



Máire Bean Uí Ógáin on her retirement from Bruff Library.

Davy Hogan 1975.

Ó hÓGÁIN

By Hazel Ní Ógáin Sweeney

Introduction (by Book Committee)

The Ó hÓgáin family of Grange lived on the Galloway Estate, in the house subsequently to become the home of Michael Lombard and his family. Davy Hogan and his family lived there when he was employed as a groom. Davy was a horseman of some renown. A number of Davy's and Mary's (nee Tyrell) children were born in Grange and attended Grange National School.

In pursuit of employment, Davy was forced to relocate to Bruff, where his son, Dáithí, was born in 1949.

The Ó hÓgáin family members are truly gifted, intellectually and academically. They are known throughout Ireland and internationally for their learning and the imparting of knowledge to others, variously through teaching, lecturing, and formal writing on a range of subject matters. Their great granduncle was the celebrated historian of Ossory, Canon William Carrigan.

A shared passion is their love of all things Irish: language, dance, folklore, storytelling, history, places, events and archaeology, to name some.

Dáithí (by Book Committee)

It is most unlikely that his siblings will mind if praise for Dáithí Ó hÓgáin is sung with gusto. Dáithí, Emeritus Professor UCD, who passed away in 2011 after an illness was an exceptional academic. He had an enormous capacity for research, learning, teaching and formal writing. He was a poet in both Irish and English. He passed on knowledge at every opportunity to his university students and others over decades. Dáithí's reputation and fame spread far and wide, but this did not, in any way, alter the essence of the man – always willing to share, explore, assist and advise, without any pretentious behaviour, in fact quite the opposite.

Irish was spoken in the family home, and at De La Salle National School, Bruff, Dáithí got a good grounding in Irish grammar. His grasp of the language was further improved by visits to the Kerry Gaeltacht.

He was awarded a Limerick County Council scholarship and continued his education at the CBS Limerick. A second scholarship in 1967 brought him to UCD,

where he studied Irish, English, philosophy and history. He graduated in 1970 and secured an MA in 1971.

He then joined RTÉ and worked as a journalist for eighteen months. From there he moved to the Irish Folklore Archive at UCD, taking up a position as a researcher under the directorship of Professor Bo Almqvist.

In 1976, he completed his doctorate, and his thesis formed the basis for *An File*.

A former member of the Sinn Féin Ard Comhairle in the 1970s, he was involved in policymaking and was associated with the development of the federal Éire Nua programme. Later he threw his energy into participating in various initiatives centred on Irish cultural heritage and the organisation of folk schools and summer schools on a regional basis.

A constant collector of folklore in Irish and English, he procured some precious traditional Irish manuscripts for the Irish Folklore Archive.

He was rapporteur-general at the UNESCO conference in Paris in 1987, at which that organisation's policy on the preservation of world folklore heritage was decided.

In 1989, he was a founding member of the European Centre for Traditional Cultures in Budapest, later travelling to conferences across Europe and further afield.

He also was, in the early 1990s, a founder of Craobh na hÉigse, an organisation dedicated to infusing new interest into the writing and reading of Irish language material. And he was a founder of the Irish National Folk Company, which liaised with many youth festivals in Europe.

He wrote seven collections of poetry, six in Irish and one in English. He also wrote three collections of short stories as well as a series of books on Irish surnames. He wrote many other books as well.

He regularly contributed to radio and television programmes. He appeared on a TG4 documentary on the origins of the ballad Molly Malone. His research showed that what has become the Dublin GAA supporters' anthem was written by a Scotsman in the 1880s as a send-up of the Irish taste for lamentation. He was a stalwart of Cumann Merriman.

Hurling was the first love enjoyed by Dáithí. Bruff lost two County Limerick minor hurling finals in 1965 and 1966. Dáithí played in the 1965 decider against Old Christians in torrential rain at Kilmallock, and he was well acquainted with some of the Old Christians team as he was a student in Limerick CBS. On the Bruff team with Dáithí were, Grange men, Jack Clancy and Tommy O'Connell and possibly others.

Hazel (by Book Committee)

Hazel Ní Ógáin Sweeney worked in the civil service in her earlier career and subsequently qualified as a school teacher, a profession practiced until her retirement. Hazel lived in Grange until she was six and a half years old when the family relocated to Bruff. Her memories of those Grange years were written for this book and her

story, beautifully told, humorous at times, is produced in full below. During those early years, Hazel would have gazed at Lough Gur, Knockadoon and other hills on a daily basis. It is, therefore, no surprise that she formed a love of local history and archaeology, and in 1975 she wrote an article for *The Dawn*, which is also reproduced below.

