

# JOSEPH HIGGINS



## Ballincollig's native son, the sculptor, Joseph Higgins

Joseph Higgins (1885-1925) was born just outside Ballincollig in 1885. His father, William, who lost his job as a teacher after being imprisoned following the 1867 Rising, worked as a cooper in the Royal Gunpowder Mills. Young Joseph attended Ballincollig National School until the age of fourteen when he and his family moved to Cork city.

1



**Joseph Higgins working on  
Boy with a Boat, 1910**

(from *Joseph Higgins, Sculptor & Painter: 1885-1925*)

2



**Boy with a Boat, 1910,  
bronze by Joseph Higgins**  
(Courtesy of the Murphy family,  
Photograph Dara McGrath)

3



**Michael Collins, 1922,  
limewood by Joseph Higgins**

(Courtesy of the Murphy family, Photograph  
Dara McGrath)

4



**Nana or Study of an Old Woman, 1910,  
bronze by Joseph Higgins**

(Courtesy of the Murphy family, Photograph  
Dara McGrath)

1 While working as a clerk at Newsom & Sons Tea Merchants, 41 Patrick Street, Higgins attended night classes at the Crawford School of Art, specializing in sculpture modelling and wood carving, winning several national awards between 1910 and 1914.

2 Modelled on his nephew, Charlie, weathered green from the outdoor elements, this work has been loved for generations by visitors to Fitzgerald's Park. The writer, Mary Leland, wrote, 'This little totem was the prayer-tree of every outing to "the park"; we introduced our children to it . . . the piece which spoke child to child and which was never forgotten'.

Following his studies, he worked as an art teacher, travelling the county by bicycle and rail before settling in Youghal, when he got a permanent post there in 1915. While teaching full-time to support his growing family, he continued to create artworks of great quality.

3 A forceful portrait of Michael Collins, in the prime of life, carved from limewood gathered from a neighbour's fallen tree, from sketches that he made of Collins addressing the Great Cork Treaty Meeting in Grand Parade in March 1922. A few months later, Collins was dead, killed at Béal na Bláth.

4 In contrast to the Collins bust, this is a very tender depiction of his aunt, Hannah McIntyre. With his death from tuberculosis at the early age of forty, a great career was cut short and Ireland lost a gifted sculptor, painter and Cork's Arts & Crafts Movement most skilled craftsman and designer. 19 of his sculptures survive, many of which, his son-in-law, the sculptor, Séamus Murphy, had cast in bronze.

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# MILEPOSTS AND THE OLD CORK TO INNISHANNON ROAD



Located just before the Wilton roundabout is a milepost or 'milestone'. This seemingly mundane monument is one of only a few surviving artefacts indicative of Ireland's early nineteenth-century transport history. The cast-iron milepost itself was likely cast in 1829 by the Hive Iron Works, which were located on Hanover Street, Cork. These triangular objects were usually situated on important trade-routes at 1-mile intervals and indicated the distance to the nearest town. The one at Wilton reads 'INNOSH 13' (Innishannon) at its north side, 'CORK 2' on its south side and 'SKIBB CORK' on top, indicating the two towns the road connected.

The establishment of an independent Irish post office in 1783<sup>i</sup> also saw the creation of mail coach services and mail-coach roads to serve key Irish towns. These were turnpike roads, which collected tolls in order to maintain their upkeep by incorporating toll houses at important intervals and a gate or turnpike across the road. This milestone was one of a series erected by the Cork Irish Grand Jury<sup>ii</sup> along the old Cork to Skibbereen mail coach road. These once stood in 1-mile intervals along the Cork to Innishannon road, and were recorded in-situ by Ordinance Survey

Ireland on their historic 25-inch maps, produced between 1837 and 1913<sup>iii</sup>. Most often the position of the posts were recorded as M.P. (Cork<sup>?</sup> / Innishannon<sup>?</sup>), although sometimes the shorthand "M.P Cork 3", indicating only one direction, was also used. Unfortunately, of the 13 mileposts recorded on the OSI maps of the old Cork to Innishannon road only three remain today.

Mail-coach services of the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were operated primarily by either jaunting-cars or post-chaise, which were later replaced with stagecoaches. Both stagecoach and post-chaise are named as such as the horses drawing them needed to be changed at stations or 'posts' along the road – leading to the necessary creation of inns and services along main trade roads. The mileposts would have served as important and welcome indicators for weary coach drivers on how their journey was progressing. While easily overlooked, these small monuments played a key role in the visual make-up of Ireland's early transport history and highlight the importance of one of the trade roads which made Cork such an important and prosperous city during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, laying the groundwork for the modern city that we recognise today.



## SOURCES

<sup>i</sup> Colin Rynne

<sup>ii</sup> Colin Rynne, *Industrial Ireland 1750 – 1930: An Archaeology* (2015), p.322

<sup>iii</sup> Ordinance Survey of Ireland website



# BLACKPOOL'S SILVER SCREEN



Long before the Reel Picture opened in 2004, Blackpool had its very own cinema on the Watercourse Road.

The highs and lows it experienced read like the plot of a film in its own right. So, get your popcorn, sit back and let's take a look at some of the drama.

The Grand Opening fell October 24th 1920 and the main feature was "Sporting Life", a six-reel special. Also, showing was a Charlie Chaplin comedy, "The Masked Rider" and "Irish Scenery" featuring faraway (and possibly never to be visited) Wicklow and Wexford. All greeted with loud and frequent applause throughout the performance.

