombstone is now incorporated in the wall of the entrance to the east transept of the new church.

INTRODUCTION

Before I speak on Tullamore, I want to say something about the county, of which it is the capital. It is necessary to do so, in order to correct certain historical errors, that have gained widespread currency through the influence of a couple of books about King's County, published in the nineteenth century.

Before the Norman invasion the political unit in Ireland was the tuath—a small state, sometimes hardly as big as a large rural parish. It often happened, however, that a number of small tuatha entered into a federation to form a big tuath (mór thuath). In these cases the chief of one of the component tuatha acted as the acknowledged leader or overlord of the federation or big tuath. The big tuath in turn was a sub-kingdom of the large provincial kingdom.

Such was the situation in the territory immediately east of Tullamore. Daingean was the chief stronghold of a tuath, whose territory was more or less co-terminous with the modern barony of Lower Philipstown. The dynastic family of this tuath was O'Connor, surnamed Failghe (anglicised Failey or Faly) to distinguish it from other O'Connor families in different parts of Ireland. At an early stage six of the neighbouring tuatha formed a federation with that of the O'Connors; and as the head of the federation was nearly always an O'Connor, the territory of the federation or big tuath came to be known as Ua bhFailghe—a name which English-speaking writers tried to reproduce phonetically by writing Ofaily or Offaley. Ua bhFailghe was a sub-kingdom of the provincial kingdom of Leinster.

In 1557 English power had been extended so far beyond the Pale, that the English Government was able to set up two new counties. One of these, Queen's County, was named for the reigning English sovereign, Queen Mary. The other, King's County, was named for her husband, Philip, King of Spain. Daingean, previously the chief stronghold of the O'Connors, was made the county town, and was re-named Philipstown in honour of King Philip.

In fixing the boundaries of King's County, the representatives of the Crown paid no attention whatever to the Irish territorial divisions already existing. They put into this one county parts of no less than three Irish provincial kingdoms, namely, Meath, Leinster and Munster. They mutilated even some of the parts they cut off from these provincial kingdoms, by carving up small political units, and putting one part in King's County and another part in some other county.

The parts of the three provincial kingdoms, cut off to form King's County, can still be identified and traced by means of the boundaries between the dioceses, among which the county is divided. The part of the county in the diocese of Clonmacnoise, and the part or rather parts in the diocese of Meath were all taken from the Kingdom of Meath. The part of the county in the diocese of Kildare was taken from the Kingdom of Leinster ; and the part in the diocese of Killaloe was taken from the Kingdom of Munster.

Like the other provincial kingdoms, the Kingdom of Meath was made up of a number of sub-kingdoms, each with its own chief elected from the local dynastic family. Tullamore is situated in the Meath sub-kingdom known as Firceall, the

dynastic family of which was O'Molloy. Hence the territory is sometimes referred to as the O'Molloy country. It stretched from the Camcor river between Kinnitty and Birr to the boundary of Westmeath at the northern end of Durrow parish. It is now represented by three baronies, Eglishe or Firceall, Ballyboy and Ballycowan.

From what I have said it will be clear that the O'Connor Faly chief never held sway in Tullamore; it was outside his territory. Consequently when our local council changed the name of Charleville Square to O'Connor Square, and when our local G.A.A. leaders called their new park O'Connor Park, the name chosen was not very appropriate. O'Molloy Square and O'Molloy Park would have been much more appropriate.

Again, Tullamore was never in the old Irish territory of Ua bhFailghe or Offaley. In fact only about a third of the county was ever a part of the Irish Offaley. To confuse matters still more, the English authorities carved up the Irish Offaley, putting about half of it in King's County, about a third of it in Queen's County, and the remainder in Co. Kildare. It follows that when our County Council decided to change the name of King's County, the new name chosen (i.e., Offaly) was not a particularly appropriate one. In fact it would have been quite impossible to get an appropriate Irish name for King's County, a wholly new territorial entity, made up of pieces arbitrarily cut off from several Irish kingdoms and sub-kingdoms. In the circumstances the obvious choice was Conndae an Ri. If, however, an old Irish name was desired, Firceall would have been as good as any other. Firceall was a territory stretching up through the centre of the county ; it was nearly as big as the part of Offaley put into King's County; it was wholly within the boundaries of King's County; and it included Tullamore the capital of the county.

I have little doubt but that the misnomers I have mentioned were due principally to the misleading and erroneous information our public representatives obtained, by reading the books already referred to. And as better-informed popular books were not available, I do not impute any blame to them. I merely wish to take this opportunity of putting other readers on their guard.

THE EARLY HISTORY OF TULLAMORE

Tullamore, being a comparatively new town, has no ancient or medieval history. The name **Tullamore**, even in its English form, is older than the town. Since the end of the sixteenth century it has been the name of the town-land, on which the town is mainly built. In its Irish form (**Tulach Mhor** or **An Tulach Mhor**) it was the name of approximately the same area many centuries earlier. Long before the Norman invasion a monk in the monastery of Lynally wrote into a manuscript a sentence to the effect that the people of Tullamore (lucht Tulcha Moire) belong to Colman of Lynally. He was making, on behalf of his monastery, a **de jure** claim to jurisdiction over a border district, which (so far as we know) never belonged to Lynally parish either in monastic or post-monastic times.

Since the disappearance of the monasteries, Tullamore townland has always been a part of the parish of Kilbride. The fact that the old parish church of Kilbride (the one taken over by the Protestants) was built at Kilbride, a purely rural area, is an indication that there was no town or sizeable village in Tullamore at that time. Otherwise we might expect that the church would be built (as at present) in the more populous centre, or at least near it.

Another line of enquiry leads to the conclusion that Tullamore was probably a rural area as late as the middle of the seventeenth century. After ten years of rule or misrule in Ireland, the Cromwellian Government had a census of population taken in 1659. The census returns make sad reading. Kilbride parish in 1659 had a population of 171, of whom 31 were listed as English. Durrow parish had a population of 165, of whom 30 were listed as English. Unfortunately the enumerator in charge of the census in Ballycowan barony did not record the population of each townland, as was done by the enumerators in the other baronies of King's County. Had he done so, we could make a good guess as to whether there was a village in Tullamore at that time. As it is, we are left entirely in the dark as to how the population of 171 was distributed among the various townlands in Kilbride parish. In any case, with a population of only 171 in the whole parish, it is clear that there cannot have been a sizeable village—if there was a village at all—in Tullamore at that time (1659).

For several centuries after the Norman invasion, the coinage used in Ireland was minted in Dublin or other centres firmly held by the invaders; and comparatively few coins minted in England circulated in this country. During a long period around the middle of the seventeenth century from before the rebellion of 1641 till well after the Restoration in 1660—no coins were minted in Ireland. To make matters worse, coins already in circulation gradually disappeared, as many people hoarded money during the troubled times. In the absence of a sufficiency of coin of the realm to carry on essential trade, token money began to be used wherever goods and services were exchanged. These token coins served much the same purpose as cheques do at present. They were issued locally, and bore the name or initials of the issuer, together with the name of the place where they could be cashed. A token coin was in effect a promissory

note. It was accepted by people, who knew the man that issued it, and who were satisfied that he could redeem it by giving goods, services or coin of the realm to the value indicated on the token.

