

The next house on the same side, Ashfield, was occupied by the Protestant clergy during the eighteenth century. In the early part of the last century it was the home of Sir William Cusac Smith, Baron of the Exchequer and from 1841 of the Tottenham Family who continued to reside there down to 1913. After this it was occupied by the Brooks of Brooks Thomas Ltd. down to about fifty years ago when the estate was divided up and houses built along the main road. A new road was later built along the side of the house and named Brookvale after the last occupants.

Lower Dodder Road

To the east of Pearse Bridge is the lower Dodder Road, following the course of the Dodder downstream to Orwell Bridge. Facing an open green space on this road is a fine entrance gateway, built in the form of a triumphal arch and originally leading to Rathfarnham Castle. The erection of this gateway is attributed to Henry Loftus, Earl of Ely from 1769 to 1783 who also was responsible for the classical work at the castle itself. This is named “the new gate” on Frizell’s map of 1779. After the division of the estate in 1913 this became the entrance to the Castle Golf Club but it was later abandoned in favour of the more direct Woodside Drive.



Lord Ely's Gate was erected around 1770.

RATHFARNHAM ROADS

Topographical notes on Rathfarnham and the adjacent hills,
including Two Rock and Three Rock Mountains, Kilmashogue,
Tibradden, Killakee, Cruagh, Glencullen and Glendoo.

by

PATRICK HEALY

South Dublin Libraries — APRIL 2005

The material in this book was written, rewritten and updated in the period 1960 - 1985
Minimal editing has been carried out to reflect more recent developments and changes.

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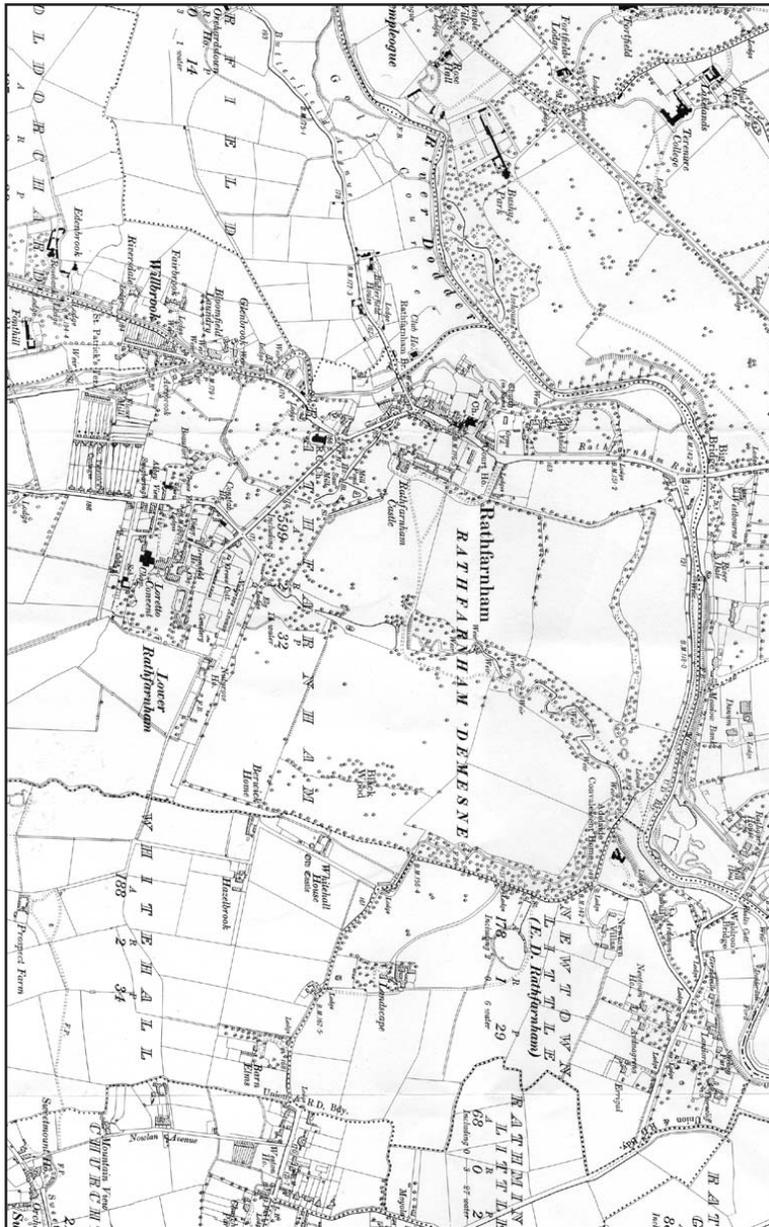
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In 1912 when the main drainage scheme was being laid to Rathfarnham, a deep cutting was made under the road at this point. At a depth of 23ft below the road level a stone causeway was uncovered nine feet wide and built of great blocks crossing the course of the river. Cut into the surface of the stone were a number of deep parallel grooves, as from the action of wheeled traffic over a long period. This was evidence for the existence here of a busy thoroughfare before the construction of the earliest bridge.

