

### Butterfield House

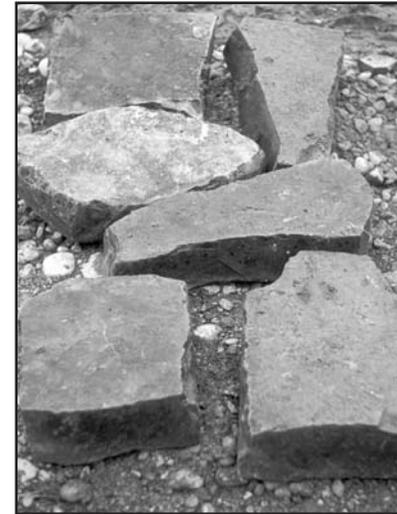
On the opposite side of the road and a short way further on is Butterfield House, identified by most historians as the house occupied by Robert Emmet. In order to avoid being arrested before the rising took place, Emmet rented the house in April 1803 under the name of Robert Ellis and lived here with Dowdall, Hamilton and others. Some of the meetings arranged here were attended by Michael Dwyer and some of his men from Glen Imaal. In charge of the housekeeping was Anne Devlin, whose father Brian Devlin had a dairy farm nearby.

On the night of July 23rd, after the rising had been abandoned, Emmet and his party returned to Butterfield Lane but later in the night moved into Brian Devlin's where they remained for a few days.



Butterfield House in 1977.

The position of the grave was clearly marked on the early editions of the Ordnance Survey maps. It was about midway along the northern boundary of the corner field facing the Fortification, on the north side of the boundary bank and a few yards from it. It was formerly enclosed by a grove of trees, which can be seen in J. J. Reynold's photograph of 1903 but these were cut down about 1928. Some time later the stumps were dug out and the stone slab broken up and thrown on the adjoining bank. The metal plate had already been taken by souvenir hunters.



Fragments of Gertrude Curran's grave slab in 1979.

It was Sarah Curran's desire to be buried here also but to this her father would not agree as he had come in for criticism on the previous occasion for burying his daughter in unconsecrated ground.

In this district nearly every ancient site is associated in tradition with either Sarah Curran or Robert Emmet and it is not surprising therefore to find that this burial place has been suggested as the last resting place of Robert

Emmet. This tradition goes back for well over a century and it is rather surprising that this site was not investigated when the search for Emmet's remains was being made at places a great deal less accessible and no less improbable.

In October 1979 the opportunity offered itself to carry out this investigation. The Priory estate was being developed and heavy machinery moved in to lay the roads and sewers. Mrs. Bernadette Foley of nearby Barton Drive drew attention to the need to carry out

this work before the site was buried for ever under a concrete jungle. With the cooperation of Messrs Gallaghers, the developers, a small group undertook to investigate the site. First the exact location was checked on the original large scale manuscript map in the Ordnance Survey, next the field was carefully chained and the site marked to within a few feet and then a narrow trench 3 feet deep was dug through where the burial should have been. The result was a complete blank. A second and a third trench were cut at intervals until a large area had been investigated without finding any burial, timber, brick or stone.

The developers then offered to investigate further with the excavator and carefully cleared an area of 20 yards long and 10 yards wide to a depth of 4 feet without finding any sign of disturbance. They then deepened this area by another two feet with no better result. All the accounts of the burial state that it was made in a vault and it is therefore surprising and disappointing that no evidence whatever was found and there does not seem to be any obvious explanation for it. I would like at this stage to pay tribute to the interest shown in this work by the staff of Messrs Gallaghers Ltd. especially the foreman Mr. Leslie Black.



The author pictured with spade was part of the team which undertook an archaeological investigation at Priory in 1979 in search of Gertrude Curran's grave.

The fairs of Rathfarnham were formerly held in Butterfield Lane on May 15th, July 10th and October 7th. The former was a cattle fair and that in July for horses and sheep. The fair green was beside the bridge and stretched along the west bank of the Owendoher river but as is the practice throughout the country, the business was not confined to the green but overflowed along the main street and into every lane and alley. At the edge of the green was a lime kiln which is marked on Taylor's map of 1816. Mr. Charles Bunn of Butterfield House owned the lime works here from 1836 to 1848.

### Old Orchard House

On the same side of the avenue is Old Orchard House, one of four already mentioned. This name does not appear before 1845, previous to which there were apparently two houses named Butterfield House. It would appear, however, that in 1836 Old Orchard was named Brasvillanne, which was recorded by the Ordnance Survey that year. It is believed by many that this was the house occupied by Robert Emmet in 1803 but historical evidence does not support this.