The first probable evidence we have for the existence of a village of Tullamore is a token penny issued by Robert Worrel (or Worrall) in 1670, and bearing the words “in Tullamoore.” His foreign name, and the fact that he thought Tullamore derived its name from the local landlord (Moore) tend to show that he was one of the 31 “English” inhabitants of Kilbride parish in 1659. From the device (1) (a half boot) on the penny, it is surmised that Robert Worrel was a bootmaker. While there was nothing to prevent a bootmaker in a purely rural area from issuing a token penny in 1670, such issue would be less likely in a rural area than in a village, where trade and exchange would naturally be more brisk. And so, we may take it as more probable, though not quite certain, that the words “in Tullamoore” mean in the village—and not merely in the townland—of Tullamore.

Our next reference to Tullamore comes from the period 1682-1685, when Dr. Dopping, Protestant Bishop of Meath, held a visitation of the parishes of Kilbride and Durrow. In his note book (2) he recorded the fact that “Owen Conroy, a Polpish school (master) teacheth at Tullamore.” As hedge schools continued to be conducted in *rural* areas of Kilbride parish down to 1826 or later, we cannot be quite certain that Dr. Dopping is not speaking of a school conducted by Owen Conroy in the townland of Tullamore. On the other hand, his words “at Tullamore” seem to suggest a known centre of population—a hamlet or village of Tullamore. And that I think is his meaning.

THE VILLAGE OF TULLAMORE

That there was a village of Tullamore in the opening years of the eighteenth century is beyond question. (3) At that time Philipstown (then the county town) and Birr (the most populous centre) were garrison towns; and a road, passing through Tullamore and Kilcormac had long been opened between them. It was near the ford (4), at which this road crossed the Tullamore river, that the village of Tullamore had sprung up. The ford was on the site of the present bridge; and the village grew up on the site of the present Patrick St. Before the canal was built, the road from Philipstown through Cappancur continued straight on till it met the Kilbeggan road at the foot of the present bridge. (5) From that point the road continued towards Kilcormac as at present, except that in the beginning there was no bridge, but only a ford, over the river.

As Philipstown and Birr were over 30 miles apart, the Government decided to station a mobile force of cavalry between them. Only two feasible sites were available—the villages of Tullamore and Kilcormac. The choice fell on Tullamore. And so in 1716, on the plot of land on which the Garda barrack now stands, a large cavalry establishment was set up, with accommodation for 200 men, together with their horses and equipment. One might well say that the town of Tullamore was born the day this establishment opened.

At a time when mass production was unknown, and when the transport of goods from Dublin to the midlands was difficult, slow and expensive, the

garrison at Tullamore had to get the bulk of its requirements locally. This meant a great increase in trade and employment for the village. Nearly every class of skilled labour was soon in demand—bakers, butchers, bootmakers, tailors, saddlers, farriers and so on. Brewers and distillers soon came on the scene to provide drink for the troops. The surrounding rural area also benefited. A new market was opened up for the farm produce of the district—beef, mutton, bacon, milk and vegetables for the soldiers; hay, oats and straw for their horses. As workers, skilled and unskilled, came to Tullamore in the hope of getting remunerative employment, the population increased, and carpenters, thatchers and others engaged in the building trade were kept busy.

At first the population of Tullamore was confined to Barrack St. (now Patrick St.) and two lanes off it. This is clear, in the first place, from the fact that all the other streets were built at a later date, as can be shown from documents preserved in the Charleville rent office. It is also clear from the boundaries of the village shortly after the opening of the military barrack. The barrack was built at the western end of the village. The facilities required to meet the new situation were provided by the landlord at the eastern end. These were a fair green for sale of live stock, a market place for the sale of farm produce other than live stock, and a pound in which stray animals could be enclosed till their owners claimed them. The fair green and the adjoining corn market are now represented by what is somewhat inappropriately called the Market Square (6) The original pound appears to have been on the site of some premises that have a front entrance from Colmcille St., and a back entrance from the Market Square. When Pound Street (the lower part of Colmcille Street) was being built in the last decade of the eighteenth century, the pound was moved over to the vicinity of the present bacon factory.

It was probably about the time the fair green and the cornmarket were opened, that the first bridge over the river was built, to enable farmers from the south side of the river to bring in their farm produce to the market. This bridge, still intact, can be seen from the grounds of the Vocational School. The road over it led straight to the cornmarket. (7) Two short stretches of road, one each side of the river, connected this bridge with the already existing Philipstown-Birr road. The inconvenience of having to make this little detour, in order to cross the river by the bridge, was soon felt ; and the present bridge was built to replace the old one. I have been unable to discover the date at which the new bridge was built; but it was in operation in 1777, when Taylor and Skinner published their road map.

The land, on which Tullamore is built, is part of the Charleville estate; and, as landlords of Tullamore, successive members of the Charleville family naturally encouraged the growth of the town. Apart from considerations of local pride, they had a practical motive for doing so. The rents derivable from hundreds of town tenancies were much greater than could have been got from a few tenants farming the same land. When the village began to increase rapidly in population after the establishment of the military barrack, the landlord might have been expected to see that it developed according to an orderly plan. For many years, however, the landlord appears to have made no attempt to exercise any control in this respect. The result was the development of a slum village, in

which the housing conditions of the majority of the population were about as bad as they could be.

THE ORIGINAL TOWN OF TULLAMORE

When the original Barrack Street had been built up almost to the barrack gate, it began to creep round the barrack into Lower Barrack Street (now Kilbride Street). Here again as in the case of upper Barrack Street, a number of lanes opened off the main street. It is not until Griffith's valuation was being made in 1850, that we get a picture of what housing conditions were like in the Barrack Street area about the third and fourth quarters of the eighteenth century. The valuers in 1850 had to visit every house, whether occupied or not, to put a valuation on it. Off Barrack Street (Upper and Lower) they found the following lanes, with the number of houses as shown in brackets Pensioners' Row (47), Milestone Lane (21), Gunwood Lane (12), Tea Lane, later called O'Connell Street (37), Water Lane (31), Ruddock's Lane (41). At a conservative estimate these houses must have had an average of five persons (including children) per house, making a total population (for 189 houses) of 945, almost 1,000 people. All or practically all these houses were built before 1785, though some of them had been reconstructed before 1850. All of them that had not already fallen into ruins were demolished during the present century as unfit for human habitation. Prior to 1785, the area just described, ie., Barrack Street (Upper and Lower) and the lanes off it, consisted almost entirely of thatched houses, most of them wretched cabins, built close together in slum conditions.

