

Maperath House

The house at Maperath, Dulane, Kells no longer exists. It was demolished in the 1950s. It had been home to the Rowley family and then the Archdale family. It had extensive parkland surrounding the house. Behind the house stood a courtyard of outbuildings and a walled garden, the remains of both which still stand.

In 1318 at the Battle of Faughart Edward Bruce was killed by John Mapas from Drogheda. The Mape family were supposed to be descended from John. The head of the family was called "The Mape". In 1503 The Mape of Maperath was killed by the O'Reilly's in his own castle. In 1598 Mape of Maperath was one of the leading gentlemen of county Meath. Around 1600 Henry Mape of Maperath died and his eldest son, Gerald, was made a ward until he reached his full age. Edward Mape of Maperath was attainted in 1641.

The Rowley family settled in the North of Ireland in the reign of James I. Henry Rowley settled at Warrenstown, Co. Meath in 1630 and his son, Henry settled at Maperath. Henry of Maperath married the daughter of Dr. Moorecroft, archdeacon of Meath but they had no children. The estate at Warrenstown was sold and his other estates went to his eldest daughter. She had married George Fisher of Galtrim and their son, Henry, succeeded to the estates and took the surname Rowley.

Henry married Sarah Johnston and died in 1807. He was succeeded by his son, Thomas Taylor Rowley. In 1798 Thomas married Eliza Toler, niece of the 1st Earl of Norbury. Thomas leased nearby Oakley Park from 1829 to 1833 when he was rebuilding Maperath. A road was constructed between the two houses at this time. In 1837 Maperath was the residence of T. Taylor Rowley. Their son, Henry, firstly married Mary Lucas St. George, and then married Georgina Grady, co heiress to the estates of Standish Grady of Elton, Co. Limerick. Their son, Standish Grady Rowley, born in 1834, inherited Maperath. In 1876 Henry Rowley of Maperath held 684 acres in County Meath.

At some later date the Rowleys sold the house to the Archdalls of Athboy. In 1911 William Stewart Archdall, an engineer born in Co. Fermanagh, lived at Maperath with his family. During the 1930s the house was left vacant after the Archdall sisters had all died. The estate at Maperath was acquired by the Land Commission in the early 1930s. It was demolished in the 1950s.

Mitchelstown House

Mitchelstown House is located at Trim Road, Athboy. Casey and Rowan describe Mitchelstown as a 'handsome three-storey house of late Georgian character' built about 1800. It has a standard plan with a large hall with reception rooms either side.

Ezekiel Hopkins, bishop of Derry, died in 1690. The family acquired lands at Athboy and resided at Athboy Lodge before moving to Mitchelstown House. Francis Hopkins of Newtown, Co. Meath married Anne Tighe of South Hill of the Tighe family of Mitchelstown, Co. Westmeath. Born in 1757 his grandson, Francis, married Eleanor Thompson of Rathnally. Francis was a solicitor and became agent for the Earl of Darnley. Francis Hopkins of Athboy was created a baronet in 1795. As a magistrate he raised a militia who dispersed a large body of insurgents in 1798. He represented Kilbeggan in the Dublin parliament from 1798 to 1800. Sir Francis died at Mountjoy Square, Dublin, in 1814 and was succeeded by his son, Sir Francis, the second Baronet, who was born in 1813. The family were buried in Rathmore where there are a number of memorials. The family had a residence at Rochfort in Westmeath.

Sir Francis acquired Tudenham Park (Rochfort Park) Mullingar in 1836 from the Landed Estates Court. His sister and heiress, Anna Maria, was married to its previous owner, Nicholas Loftus Tottenham. In his will Francis left the property to his sister. Mr. Hopkins of Mitchelstown had a hunting pack in the eighteenth century. In 1832 a number of packs amalgamated to form the Meath Hounds, based at Mitchelstown with Mr. Hopkins as master. Sir Francis served as High Sheriff of Westmeath. In 1835 Mitchelstown was described as a good house of three stories and basement, the residence of Francis Hopkins. The townland was the property of the Earl of Darnley. Sir Francis was a traveller and visited the Shah of Persia in 1835. In 1839 Sir Francis Hopkins took part as a knight in a medieval tournament at Eglinton, Scotland. Bryan Seery was tried for the attempted assassination of Sir Francis in 1845 and executed at Mullingar following a second trial in 1846. It was quite a controversial trial at the time. Sir Francis died in Maderia in 1860 and the title became extinct. His eldest son, William succeeded him at Mitchelstown.

William Hopkins of Mitchelstown married Frances Rotherham of Crossdrum and their son Edward Francis Hopkins married Frances Catherine Battersby and served in Ceyon Civil Service 1874 to 1907. In 1876 William Hopkins of Mitchelstown House held 427 acres in County Meath. William died in 1880. William John Hopkins was born about 1858. In the 1901 and 1911 census William John Hopkins and his family was living at Mitchelstown.

Mitchelstown house was acquired by Ben Dunne of Dunnes Stores in the 1970s and became a weekend home for his daughter Mrs. Margaret Heffernan and her family. Mrs. Heffernan's husband, Andrew, is a consultant endocrinologist at the Blackrock Clinic. The house was refurbished in the early 1990s.

Moorside

Moorside House, near Clonalvy, on the borders of north County Dublin, was home to the Ball family. The name of the town land is Mooresides. Bence-Jones described Moorside as a 'pleasant eighteenth century house'. The house was enlarged by taking in what had formerly been a separate building at the back. The Balls held lands at Reynoldstown, Naul, Co. Dublin and at Mooreside, Clonalvey, Co. Meath. Members of the family lived at both places.

Laurence Ball was born in 1776. He acquired full title to Moorside, Clonalvey, in a deed of release in 1811. Mooreside went to his fourth son, Richard. Richard Ball, the son of Laurence Ball and Catherine Jordan, was born in 1812. He married Mary Agnes Shannon in 1853. He succeeded his father in the lands at Mooreside while his brother Patrick succeeded to lands at Lunderstown, Duleek. The second son, Richard Oliver Ball, born in 1859, married Mary Tench in 1896. In 1876 Richard Ball of Moorside, Naul, held 187 acres in Co. Dublin. He was a senior partner in the solicitor firm of Tench and Reynolds. Richard Ball bred Reynoldstown, the winner of the English Grand Nation in 1935 and 1936. Reynoldstown was bred by Richard Ball, who had bred his dam and grandam. Ball's son, also Richard, broke Reynoldstown at age three, and at age four he was sent hunting and was schooled over "made" fences. Richard Ball died in 1941.

His son, Richard Ball, was born in 1898. He married Mavis Norah Worrall in 1948. He was Director of the National Stud between 1956 and 1959 and President of the Irish Bloodstock Breeders' Association from 1959 to 1962. His son, Charles Richard, was educated at Stonyhurst College and the Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester.

Mount Hanover



Mount Hanover

Mount Hanover is located between Julianstown and Duleek, near Kilsharvan. Maurice Craig said the Mount Hanover was an early 18th century house, noted for its fine ironwork. Craig said it probably dated to the first half of the eighteenth century. Casey and Rowan described Mount Hanover as a very tall gabled Georgian house with long fifteen pane sash windows with thick glazing bars. Mulligan dated the house to the early part of the eighteenth century possibly 1720. The ground floor rooms have plasterworks representing birds, fruit and foliage.

John Curtis of Mount Hanover married Martha Towers in 1744. He died in 1775. His second son, Richard, succeeded him at Mount Hanover. John's daughter Sophia married John Forbes of Newstone, Drumconrath. John Forbes was M.P. for Drogheda and Lord Mayor of Dublin. He later served as governor of the Bahamas. He died in 1797. Rev. Richard Curtis lived at Mount Hanover. In 1786 Arthur Forbes was resident at Mount Hanover.

In 1801 George Ball was noted as resident. Mount Hanover was occupied by Gustavus Hamilton in 1814. The house then passed to the Matthews family.

In 1835 Mount Hanover was the residence of James Mathews and was a good house with offices. In 1837 James Mathews was one of the shareholder in the Drogheda and Kells Railway company. The Mathews family were involved in the formation of the Drogheda Steampacket Company (1826-1902). In 1854 James Mathews held Mount Hanover.

Fr. Matthews from Mount Hanover was parish priest of St. Mary's Drogheda. Fr. Matthews had been suspended for seven years for supporting his niece in a case against her superiors in a convent in England. His niece was Susan Saurin of Garballagh House, Duleek. In 1876 James Mathews of Mount Hanover House held

968 acres in County Meath. At Christmas the Matthews family put on a pantomime and tea party for the children of Mount Hanover School. Patrick, son of James Mathews died in 1895. In 1901 Elizabeth Mathews, widow, aged 41 was living at Mount Hanover. The house had twenty rooms, seventeen windows to the front and seventeen outbuildings. James Stanley Mathews, elder son of Patrick and Elizabeth Mathews of Mount Hanover, was educated at Oxford College and was called to the Irish Bar in 1911. He married Phillis Mary Lentaigne in 1914. He served with the South Irish Horse from 1915 to 1919.