Old Orchard House.

Rocque's map of 1760, showing Butterfield Lane.



Priory was occupied by the Curran family down to 1875 and subsequently by the Taylors until 1923. At the beginning of the century the house and gardens were still in good repair but after the Taylor's time the place was neglected. And all that remains of the house are the ruins on the green in Hermitage Estate.



Adjacent to Priory was a mound with a tree growing out of it.

In one of the fields behind Priory was an artificial mound with a tree growing on top of it. There is no information available about this and it may have been a prehistoric burial site. This mound was demolished in 1986 when houses were being built on an adjoining site. An underground passage was exposed which was followed for a considerable way by local children.

### Harold's Grange

Beyond Priory and the Fortification are a number of old residences, Eden, Rathfarnham Park, Highfield Manor and Grange House, and on the other side of the road the well wooded demense of Marlay. All these properties are in the extensive townland of Harold's Grange, which in former times comprised part of the lands of the powerful Harold family. The Harolds were settled here in the thirteenth century and occupied it, first as tenants of St. Mary's Abbey and later of Lord Upper Ossory. They became responsible for the protection of the Pale in the neighbourhood of their home but they were an independant and often lawless family and did not hesitate to use violence against those whom they were expected to protect. In the reign of Henry VIII they had a small thatched castle and a watermill on these lands. Early in the seventeenth century they severed their connection with Harold's Grange but continued to hold Kilmashogue until dispossessed of their rights after 1641.

### Marlay

At the beginning of the eighteenth century many improvements were carried out on the lands of Harold's Grange by Mr. Thomas Taylor. After his death in 1727 the place was occupied by his sons, one of whom, Alderman Thomas Taylor, was Lord Mayor of Dublin in 1750. Soon after his death in 1763 the estate passed to the Right Hon. David La Touche, whose wife was a daughter of Rev. George Marlay, Bishop of Dromore, in whose honour the name of the place was changed to Marlay. The Taylors had built a mansion and laid out ornamental gardens and had enclosed an extensive deer park on the northern slope of Kilmashogue Mountain. The house was enlarged by La Touche in 1781. There was formerly in the grounds a mausoleum and monument to the memory of Elizabeth, Countess

## Chapter 4

### *Butterfield Avenue*



O the southern end of Rathfarnham village, Butterfield Avenue leads to Templeogue and Firhouse. Formerly known as Butterfield Lane, it retained its rural character down to the middle of this century but housing development, road widening and the removal of dangerous bends have now altered it beyond recognition. In this connection it is interesting to note that on the map made by John Rocque in 1760 only 4 houses are shown on the entire length of the avenue. These four houses are still standing. Down to 1912 the only addition to these was a pair of council houses beside the bridge.



Butterfield Lane from *Footprints of Emmet* (1903).

Kilmashogue Hill where remains of it were to be seen in the eighteenth century. This is apparently indicated on Rocque's map of 1760 where the description "old stone wall" is written against a line on the Stackstown side of Kilmashogue.

As far as can be judged from this map, which is not strictly to scale, this line coincides with a stone faced ditch which lies on the east side of the boundary between the townlands of Stackstown and Kilmashogue and which is now within a young forestry plantation. If the identification is correct this must be one of the few remaining portions of the rampart of the Pale.



Portion of the Pale ditch, Kilmashogue.

of Lanesborough, a sister of John David La Touche. This was situated to the south east of the lake, it was in ruins in 1871 and has since been removed. In the first quarter of the present century Marlay was the home of Robert Tedcastle of the well known Dublin business house and for the thirty years prior to its sale had been the property of the Love family. Marlay Demense was purchased by Dublin County Council in 1972 and opened as a fine public park in 1975. The adjoining house named Marlay Grange was erected in 1874 by Hon. Hercules Rowley J.P.



Marlay House today.

## Glensouthwell

Grange Road continues for nearly a mile to skirt the boundary wall of Marlay as far as the cross roads at Taylor's Grange beyond which it terminates at a group of farmhouses where there was formerly an old passage leading to Stackstown. Prior to the development of the M50 motorway, the road to Kilmashogue along College Road, passed the entrance to Glensouthwell which is now known as Danesmoate. Within the grounds is a delightful glen known as Little Dargle, watered by a brook which rises near the Ticknock rifle range. This house was built in the eighteenth century by the Southwell family and in 1787 was the residence of Capt. William Southwell. Throughout the following century it was occupied by the Ponsonbys, down to 1896 and later by Professor Stanley Lane



Glensouthwell, now known as Danesmoate.