The new cinema was advertised as "comfortably appointed with luxurious seats", but after a few short years, it was closed by the city for not adhering to the most basic standards required.

Revamped and reopened as the 'Lido', it resumed its place among Cork's Picturedromes in 1931 and once again proved a runaway hit. Such a hit that it staged professional boxing in 1935.

Cinemas were seen as lucrative targets and the Lido was hit several times by real life gangsters. In 1937, the office door was busted in and a treasure trove of stolen farthings were later recovered in a farmer's field in Rathpeacon.

Arriving home one night in 1941, long-suffering manager Ed Coghlan, was pounced upon and robbed of £10 takings. Slightly injured on the head, Ed still gave chase to no avail.

Known as 'the Shadow', Ed was notorious himself for appearing out of nowhere to nab customers attempting to slip from the cheap seats into more expensive ones.

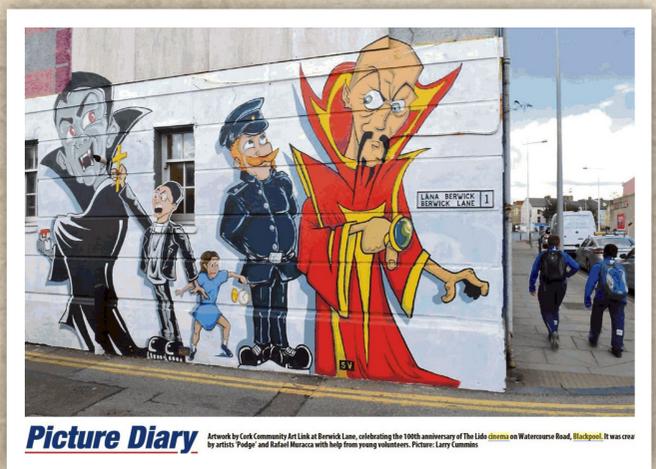
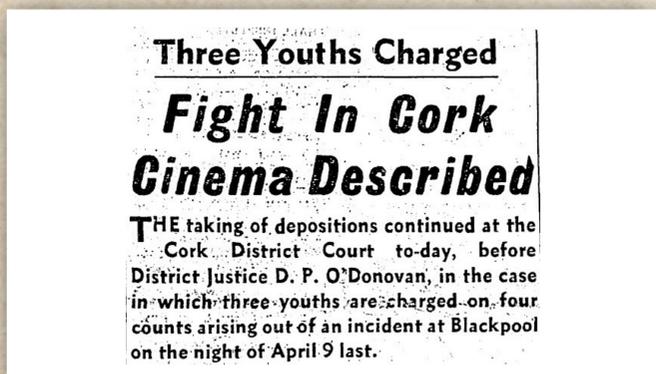
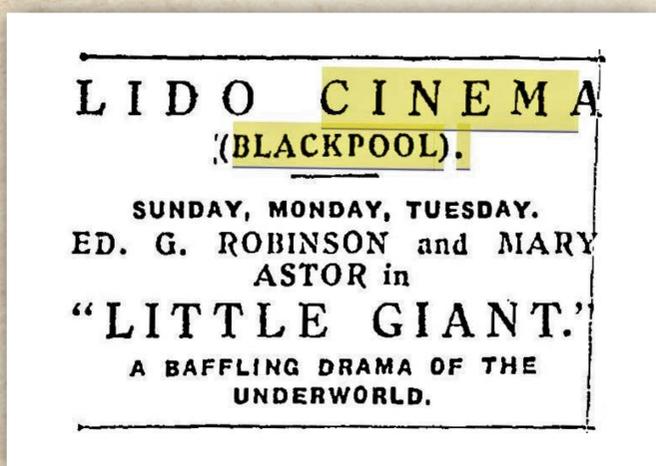
Often witness to scenes of riotous enjoyment, matters got of hand at the Lido in 1949 when a pair of brothers were arrested for a disturbance. Says a Guard to the Court, "hardly a night passes without the Station being rung up about some trouble".

Midnight at the Lost and Found: "1960, near the Lido Cinema, lady's false teeth". "1963, a complete set of Mini-Motor tools".

The bottom of what was usually a jolly curve was hit in May 1962 when a knife fight broke out resulting in GBH charges. It was all Ed needed and he only weeks from retirement. A boy from Spangle Hill and Mrs. Coghlan provided some identifying Descriptors: ... "a dirty white gaberdine coat" ... "hair dishevelled" ... "heavy feed of drink" ... "wide army canvass belt with a brass buckle" ...

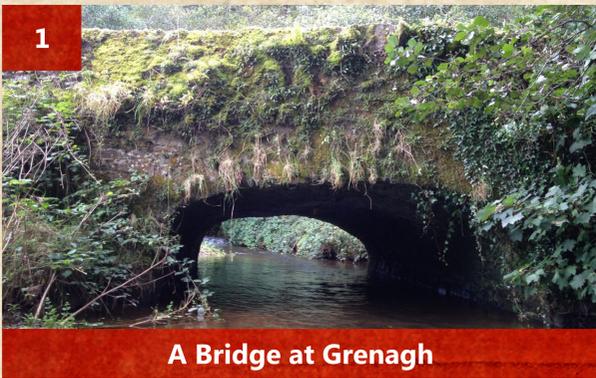
Gary Cooper's 'Good Sam' was the last Lido picture show and in a plush revamp, the cinema was renamed first the 'Palladium' and then the 'Princess'. But the curtain finally began its slow descent in June 1963 when 'disastrously' the balcony was found ablaze after a Saturday night screening.