According to 'The parish of Duleek and over the ditches' one of the Matthews family was caught in the 1916 ambush at Ashbourne. The car in which they were driving, a Rover, received a few bullet holes. There was a cricket club at Mount Hanover between 1949 and 1956. The house was sold in 1985.

Mount Hevey

Mount Hevey is located at Hill of Down, Clonard, Kinnegad. The name of the townland is Kilnagallagh. Casey and Rowan describe Mount Hevey as a square Italianite villa of a type popularised by William Caldbeck in the 1850s. The house consists of two storeys over a basement. The house dates to about 1860 but there was an earlier house which was incorporated into the farmyard. The farmyard complex dates from about 1860, the same time as the house was erected. A walled garden dates from about 1890. There is a shell house bearing the date "1912".

There is a record of a John Hevey, merchant, in Kinnegad in 1746. In 1805 there is a record of Garrett Hevey of Mount Hevey. Patrick Langan married Mary Hevey of Mount Hevey. Their son, Frederick Hevey Langan, inherited Mount Hevey from John Hevey, Mary's father.

In 1835 it was leased to Mr. Heavy of Mount Heavy by the owner Mr. McManus. In 1854 the townland was in the ownership of James McManus and Frederick H. Langan was renting the major part of the townland and he in turn was renting a house offices and land to Michael Hevey. The major house was the residence of Frederick H. Langan.

Frederick Hevey Langan was born in 1825. He was a magistrate. In 1876 Frederick H. Langan of Mount Hevey held 929 acres in County Meath and 2051 acres in County Galway. He died in 1890. In 1901 John H. Langan and his wife were residing at Mount Hevey. The house had nineteen rooms, twenty two windows to the front and twenty eight outbuildings. John Francis Hevey Langan was the only son of Frederick Hevey Langan and was born in 1871. In 1900 he married Rowena Martin of Dublin and they had three children, two daughters and a son, Frederick. John was High Sheriff of Meath in 1913. The family also had property in Dublin. John died in 1955. His eldest son, Frederick Hevey Langan, married Myrrha Jepson about 1940. Frederick Hevey Langan was involved in the R.D.S. and was nominated as a candidate in a Senate election in 1970. Frederick died in 1978, a year after Mount Hevey was sold. His only son, Peter St. John Hevey Langan, became a barrister and was called to the English Bar in 1967. Princess Margaret attended the ceremony.

Mountainstown House



Mountainstown House, located north of Navan at Castletown is a wonderful Queen Anne house with a well maintained courtyard and estate. Home to the Pollock family, Mountainstown House is not near any mountain or town and probably derives its name from a mounting post or halt, according to Rowan and Casey. Maurice Craig described Mountainstown as a somewhat naïve but charming building.

Samuel Gibbons lived at Mountainstown in the early eighteenth century. It appears that the house was originally built for Richard Gibbons about 1720. In the late eighteenth century his only surviving child, Anne Gibbons, sold it to John Pollock, whose family had been renting the estate for some time.

John Pollock was the third son of John Pollock, a Newry linen merchant. Pollock became a solicitor in Dublin and agent for the Duke of Devonshire, one of the largest landowners in Ireland and was a Dublin based solicitor. In 1813 the main block of the house was extended by a long two-storey gabled wing built on to the southwest corner and converting the house to an L-shaped plan. The Venetian doorcase bears the Pollock coat of arms.

Today the derelict remains of Kilshine church is situated opposite the main gates of Mountainstown House. John Pollock rebuilt the church in 1815 and presented the parish with a silver chalice. Kilshine Church was closed in 1958 and was de-consecrated and the furnishings removed. The Pollock memorial tablets were erected in Donaghpatrick Church.

The 1798 rebels passed through the Mountainstown and Georges Cross area. There are a great number of Croppie graves in Mountainstown estate. In 1998 a multi-denominational service was held to commemorate the hundreds of United Irishmen from Wexford who fought at the battle of Knightstown Bog on 14th July 1798. A stone plaque was erected to commemorate those who died. The Pollocks of Mountainstown took an active part in the commemoration ceremonies.

John Pollock died in December 1826 leaving an only son, Arthur, born 1785. Arthur Hill Cornwallis Pollock spent much of his early years travelling Europe. Arthur was High Sheriff of Meath in 1809 and died in 1846.

In 1835 Mountainstown House, the seat of Mr. A.H.C. Pollock was described as being surrounded by beautiful planting and ornament ground. North of the house was a small fishpond for ornament. In the farmyard there was a small pond and two fine

spring wells. Situated in the northwest of the townland was a beautiful decoy, in which ducks, teal and widgeon were caught.

Arthur was succeeded by his son, John Osborne George Pollock, who was born in 1812. He was a justice of the peace and a deputy lieutenant of the county. He served as High Sheriff for the county in 1854. John died in 1871 and was succeeded by his sons, Arthur Henry Taylor and John Naper George. In 1876 Arthur Pollock held 848 acres in county Meath and Maria Pollock of Mountainstown held 1174 acres in county Meath.

John Naper George married Anna Josephine Barrington of Limerick. Dying in 1905 John was succeeded by his eldest son, also named John, born 1896. Anna Josephine lived on until 1947, surviving her husband by forty years. John Pollock served during World War I in the North Irish Horse and died in 1966.

There was also a large amount of material on the Irish Pollock families showing their descent from the main family, including written histories on the Pollocks of Newry, Balleyedmond, Balleymagregrechan and Mountainstown, and showing the descent of James Knox Polk, the 11th President of the United States of America from the Irish Pollocks. A house in Scotland, called Mountainstown, is home of a Pollock family but there is no clear relationship with the Meath Pollocks. President Polk may be related to the Pollocks of Scotland according to one source.

Moydorrhagh House, Nobber

The Cruys (Cruise) family held castles and estates of Cruicetown and Moydorrhagh. As early as 1292 Robert de Cruys of the Naul had an interest in the lands at Moydorrhagh. The family of Moydorrhagh may have given their name to the townland. A Richard Moydorrhagh is recorded as being in conflict with the Cruise family and the Crown in 1310.

Christopher Cruise of the Naul held Moydorrhagh in the early 17th century. In 1789 Joseph Cruise sold the lands of Cruicetown, Altmash and Moydorrhagh to Arthur Ahmuty of London. In 1799 the Ahmuty family leased lands to Peter Cruise of Moydorrhagh.

In 1831 the Ahmuty lands at Cruicetown, Moydorrhagh and Altmash were acquired by the executors of William Alexander Shaw, late of Great Denmark Street, Dublin. His heir William John Alexander took the surname Shaw. In 1854 Moydorrhagh was held from Shaw by Peter Cruise.

Moydorrhagh house is a Georgian two storey farmhouse erected by the Cruise family in 1790. In 1835 Moydorrhagh House was described as being a two storied, slated house, the seat of Andrew and Peter Cruise. In 1901 Henry O'Neill held Moydorrhagh House which was not occupied. In 1911 Margaret McKeever was the landowner of Moydorrhagh townland with the house not being occupied.

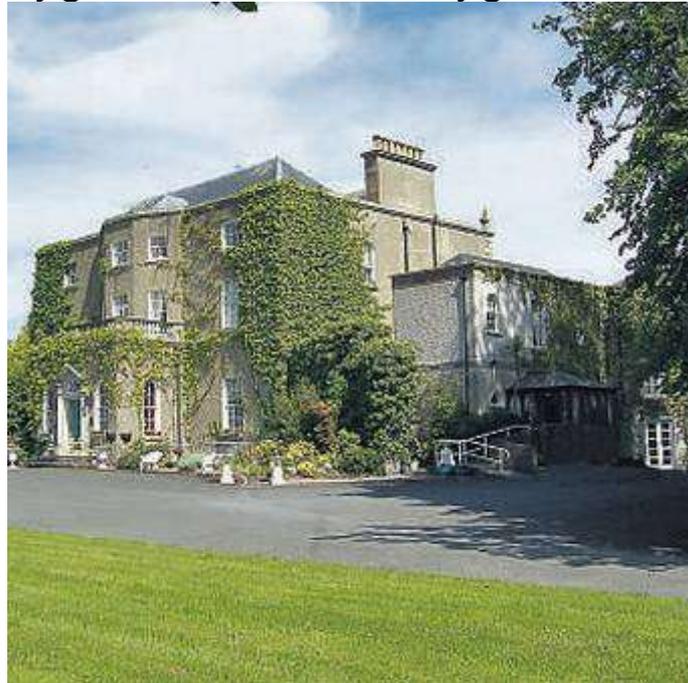
Moygaddy House

Just outside Maynooth Moygaddy was the property of the Duke of Leinster in 1835. Half the townland was leased by Mr. Tuffe who erected a house which he called Moygaddy House. Also in the aerea was Mr. Cannon's farmhouse, where the Duke's steward lived which was also called Moygaddy House. Mr. Thomas Cannon of Naas held half the townland. About 100 acres of the Duke of Leinster's demesne was in this townland and he had about 25 acres planted. The demesne abounded with pheasants, hares, partridges and wild fowl. Mr. Cannon's house was later re-named Owenstown House. Mr. Tuffe's house stood near the remains of Moygaddy castle.