The low-lying fields on the west side of the road, just beside the bridge were formerly occupied by a mill pond and extensive mill buildings. On a map by Frizell dated 1779 it is called the "Widow Clifford's mill and mill holding" and in 1843 it is named the "Ely Cloth Factory." It was then owned by a Mr. Murray but passed in 1850 into the hands of Mr. Nickson, who converted it into a flour mill. His family continued in occupation until 1875 when John Lennox took over. In 1880 this mill closed down, the buildings were demolished and not a trace of it now remains.



Ashfield, later known as Brookvale is an 18th Century Glebe House.



Introduction

by Mayor Robert Dowds

As Mayor of South Dublin, and as a History graduate, it is a real pleasure to introduce this publication. In this work Paddy Healy presents the results of his meticulous labours as a local historian. He illuminates for all, many aspects of the history of Rathfarnham and surrounding areas. Paddy Healy's work is welcome in its own right as a major contribution to the growing body of local history in Ireland. However, it is also welcome as it provides the opportunity for both the established and newer communities in the Rathfarnham and in South Dublin to delve into their great historical heritage. It is my earnest hope that people of all ages in Rathfarnham area and in South Dublin will be enriched by what Paddy Healy has presented to us.

I would like to thank the late Paddy Healy's brother, Peter for making Paddy's work available to one and all. What a wonderful legacy Paddy Healy has left us in this book and in his other writings.

Lastly I must give credit to Kieran Swords of Tallaght Library and to all others who are making Paddy Healy's work available to the public.

Robert Dowds

*Mayor, South Dublin County
April 2005*



The Crest or Coat of Arms of South Dublin County reflects the ancient history of the area, its geographic features and the work of the Council.

The motto "Ag seo ár gCúram – This we hold in Trust" is an admonition to value, to preserve and to develop the economic, social, environmental, cultural and heritage assets of the area both for our own time and for future generations.



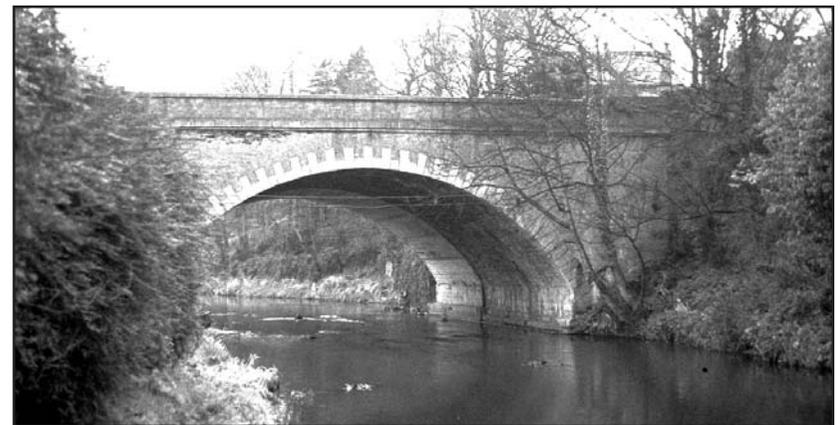
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(ii)

The Rathfarnham Road

The road to Rathfarnham according to many writers follows the same route as the Slighe Chualann, the ancient highway, which in the time of St. Patrick was used by travellers from Dublin to Wicklow and Wexford. This road is believed to have crossed the Dodder at the Big Bridge, now Pearse Bridge, and re-crossed it again near Oldbawn, an unnecessarily inconvenient route, considering that a road through Templeogue to Oldbawn would not necessitate a crossing at all. The first record of a bridge being built here was in 1381 and in 1652 it was described by Boate in his *Natural History* as a wooden bridge which “though it be high and strong nevertheless hath several times been quite broke and carried away through the violence of sudden floods”. After three bridges had been demolished by the river, between 1728 and 1765, the present structure of one stone arch was erected in the latter year. This was widened on the west side in 1953 when it was renamed in commemoration of the brothers Pearse.