More potent again was the arrival of the Television Age, and the closing credits finished rolling in 1965 on a Blackpool institution that gave so much joy. For many years after, 71 Watercourse Road housed O'Meara Camping and more recently has operated as an Art Collective.

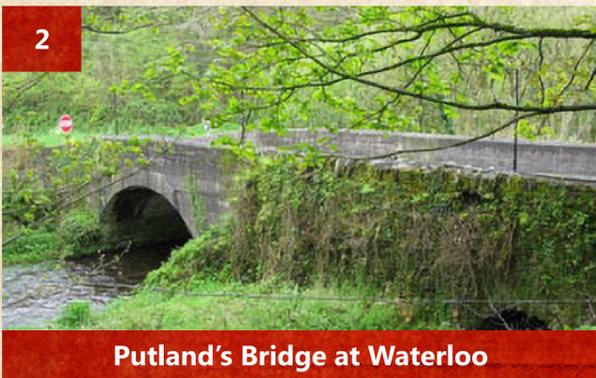


# CROSSING POINTS

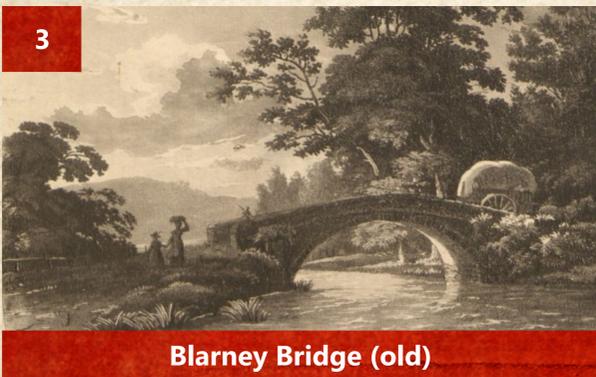
## SOME BLARNEY BRIDGES



1 Way up near the Dairygold complex at Grenagh is one of the most picturesque of the bridges that cross Blarney's rivers. It has an earlier feel about it than those of the railway era with its crooked arch, venerable moss and less geometrically cut limestone.



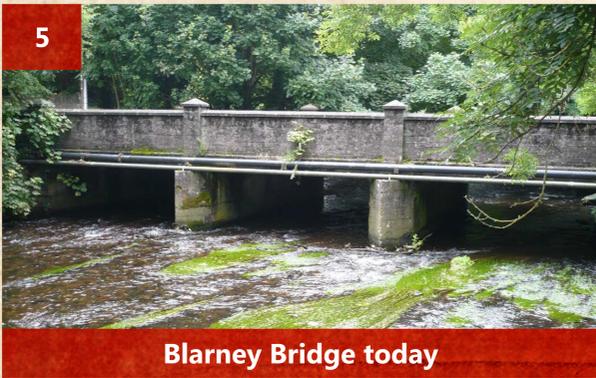
2 Putland's Bridge at Waterloo was built between 1812 and 1815 and is the first bridge named on the original 1840 Ordnance Survey maps. Its construction is a testament to the Putland family and their hard working tenantry whose rents helped pay for it.



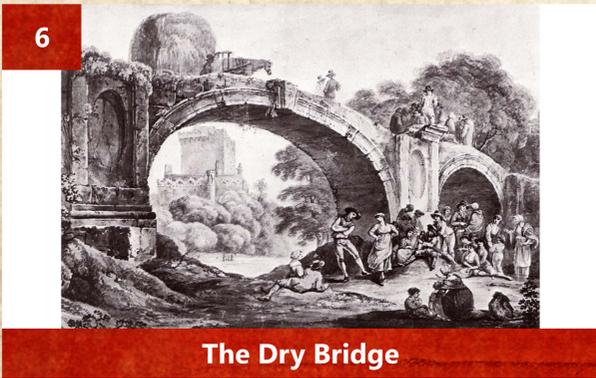
3 How about this for a rustic scene? Blarney Bridge, at the corner of the Square, was first erected in 1790 "by public subscription" and was of one arch. This illustration dates from 1811.



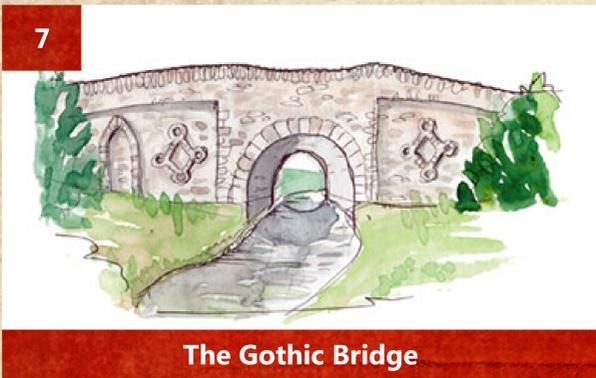
4 The Great Flood of 1948 destroyed it (and much more besides) and a temporary wickerwork structure was put in place until the present bridge was built. 5 This was done in plain concrete blockwork the like of which can also be seen at Healy's Bridge and along the Station Road.



6 Predating both though, was the 'Dry Bridge' which stood just beyond today's Blarney Bridge. It was built way back in 1756 when the industrial village was evolving. It was regarded as "a handsome structure with three arches". But the river was never diverted under it as intended, famously leaving Blarney with "a bridge without a river, and a river without a bridge". It did prove to have its uses. A woman living at the Gate Lodge kept her hens under it before it was dismantled. The site was filled in and levelled after the flood of 1948.