Moygaddy House is a two-storey over basement house. A bridge was constructed over Lyreen stream at the same time the house was constructed. Stabling and outbuildings were also constructed at the at the same time.

Lt.-Col. Francis Michael Benedict Carey Boylan was the youngest son of Thomas boylan of Hilltown. He served in both World Wars and became a land agent. He lived at Moygaddy House.

Moyglare House or Moyglare Manor



Moyglare Manor is situated 2km north of Maynooth on the Meath–Kildare border. Dating to about 1780 the house is three storeys over a basement. The entrance hall has a fine plaster frieze. The grand central staircase is a feature in itself with the hall stretching up three floors. The house is approached by a tree lined avenue nearly a kilometre in length. Moyglare Stud now stands in what was once the demesne of Moyglare House. The remains of Moyglare Castle and church are to the south of the house, nearer Maynooth. Moyglare was granted to a knight called Le Bret by Hugh de Lacy in the late twelfth century. The Delahoyde family held Moyglare in the 1400s.

The Sandford family had a castle at Moyglare. Captain Theophilus Sandford, of Moyglare, Co. Meath, died in 1668 and was buried at Moyglare. His eldest son, Henry settled at Castlerea where a descendant held more than 24,000 acres in the 1870s.

John Adlercron lived at Moyglare in the first half of the nineteenth century. John and Dorothea Catherine Ladeveze-Adlercron travelled to Europe during the period 1806–49. John travelled to Moscow in 1805-6. They had only one daughter, Anne.

The Cannon family were associated with Moyglare from the middle of the eighteenth century. Thomas Cannon married Bridget Aylmer in 1775. In 1837 Moyglare was the seat of Charles Cannon and described as a handsome mansion, situated in an extensive and well planted demesne. The property was still held by him in the 1860s.

The Tuthill of Moyglare were a branch of the Tuthill family of Peamore, Devon. William Devonsher Tuthill was born in 1815 at Webbville House, Blackrock. His parents were Rev. Christopher and Arabella Tuthill of North Ballinastona, Co. Limerick. He joined the army and became an officer in 1841. Reaching the rank of

Captain in 1848 he retired in 1850. In 1852 he married Alicia, daughter of John Fitzgerald Gabbett. In 1876 there were various Tuthill family members who held lands in county Limerick. Captain Tuthill of Moyglare and William Bredin of Castlegarde, Co. Limerick shared 821 acres. George Tuthill of Dublin held 464 acres. Capt. J. V. Tuthill of England held 260 acres. John L. Tuthill of Dublin held 198 acres. William Tuthill of Moyglare, Maynooth held 286 acres. William died in 1885 and was buried at Moyglare churchyard.

Their eldest son was Christopher Devonsher Villiers, a captain in the 4th Hussars. He died in 1909. His brother, Captain John Fitzgerald Tuthill, lived at Moyglare. Another son, Christopher, emigrated to New Zealand where he named his new home, "Moyglare."

In 1911 John Fitzgerald Tuthill lived at Moyglare. John's eldest son was William Fitzgerald Tuthill and he lived at Moyglare. William married Katharine Jessie Winsloe in 1918. She had previously been married to Major Alfred Cairnes. She died in 1958.

The house was sold about 1976. In 1980s Moyglare was the home of Dr. and Mrs. W.G. Fegan. William Fegan was Professor of Surgery at Trinity College, Dublin. He lived at Moyglare House before moving to Lamu, Kenya where he died in 2007.

Norah Devlin purchased the house in the early 1980s and converted it into a country house hotel. The renowned hotel and award winning restaurant was in operation for many years and featured in 'Ireland's Blue Book' of country house hotels. With no family member able to take over the hotel the property was sold.

Moynalty Lodge or House



Moynalty Lodge or House is located near the village of Moynalty in north Meath. Erected for John Farrell in the 1820s Casey and Rowan described it as a charming Regency-style house.

James Farrell was a brewer from Blackpitts, Dublin. His father, John, was originally from Stamullen. Becoming wealthy James lived on Merrion Square, Dublin and even lent a considerable sum of money to Lord Gormanston. When the penal laws with regard to land ownership were abolished James Farrell took advantage of his new rights and in March 1790 purchased a block of lands at Moynalty including the townlands of Moynalty, Walterstown, Rathbawn, Rathmanroe, Rathstephen and nine

acres at Curraghtown. James continued to reside in Merrion Square and granted Moynalty to his son, John. Another son, Thomas, was given lands at Robertstown.

The Moynalty estate included some 2654 statute acres. In 1819 John Farrell granted an acre of land for the erection of a new Catholic chapel and donated £200 towards its construction. The Protestant church was re-built about the same time and John provided lands for the extension of the cemetery. Work on the new village of Moynalty began in 1826. A primary school was also part of the new village plan. The mud walled houses of the village were demolished and the houses were erected to a Swiss style. All the houses were erected on only one side of the street giving rise to the phrase "All to one side like Moynalty." In 1837 Moynalty village was described as "of recent erection, was, till within the last few years, composed of cabins; it is now clean and well-built, and comprises 33 detached houses, noted for their neatness, with the church at one of its extremities, and the R.C. chapel at the other: the improvement has been effected by J. Farrell, Esq., the present proprietor, who has also, by extensive and judicious plantations, greatly benefited the surrounding country, and has erected some substantial farm-houses on his estate."

John Farrell erected Moynalty House. A two storey over basement house Moynalty has a limestone doric porch approached by limestone steps. The house has two entrance avenues one from the village and the second near the Catholic Church. The house is now hidden from the road by dense woodlands. A walled garden was constructed nearby. With its intricate woodwork trim, the gate lodge too seems to have been inspired by Swiss style. Serving as a gatelodge from its construction until 1929, the building actually contained two dwellings. A Justice of the Peace, Deputy Lieutenant of the county and high sheriff of Meath in 1843 John married Elizabeth Emily Bennett of Thomastown, Co. Offaly.

Their son, John Arthur, who was born in 1825, inherited the estate on the death of his father in 1870. John Arthur married the Honorable Lucretia Preston, daughter of Lord Gormanston in 1860 at the chapel at Gormanston Castle. In 1883 John Arthur Farrell of Moynalty was listed as one of the great landowners of Britain and Ireland, holding 4790 acres. John Arthur became known as 'Jack the Leveller' as a result of taking a hard line with some tenants. In 1869 Farrell's agent was shot and wounded. John Arthur Farrell died in 1904 and his son John Edward arrived home from Tasmania to take over the estate. John Edward had served as a lieutenant in the Royal Warwickshire regiment. He became High Sheriff of Meath in 1907. He married Harriet Nicholas in 1884 and they had four sons and six daughters. Due to ill health John Edward had to dispose of some of the estate and the Land Commission began to break up the estate. John Arthur's second son, Colonel Edward Farrell, took over the neighbouring estate of Walterstown from the Kellett family.

The history of the Farrells is outlined in the history of Moynalty, 'Not so much to one side,' by Valentine Farrell, a descendant of the family.

Moyrath Castle

Moyrath Castle is located near Kildalkey. Moyrath Castle consists of a medieval tower with rounded corners and nineteenth century battlements which was remodelled and a two storey house added. The castle was said to have been erected by Lord Geoffry de Montemarisco in 1219. The castle is probably a tower house of the fifteenth century.

The Nugent family were a branch of the Earls of Westmeath family. Moyrath was purchased by William-Og Nugent, second son of William, first Baron Delvin, and from that time became the seat of the family, who took the name of Nugents of

Moyrath. William's grandson, Christopher, was living at Moyrath in 1499. Sir Thomas Nugent of Moyrath represented Westmeath in the parliament of Elizabeth I. Francis Nugent, son of Sir Thomas was born at Moyrath about 1569. Becoming a priest in the Franciscan Capuchin order, he was the founder of the Irish and Rhenish provinces of that order. He died in France in 1635. A descendant Sir Thomas Nugent was created a baron in 1622. The family managed to hold onto their lands at Moyrath during the Cromwellian confiscations but lived at Dardistown and then at Taghmon, Co. Westmeath. Sir Robert, son of Thomas, became the second baron and lived at Taghmon. His son, Thomas, succeeded in 1675. A supporter of James II, following the defeat at the battle of the Boyne, Thomas followed his king to France. Having two daughters the title became extinct on his death.