Éamonn (by Book Committee)

Éamonn, Hazel's brother, wrote the "Foreword (*Réamhrá*)" to this book. Grange people are both grateful and privileged that he took on the task enthusiastically and expertly. The Foreword is both incisive and enjoyable to read. Written by a literary author of standing, the Foreword enhances the book significantly. Éamonn is a renowned scholar of the Irish Language.

Professions of Siblings (by Book Committee)

EAMONN worked as director and editor in the Royal Irish Academy in Dawson Street, Dublin.

HAZEL worked as a teacher of Irish in the Technical Institute, Ringsend, Dublin. ANN worked in the Civil Service but had to resign when she got married as was the rule then.

JIM worked as a teacher of Irish and English in St Paul's Secondary School for boys in Raheny, Dublin.

THÉRÈSE went to live in Canada and taught for some years there.

DÁITHÍ (deceased) was Professor of Folklore in University College Dublin.

JOE taught mathematics at the Technical Institute, Ringsend, Dublin and is a part-time lecturer of mathematics at Trinity College, Dublin.

Childhood Memories of Living in Grange (by Hazel Ní Ógáin Sweeney – 2015)

I loved living in Grange. I lived there for the first six and a half years of my life, and when I look back on that time, I realise that it was an idyllic place in which to start one's life. Even the name Grange has a lovely musical ring to it especially in the Irish version of it "An Ghráinseach". I began my life in Grange because my father, Davy Hogan, got a job as a groom in Galloway's. Both my parents, Davy and Mary, were from Kilkenny and Grange was not too unlike the area in Kilkenny from which they came. A house came with the job, and so I lived with my parents and brothers and sisters in a small house on Galloway's land and not too far away from their big house. There was a hill at the back of our house on which tall trees and bluebells and primroses grew. I cannot ever remember being in the precincts of the big house, I don't think I even knew what the front of it looked like. Years later I went with my husband to show him where I had lived as a child, and it was only then that I really saw the main house.

Life was different then and children and adults mixed very naturally and so we as children were very friendly with the people who worked at Galloway's. My

earliest memory is, when I was about three years old, wandering in to the cow-house, which was a little bit down from our house. Chris Madden, who worked at Galloway's, used to milk the cows in the evening, and I remember being there with him and watching him milking. Of course, I used to love when he would squirt the milk at me from the cow's teat. Another vivid memory I have from around that age is being surrounded by a pack of foxhounds on the pathway near the cow house and not being the slightest bit frightened. The hunt used to pass through the fields beside our house and it was a great thrill for us children to hear the sound of the hunting horn and to see the men in their red coats on the horses being followed by the hounds. As we were children, we didn't give much thought to the poor fox!

I also remember around that time that Mr Shanahan (Jack), who was a building contractor from Bruff, was doing some work on the big house. Johnny Brien from Ballingirlough was working with him, and I and my siblings, Nap [*Éamonn*] and Ann, used to sit with him and Johnny while they were having their lunch. Johnny used to want me to say the 'S' word, and he used to say to me "Say s..t Hazel and I'll give you a spoon of sugar". He got a kick out of me, as a child, saying it, (innocent days!). Johnny remained a very good friend of our family even after we had moved to Bruff. Nap, my older brother, and I used to spend a lot of time playing on the hill at the back of our house and I remember one day when we were there we suddenly heard a pounding of hooves behind us. When we looked behind, we saw Paddy, the workhorse, who was quite cross, galloping towards us so needless to say we ran like the wind. He was a big horse, and he had big warts on his face. We could see the lake at Lough Gur very clearly from the hill and one day we thought we saw things moving over there. We were fully convinced that it was the fairies, and we ran in to tell our mother that we had seen the fairies. It probably was the wind blowing the rushes on the lake but to us it looked like little bodies moving around. The trees on the hill were homes to hundreds of crows and they always made a great racket when they were heading home for the night, it was a great sight to see them all flying home together.