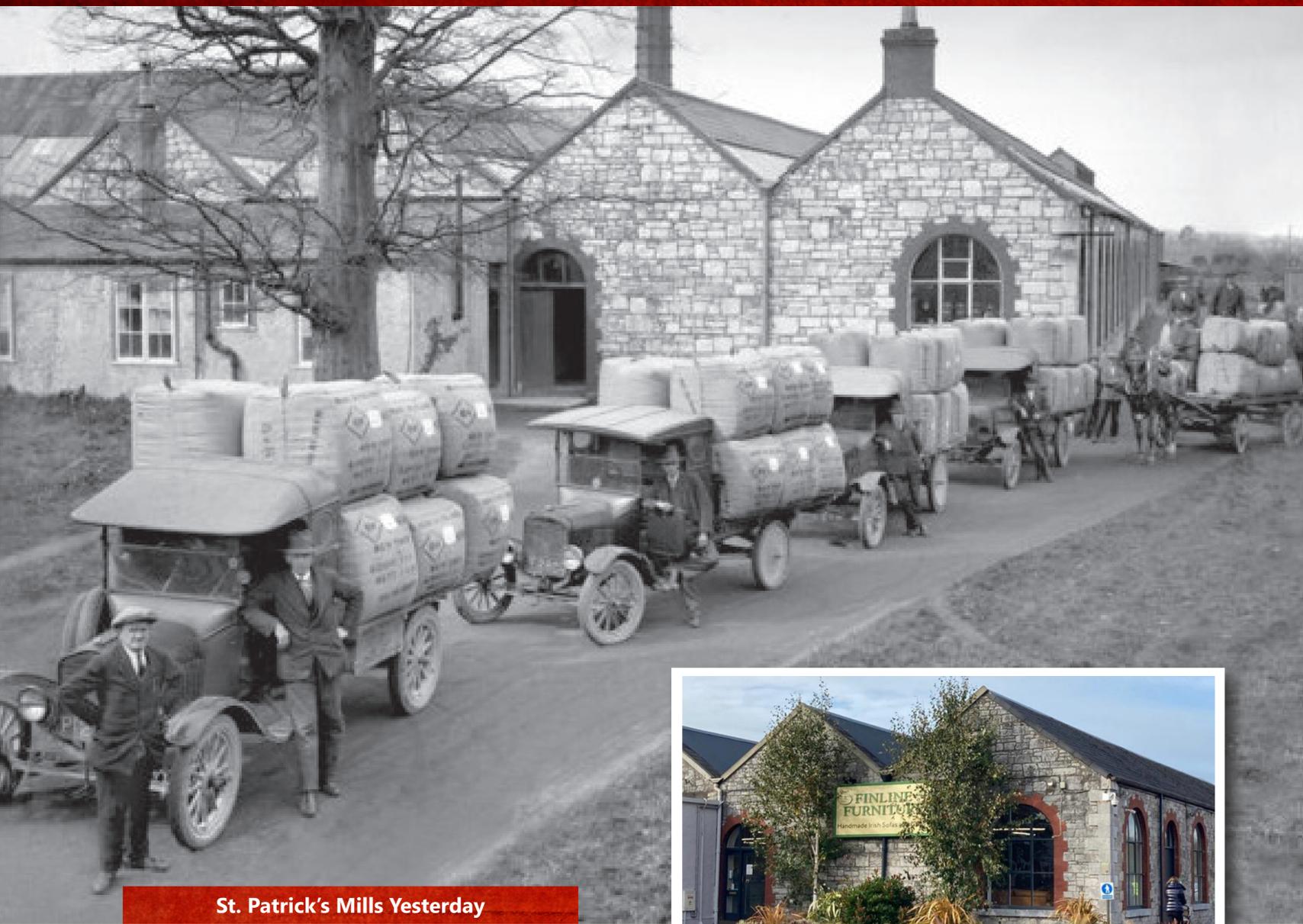


7 All of the above relate to the River Martin but the Gothic Bridge, near the playground, spans the Blarney River. This stream descends from the Whitechurch direction and was also known as the Comane and the Whey. Here is a stylised depiction of the Gothic Bridge with its decorative brick work.



# DOUGLAS

## AN INDUSTRIAL VILLAGE



St. Patrick's Mills Yesterday

Douglas developed as a suburban area in the 18th and early 19th centuries and was noted for a high concentration of 'big houses'. The oldest was built in 1627 by Morris Ronayne and demolished in 1969. The original inscribed fireplace was moved to Blackrock Castle.

The area began to develop as a wider urban settlement with the opening of the "Douglas factory" in 1726. In August 1755 this was reported to be the property of Messrs. Perry, Carleton and Co. with 100 looms operational. The mills produced sail-cloth and supplied sails to the Royal Navy among other clients.



Fancy Worsted Suitings from Morroghs

The Besnards, acquired the Mills by 1783 and installed the first powered spindles in Ireland along with skilled workers from Ulster and Scotland. In addition to those working in the mill workers, over 1,000 spinners worked from their houses, and there were hacklers, bleachers and labourers tasked with preparing raw material in Douglas village.