The Ashe family seem to have held Moyrath in the seventeenth century. Thomas Ashe married the daughter and heiress of Nicholas Bailey who had acquired the monastery of Newtown-Trim following the confiscation of the monasteries. Henry, grandson of Thomas, lived at Moyrath. Henry's son, Nicholas, succeeded to the estates at Newtown and when he died in 1656 his estates were inherited by his cousin, William Ashe of Summerstown.

The Barnewalls of Trimblestown held Moyrath. Gerald Potterton, who gave a tour of the house to the Meath Archaeological and Historical Society in 2008, said that there was a curse associated with Moyrath. When the Barnewalls were dispossessed and forced to leave the castle Lady Barnewall pronounced a curse on the ancient castle of Moyrath. As she departed she flung open the carriage door and pronounced that there would be seven widows in Moyrath. Part of Moyrath was held by Speaker Connolly of Castletown.

In 1753 Moyrath was leased by Thomas Potterton of the Rathcormick family. His son, Henry inherited Moyrath and then his son, Thomas, held Moyrath until his death in 1834. Thomas was concerned with regard to the title of the property and in 1801 he sold the property to his lawyer cousin for five shillings and a week later bought it back again for a similar sum.

In the 1830s the castle was lived in by Henry Grattan M.P. for Meath. He was the landowner and leased Moyrath to the Pottertons. Henry Grattan, son of the great statesman of the late eighteenth century, was elected as M.P. for Dublin in 1826 and became M.P. for Meath in 1831. Grattan supported Repeal of the Act of Union. He served as M.P. for Meath until 1852. He died in 1859.

The castle was inherited by Henry, son of Thomas. In 1835 the remains of the castle had been partially re-fitted and occupied as part of the residence of H. Potterton. In 1840 Henry married Susanna Tarrant, who came with a substantial dowry of £4000. Some of this dowry was expended on renovating Moyrath and constructing a farmyard. A stone arch bears the inscription HP 1841. Henry died in 1862 and his wife two years later. Their son, Thomas, came of age in 1872 and inherited Moyrath.

In 1876 Thomas Potterton of Moyrath held 966 acres in County Meath. Three generations of Pottertons died young and the castle was sold to the Collins family in 1896. In 1901 James Collins and his family resided at Moyrath. In 1911 Frank Collins was living at Moyrath. In 1948 the property was sold to an Englishman, Major R. Lesley Johnson. Mr. Johnson was the seventh generation male occupant who sadly died suddenly in 1976.

In 1984 Moyrath was purchased by the Potterton family and became home to Gerald Potterton and his family. Homan Potterton gives a good account of Moyrath in his book "Potterton People and Places: Three centuries of an Irish family."

Mullaghfin House

Mullaghfin or Mullafin House is located at Balrath, Kentstown. Casey and Rowan described Mullaghfin as a handsome late eighteenth century gabled farmhouse of two storeys over basement. Two small windows set high up to light the attics.

Sir Andrew Aylmer of Balrath married Catherine Hussey. Their daughter, Mabel, married John strong of mullafin. This couple had five sons. The family inherited an estate at Weston, Dublin. In 1837 Mullaghfin was the property of H. Smith Esq. In 1876 Capt. Wm. F. Smith, Mullafin, Navan, held 551 acres in county Meath while William Smith of Mullafin held 117 acres.

The Mannions of America mini-series was part filmed at Mullaghfin House. The stars were David Soul and Pierce Brosnan. The Mannions of America marked the arrival of Pierce Brosnan as an actor in Hollywood.

The house has had various residents including Ounans, Hutleys, Knights and Roundtrees. During the Knight's time a restaurant operated in the house.

Netterville Amshouses, Dowth



The Netterville Almshouses at Dowth were erected in 1877 to the design of George Ashlin. Ashlin had an early association with the distinguished architect, E.W. Pugin. Near the almshouses stands the medieval castle of the Nettervilles. A late Victorian institutional building the entire spans 7000 sq. ft. A chapel was one of the features of the building. The plaque over front door reads: 'These almshouses were built A.D. 1877 out of the surplus fund accumulated by provident management of the Netterville charities by the trustees. Arthur James Earl of Fingall. Richard Gradwell, Esq. of Dowth Hall, Co. Meath. Malachy Strong Hussey, Esq. of Westown, Co. Dublin.' It has been adapted to a family home and re-named Netterville Manor.

The Netterville Almshouses were erected from monies left in the estate of the 6th Viscount Netterville. Dowth Castle was the ancestral home of the Netterville family. This family may have been granted lands here as early as the late twelfth century. The Castle was abandoned when the new house, Dowth Hall, was erected in the eighteenth

century. The sixth Viscount Netterville, John, died unmarried in 1826 and in his will he left the castle to be fitted up as an alms house for aged women. Lord Netterville's wishes were that 'the inmates should live in peace and good feeling with each other; and that they must be clean, tidy and perfectly sober, and that they must attend when able to those who from sickness are unable to do this for themselves.' Lord Netterville left 60 acres of land for the support of six aged women and six orphan boys. The original castle was altered and repaired for their accommodation and a school attached. A small gothic style church was erected for the widows but when the new building was erected in 1877 a chapel was included in the main building and so this church was abandoned.

The Netterville Institution, as it was called, embraced also a National School, built on its grounds, of which William David O'Reilly was the master for thirty-five years. His son, John Boyle O'Reilly, was born at Dowth in 1844. John joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood and was transported to Australia. He escaped to America where he became publisher of 'The Pilot' newspaper. There is an annual tribute to O'Reilly at the nearby churchyard.

In 1877 the new Almshouses were erected. The building was constructed of red-brick with limestone and blue-brick trim. In 1901 Caroline McGrath was matron of the Institute. In 1911 Caroline McGrath was the Matron and there were eight women over 50 and seven girls under 20. All were single.

The Institution closed in the early 1960s and Netterville was the base for the archaeological excavations for Newgrange in the later 1960s. Martin Brennan was a part owner of the building for a period when it was used as a centre for martial arts. Martin Brennan challenged conventional opinion about the function of Newgrange and the passage-mounds of Ireland and presented evidence showing that many of these 5,000-year-old monuments were used as complicated astronomical observatories. His books, *The Boyne Valley Vision* and *The Stones of Time*, both published in the early 1980s, continue to hold a fascination with the public.

Netterville was then held by an American heiress of the Hearst family. Netterville was occupied by the Buddhist Foundation of Ireland for a period. It was then developed as a guest house which opened in 1998.

Newcastle House

Newcastle House was located between Oldcastle and Virginia on a minor road. In 1911 the house had twenty two room, eighteen windows to the front and twenty two outbuildings. There were stables and a walled in garden. The house is now demolished but part of the outbuildings still remain.

Thomas Battersby established the family at Newcastle. Thomas was born in 1767, the son of John Battersby of Lakefield. In 1799 he married Margaret Rotheram, eldest daughter of George Rotheram of Crossdrum. Thomas died in 1839.

In 1835 Newcastle was the property of J.L.W. Naper and let to Thomas Battersby J.P. for his life. There was a handsome house and a good deal of grass and valuable timber on Mr. Battersby's demesne. The house was pleasantly situated and the demesne neatly planted.

Thomas was succeeded by his son, George. George's brother, Edward, served as a Lieutenant in the Royal Navy and is buried in Barbados. George was seated at Loughbawn and was a Judge of the Provincial Court of Dublin. In 1847 Frederick William Battersby of Newcastle House died of typhus fever caught while undertaking his duties as a member of the Oldcastle Relief Committee. He was aged twenty seven. Thomas George, son of George, was born in 1832. In 1854 Thomas Battersby was

leasing Newcastle House and 200 acres from James W.L. Naper. In 1876 Thomas G. Battersby of Newcastle House, Oldcastle, held 79 acres in county Cavan and 112 acres in co. Louth but no lands in Co. Meath. The Co. Meath lands were held as tenants of the Napers. Thomas served as a justice of the peace for counties Meath, Westmeath and Cavan. Thomas married Henrietta Mary Anne Rotten from Bath in England. Dying in 1887 Thomas was buried at Loughcrew. There were 808 acres in the Newcastle estate.

Thomas the eldest son succeeded in 1887 but died a year later to be succeeded by his brother, John Albert. John married a cousin Alice Isabella Battersby of Cromlyn and they had two daughters Alice and Violet. Their only son, Thomas Charles, died as an infant. In 1911 John Albert Battersby and his family were living at Newcastle.