We must now go back a few years. Apart from the wretched housing conditions of the working classes, Tullamore was a busy and growing little town by the middle of the eighteenth century. Already some of the wealthier inhabitants were beginning to erect good, slated houses of two or three storeys. Very few of these were built in the crowded Barrack Street area. Those who could afford to build good houses preferred to get sites outside the town. The most popular residential district was along the Kilcormac road on the south side of the river. The building up of this residential area began between 1745 and 1750, and proceeded rather slowly for some years—at the rate of two, or occasionally three, houses per year. Some of these houses were built a little off the Kilcormac road. John Wilson built a house in Market Square (now O'Connor Square) in 1750. The same year a Mr. Crowe built a large house for himself at the foot of Crowe Street. He built soon afterwards five or six of the adjoining houses. One of these was the first Wesleyan Chapel built in Tullamore it can still be identified by its Gothic windows (8).

Good slated houses were so unusual in Tullamore about the middle of the eighteenth century that for some years the builders of such houses inserted in the front wall an inscribed stone recording the builder's name and the date of building. Most of these stones have disappeared in the course of reconstruction, but at least one still remains in its original place. It is set in the front wall of the Offaly Pharmacy in Bridge Street ; and it reads "Maurice Tyrell built this in 1747. Re-built by W. Hall 1815" (9).

Some time between 1750 and 1760 a supplementary cavalry barrack was built on the eastern side of the town, on the site subsequently occupied by the canal harbour. The new barrack brought increased trade and employment to the town; but building in the immediate vicinity of this barrack appears to have been discouraged. The Government had presumably learned a lesson from the way

Barrack Street and the lanes off it had developed on three sides of the old barrack, and quite close to it.

The year 1780 marked the end of an era in the economic history of Ireland. For over a century successive British Governments had been putting into force a series of enactments designed to cripple the trade and industries of Ireland. By these enactments one export market after another was closed to Irish goods, till no export market was left open, even in Britain (10). At the same time Ireland was being gradually flooded with goods made in Britain. The inevitable result was economic depression in Ireland. Petitions to the King to have these trade restrictions removed were sent in many times by the Irish Parliament, but these petitions had no effect till two arguments, that Britain could understand, were brought forward by the Protestant minority in this country—the only section of the population that had civil and religious liberty, full civic rights and a worthwhile financial stake in the country. One of these arguments was a boycott of British goods. The other was the organisation of Lord Charlemont's Volunteers, and their demonstration of force in College Green, Dublin, in 1779, when placards on their cannon carried such slogans as "Free trade or a speedy revolution." The result was the grant of a large measure of free trade in 1780.

Tullamore was spared the depression, which affected some of the older towns rather severely. There were several reasons for this. In the first place, Tullamore was still a small town, and much of its business was concerned with supplying goods and services to the garrison. Secondly, Tullamore was a long distance away from the ports, through which British goods were being imported to compete with home-made goods; and in those days long-distance trains-port inland was difficult and expensive. And thirdly, Tullamore was too new a town to have been able to develop an export trade—or indeed any considerable Irish trade—before the restrictions were imposed. Nevertheless when the Volunteer movement was organised in the North, it found a sympathetic response in Tullamore. In 1778 a Volunteer corps was formed in Tullamore under the name "Tullamore True Blue Rangers," usually shortened to "Tullamore True Blues." The commander was Charles William Bury, about whom we shall hear more presently.

THE GREAT FIRE OF 1785

On the tenth of May, 1785 (a fair day in the town), Tullamore suffered a serious disaster. Barrack Street, then the main street of the town, was almost completely burned out. A letter written from Tullamore two days after the fire, and published in the *Hibernian Magazine*, gives the following account of the fire "A most dreadful fire took place on the fair day, by which nearly a hundred houses and offices were totally consumed. The melancholy accident was occasioned by the liberation of a fire-balloon, which two gentlemen encouraged an English adventurer to prepare for the amusement of their friends. Having being launched from Dr. Bleakley's yard, it took its direction with a smart wind towards the barrack, where its progress was interrupted by the chimney; and having, on the shock, taken fire it communicated to Christopher Beck's house, and raged with ungovernable fury, notwithstanding the efforts and the assistance of a number of people collected by the circumstance of the fair, till

every house front and rear (11) in Barrack Street (except one thatched (12) and four slated houses) was entirely destroyed. The utmost distress has been experienced by the miserable inhabitants, (to) whom the remaining houses are scarcely sufficient to afford shelter; and several of the wealthier residents have suffered losses nearly to their total ruin, particularly Mr. Norris whose dwelling house, office and malthouse (13) containing a considerable quantity of grain were destroyed." From the above it is clear that the fire was confined to Barrack Street, and did not extend either to the lanes off Barrack Street, or to any of the houses south of the river.

Tullamore was fortunate to have as its landlord, at this critical stage in its history, Charles William Bury, then a very energetic young man, with liberal and progressive ideas, and a great interest in the improvement of both the town and the rural area around it. With his encouragement and help, financial and otherwise, a re-building programme was started almost immediately. The old Barrack Street was a mean, and probably narrow street of thatched houses. The landlord took care that the new Barrack Street would be very different. He allowed only slated houses to be built and these had to be so sited, as to leave a wide, straight street with accommodation for two-way vehicular traffic. These ideas were kept in mind when new streets were being built a few years later. The result is that the principal streets of Tullamore compare very favourably not only with those of older towns, such as Athlone, but also with those of most modern towns.

THE NEW TOWN OF TULLAMORE

Although the fire caused great hardship to individuals, it was a blessing in disguise in another way; it led to the building of a much better town of Tullamore. The building boom, that started after the fire, was not confined to the burnt-out area, but spread at once to the southern side of the river. Within a few years nearly all the vacant building sites in Bridge Street and High Street were leased for the building of dwelling houses and business premises. By the end of the eighteenth century, the road from the bridge to the top of High Street was almost a continuous street; and the few gaps still left were built up in the opening years of the nineteenth century. Moreover, the building on the southern side of the river was not confined to the main thoroughfare. In 1786 two members of the Ridley family built houses in Market Square (now O'Connor Square). A few yards beyond the square there is an archway, over which there is a stone with the inscription "Joseph Flanagan 1787." This archway provided a back entrance to "Flanagan's Lane" which had six houses, built presumably in 1787 (14). About the same time the upper end of Crowe Street was being built up; and a few years later some lanes were built off the upper end of High Street.

An important development started about the beginning of 1790—the extension of the town to new streets, which did not exist before. To encourage the building of dwelling houses and business premises—both of which were required to meet the needs of an increasing population—the landlord offered leases of building sites on very attractive terms. A person wishing to build could get a lease of a site for 999 years at an annual rent of a shilling per foot frontage to the street. Many people took advantage of this offer to build houses for themselves.

Some speculative builders also availed of it, to invest their money in house property, which they hoped would bring them in a good income from rents.