Pearse Bridge, Rathfarnham

Author's Preface



HIS booklet is not primarily intended either for the historian or for the tourist although both may find much of interest within its cover. It is hoped, however that it will prove a convenient source of information to that large body of citizens who are already familiar with the Dublin Hills and who are to be seen on Sundays and holidays travelling the roads and laneways and rambling over high summits and mountain tracks.

The writer, at an early age came under the spell of the mountains and spent many pleasant years exploring this region. A thirst for information sent him to the local and county histories, the archaeological and historical literature and to unpublished material from various sources. This volume which deals only with the area directly accessible from Rathfarnham is the result of twenty five years of observation and investigation.

The main sources of information used were Handcock's *The History and Antiquities of Tallaght*, D'Alton's and Ball's county histories and that masterpiece of decriptive writing and local information, Joyce's "Neighbourhood of Dublin". Periodicals consulted were mainly the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, the *Dublin Historical Record* and *Proceedings of the Royal Irish Academy*. Information was obtained also from old guide books and topographical works and from old newspapers, maps and directories. As far as possible the material from these sources was verified on the ground and every effort was made to ensure the accuracy of local information.



Six inch Ordnance Survey map of Rathfarnham in 1843

Acknowledgements



THANKS are due to a number of people. Firstly, to the late Paddy Healy for his meticulous research, his informative writings and his important collection of slides and photographs which have formed this book. Initial access to Paddy's collection of manuscripts and slides was graciously facilitated and supported by a number of people, most notably Michael Fewer and Con Manning. Síle Coleman of the County Library in Tallaght was a great support in preparing the book for publication. John McAleer is responsible for the professional design and layout of the book.

The greatest debt is owed to Peter Healy who in the sharing nature of his late brother Paddy, gave access to Paddy's papers so that others could share Paddy's great knowledge and deep insights.

Rob Goodbody and the Irish Times kindly granted permission to reproduce Paddy Healy — An Appreciation.

Mrs Monica O'Connor, Mrs Kitty Keating and Mr. Pat Cooke of the Pearse Museum kindly permitted images to be used in the book. The Council of trustees of the National Library permitted the reproduction of Frizell's Map of Rathfarnham.

Details were checked with and assistance sought from a number of people who most willingly assisted: Pat Sweeney, Sean Lawless, Carol Hawkins, Maurice Bryan, Dr. Christopher Moriarty, Mary Keenan, Tommy Cowzer. Gerard Lyne, Elizabeth M. Kirwan and Bernard Devaney of the National Library of Ireland were most helpful,

If anyone's name has unwittingly been omitted, please accept an apology and a big thank you for your assistance.

Thank you all — Go raibh míle maith agaibh go léir

Chapter 1

Rathfarnham Road, Village and Castle



THE history of Rathfarnham in so far as we can learn from existing records, began at the time of the Anglo-Norman invasion when in 1199 these lands were granted to Milo le Bret. The name Rathfarnham suggests that a habitation existed before that time but of those who dwelt therein we know nothing. They left no remains of pre-historic burial places, no early churches and no records preserved in the annals.

Even during the centuries immediately following the invasion no event of great importance occurred. The lands were, to some extent, protected from the Irish neighbours by the existence, on the southern side, of the extensive Royal Forest of Glenree, with its inevitable wardens. It was not until this great deer park was overrun by the Clan O'Toole in the fourteenth century that Rathfarnham was exposed to the danger of attack.

There was much activity here during the stormy period of the seventeenth century but early in the following century, gentlemen's residences were being erected in the vicinity. At this period also, with the harnessing of the waters of the Owendoher and other rivers a great industrial drive began, largely in the production of paper. During the early part of the last century a number of these mills changed over to the manufacture of woollen and cotton goods and later still many were converted into flour mills. The introduction of the steam engine superseded the use of water power and as the old buildings fell into disrepair they were in most cases not replaced.