Alice inherited when John Albert died in 1937. Alice married Frederick Gordon Wood, an English soldier who came to the area as a guard for the German internment camp at Oldcastle Workhouse. Their children John, Bunty and Maureen served in the forces during the Second World War. John and Bunty Wood sold the house in the 1960s and it was demolished. Eamon de Valera came to a ploughing match in the grounds. John Smith wrote about the house in *The Oldcastle Centenary Book*.

Newgrange House

Newgrange house is situated near Newgrange tomb at Slane. In 1699 the lands at Newgrange were leased to Charles Campbell for a period of 99 years from Alice Moore, Countess Dowager of Drogheda. Campbell built a mansion with outhouses, stables, orchards and gardens. It was Campbell's workmen who discovered Newgrange tomb in 1699.

In 1725 Campbell died and his lands were willed to Benjamin Burton of Burton Hall, Co. Carlow. The Caldwells who were in-laws of Campbell acquired parts of the lands in the eighteenth century. In 1744 Newgrange House was described as being buried in trees. There were plantings to the north of the house and along the roadside. The icehouse of Newgrange House is located north of the tomb and has been restored.

In 1835 Newgrange House was described as a neat three storey slated farmhouse, the residence of Mr. Maguire. The house was in good repair and eight acres of land to its south and west were neatly laid out in pleasure grounds. There is a stone seat on the public road called *Maguire's seat*.

In the late twentieth century the Redhouse family moved from Dublin to Newgrange where they have developed a very successful open farm.

Newgrove House

Newgrove House was located in Balnagon Upper townland, Kilskyre, 6 kilometres west of Kells. The original house has long decayed but it was a medium sized house of two storeys over a basement according to Mulligan. He dated the house to probably around 1760. The house was demolished in 1983. Attached to the house was a courtyard of buildings which still stand today. The stables had unusual flooring. The main entrance to the house has been restored recently. The neighbouring estate to the east was Sylvan Park.

The lands at Newgrove were held by various families. In the late eighteenth century they were held by the Reilly family. In 1774 Hugh O'Reilly was the owner. Frances, widow of Hugh O'Reilly of Newgrove, married Rev. William Maziere Brady, a Protestant minister, who was later vicar at Donaghpatrick but who later converted to

Catholicism and lived in Rome. He wrote a number of books. In Rome he became Private Chamberlain to Pius IX and Leo XIII and was created a Papal Knight.

In 1814 the residence of Philip Reilly. Mary Reilly made a defence of her house against the Defenders in 1794. The Defenders were a tenant based secret society agitating for better conditions for the tenants. Mary Reilly died in 1816 and the property was inherited by her nephew, Hugh O'Reilly of Rathaldron Castle. In 1835 Newgrove was the residence of Counsellor O'Reilly. It was described as a neat house of two storeys and basement, with a good garden and offices and excellent lawn. Hugh O'Reilly of Newgrove was magistrate in 1834. In 1865 Hugh sold the estate to Standish Grady Rowley of Maperath, Kells. The property was then inherited by his son, Clotworthy Rowley, who overspent and the property was purchased by his stepmother in 1902. She sold the house and 109 acres of land to Christopher Leavy in 1919.

Norman's Grove

Normansgrove or Norman's Grove is situated near Clonee, Dunboyne. A two storey eighteenth century house with a high roof, an earlier building is incorporated into the house. The house is one room in depth with a passage running at the back of the building. There is a folly and a haha to the south of the house.

In 1748 the property was acquired by the Lee Norman family who gave the house their name. In the eighteenth century Norman's Grove was the residence of Luke Eiffe. Luke Eiffe died 1856 aged 85 years. His son, Luke, emigrated to New Zealand, where he died in 1865. His son, James, died 1878 aged 62 years.

In 1803 Norman's grove was the seat of Mr. Jones. In 1835 Normansgrove was the seat of Captain Arnott. There was 7.75 acres of plantation at Normansgrove. Captain Arnott was only in possession for a short time. In 1837 J. Shanley J.P. was living at Normansgrove. James Shanley of Norman's Grove emigrated to Canada.

Christopher Ward of Gunnocks rented the house and lands in 1845. In 1876 Christopher Ward of Norman's Grove, owned 84 acres in county Meath. In 1881 Bernard Ward was living at Norman's Grove.

In 1901 and 1911 Patrick J. Ward, grazier, was living at Norman's Grove. The house had eighteen rooms, sixteen windows to the front and nineteen outbuildings.

Oakley Park

Oakley Park is located as Oakley Park or Lawrencetown, Dulane, Kells. Peter Bamford has extensive details about the Bomford family and their houses on his website and most of this article is based on his research.

Originally a square eighteenth century house with a three bay front and a long hall which led to an inner hall. The house was bought by George Bomford in 1837 and enlarged. The work was completed by 1839. The house was almost doubled in size by adding a new block to its front. Oakley Park was sold in 1955 by Lt. Col. George Bomford to Laurence McGuinness who reduced the size of the house by demolishing the original block and the second nineteenth century addition leaving only the main nineteenth century addition.

The Betagh family held the property until the middle of the seventeenth century. In 1640 Thomas Betagh was the landowner at Laurencetown in which there was a ruined castle. A timber beam was uncovered during the demolition of the 1950s which bore the inscription "P. Kiernan 1649." The townland was renamed Oakley Park after the Oakley family who held the property in the late seventeenth century.



Oakley Park 1939, painted by Winoia Constable c1958

The Graham family of Platin also had an interest in the property. Joseph William held the property in 1709 and it is probably he who erected the house about 1715. It was a square one storey house with a basement. The Crawford family acquired the lease in 1730 and remained there until 1829. The Crawford family originated in County Fermanagh. Robert Crawford of Oakley Park died in 1784 leaving sons, Robert and John who succeeded him. John's son, Jason, succeeded to Oakley Park. In 1797 Rev. Jason Crawford married Henrietta Rowley from Maperath and their eldest son, John Maxwell Crawford, succeeded to the estate on the death of his father in 1829. The Crawfords re-routed the Kells-Moynalty road away from the house and constructed a yard about 1815. Two gate lodges were erected. The house was leased to Thomas Rowley for a period. In the mid-1830s the house was occupied by Captain William Graham.

In 1837 George Bomford acquired Oakley Park. George Bomford was the oldest son of George Bomford of Drumlargan, Summerhill. Born in 1811, he married his first cousin, Arabella Winter of Agher in 1832. They had been brought up together at Agher. He was a Justice of the Peace and served as High Sheriff of the county in 1860. In 1876 George Bomford of Oakley Park held 2,436 acres in County Meath and 443 acres in Westmeath.

His second son, John Francis succeeded him at Oakley Park. John Francis Bomford married Elinor Jane Bolton in 1866. In the 1911 census John Francis and his family were living at Oakley Park. John Francis died later that year and is buried at Kells. Their eldest son was George Lyndon Bomford J.P. At the age of eighteen George was sent to America where he spent a period as a pony express rider in Texas. George joined the Land Commission in 1895 on his return from the United States. In 1911 there was a very bad thunder storm when eighteen cows were killed by lightning whilst sheltering in the wood to the east of the house. George served during the First World War as a captain. His sister, Elinor May, married Hugh Constable, grandson of the landscape painter, John Constable. George died in 1951 and is buried at Kells. His eldest son was Lt.-Col. George Warren Bomford. From 1917 to 1947 George Warren served with the Indian Army. George Warren served in the First and Second World

Wars. He arrived back at Oakley Park as a Colonel in 1948. After he sold Oakley Park he lived in Malta and Italy.

Oatlands House

Oatlands House is located near Greetiagh, Bohermeen in the townland of Durhamstown, civil parish of Ardraccan. Oatlands House was erected about 1770. The house and demesne appear on Larkin's map of County Meath in 1812. In 1911 Oatlands House had more than thirteen rooms, six windows on the front and thirty five outbuildings. There were woods between the house and the road and also to the south of the house. These have now been removed. There is a small pond to the west of the house.

The Thompson family came to Ireland with William of Orange and settled at Clonfin, Co. Longford. William Thompson of Clonfin married a daughter of Peter Metge of Athlumney. David Thompson was from Clonfin. Born in 1738 David settled at Oatlands. He married Anne Higginbotham of Larhy, Co. Cavan and died about 1816 leaving seven sons and three daughters.

Robert Thompson of Oatlands wrote a "Statistical Survey of the County of Meath" which was published by the Royal Dublin Society in 1802. It is a wonderful account of agricultural and other practises in the county. Robert died in 1813 aged 41 and was buried in Ardraccan.