The most important of these speculative builders was a Captain Acres, who in January 1790 was granted leases of four plots of land, to be used as building sites. One of these was at the junction of High Street and Cormac Street. On this plot Captain Acres built Acres Hall (facing O'Moore Street) and the adjoining row of houses on the western side of Cormac Street. The other three plots were on the north side of the river, and between them included more than a quarter of all the building sites in the present Columcille Street, and most of those in Offaly Street. The development of these plots must have been well advanced by 1795, for in that year Acres obtained a lease of a large plot at Windmill Hill. On this he built nine houses along the south side of O'Moore Street, and eleven or twelve others around the corner on the eastern side of Cormac Street. About the same time a row of houses was built on the opposite side of O'Moore Street by another speculative builder named Crofton.

By noting the dates, at which leases were granted, we can trace the expansion of the town into new streets. Apart from a few gaps filled up a little later, the new streets were built up mainly during the following periods Columcille Street, Offaly Street, Cormac Street and the western end of O'Moore Street during the last decade of the eighteenth century (15); the western end of Harbour Street during the last decade of the eighteenth century and the first decade of the nineteenth century (16); Church Street (17) and Store Street during the two first decades of the nineteenth century (18); Henry Street, between 1830 and 1840. Charles William Bury (created Earl of Charleville in 1806), died in 1835, having lived to see Tullamore reach the stage of development, at which it remained almost unchanged till the end of the century.

Sir Charles Coote spent some time in Tullamore early in 1801, collecting material for his **Statistical Survey of the King's County**, published the same year. In that book he compares the new Tullamore with the old. "About fourteen years ago," he says, "it (Tullamore) was but a very mean village, with scarce any better than thatched cabins, which were almost all (19) destroyed by accidental fire occasioned by the launching of a balloon, and has since risen phoenix-like from its ashes to its present pre-eminence. It is certainly the best town in the county, and bids fair to be little inferior to any town in Ireland. The houses are all slated, built mostly two storeys in height, and ornamented with window stools and top courses of fine hewn stone... Lord Charleville gives the utmost encouragement for building. He has hitherto invariably let leases for ever of the town plots at a shilling per foot in front; and the tenants get three lives (lease) of a reasonable proportion of the adjoining parks (at) from sixteen to twenty shillings per acre. So rapidly has this town increased in wealth and consequence within these few years, that these parks now set for six guineas per acre, and are sought for with avidity at a still more enormous rent."

THE GRAND CANAL

One of the chief reasons for this increased prosperity was the building of the Grand Canal. The Grand Canal Company was formed in 1772 to link up the port of Dublin with the Barrow and Shannon rivers. The link with the Barrow was

made at Athy in 1791. The junction with the Shannon was made at Shannon Harbour in 1803. Meanwhile the canal was completed as far as Tullamore in 1798 and for three or four years Tullamore remained the trading terminus. While Tullamore benefited to some extent from the employment given during the actual building of the canal, it benefited still more from the increased trade that followed the opening of communications with the port of Dublin. Tullamore became a collecting and distributing centre for goods—a little metropolis for a large area. Every kind of goods imported into Dublin could now be brought to Tullamore cheaply within a few days. Similarly various kinds of farm produce, as well as the manufactures of the town itself, could be sent to Dublin, or through Dublin to foreign markets. Irish whiskey, for instance, was one of the commodities that found a ready market in Britain and her colonies about this time.

For over a year all merchandise was loaded or unloaded at Bury Quay between Store Street and St. Brigid's Place. The original canal store at Bury Quay is now used as a grain store by P. & H. Egan, Ltd. But as Tullamore was the principal town between Dublin and the Shannon, the Canal Company was anxious to have a harbour and dry dock at Tullamore. In 1799 the Canal Company purchased from the Government the site of the second military barrack established in Tullamore; and built the branch line into the present harbour. The dry dock and harbour were excavated out of the barrack square. The buildings, previously used to house men and horses, were now adapted to store merchandise. The Government in turn built another military barrack on the eastern side of Cormac Street. This was subsequently known as Wellington Barrack. Some of the houses near the entrance to the Courthouse appear to have been built originally for military personnel. When the troops were withdrawn, this barrack became the R.I.C. Barrack and during the land agitation it housed a large force of police.

As there was no public transport system for either passengers or merchandise before the Grand Canal was built, the Canal Company proceeded to cater for both. Special passenger boats, popularly known as fly-boats (because of their speed), were used for the passenger service. These boats travelled only by day, and at first took two days for the journey from Dublin to Tullamore. In 1801 the Canal Company built hotels at Robertstown and Tullamore (20), to cater for passengers at the end of the first and second day's journey respectively. Under the pressure of competition from the stage coaches later on, the speed of the fly-boats was stepped up, and the journey from Dublin to Tullamore was completed in one day (21). The first big load of passengers from Dublin to Tullamore was carried by a flotilla of the Canal Company's boats in 1798. It was part of the army proceeding to Connaught, to meet the French force that had landed at Killala. Having disembarked at Tullamore, the troops proceeded on foot to Athlone.

TULLAMORE IN 1798

Although Tullamore took no part in the rising of 1798, it did not entirely escape the aftermath. After the rising had been crushed, the Government sent

companies of its armed forces around the country, to give a demonstration of force, and to intimidate the discontented nationalist section of the population. A force of yeomanry carried out this mission in Tullamore. On a Sunday morning they raided the Catholic Church, then situated at Ballyduff, just as the people had assembled for Mass, and cleared the whole congregation out of the church. The parish priest (Rev. Patrick Geoghegan) fearing the treatment he might receive if captured, escaped from the sacristy and hid in a field of corn. While there he was drenched by a shower of rain. The result was a bad cold, from the effects of which he died a few months later.

Another item in the aftermath of the rising was the trial and execution in Tullamore of three men (one named Coffey and two brothers named Dempsey) brought to Tullamore from another part of the county, and charged with complicity in the rebellion. A writer named Musgrave, in his history of the rebellion, tells us that on the day of the executions “the inhabitants of the town, to testify their concern for the fate of their fellow traitors, closed their doors and windows, and observed a dead silence during the executions.” As at least a third of the population of Tullamore at that time was loyalist, there must obviously have been another motive for the silence and empty streets. There can be little doubt but that the second motive was fear—fear lest some of the Crown forces might run amuck. The inhabitants of Tullamore may have heard of an incident that took place in the neighbouring town of Kilbeggan about that time. Members of a company of yeomanry ran amuck without provocation. Among other misdeeds, these upholders of law and order seized a farmer on his way to the forge, dragged him to the market square and hanged him from a crane used to lift sacks of corn to and from a weighing machine. And there was no redress for his widow and her six children (22).