Further textile mills opened in the 19th century, including an additional Besnard-owned scutching mill 1806, Lane's Corn and Hemp Mills 1845 O'Brien Brothers 1882 (St Patrick's



St. Patrick's Mills Today

Woollen Mills), Donnybrook Mills 1866 (later known as Morroghs Woollen Mills) 1889 and Conroy's Rope and Twine Mills 1892.

Most of the mills ceased operating in the early 20th century, although St. Patrick's and Donnybrook continued until the 1970s. Some of the houses built for the mill workers are still in existence, including the terrace near the junction of the Grange Road and Donnybrook Hill.

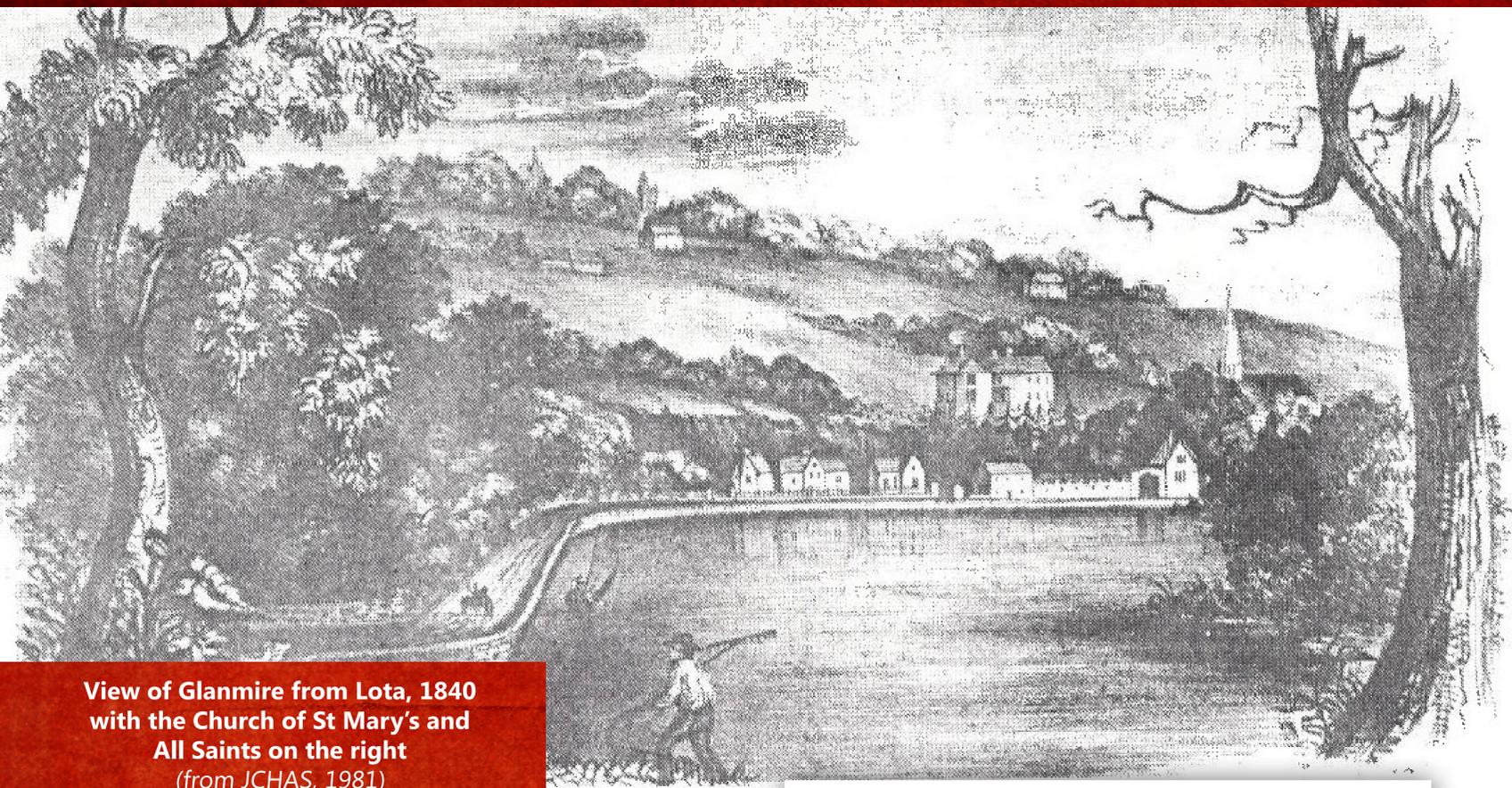
Other large businesses of the past included an Osiery (willow cultivation for basket making) beside Conroy's Mills (now Galway's Lane), two large brick manufacturers which straddled the nearby estuary, the Ravensdale Flour Mill, and the Woodville Flour Mill which produced sea biscuits and ship bread.

In 1898, the Cork Electric Tramways and Lighting Company built a route from Cork City to Douglas. This operated until 1932 when it was replaced by a bus service.

In the second half of the twentieth century, the circle completed as Douglas became a dormer suburb of the city. New housing was built and the area between Douglas and the city became built-up. Schools, shopping centres, cinemas and other amenities developed to serve the growing population.