Thompson Blennerhasset Thompson was born in 1804 and married Meloria Young of Philpotstown Hosue in 1828. In the 1830s Oatlands was described as a good residence and the seat of Blennerhasset Thompson. Blennerhasset Thompson died in 1853, leaving a son, Peter, who died a year later. In the 1850s William Thompson held a considerable amount of the lands of Durhamstown.

From at least the late 1840s George Pollock held Oatlands. George Annesly Pollock was the son of Arthur Hill Pollock of Mountainstown. George married Louisa McKay of Stephen's Green, Dublin in 1846. According to histories of the game of croquet, an early set of rules of the game were compiled by an anonymous writer who described himself as "Corncrake" to *The Field* publication on 21 August 1858. Corncrake was in fact George Pollock. Oatlands was one of the first places in Ireland where croquet was played. George died in 1867 leaving three sons and three daughters.

In 1901 and 1911 Albert Lowry and his family were living at Oatlands. Albert was son of Joseph Lowry of Bachelors Lodge. Albert was a noted horse owner and breeder and operated a stud at Oatlands. Albert moved to Bachelor's Lodge and died in 1931.

Odder Castle

Odder Castle is located on the southern slopes of the Hill of Tara on the road to Kilmessan. Odder castle is a modernized fortified house, originally dating to the early 16th century. The building was greatly altered about 1880 when a large central stair hall was created.

There was an Augustinian nunnery at Odder in medieval times. Odder was originally the property of the Barnewalls. The Dillons of Lismullen became the landlords of the townland and in 1855 James J. Mills was the lessor of Odder Castle. James Mills was a barrister and a grandson of Sir John Dillon of Lismullen. James J. Mills married Elizabeth Pakenham of Straffan in 1869. James Mills died in 1895.



The property came into the hands of the Steen family before 1886. Laurence Steen of Odder Castle was appointed Justice of the Peace in 1886. In 1901 Laurence Steen, Justice of the Peace and farmer, and his family lived at Odder. Laurence Steen died in February 1936 aged 88. He had been a solicitor, peace commissioner, member of the Navan Board of Guardians and Meath County Council. Laurence Steen Junior inherited Odder Castle. Laurence Steen was born in 1883. Ambrose Steen was State Solicitor for Meath until his death in 1946.

Oldbridge House



Also known as Oldbridge Hall the house is situated on the banks of the Boyne near Drogheda. The house has a plain exterior appearance. The house may have been designed by George Darley. Erected about 1750 the house originally consisted of a three storey central block with low single-storey wings. The wings were raised to three storeys during the renovations of 1832. The 1832 alterations were carried out by Frederick Darley, a relative of the original builder. Oldbridge estate forms part of the site where the Battle of the Boyne took place in 1690. The house is now in state ownership with the ground floor displaying material relating to the Battle of the Boyne.



The Coddington family were established at Holmpatrick, Skerries, before coming to Oldbridge. Captain Dixie Coddington was on the staff of William III at the battle of the Boyne. His son, John, purchased Oldridge from the Earl of Drogheda in 1729. John McCain who ran against Barack Obama in the US presidential election of 2008 may have had Coddington ancestors. The Coddingtons acquired 1892 acres at Oldbridge, from the Moores, Earls of Drogheda and acquired lands at Ardbraccan from Lord Ranelagh. The Coddingtons also acquired lands of Tankardstown from the Osbornes family through marriage.

Dixie Coddington was born about 1725 and it was he who erected the house at Oldbridge. Dixie Coddington was Member of Parliament for Dunleer and held the properties of Oldbridge and Tankardstown. A captain in the 9th Dragoons he was High Sheriff of Meath in 1754. In the same year he married Catherine, daughter of Thomas Burgh. they had seven children, who all died in infancy. He died in 1794 and is buried in St. Anne's, Dawson Street, Dublin.

Dixie Coddington was succeeded by his brother, Henry. Henry died in 1816 was succeeded by his eldest son, Nicholas. His son was Henry Barry Coddington who served as High Sheriff of Meath in 1843. In 1876 Henry B. Coddington of Oldbridge held 2,604 acres in County Meath. His son was John Nicholas.

Henry Coddington, born at Oldbridge in 1789, studied at Cambridge where he became a tutor. A clergyman he wrote a number of acclaimed works on the subject of the nature of light and optics. The stress of dealing with dissension within his parish evidently led to a burst blood vessel and death in Rome in 1845.

In 1837 Oldbridge was described as being in an extensive demesne, well planted, on the banks of the Boyne. Fitzherbert Coddington, third son of Nicholas Coddington, of Oldbridge, joined the army in 1825 and served in India. He received a dangerous sabre wound at the battle of Maharajpore.

John Nicholas Coddington was a major in the Meath Militia. Born 1828 he married firstly Lelia Jane Lennox of Loughcrew. He married secondly Maria Louisa Pollock, widow of John Pollock of Mountainstown and then thirdly he married Constance Elizabeth Smith of Annesbrook.

Major Dixie Henry Coddington, born 1909, served in the Indian Army and served during World War II. His son Nicholas Dixie Coddington was the last of the family to live at Oldbridge. This branch of the Coddingtons remained at Oldbridge until the

1970s and finally sold off the estate in the 1980s. Oldbridge House is now home to the Battle of the Boyne Visitor Centre, opened on 4 May 2008 by Taoiseach Bertie Ahern and Northern Ireland's first minister, Ian Paisley.

Parkstown House



Parkstown House is located just outside Ballivor on the road to Trim. Casey and Rowan described Parkstown as a tall thin three storey gable ended house. Bence-Jones pointed out the pedimented doorcase and niches at the centre of each floor. Erected about 1770 the house has internal doors with Art Nouveau glass panels.

In 1721 Francis Fleetwood of Parkstown leased the townland of Parkstown to Thomas Bomford of Rahinstown. Fleetwood held lands at Colronan, Cornelstown and Crossenstown.

In 1786 Robert Fleetwood held Parkstown. Robert married Catherine Margaret Hopkins. Their daughter, Hester, married James Rynd of Dublin and their son, Robert Fleetwood Rynd, lived at Ryndville. The name Fleetwood continued down the generations in the Rynd family. In the early 1800s a Robert Fleetwood married Maria Rynd but they seem to have lived in the parish of Rathcore.

In 1805 Michael Campbell of Parkstown married Miss Dowdall, daughter of George of Causetown, Co. Meath. In 1835 the house was the residence of Mr. Campbell.

In 1854 William Hone leased Parkstown House and the townland of 346 acres from the Earl of Darnley.

In 1911 Mary Anne Parr and her family lived at Parkstown. Mary Anne was a widow aged 83 in 1911. In 1928 B.C. Parr sold Parkstown. Bernard Cecil Parr, was the son of Bernard W. Parr of Ballyboy House, Rathmore. The house was described as “ the residence which is picturesque situate, is approached by front and back avenues and contains a large hall, two sitting rooms, five bedrooms, two dressing rooms, kitchen,

dairy, W.C. Laundry etc.” Bernard C. Parr married Sidney Bell of Dublin in St. John’s Pro Cathedral, Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1932.

Parsonstown

Located near Lobinstown Parsonstown House has been demolished but a good yard remains. Some of the yard buildings have been converted into a dwelling. There is also an 18th century gate lodge and a sawmill in the demesne grounds. The house and demesne are shown on William Larkin’s map of 1812.

The Blackburne family were associated with Parsonstown. George Blackburne of Co. Meath died in 1769. His oldest son, Richard, became established at Footstown Great. Francis Blackburne, the son of Richard Blackburne of Footstown and nephew of Anthony of Parsonstown, went on to become Lord Chancellor of Ireland. He prosecuted Daniel O’Connell and presided over the trial of William Smith O’Brien. His eldest son, settled at Tankardstown, Co. Meath.

The third son of George was Anthony, Barrister of Law, who settled at Parsonstown and died in 1804. His son, also Anthony, was curate and rector at Kilshine and Rector at Killallon 1850 to 1872. Anthony was High Sheriff of Meath in 1829. In 1835 Parsonstown House was described as in good repair, but unoccupied. The demesne of 190 acres was well cared for. Parsonstown House was a two storey slated house, substantially built and a comfortable house. Anthony had three daughters.

The Brinkley family took over Parsonstown after the Blackburne family. John Brinkley was the first Royal Astronomer of Ireland. Born in Suffolk about 1763, the illegitimate son of Sarah Brinkley, a butcher’s daughter, Brinkley was educated at Trinity College Dublin and became Royal Astronomer and Professor of Astronomy there in 1792. In 1826 he was appointed bishop of Cloyne. He died in 1835 and was buried in Trinity College chapel. He had two sons, John, a clergyman and Matthew who lived at Parsonstown House.