Rev. Patrick Geoghegan, P.P., mentioned above, was succeeded by Rev. James Murray in March, 1799. Fr. Murray decided that the time had come to build a Catholic Church in Tullamore town. When he approached the landlord (Charles William Bury) for a site, he not only obtained a site free of rent, but also a generous subscription towards the cost of building the church. The site given on that occasion included the whole of the present church grounds, except the strip of ground between the present church and Store Street. This strip had been already leased—presumably to a contractor for the Supply of hay to the barrack just across the road. In any case it was occupied by a hay-shed. When the Canal Company took over the barrack, the hayshed was replaced by a number of dwelling houses. These were still in existence in 1850.

The original church, opened in 1802, was built partly on the site of the present church; but as it was considerably smaller, the space between the church and Chapel Street, was larger than it is at present. On this space Fr. Murray built a presbytery and outoffices in 1805. These buildings blocked the entrance to the church from Chapel Street; so that for many years the whole congregation had to approach the church through the gate from Harbour Street. The entrance from Chapel Street was re-opened, when the old presbytery and outoffices were demolished to make room for the present church. I have been unable to discover when the entrance from Store Street was secured (23).

GROWTH OF POPULATION

At this point it may be of interest to try to answer the question what was the population of Tullamore at the close of the eighteenth century? As no official census of population was taken between 1659 and 1821, the most we can hope to establish is a more or less probable estimate. We may take it that the big building programme, begun about 1786, attracted a considerable labour force, skilled and unskilled, from outside Tullamore to supplement the building force already available in the town. The only other development, likely to attract an influx of labour between 1790 and 1821, was the building of the Grand Canal, including the harbour and dry dock. The additional labour, if any, required from outside for this purpose must have been recruited before 1800, or at the latest 1801. It follows that, during the 20 years preceding the census of 1821, whatever increase in population took place in Tullamore was entirely or almost entirely due to natural increase.

The first published estimate of the population of Tullamore was made by an English writer named Wakefield, who visited Tullamore in the summer of 1814 (24). He estimated that there were then in Tullamore "1,500 Protestants and probably 2,500 Catholics," that is, 4,000 in all. His use of the word "probably" shows that he was not entirely satisfied with the information he collected about the number of Catholics.

Seven years later, when the census of 1821 was taken, the population of Tullamore was 5,517, i.e., 37½ per cent above Wakefield's estimate. Since it is quite incredible that the natural increase of the population (especially in the circumstances then obtaining) could have amounted to 37½ per cent in seven years, we are forced to conclude that Wakefield underestimated the population in 1814—his error being due most probably to an underestimate of the number of Catholics.

In discussing the probable rate of natural increase of population at that time, we have to take account of the causes tending to check it, especially among the labouring classes. Their hours of labour were much longer than at present ; their working conditions often unhealthy ; their housing conditions for the most part bad; and their wages and standard of living very low. These conditions provided a favourable environment for the spread of tuberculosis, especially in the crowded back lanes. They also tended to lower resistance to disease in time of epidemics. Besides, there were as yet no public health services to check infant mortality, or provide against the intermittent recurrence of infections or contagious diseases, such as smallpox, diphtheria, scarlet fever and cholera. Little information has come down to us about the frequency or severity of these epidemics about the turn of the century; but when evidence becomes available for a later date, we find that they took a heavy toll of life around the middle of the nineteenth century (25). In short, we are justified in concluding that the annual death rate (as calculated over a period of 8 or 10 years) must have been much higher in the Tullamore of a century and a half ago, than it is in the Tullamore of to-day.

Taking these considerations into account, I think it is reasonable to conclude that a natural increase of population, amounting to 37½ per cent, must have

required at that time a period of not less than 25 years. If that estimate is approximately correct, the population of Tullamore must have reached the 4,000 mark, not in 1814, but some time about the middle of the last decade of the eighteenth century (26). On that supposition it is easy to understand the feverish building programme, begun about 1786 and carried on at high pressure for the next 20 years or more. From the big part taken by speculative builders in the programme from 1790 onwards, it is clear that there must have been an acute shortage of housing accommodation all through the last decade of the eighteenth century, and well into the nineteenth. Only a big population could account for that state of affairs.

TULLAMORE INDUSTRIES

The next question that suggests itself is this what industries were developed in Tullamore during the eighteenth century, to support the steadily increasing population of the town? Unfortunately we have very few contemporary documents to throw light on the industries of Tullamore till the year 1801. We can, however, draw some probable conclusions by comparing the backward industrial situation, that must have obtained in the insignificant village of Tullamore before 1716, with the fairly advanced stage of industrial self-sufficiency, which the town had reached a century later. This remarkable change must have been brought about by a gradual development, that began far back in the eighteenth century. The necessity for such development must have become clear soon after the establishment of the barrack in 1716. That men soon came forward with sufficient vision, enterprise and capital to undertake that development is evident from the building programme already outlined—a programme already well under way by the year 1740.

Industry was still in the hand-operated stage in the eighteenth century. There were as yet no steam engines applicable to industry, no internal combustion engines, no electric motors. The only power applicable to industry was water power; and that was used mainly for grinding corn to make meal and flour. Long distance transport inland at that time presented formidable difficulties, except where there was a canal or navigable river. The result was that industry was not so concentrated as at present in a few favoured centres, but was more widely distributed throughout the country.

Before the canal reached the town in 1798, Tullamore was in a particularly isolated position, being at almost the maximum distance from a sea port, a navigable river or any large industrial centre. The people of Tullamore had the greatest possible incentive, therefore, to try to provide for their own industrial needs, and thus make the town industrially self-sufficient as far as possible. This incentive became all the stronger as the town increased in population, and became the market town, on which the inhabitants of a considerable rural area depended for most of their industrial requirements.

Tullamore, of course, never became anything like fully self-sufficient industrially. We have, for instance, no evidence or tradition of the manufacture in Tullamore of such household articles as delph or glass. It is fairly certain, I think, that many other articles, particularly of iron, that could conceivably be made locally, and possibly were made in limited quantities, continued to be

imported for the most part, because local resources were insufficient to cope with the demand. Cutlery and kitchen pots are examples that come to mind.

Allowing for these limitations in the supply of household goods, I think it is reasonable to assume that Tullamore had made good progress, by the middle of the eighteenth century, in developing the more essential industries, that is, the industries associated with the primary needs of food, clothing and housing. In connection with food, the old method of grinding flour by hand quern must have given way soon after the establishment of the barrack to a flour mill worked by a water wheel, if such mill did not already exist in 1716. As the population increased, the utensils used for baking bread in private houses (gridles, pans and pot ovens) must have been in great demand. How far, if to any extent, this demand was met by local iron foundries, can only be answered if and when we find out when iron foundries *were* first opened in Tullamore, and what was the output of such foundries when in full production. The prospect of getting reliable information on these points appears remote.

In connection with clothing, a considerable amount of spinning was done by the women in all rural homes (27), and probably in many of the town homes as well. While a certain amount of weaving was also done in the rural areas, we may take it that most of the looms were operated in the town, where the bulk of the weavers' output was sold. The wheelwrights and other craftsmen, that made and repaired spinning wheels and looms, may also be presumed to have had their workshops mostly in the town.