# GLANMIRE

## SARAH CURRAN - A SECOND CHANCE AT LOVE IN GLANMIRE



View of Glanmire from Lota, 1840  
with the Church of St Mary's and  
All Saints on the right  
(from JCHAS, 1981)

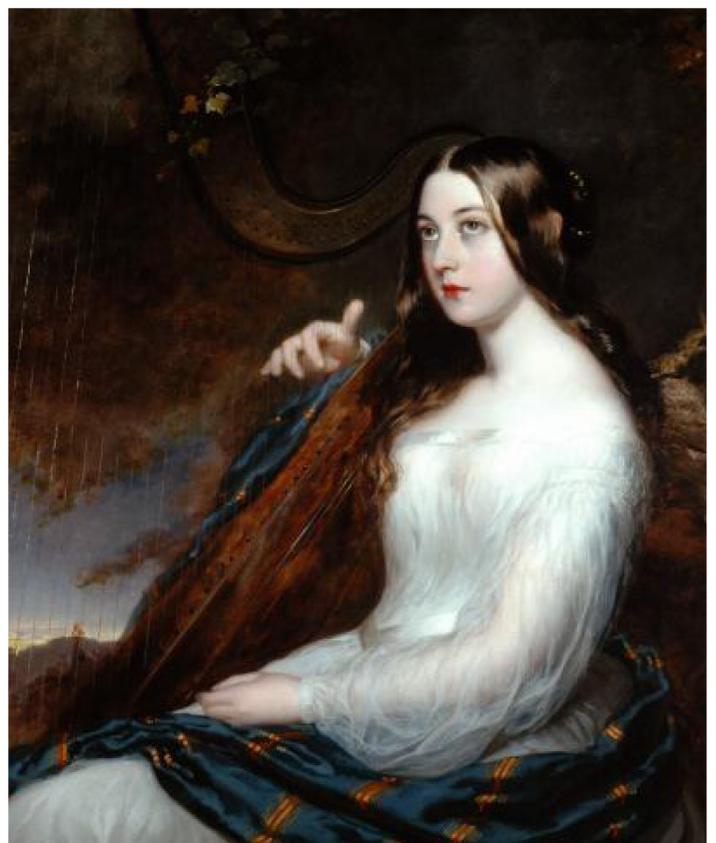
Though this drawing is dated 1840, it is likely that the view had not changed much since 1805 when Sarah Curran married Captain Robert Henry Sturgeon in the Church of St Mary's and All Saints on 24th November 1805.

In 1785, the parishes of Rathcooney, Caherlag and Little Island were united under the title of the Union of Rathcooney and the new church at Glanmire was consecrated in October 1786. It was only during the Bicentenary Rededication Service on 24 October 1986, that this church was finally given the name of Church of St Mary's and All Saints. The church has six stained glass windows, some dedicated to the memory of former Glanmire residents.

Sarah Curran is remembered for her tragic love affair with the United Irishman, Robert Emmet, leader of the Irish Rebellion of 1803. Following the failure of the rebellion, Emmet was hanged, drawn and quartered. When love letters from Sarah to Emmet were discovered and their secret engagement exposed, her father expelled her from the family home. She fled to Cork where she took refuge with the Penrose family at Woodhill in Montenotte. On her wedding day in Glanmire, Cooper Penrose gave her away. The marriage was short-lived as Sarah died only three years later in 1808. Poets and artists were inspired by Sarah's story including her friend, Thomas Moore, who wrote *'She is far from the land about her'*.

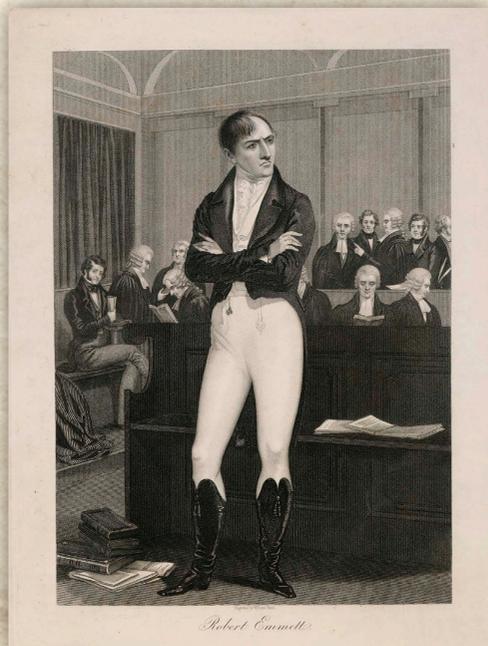
*'She is far from the land where her young  
hero sleeps,  
And lovers are round her, sighing;  
But coldly she turns from their gaze, and  
weeps,  
For her heart in his grave is lying.'*

(from Thomas Moore's Irish Melodies, vol. 4)



Sarah Curran by William Beechey, c1805  
(Creative Commons Images)

The artist, William Beechey, painted this romanticized depiction of Sarah as Hibernia, playing the harp, the national symbol of Ireland.



Robert Emmet in Court  
(during his trial in 1803)  
Engraving by William Read  
(National Gallery of Ireland Creative  
Commons Images)

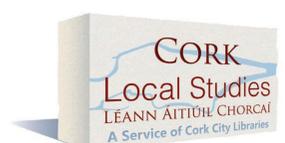
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# THE WATER TOWER IN KNOCKNAHEENY

**YOU'VE SURELY NOTICED IT ?  
PLEASE DON'T SAY YOU HAVEN'T !**



**1968:** Plans first revealed in the City Hall. Cllr. Gerald Goldberg calls it "futuristic" and says it "will fit into the landscape".

Estimated cost: £58,200 (€73,900). Estimated capacity: 400,000 gallons (1,800 m<sup>3</sup>). It was "all water" November. The Corporation also discussed proposals for two new swimming pools.