Matthew Brinkley of Parsonstown lived from 1797 to 1855. In the 1850s Matthew is listed as holding lands at Parsonstown and Killary. He married Harriet, daughter of Richard Graves, Dean of Ardagh. Their eldest son John died unmarried. Their second son, Richard, succeeded to the family property at Portland, Co. Sligo in 1884. He died in 1875 and was buried at Monkstown, Co. Dublin.

Francis Brinkley, the thirteenth child of Matthew Brinkley was born in 1841. His maternal grandfather was Richard Graves, Dean of Ardagh. Francis became an artillery officer and was invited to Hong Kong by his cousin, who was governor of the colony. On his journey to Hong Kong the ship stopped at Nagasaki where he witnessed a duel between two samurai warriors. Francis was so impressed with the culture that Captain Brinkley settled permanently in Japan in 1867. In 1871 he resigned his commission to become foreign advisor to the Japanese government. He mastered the Japanese language and married the daughter of a samurai. Their son, Jack Ronald Brinkley, contributed greatly to Japanese culture. Francis published the Japanese Mail newspaper from 1881 and became the Japanese correspondent for The Times of London. He reported on the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-5. Frank wrote book for learners of the Japanese language and assisted in the compilation of an English-Japanese dictionary. His book ‘A history of the Japanese People’ was published after his death. His last report for The Times was written on his deathbed in 1912.

By the 1850s the estate at Parsontown had been taken over by James Tertius Donovan. In 1876 James T. Donovan of Parsonstown held 642 acres in county Meath. In 1901 and 1911 James T. Donovan was living at Parsonstown.

Noel French’s Meath Houses

Phepotstown House

Phepotstown House is located in Phibockstown, Kilmore, Kilcock. The house was erected in the first half of the eighteenth century after the Prentice brothers, John and Robertt had acquired the estate from the Husseys of Galtrim. The lands passed to John Smith in 1804 due to unpaid debts owed by Thomas Prentice. The lands included the lands of Larchill which is just east of Phepotstown. In 1835 the house was the seat of Mr. Walsh and described as a good house, two storeys high and slated. A small portion of the ground around it was neatly planted. The Robinson family then came into ownership about 1890 and continued to live there until the mid 1990s. In 1991 Bernard Robinson, his wife and five children were in residence at Phepotstown.

The Robinsons established a training yard at Phepotstown. Willie Robinson rode Team Spirit to victory in the 1964 Aintree Grand National. Robinson was one of the leading riders of his day. He remains one of only four jockeys to have won a Gold Cup (Mill House '63), Champion Hurdle (Anzio '62 and Kirriemuir '65) and Grand National (Team Spirit) in the post-war era.

Team Spirit was retired after the race and put out to grass. When he died he was buried in the lawn at Phepotstown House. Brian Robinson from Phepotstown built one of the first hovercrafts in Ireland at Phepotstown in the mid 1960s. He exhibited his craft in England in 1967.

The Land Commission acquired 244 acres from George Robinson in 1943. The house was sold to the Treacy family in 1994 and they fully restored the house. A number of articles in 'Moynalvey, history, folklore and memories of a Co. Meath parish' provide further information on the house and Robinson family.

Philpotstown House – Dunderry Park

Philpotstown House is two kilometres north east of Dunderry. An early 18th century house with a high pitched roof of two storeys it is in Churchtown civil parish. The house has a large hall and four main reception rooms. Sitting on brow of a hill the house overlooks parkland including a two acre lake. Churchtown House was the dower house for Philpotstown House. Today Philpotstown is named Dunderry Park.



John Young held Philpotstown in the early nineteenth century and was living there in 1814. John Young was born about 1747, married Mary Thompson and died at Philpotstown in 1822. The family were from Carragocuran, Co. Cavan. His son, John Thompson Young, born about 1815, married Anna Sophie Orpen in 1834. John discovered a prehistoric socketed axe in the bog between Philpotstown and Athboy which he gave to his nephew the historian, Goddard Orpen. The axe is now in the National Museum of Ireland. In 1834 John became a life member of the R.D.S. He presented samples of floor tiles from Bective Abbey to the Society on 29 June 1843. The house was the residence of John T. Young in the 1830s. John died in 1850. In the 1850s the house and property was in the possession of Anna Sophia Young and in 1876 she is recorded as holding 548 acres in County Meath. Croquet Philpotstown House was the site of one of the first croquet lawns in Ireland. The Meath Hounds and hunt regular met or hunted at Philpotstown. Anna Sophia died in 1897 without any children to succeed to the estate.

The house was re-named Dunderry Park. The house changed hands on a number of occasions. In 1901 Captain Philpots held the house and in 1911 Arthur Philpots of Dublin held the property. In 1901 Frances Fletcher and Australian lady was living at the house. In 1910, the wealthy American business man, John Pierpont Morgan, leased the house for the hunting season. Morgan would have been in his early seventies at this stage. He died in 1913. Paddy Keely told me that even in the 1930s people were still talking about the visit of J.P. Morgan. The telegraph at Robinstown Post Office was kept very busy with trans-Atlantic correspondence. A tip for the delivery of one of the telegraphs could be worth a few week's wages. The Meath Hunt regularly met at Philpotstown during Morgan's visit and enjoyed his generosity. In 1911 the house was vacant. Another famous person to rent Philpotstown was Ambrose "Brose" Clark, an American whose family held 50% of the Singer sewing Machine company. Brose Clarke bred Kellsboro Jack, the winner of the 1933 Grand National. Captain Eccles and his family lived at Philpotstown in the 1930s. Captain Eccles was the Secretary of the Tote Board and Master of the Meath Hounds. Captain Eccles died at Dunderry Park in 1940 aged 60. Dunderry was developed as a stud farm. His only daughter married the son of Count John McCormick, the famous singer, in 1941. His son, Captain Dennis Eccles then held Dunderry Park into the 1955. In the late 1950s Dunderry was held by the Sharp family, the same family which owned the toffee and sweet company. The Mulhaire family owned Dunderry Park for a period. In the early 1990s Dublin property developer Pat Phelan owned Dunderry Park. The house was sold in 1997 and acquired by the Transpersonal Institute which is operated by Oaktree Charitable Trust, a non profit organisation set up to help people deal with the stresses of life. The Transpersonal Institute, incorporating the Irish Centre for Shamanic Studies, offers various courses in transpersonal consciousness.

Piltown House



Photo: Kieran Campbell

Piltown House is located to the south of Drogheda, near Colpe. Piltown House was erected in 1838 for Thomas Brodigan, Drogheda businessman and first advocate of the building of the Dublin and Drogheda Railway which opened in 1844. John B. Keane was the architect for Piltown house in 1838 and William Henry Byrne was the architects for alterations and additions in 1888. A two storey over basement house Piltown was described in 1844 by D'Alton as 'a strikingly beautiful mansion standing in the centre of the townland, within a park of 200 statute acres, that for scenic effect and skillful cultivation, presents, in the view from the Dublin and Drogheda railway, an ornamental and gratifying foreground.'

Pilton or Piltown was in the hands of the Wellesley family after the Battle of the Boyne and then the Duff family and then in the early 1800s in the hands of Edmund Malone, an eminent lawyer. The property then came into the hands of the Brodigan family. Colombo Brodigan married a Cheevers lady and their son was Francis who died in 1831 and was interred in Colpe graveyard. The Brodigan family had grocery shops in Drogheda. The cash books of Francis Brodigan from 1817 and day books relating to sales of tobacco, wines, packs of cards, tea and sugar from 1793-7 are now in the National Library of Ireland.

Thomas Brodigan was the son of Francis Brodigan of Drogheda. Thomas Brodigan, a member of the Board of Trade, was a proponent of the railways and in 1835 he published an essay entitled "On the Establishment of a Northern Railroad." In 1836 the Dublin and Drogheda. At least eight men were killed and many injured during the construction of the railway. Thomas Brodigan established a fund "The Disabled by Industrial accident Fund" which proved an income to those injured or widowed during the construction of the railway. Thomas Brodigan supported the growing of tobacco in the 1830s. Thomas Brodigan published a book in 1830s on the growing and curing of tobacco in the Ireland.

In 1846 Thomas Brodigan went on pilgrimage to Jerusalem, a long journey in the mid 19th century. While there the Greek and Latin priests nearly came to blows during Good Friday ceremonies, knives were drawn – a dispute which still continues today. Brodigan petitioned the Parliament to intervene so that pilgrims could travel safely to the Holy Land. Brodigan also visited Spain and Italy.