Memorial to Seán Doyle, Stackstown.

Sean Doyle was the son of Alderman Peadar S. Doyle of Inchicore. On Sunday morning 19th September 1920, he was assembled with a party of No. 3 and No. 4 Coys and 5th Batt Engineers for a demonstration of the use of home made explosive known as war flour. Many of them were unarmed and when a party of military and police surrounded them and called on them to halt, some surrendered and others escaped over the mountain. About forty prisoners were taken and Volunteer Doyle was shot dead. This was one of the first activities of the newly recruited Black and Tans.

From behind the lands of Glensouthwell and St. Columba's College the ground rises with increasing gradient towards the top of Kilmashogue Mountain. Elrington Ball, in his history of the county, states that the barrier of the Pale ran across the north end of



Cross found on Kilmashogue Mountain.

Nearby is an ancient ice house with its entrance blocked up.

In the chapel is an ancient stone cross which was found about fifty years ago somewhere on the lower slopes of Kilmashogue mountain behind the college. It was brought into the college chapel and has been there ever since. Unfortunately there is no record of the spot where it was found and enquiries have so far failed to elicit any information. This is a great

pity, as it must certainly have come from the site of the ancient church of Kilmashogue, which was mentioned by P.W. Joyce and the location of which is now unknown.

Above the back wall of St. Columba's College is a memorial to Volunteer Sean Doyle, erected on the spot where he was shot in 1920. It is against a low masonry wall at the side of a laneway and bears the following inscription:

In Memory of  
Sean Ua Dubhgaill Volr.  
4th Batt. Engineers I.R.A.  
who was shot at Kilmashogue  
Co Dublin  
19th Sept 1920  
by the armed forces of the  
British Crown  
Aged 19 years  
R.I.P.

Poole, the author of a number of works on Oriental art and numismatics. For many years down to 1946 it was the home of Lieutenant Algernon Gainsford of the Seafort Highlanders.

An ancient monument known as the Brehon's Chair, consisting of three tall slabs about nine feet high enclosing a small square space was located in a field which was visible from College Road. It is now located within the housing development on the site. There was formerly another large slab supported by smaller ones lying to the north east but this was unfortunately destroyed about 1876 by blasting. The existing remains are apparently the portal portion of a dolmen type of tomb and the stones which were removed would have been part of the destroyed chamber. A similar type of portal can be seen on a dolmen at Haroldstown in Co. Carlow.



Brehon's Chair.

Beside the stream in the Little Dargle were the remains of a tall narrow tower of which only one wall composed of one jamb of a doorway with a pointed arch was standing in 1977. This building was about nine feet square and around 1900, the remaining wall with its battlements was about twenty five feet high. A little over a hundred and twenty years ago this tower was in a better state of preservation and was surrounded by the old walls of other buildings from which it has been suggested that this was the site of the original Grange of the Harolds. The remaining portion however was of very light construction and quite unsuitable for a building of that period and location, whether intended for domestic or ecclesiastical use. It was probably built in the eighteenth century for the better enjoyment of the view over Dublin Bay.



Remains of tower at Glensouthwell c.1900 and in 1977.

Beside the house is an octagonal building with a cellar underneath. In 1977 it was filled up with boughs and brushwood to prevent cattle falling through but is said to be elliptical in shape and was apparently an ice house. On the other side of the brook there is a fine arched gateway in cut stone leading into the pasture land.

### St. Columba's College

Next to Glensouthwell is St. Columba's College, a boarding school for Protestant boys which enjoys a well deserved reputation for the high standard of its students. The fine mansion which now forms the front of the college was formerly named Hollypark and was built toward the end of the eighteenth century by Geoffrey Foot of the well known snuff manufacturing family. St. Columba's was founded in 1843 and was at first located at Stackallen House in Co. Meath. In 1849 the college was transferred to this situation and the chapel and other necessary buildings erected. The old house contains some fine panelling, tapestries and antique furniture. In a grove of trees near the tennis court is St. Sabh's holy well about which no information seems to be available. It is in a deep hole faced about with masonry and approached by a flight of steps.



Hollypark is now part of St. Columba's College. (c. 1960).