**1971:** The engineering consultants are Malachy, Walsh & Partners and the design is inspired by a beautifully proportioned tower in the market complex in Caen, France. Contractors, Bowen and Mullally & Co., begin work in June.

**1972:** Fifteen months later, a landmark visible from miles around is born standing 80 feet high (24½ metres). Final cost: £73,896 (€94,000). The city's daily water usage is 9.3 million gallons (42,200 m<sup>3</sup>) predicted to rise to 13 million (59,100 m<sup>3</sup>) by 1976.

**1978:** A landmark is right - Evening Echo, Jan 4: "For Sale: Fiat 600, driving well. - Kilmore Road Lr., Knocknaheeny (near water tower)".

**1993:** Cork Examiner, Nov 1: "Gardaí in Gurrabraher investigating the theft of a car



from near Union Quay found it burnt out near the water tower in Knocknaheeny last night".

**2010:** Cllr. Tony Fitzgerald leads a charge to refurbish and floodlight an "iconic feature" and enhance the image of the northside. The "energy efficient" revamp costs the City €43,000 and the green illumination can be witnessed from dusk to 1 am.

**2017:** Not so on St. Patrick's Day 2017 though. Buildings across the globe were going green – the London Eye, Empire State Building, Eiffel Tower. But Irish Water were not planning to update the lighting.

**2019:** The City Boundary shoots miles out to encompass fine dairy farms from which the tower is visible. The sod is turned on a €40m upgrade for the Lee Road Waterworks. The water treated on the Lee Road is pumped to reservoirs in Shankiel, Hollyhill, Churchfield in addition to the Rezza. These serve the northside and city centre. Southside districts get theirs from Inniscarra.

The future looks wet!

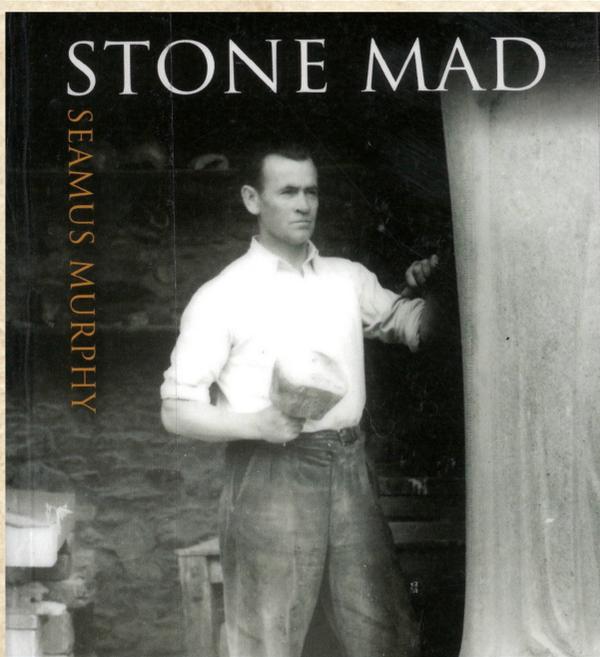


# MAYFIELD

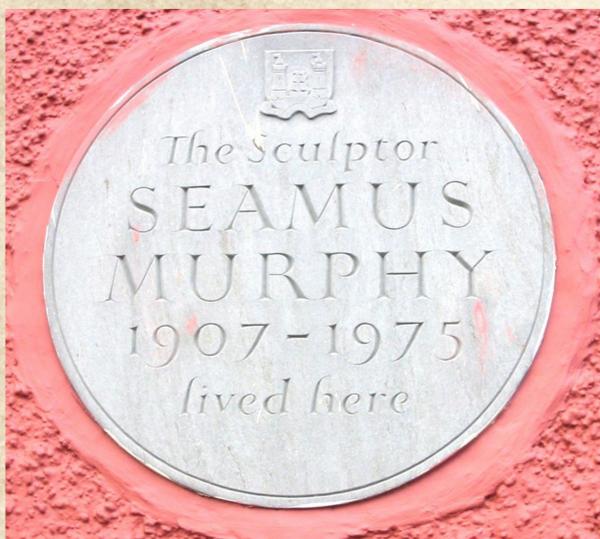
## DANIEL CORKERY AND HIS PUPILS FRANK O'CONNOR AND SEAMUS MURPHY



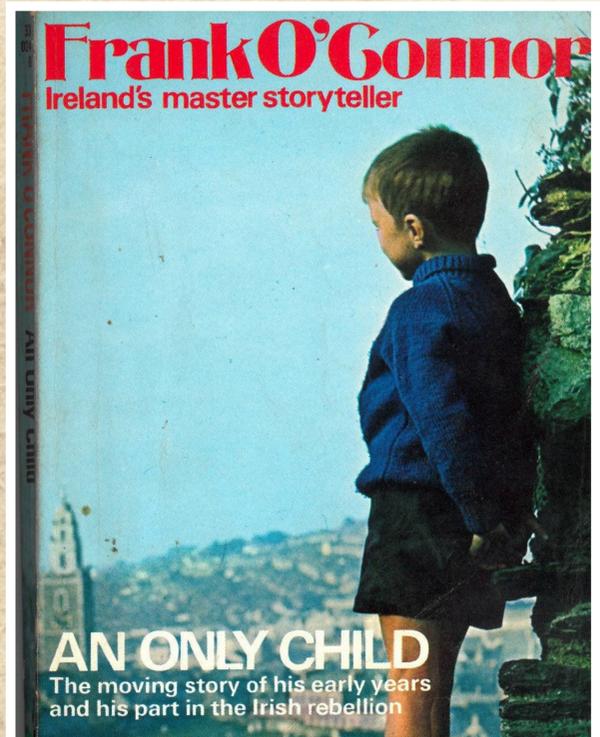
Daniel Corkery, Bronze,  
by Séamus Murphy  
(Courtesy of the Murphy Family,  
Photograph Dara McGrath)



Séamus Murphy's autobiography *Stone Mad*, published in 1950, became a bestseller and was voted Cork's favourite book in 2013.