In connection with housing, the growth of the town during the eighteenth century implies that there must have been a large and skilled building force in the town from before the middle of the century. Stone was obtained from a quarry adjacent to Lower Barrack Street—in the area between the present Kilbride Street and Clontarf Road. When the building boom was at its height about the end of the century, the builders probably drew on the Ballyduff quarries. Bricks were manufactured in the vicinity of the town (28). Timber at least towards the end of the century, had to be brought in from Geashill. It was sawn, cleaned and put together in Tullamore. Some or all of the nails used in construction were supplied by Tullamore nailers, at least in the latter part of the century. I have found no evidence or tradition to suggest that a slate quarry was ever worked in the vicinity of Tullamore.

DISTILLING AND BREWING

Two other industries, distilling and brewing, must have been developed very soon after the establishment of the military barrack, if they did not already exist in a small way. Throughout the eighteenth century there was a big and growing demand for whiskey on the home market; and distilleries were numerous in all the grain-producing areas. Judged by present standards these distilleries were very small, the capacity of the stills in most of them being only five per cent or less of the capacity of the stills now operated by B. Daly & Co. But a distillers' licence cost very little there was no tax on malt till 1785; the excise duty on whiskey was only eight pence per proof gallon till 1760, when it was raised to ten pence, and later to one and two pence (29). Nevertheless there was even then a

considerable amount of illicit distilling, as the prevention of illicit distilling was not nearly so well organised then as it is now.

Nearly all Irish industries declined during the eighteenth century under the combined effects of British-imposed restraints, and the competition of British-made goods. Distilling, however, was an exception; it continued to thrive in spite of the fact that the import of British-made spirits increased sevenfold between 1720 and 1776. The result was that more people went in for distilling. At first the new distilleries erected were genuine commercial undertakings (30). From about 1770, however, a big crop of very small stills gradually came into operation, often as a side line to some other business. By 1780 (the peak year) the number of licenced distilleries, or so called distilleries, in Ireland reached the fantastic total of 1,212. The insignificance of most of these “distilleries can be gathered from the fact that of 76 licenced distilleries in the Athlone excise area, no less than eleven were in the town of Clara. The owners of many of these small stills paid little or no excise duty, as they worked only when there was little danger of a visit from an excise officer. In 1780 the Irish Parliament passed legislation designed to put these small undesirable distilleries out of business. Within a year the number of licenced distilleries fell from 1,212 to 855. Among those that closed down were the eleven “distilleries” in Clara (31).

I have been unable to discover when the first licenced distillery was opened in Tullamore; but I think we may take it as practically certain that there was at least one still operating in Tullamore before 1720. Whether it was licenced or not is another question. For contemporary documentary evidence, however, we have to wait till 1801, when Sir Charles Coote records that there was a distillery then working in Tullamore. Unfortunately he gives us no details about it. We can, however, draw some very probable conclusions on the strength of circumstantial evidence.

In the first place, it is most unlikely that the distillery Coote found working was recently established, as the Irish Parliament during the previous 15 or 20 years had been trying to discourage the drinking of whiskey, and to encourage the drinking of beer, a less intoxicating liquor. There were two motives for this policy—(1), to remedy the prevailing drunkenness, which Henry Grattan described as a “national evil”; and (2), to help the rehabilitation of the brewing industry. We may take it then that the Tullamore distillery in 1801 was one that had survived the weeding-out legislation of 1780. Its existence in 1785 would help to explain why one of the premises burned in that year was a malthouse with a considerable quantity of grain.

I think we can trace this distillery back beyond 1780. In 1756 two men, Michael Molloy and John Vaughan, both described as merchants, took out leases of two adjoining building sites in Bridge Street, and erected houses on them (32). A third lease in which both names occur, shows that Molloy and Vaughan were partners in some business enterprise. In view of the fact that distilling was the only industry not suffering from depression at the time, we may take it as reasonably certain that the enterprise in question was a distillery, established about 1756 or 1757 somewhere in the grounds of the present distillery. Early in the nineteenth century another Michael Molloy, presumably grandson of the former Michael, inherited the house and property of his namesake.

I have been unable to discover when the old distillery closed down. In a book on distilling, published in 1838, Samuel Morewood gives a list of the Irish distilleries working in February, 1818. The list does not include any distillers in Tullamore. But this proves nothing more than a temporary cessation from distilling, as Locke's distillery in Kilbeggan is also omitted from the list, though it certainly had not closed down permanently. If in fact the Tullamore distillery did close down permanently about or before 1818, it may have been about that time that the Vaughan interest in it was bought out by Molloy. The latter appears to have reconstructed and enlarged the old distillery, having acquired for the purpose the water power and buildings of two mills on the river, a flour mill and an oat meal mill (33). If my surmise is correct, the distillery (now B. Daly & Co.) opened by Michael Molloy junior in 1829, was not an entirely new distillery, but a reconstructed and enlarged version of an old one he had inherited.

Before the middle of the seventeenth century no beer was brewed from hops in Ireland; but in many parts of the country small breweries or "brew houses" produced a strong ale from native grain (34). By the opening years of the eighteenth century all the principal breweries—those in Dublin, Cork and other towns with easy access to the sea—were equipped to produce Only a lighter beer based partly on imported hops. Restraints imposed by the British Government in 1720 and 1731 practically put these breweries out of business, by making it impossible for them to import hops except from Britain, and by making the price of British hops excessive. The result was that imports of British beer went up from 70 barrels a year about 1720 to over 30,000 barrels about 1790. Soon after it gained legislative independence, the Irish Parliament set about rehabilitating the Irish brewing industry. The effect of its efforts began to appear in 1792. By 1800 the imports of British beer were down from 30,000 to 5,000 barrels a year.

It is difficult to say how far Tullamore was affected by these events, at least prior to 1798, when the coming of the canal put an end to the comparative isolation of Tullamore. It is most unlikely that a brewery using hops was established, or could have worked economically in Tullamore before the coming of the canal. On the other hand, it is very probable that some kind of brewery was established in Tullamore soon after the opening of the military barrack, if there was not one already in existence. Whether it was a "public brew house" or a private brew house attached to a tavern is a moot question. We have, however, no documentary evidence for the existence of a brewery in Tullamore till 1801, when Sir Charles Coote found one brewery in operation and two others being built. Unfortunately, he gives us no details about the brewery he found in operation.

Distilling and brewing were not the only industries Coote found in Tullamore in 1801. Being a great believer in industry for export, he was inclined to enthuse over any industry for whose product there was a ready market abroad; and he was inclined to underestimate the importance of an industry that catered exclusively or mainly for local needs. His pet industry in this part of the country was the manufacture of linen from flax grown locally. He deals at some length with this industry in his survey of Kilcoursey barony; but he recommends that the linen hall, which he deemed necessary, should be set up in Tullamore. Dealing with Tullamore later on, he says, "The linen manufacture has been

introduced here, and is likely to be pursued with spirit." Clearly the linen industry was not an old one in the town, but was recently introduced.