Francis Brodigan was born about 1836 at Parkanaur, Co. Tyrone. Francis served as a colonel in the Crimean War. In 1865 Francis Brodigan was a Liberal candidate for Drogheda in the election but was defeated by Benjamin Whitworth, another Liberal. Francis was High Sheriff of Drogheda in 1862. In 1876 Francis Brodigan of Pilltown House held 726 acres in Meath 4 acres in Drogheda and 6 acres in Louth He married secondly Alice Caroline Burges in 1877. In 1898 Sir Nugent Talbot Everard obtained a special licence to grow tobacco. He was joined in the next few years in the experiment by Sir John Dillon of Lismullin, R.H. Metge of Athlumney and F. Brodigan of Piltown. Francis died on 8 March 1910. His son, Captain Francis John Brodigan, was killed in action in 1915 during the First World War. The private and estate papers of the Brodigan family are now in the National Library. They were donated by the McClintock family who inherited Piltown House.

Pilltown House had an interesting collection of art and curios in the 1940s. The residence of Colonel McClintock there were some very fine paintings of the Dutch and Italian schools reputed to have been conveyed here for safety at the time of the French revolution. A visitor in the 1940s said one piece called for special mention, a remarkable painting on wood representing the head of Our Lord crowned with thorns. The land surrounding the house was bought by the Franciscans in the 1960's who sold it to the Christian Brothers, who subsequently sold it piecemeal to separate groups and individuals. The house was empty and became a target for vandals. In October 2006 Piltown House was gutted by fire.

Platten Hall



Photo: Archiseek

Platten Hall was located at Donore, just west of Drogheda. Today the cement works occupy part of the estate. Bence-Jones described Platten Hall as a 'very handsome red brick house with stone facings' probably from about 1700. Craig considered it possibly the work of Sir William Robinson for John Graham. A large red-brick

mansion the design occupied three sides of a square. Situated in an extensive demesne, originally wide avenues of elms radiated from it on all sides, like the spokes of a cart-wheel — a plan fashionable in England; but unfortunately these did not remain perfect. It had a large hall with an open staircase of three flights. Samuel Reeves took a storey off the house in the mid nineteenth century. One wing was closed off and the windows bricked up. The house was demolished in the second half of the twentieth century. The house may have replaced a medieval castle, belonging to the D'Arcy family. The house was originally set out in a formal layout of elm avenues. The church in the grounds was used as a mausoleum by the successive residents of the Hall. Octagonal pigeon house attached to Platten Hall

According to 'The parish of Duleek and over the Ditches' Platten was purchased from the Forfeited Estates Court by Alderman John Graham of Drogheda. John Graham was the eldest son of Robert Graham of Ballyheridan, Co. Armagh. The Darcy family had held the property before the Battle of the Boyne. Platten being between Oldbridge and Duleek featured in the battle of the Boyne. Graham erected the three-storey red-brick mansion where he resided until his death in 1717. His second son, William, succeeded as he disinherited his first son, Richard.

Mrs. Delaney (Pendarves) wrote of the Christmas at Platen in 1732 - 'We are to have a ball, and a ball we had; nine couples of as clover dancers as ever tripped. We began at seven, danced thirty-six dances, with only resting once, supped at twelve, everyone by their partner at a long table which was handsomely filled with all manners of cold meats, sweetmeats, creams and jellies. Two or three young ladies sang. At two we started dancing again; most of the ladies determined not to leave Platten till daybreak so we dance on until we were not able to dance any longer. We did not get to bed till past eight.' A regular visitor to the Grahams Mrs Delaney makes a number of mentions of balls in their home.

The extravagance of William Graham was a matter of public notoriety. Swift had to write to him as he did not meet the rent of a premises he held from St. Patrick's Cathedral. In 1734 Dean Swift wrote to Mrs. Delaney (Pendarves) that Mr. Graham was ruining himself as fast as possible. One of the bedrooms in the house was called the Duke's Room after the Duke of Dorset, Lord Lieutenant of Ireland who visited the house in 1732 when the Boyne Obelisk was unveiled.

William Graham died in 1748 and was succeeded by his son, John, who was M.P. for Drogheda 1749-1768. John married Dorothy Gorges of Kilbrew. John was High Sheriff of Meath in 1753. When John died in 1777 all his property went to his steward, Graves Chamney. Graves Chamney became heir as Graham said he had succeeded in 'taking me out of prison when my wife and relations would not relieve me.' He was obviously in gaol for debt. Graham resided for the most part in his house North Great Georges Street, Dublin rather than at Platten. A branch of the Graham family settled at Cromore House, Doneraile, Co. Cork.

In 1800 the property was sold to Robert Reeves of Dublin who bequeathed it to his second son, Samuel Speight Reeves. From Samuel the property passed to John Joseph Gradwell, High Sheriff of Drogheda in 1855. The Gradwells from Preston had already purchased Dowth Hall. Mr. Gradwell died in 1873 and was succeeded by his son, George Fitzgerald Gradwell. The Gradwells were involved in the milling trade in Drogheda. In 1876 Ellen Gradwell of Platten Hall held 615 acres in county Meath. He had three sons and was succeeded by the third son, Francis William Edward Gradwell in 1933 and he was living in the house in 1941. The house passed through the hands of T.J. O'Neill and D'Arcy Slone. The house became derelict and was demolished.



Pigeon house at Platin, Photo: Kieran Campbell

Posseckstown

Posseckstown house is just outside Enfield on the road to Trim. In the civil parish of Rathcore it was the property of Mr. Kettlewell in 1835 and leased to Mr. Rynd and Mrs Domegan, Enfield. The red brick house was probably built about 1870. William Potterton purchased the property in 1923 and when his son died the property passed to his sister, Alice Weld, and then to her daughter, Mona Foster.

Possextown House

Located east of Nobber Posseckstown House is a detached three-bay, two-storey over basement house, dating to about 1800. In 1837 Joseph F. Hopkins was living at Possextown House, Nobber. Francis Hopkins was baptised in Nobber in 1885. The Meade family have occupied the house in recent yerars.

Priestown House

Priestown House is located on the east side of the road from Ratoath to Dunboyne in the civil parish of Kilbride. Sometimes it has been wrongly described as being in Mulhuddart, County Dublin.

Theobald Butler was the first of the family to occupy Priestown. He was a descendant of James the second Baron of Dunboyne. His son, James succeeded him at Priestown. The family occupied the property from at least the early 1700s. Richard Butler, son of James Butler of Priestown, became a clergyman in Kilkenny. His son, also Richard, became Rector of Trim and Dean of Clonmacnoise. He wrote the first history of Trim

castle in the 1830s. James, son of James Butler, became Anglican Chaplain at Bad Homburg in

Hesse, then one of Europe's most fashionable health resorts. Some 140 years later, his great

great granddaughter, Valerie Pitman inherited Priesttown.

James Butler was succeeded at Priesttown by his grandson, James. In 1835 the townland of Priesttown was the property of Rev. James Butler. The house was described as a modern neat two storey slated house in good repair and was the residence of Rev. James Butler. There were twenty one acres of plantation around the house. The offices were commodious and in good repair.

One of the Butlers had an accident and his arm was damaged. He was brought to Dublin to have it amputated. Before the operation he asked the surgeon to put the arm to one side for him because he wanted to take it home with him and bury it in Kilbride cemetery where he himself would be buried one day. "After all" he said "I don't want to be going into heaven with only one arm". He was known ever after as "Fisty" Butler. His brother was priest at the Spa in Wiesbaden, Germany. When he went hunting he held the reins in his teeth and held onto the saddle with one hand

Thomas Butler held Priesttown in 1850s. Thomas Butler of Priesttown House held 509 acres in county Meath in 1876. Thomas Butler J.P. of Priesttown House died in 1900 in his 77th year. During renovations in the early 1900s a priest's hiding hole was discovered at Priesttown during renovations. Inside was discovered a priest's chalice.

James Tottenham Butler inherited Priesttown from his uncle in 1900 and he married Geraldine Osborne, daughter of Henry Osborne of Dardistown Castle in 1906. His mother was the daughter of Tottenham Alley, Hill of Ward, Athboy. James was a Major in the Meath Militia. James T. Butler died in 1928 in his 68th year. Mrs. Geraldine Butler was a keen gardener and her daffodil and roses won prizes at shows. There were five gardeners at Priesttown during her time. Mrs. Butler spent her summers at her house in Howth. Geraldine B.M. Butler who died in 1966 in her 94th year.

She and the Major had no children and she left her house in Howth to her brother Henry Osborne. Priesttown was bequeathed to Valerie Pitman who farmed the lands. Miss Pitman was the first to introduce silage making, winter barley and oilseed rape to the area. She had a collection of letters, deeds and accounts for Priesttown dating back to the eighteenth century. She married Henry Gerard Wellesley in 1969. It was his fourth marriage. He was son of Lord Cowley, direct descendant of Gerald Valerian the younger brother of the Duke of Wellington. She died in August 2009.