Séamus Murphy Plaque at 149  
Ballyhooley Road.



An Only Child by Frank O'Connor

Two of Cork's finest talents of the 20th century, the writer **Frank O'Connor** and sculptor **Séamus Murphy** attended the two-roomed overcrowded St Patrick's National School (St Pa's) at St Luke's Cross, where they were pupils of another great Cork talent, the writer **Daniel Corkery**, who had taken up a teaching post there in 1913.

Corkery encouraged the potential he saw in both pupils. O'Connor and Murphy later paid tribute to the major influence that Corkery played in their early lives. O'Connor wrote that he had looked on him as 'a substitute father' and hero figure and Murphy recalled Corkery's encouragement of his artistic talent when they went sketching together after school. At Corkery's urging, Murphy enrolled at the Crawford School of Art where he studied at night while serving his apprenticeship with a master stone-carver in Blackpool. His first portrait bust in 1936 was of his former teacher, Daniel Corkery.

**Frank O'Connor (1903-66) – 'The Dreamer of Harrington Square'**. The Frank O'Connor Library, Mayfield was named in honour of this local writer, who lived at 8 Harrington Square, near Dillon's Cross. Born Michael O'Donovan, he adopted the pseudonym Frank O'Connor to retain his independence as a writer, while working as a librarian in Cork and other parts of the country. His literary career spanned four decades from 1922-1966, during which he received international acclaim for his short story collections and memoirs.

In *An Only Child*, published in 1961, O'Connor recounted his childhood days in Dillon's Cross, creating a vivid depiction of Cork working-class life in the early twentieth century.

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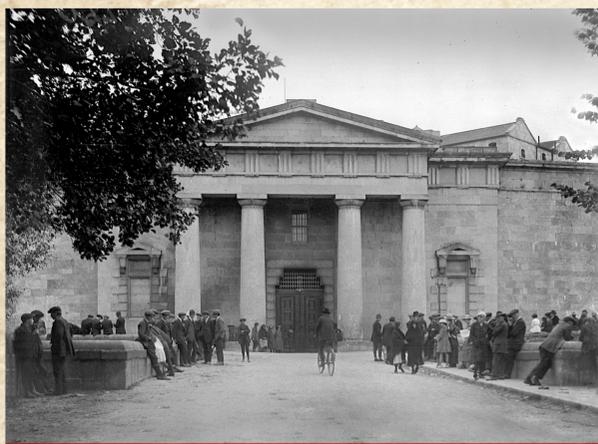
# JOE MURPHY

## ‘THE BOY FROM POULADUFF’



JOSEPH MURPHY.  
*Who gave his young life for Ireland  
in Cork Gaol on 25th October 1920  
after 76 days fast.*  
D I D

**Memorial Card of Joseph Murphy  
(18 May 1895-25 October 1920)**  
(Courtesy of Cork Public Museum, Cork)



**The scene outside Cork Gaol, during the  
Hunger Strikes, October 1920.**  
(Courtesy of Irish Examiner Archives)



**From Freeman's Journal,  
26 October 1920**



**JOE MURPHY HOUSE, Ballypnehane**  
(from Ballypnehane Heritage Hub)

When Joe Murphy was still a small boy, his parents brought him back from America, (where they had emigrated in 1891) to live in Cork. Settling in Pouladuff Road, young Joe attended Togher National School and played hurling with Old Plunketts club in Togher.

At age of 22 in 1917, Joe Murphy joined the Irish Volunteers. On the night of 15 July 1920, he was imprisoned in Cork Gaol and charged with possession of explosives. He and more than sixty of his fellow prisoners – many held without trial - started a hunger strike on 11 August 1920, demanding to be released. They were joined the following day by the Lord Mayor of Cork, Terence MacSwiney. After ten days all but eleven were sent to other prisons around Ireland and Britain, with MacSwiney sent to Brixton Prison.

The national and international media reported on the struggles of the hunger strikers and each day large crowds would gather outside Cork Gaol for news, many reciting the rosary or singing ‘Faith of our Fathers’. Messages were sent in semaphore (visual signalling) from the windows of the prison hospital where the hunger strikers were. The question most often asked by the men within was “How is Terry Mac?” IRA signallers outside replied in Morse Code giving the latest news from Brixton Prison.

On 25 October 1920, after fasting for 76 days, the 25-year-old Joe Murphy died within hours of the passing of Terence MacSwiney in Brixton Prison. They were buried near each other in the Republican Plot in St Finbarr’s Cemetery.

In the late 1940s Cork City Council built a large housing estate at Ballypnehane with most of the roads in the area named after well-known figures from the Irish War of Independence. One of these roads is named after Joe Murphy. With Joe Murphy Road and Joe Murphy House, located at the junction of Pouladuff Road and Vicar’s Road, Ballypnehane has not forgotten its native son.

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