HAND INDUSTRIES

The woollen industry, on the other hand, was an old one. Coote merely remarks about it "The woollen manufacture is also getting forward here." By accident he gives us some idea of the importance of the woollen industry in Tullamore at the time. He tells us that in Tullamore "little specie is seen and principally purchased by the yarn buyers, who frequent Connaught markets." In other words, the yarn spun in the town by spinners employed for the purpose, even when augmented by the yarn spun in the homes of the rural population, was not sufficient to keep the Tullamore looms working; and so, buyers from Tullamore had to travel to Connaught to buy yarn.

Coote did not attempt to enumerate the various industries he found in Tullamore; but by accident he is led to make a remark, that throws a flood of light on the great variety of hand-industries, carried on in the town at that time. He says "Here is also a bolting mill (flour mill) of inconsiderable powers on account of the lackage of water. **This indeed is the only obstacle to its becoming a great manufacturing town.**" He saw a great variety of hand-industries, a trained labour force with the necessary know-how; but he could see no future for Tullamore as a great manufacturing centre, because the only power applicable to industry, so far as he knew (i.e. water power) was lacking.

Many of the industries and crafts not mentioned by Coote can be ascertained from other sources, such as old street names, traditions about the crafts handed down in particular families, and a list of the "principal" inhabitants of Tullamore in 1823 (35). Many old names going back to the eighteenth century tell us of industries carried on in the vicinity long ago—e.g. Distillery Lane, Tanyard (36), Wheelwright Lane, Gunwood Lane. Surviving traditions in the town rarely go back more than a century, and are of little use for our purpose. There is one source, however, that I have found a little more helpful—a very old person belonging to a family that has lived for generations in the same house, one of the oldest houses in Tullamore. From that source I learned a few of the many crafts (most of them now forgotten) that were handed down in certain families in the lower Barrack Street area about the end of the eighteenth century, and beginning of the nineteenth. In Tea Lane there was a family of nailers, and also a family of coopers. Apart from any employment the latter got in the distillery or brewery, they kept their own workshop, in which they made the old-fashioned churns and dashes required by the farmers of the rural area. In Pensioners' Row there was a family that made straw beehives and straw-bottomed chairs. Nearby was a family that made wooden riddles and sieves, both in demand by the farming community. In Lower Barrack Street there was an iron foundry. Some time in the nineteenth century a member of the family moved over to Kilbeggan and established an offshoot foundry, which long outlived the parent establishment in Tullamore. During the second world war, socks of ploughs cast in the Kilbeggan foundry were sold in the hardware shops here in Tullamore. This Kilbeggan foundry has since been bulldozed out of existence.

The list of the "principal" inhabitants of Tullamore in 1823, together with their avocations, is not entirely satisfactory for our purpose. In the first place,

unless a man could be regarded as a merchant or its equivalent, he was not deemed to be a "principal" inhabitant by the person who drew up the list. Secondly, 1823 is a little too late for our purpose, as it leaves too much time for the establishment of new industries since the end of the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, I think it is worth while mentioning the industries recorded in this list.

Omitting avocations that cannot be classed as in any sense industrial, the following callings have one or more representatives in the list: Boot and shoe makers, brewers, coach makers, printers and stationers, makers of tallow candles, watch and clock makers, brickmakers, saddlers and harness makers, painters and glaziers, tobacco manufacturers, builders, gunmakers, tanners, starch manufacturers, builders, distillers, silk manufacturers, iron founders. The mention of a gunmaker (located in Barrack Street) is interesting, when taken in connection with Gunwood Lane, off Lower Barrack Street. I doubt very much whether the Tullamore foundries ever turned out a gun barrel. But it is easy to understand why a man could be called a gunmaker, if he assembled guns from imported barrels and wooden stocks made in his own workshop.

THE "BATTLE OF TULLAMORE"

I shall conclude by saying a few words about an incident, that really has nothing to do with the history of Tullamore. I mention it only because I wish to correct the date usually assigned to it. The incident was a kind of riot between Crown forces, which has since been magnified into a battle—"The Battle of Tullamore"

About 1804 the ruler of Hanover demobilised his army under pressure from Napoleon Bonaparte. A great number of the demobilised officers and men, being unwilling to return to civilian life, offered their services as mercenaries to the British Government, and were accepted. By the end of 1805 several thousand of these Hanoverians had crossed over to England, where they were known as the German Legion. In May 1806 about 2,000 of these Germans were sent to Ireland; and within a few days after landing at Cork, some hundreds of them arrived in Tullamore to take over garrison duty in the town. They were well received by the loyalist section of the population, and were much impressed by the hospitality shown them. Meanwhile no change was made in Birr, where the garrison consisted of five companies of Irish militia, drawn from four different regiments (those of Monaghan, Derry, Sligo and Limerick).

Two months after the arrival of the Germans in Tullamore, the militia companies in Birr were ordered to leave the town, and proceed to join their respective regiments. The order was very unpopular; and as it was attributed to the arrival of the Germans in this country, the militia were nursing a grievance against the Germans, when most of them left Birr on the morning of the 22nd July, 1806, to march to Tullamore, where they were to encamp for the night. On arrival at Tullamore that afternoon, the officers of the militia received an invitation to dine that evening at the German officers' mess. The invitation was declined on the plea of fatigue.

Later that evening three or four of the militia were standing on the bridge talking to a local youth, when an unarmed German approached the bridge on his

way to the barrack for roll-call. The youth made some disparaging remark about the German, and his words found an echo in the mood of the militia at the time. As the German passed by, one of the militia struck him a blow and knocked him down. Another German was treated similarly a few minutes later. A German patrol, having witnessed this second incident, hastened to the bridge, arrested the offending militia-man, and proceeded to take him to the barrack. His companions ran off to organise a rescue party. In a few minutes a group of some 20 militiamen pursued the patrol, now nearing the barrack, intent on effecting a rescue. The militia were baulked, however, by a German officer named Dusing, who led a party of his men across their path and barred their advance. The Germans were unarmed, while some at least of the militia had muskets and ammunition.

Baulked in their rescue attempt, the militia threw stones at the Germans; and eventually one or more of them fired some shots, wounding two of the Germans. There was a quick response from the barrack. A posse of cavalry galloped out and charged the militia, scattering them and wounding some of them. The cavalry cleared Barrack Street and then other streets near the bridge. The militia took shelter in lanes and doorways and opened fire on the Germans. By the time order was restored there were casualties on both sides. The Germans had three officers and twenty-two other ranks wounded, one of the officers very severely. They all recovered eventually. The militia had no officers but nine other ranks wounded. One of these died of his wounds.

When news of this encounter reached military headquarters. General Floyd was sent to Tullamore to investigate and report on the incident. He gives what appears to be an interim report, dealing with the first stage of the riot, in a letter dated 28th July 1806 (37).