4 Butterfield Avenue	51
Old Orchard House	53
Butterfield House	54
Washington House and Orchardstown House	56
5 Rathfarnham to Whitechurch and Kilmashogue	57
Whitechurch Road	60
Taylor's Lane	61
6 Ballyboden Road	65
7 Rockbrook to Cruagh	73
8 Taylor's Lane to Whitechurch and Kilmashogue	77
Larch Hill	83
Calbeck Castle	85
Kelly's Glen	86
9 Cruagh to Glendoo and Glencullen	89
Tibradden Mountain	91
Glencullen Valley	94
10 Ticknock, The Two Rock Mountain, The Tree Rock Mountain, Barnacullia and Ballyedmonduff	105
Ticknock	107
Three Rock Mountain	109
Barnacullia	110
11 Firhouse Road	117
Bibliography	122
Appendix I — Frizell's Map of Rathfarnham 1779	

Paddy Healy — An Appreciation



ADDY Healy, archaeologist, local historian and friend, has died after a long life devoted to Ireland's past. Through his work on archaeological excavations in Dublin city and elsewhere, his meticulous collection of information, his support of various societies and his encouragement to younger generations, his influence has been widespread and invaluable.

Born in Canada in 1916 of Irish emigrant parents, Paddy moved with his family to Dublin at the age of five. After schooling in Haddington Road and Marino, he studied building construction in Bolton Street College, where his subjects included land surveying and technical drawing; both were to prove important in his later career. After graduation he worked as a silkscreen printer in Modern Display Artists while he took night classes under Sean Keating at the National College of Art.

During the Emergency Paddy served in the Army, then worked as a painter and decorator for a time. An important change came in 1949 when he joined the staff of the Land Commission as a surveyor. After eight years he moved to the Forestry Division, again as a surveyor.

In 1952 he began to attend Professor Seán P. Ó Riordáin's lectures in archaeology in University College Dublin as an occasional student. He joined the UCD Archaeological Society, becoming its vice-president, and his contact with the college led him to work as part of Prof. Ó Riordáin's team on the excavation of the Rath of the Synods at Tara during his annual holidays. In 1967 he joined Breandán Ó Riordáin's team on the second excavation at High Street in Dublin. At this stage Paddy made a major decision to abandon the security of his job with the Forestry Division to work full-time on archaeological excavations. He went on to work on excavations at Winetavern Street in 1969, Christchurch Place between 1972 and 1979, and from 1976 in Fishamble Street.

When the work on the Wood Quay site became controversial, Paddy stood firmly on the side of archaeology. His quiet but determined manner was a great source of encouragement to his colleagues as he sat in on the site, and he was the author of a poem written about the controversy and sold to raise funds for the campaign.

During the 1970s Paddy Healy acted as a contract archaeologist providing advice and working on excavations. Most importantly, he provided lists of monuments and sites of archaeological interest in Co. Dublin in the mid-1970s to assist in the preparation of the County Development Plan and the Action Area Plans which preceded the development of the western new towns of Tallaght, Lucan/Clondalkin and Blanchardstown.

Over the years he wrote papers and articles for a variety of publications, including several in which he described for the first time monuments and artefacts which he had discovered. Some of these were early grave slabs from the Rathdown area of south Dublin and north Wicklow and these became the topic of his MA thesis presented to NUI Galway under the supervision of Professor Etienne Rynne.

Paddy, in turn, was the subject of a publication when 29 colleagues and friends contributed papers in his honour for publication in a book, *Dublin and Beyond the Pale*, edited by Con Manning.

Among the organisations to benefit greatly from his membership were the Old Dublin Society, the Royal Society of Antiquaries, the Dublin Archaeological Society, Friends of Medieval Dublin, the Irish Architectural Archive and the Rathmichael Historical Society.

Paddy Healy was laid to rest on December 11th last in the cemetery at Mount Venus in the Dublin Mountains, close to historical and archaeological sites that he had investigated and overlooking the city which he had loved so much.

R.G. *Irish Times Monday 21st of January 2001*

Contents

Introduction by Mayor Robert Dowds	i
Author's Preface	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Paddy Healy — An Appreciation	v
Contents	vii
1 Rathfarnham Road Village and Castle	1
The Rathfarnham Road	3
Lower Dodder Road	6
The Motte and Bailey	7
The Old Graveyard	8
Rathfarnham Castle	11
Rathfarnham Village	16
2 Rathfarnham Lower and Whitehall	19
Nutmog Avenue	21
Whitehall	23
Berwick House	25
Loreto Abbey	26
The Ponds	27
3 Grange Road to Harold's Grange and Taylor's Grange	31
St. Enda's	33
Priory	37
Harold's Grange	42
Marlay	42
Glensouthwell	44
St. Columba's College	47