Since the latter part of the nineteenth century, references to the “battle of Tullamore” in local newspapers and in at least one book (Cooke’s History of Birr) all agree in giving the year 1808 as the date of the so-called battle. The origin of this error appears to have been the inscription on a headstone in Kilcrutten Cemetery, recording the death of a German officer named Oldenhausen in 1808. Some newspaper correspondent jumped to the conclusion that Oldenhausen was killed in the “battle of Tullamore “—which consequently must have taken place in 1808. Once the error got into print it was copied by subsequent writers without question.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. Cf. Boyne, *Tokens of the XVIIth Century*, p. 573.
2. Now in Marsh's Library, Dublin.
3. In its issue of September 25th, 1712, a newspaper called **Dublin Intelligence** published a letter from a correspondent in Killeigh, containing the following information "On Tuesday night last 16 of the people of the town apprehended the popish bishop of Dromore and his Chaplain near Tullamore. We delivered them into the hands of the gaoler of Philipstown." The reference is obviously to the village, not to the town-land of Tullamore.
4. The mass of solid rock, which made the river fordable at this point, was removed during the Brosna drainage operations about 1953.
5. See Taylor and Skinner's road map, published in 1777.
6. **Market Square** was the original name of the present O'Connor Square; and Charleville documents always use it in that sense. The market house, dating from the eighteenth century, may still be seen; though it is not so easily recognised since it was converted into a cafe.
7. It was probably to avoid blocking the traffic over the river, that the original bridge was built some distance above the ford. With this bridge as an alternative means of crossing the river, the ford could be put out of commission while the new bridge was being built.
8. John Wesley preached in Tullamore in 1747 or 1748.
9. Another stone, removed from its place when the front wall of the house was being plastered, may now be seen set in the footpath near Cash's door in Patrick Street. From it we learn that the house was built by Andrew Grier in 1742. It is one of the houses that escaped in the fire of 1785, and is one of the four or five oldest houses in Tullamore.
10. Limited quantities of a few materials, that were in short supply in Britain, continued to be exported to Britain.
11. The expression "front and rear" probably means that not only the dwelling houses, but also the outoffices behind them were burned.
12. The thatched house, saved in the fire of 1785, is "The Mallet Tavern" near the Clara bridge in Kilbride Street. It was saved largely through the efforts of the soldiers who frequented it. It was a public house in 1785 and is still a public house. Its licence is probably the oldest in Tullamore.
13. The site of this malt house is now part of the grounds of the distillery (B. Daly & Co.) and is situated near the junction of Patrick Street and the road to Marian Place.
14. The front entrance was near the present post office building (which was not erected till 1863).
15. Although Columcille Street was nearly completely built up by 1795, no houses were built till some years later on the corner sites at the crossroads formed by Columcille Street, with Patrick Street and Church Street. The leases for three of these sites (and probably for the fourth) were not granted till 1801. It appears as if leases for these corner sites were temporarily withheld for some reason.
16. Leases for the corner sites at the junction of Harbour Street and Deane Street (opposite the Church gate) were not granted till 1823.

17. Apart from the church, built about 1726 (in the area now known as the Shambles) and the county infirmary (now the County Library), built about 1788.
18. The lease for the corner site at the junction of Cornmarket and Church Street—the site opposite the Methodist Church—was not given till 1824.
19. It is clear that Sir Charles had not seen Pensioners Row or other lanes off Barrack St.
20. The Canal Hotel at Tullamore is now the Presbytery.
21. The group of nuns, coming to found the Mercy Convent in Tullamore, travelled from Dublin by fly-boat on 21st April, 1836. The boat left Portobello at 8 a.m. and reached Tullamore shortly after 3 p.m. (from the Convent annals).
22. The farmer was Michael Fox of Ballyobhan, about a mile north of Kilbeggan.
23. It was probably about 1851. After the severe outbreak of cholera in 1849, many houses remained vacant for over a year. Among these were six houses in Store Street, five of them in a row. It was probably some of these that were acquired and demolished by the Parish Priest at the time.
24. Cfr. **An Account of Ireland, Statistical and Political** by Edward Wakefield London 1814.
25. There were outbreaks of cholera in Tullamore in 1833, 1849 and 1867. The outbreak in 1849 was a particularly bad one, and carried away hundreds of the inhabitants. The winter of 1836—7 is described as follows in the Convent Annals “This was a severe winter for the poor. They suffered intensely from cold, hunger and disease. And as there was no fever hospital in the town, the epidemics raged uncontrolled.”
26. The conclusion arrived at above is borne out by the rate of increase from 1821 to 1831. In 1821 the population was 5,517. In 1831 it was 6,342, or 15 per cent higher. An increase of 15 per cent in ten years works out at approximately the same rate as 37½ per cent in 25 years. In 1831 the population of 6,342 was crowded into an urban area of 840½ acres. In April 1961, the population was 90 less in an urban area of 1,940 acres.
27. Dealing with Kilcoursey barony, Sir Charles Coote tells us “The women and children are all spinners, and disposed to industry.” And again “I have already spoken of the great industry of the women indeed their auxiliary exertions are particularly depended on for the subsistence of the family” (Coote op. cit. p. 163 and 166). There cannot have been much difference between the industry of the women in two adjacent baronies, Kilcoursey and Ballycowan; nor can there have been much difference in the necessity for their exertions to eke out the family budget.
28. The first brickyard worked in Tullamore was situated between Pearse Park and the railway near the canal. One or two of the Pearse Park houses adjoining the brickyard are built on the site of the kiln used to bake the bricks. Another brickyard was opened later on at the lower end of St. Colman’s Terrace. The clay here was not so good, and the project was abandoned after a few years.
29. It is now eight pounds, sixteen shillings per proof gallon. (March 1962).
30. For instance, Locke’s Distillery in Kilbeggan, established in 1757.
31. “Formerly there were no less than eleven distilleries worked in this town (Clara) and not one now, though it possesses every advantage of water, fuel and abundance of corn in the neighbourhood. This can only be accounted for by the small stills being cut off by the

legislature; and it is really surprising why some capital distillery is not now carried on here” Coote, op. cit. p. 156.

32. The two houses, now let into One, provide offices on the ground floor for Hoey and Denning, solicitors.
33. In 1786 these mills and a plot of land adjoining them were held (on lease from Charleville) by George Hamilton. Michael Molloy junior appears to have acquired the whole of the Hamilton holding, i.e., the land as well as the mills.
34. The expression “public brew houses,” found in documents of the seventeenth century, appears to mean licenced breweries. But in addition to the public brewers there were tavern keepers, who brewed ale on a small scale for sale in their own taverns.
35. This can be found in an appendix to Cooke’s **History of Birr**.
36. There was another tanyard in Barrack Street, at the back of the premises now known as Rhattigan’s.
37. Cfr. Beamish, **History of the German Legion. vol. 1**.