My father and mother had many good friends in Grange, and there were always people in our house in the evenings. Danny and Bridget Dwyer were very close friends and Danny, who was a great storyteller, was a regular visitor in the evening. He is my brother Jim's Godfather and both Danny and Bridget continued to visit us when we moved to Bruff. Maggie Donovan and her sister, Janie, were also good friends of my mother, and they often helped out when there was a new baby in the house, Maggie is Jim's Godmother. Jack Harty was another caller as was Pat Daly from the Lake, who is my sister Therese's Godfather. My father and he had a great interest in greyhounds. Jamesie Flavin was another 'greyhound' man and he very often came, not only to discuss greyhounds with my father but also to supply

the entertainment for the evening as he was a good fiddle player. Johnny Ryan, who used to help my father with the horses at that time, dropped in occasionally.

There was many a game of cards played in our house so between the storytelling, the music and the card playing there were no dull evenings. We children would have to go to bed early, and I remember well sneaking out of bed and sitting on the stairs to listen to all the fun in the kitchen and wishing I was there. Mrs Moloney and her husband Jim were good friends also as were Mrs McInerney and her husband Pat and their daughter Angela. Mrs Moloney looked after me when I was just a few months old; my mother had to go in to Barrington's Hospital with a threatened appendicitis. Their daughter Phyllis brought my brother Nap to school on his first day. Nurse Duggan, the local midwife, lived near the Moloney's. She assisted at the birth of three of my siblings, Ann, Jim and Therese and she is Ann's Godmother. John Keeffe supplied our family with milk, and Nap and I used go and collect it every evening. He also had greyhounds, so my father and he had a common interest.

My education began in Grange National School when I was five years old. The three teachers in the school were Mr Lynch, who was the headmaster, Mrs Power and Mrs O'Donnell. Mrs Power was my teacher. I remember that Lucy Brien and Mary Riordan, both from Holycross, were in my class as was Jim Donoghue and the Master's son Colm Lynch. I was a ciotóg, but I must have been changed as I now write with my right hand and do everything else with my left. I do not remember being made to change. Opposite the school was Mr Kelly's shop, and he used to sell 'conversation' lozenges. They were heart-shaped, and each sweet had a little message written on it. We children loved them because seeing what was written on them was exciting for us. A penny's worth of those made us happy for the day! My mother used to do all her shopping in Mr Kelly's. He was a very nice man, and she used to get her messages 'on tick' and pay at the weekend when my father got his wages. Mrs Walshe lived next door to the shop, and she had a little dog called 'Fairy'. 'Fairy' was very spoiled and would snap at anyone who went near her, so we kept well away.

Nap and I used to walk to school through the graveyard, then we would pass McInerney's house and then on through Upper Grange to the top of the hill where we turned left to get to the school which was a little further down. There was a sort of avenue leading down from our house to the little door which opened in to the graveyard. There was a field beside this avenue and one time there was a very wicked white cow in it. Every time we passed this field the cow used to race down towards us bellowing loudly. We were really scared of her, and our mother had to accompany us on our way to school until we got to the door into the graveyard. Later we found out that the poor cow was distraught with grief because her calf

had been taken from her, and she was frantically looking for it. Galloway's walled garden was along that avenue, but it was out of bounds for us. We used to look in through the gate on our way home from school, and I can still see the lovely blue lupins and roses that grew in there. Jim Molyneux was the gardener at the time, and we could see him in through the gate working away. In the spring, there were always masses of bluebells and primroses growing along that avenue. However, despite the exciting times we had on our way to and from school I used to feel very lonely for my mother while at school. Eventually, I refused to go to school without my sister, Ann, who was a year younger than I and only four years old at the time. I wasn't quite so lonely when I had my sister with me, so poor Ann had to go to school when she was only four, which was very young then to start school.

My happy life in Grange ended when I was almost seven years old. My father no longer had work in Galloway's and so had to look for work elsewhere. We had to leave our little house which was surrounded by the hedge that my brother Nap had set when he was six years old and which had lovely nasturtiums growing in the garden. It is many years ago since I left that house, but whenever I see nasturtiums and get their smell I am transported back to my happy childhood while living in Grange.



Back: Nap Hogan, 3rd row: Mary O'Dwyer, Máire Bean Uí Ógáin (kneeling), 2nd row: Ann, Hazel and, in front: Jim Hogan and Pat O'Dwyer being held by his mam Bridget (partially out of shot)

The Archaeological Importance of Lough Gur (by Hazel Ní Ógáin Sweeney – 1975)

About three miles north-east of Bruff, lies the well-known lake of Lough Gur. Lough Gur, being a very beautiful place, is a source of great pleasure for the people of the surrounding area. The nearest sea-side resort is about fifty miles away. So, on a hot summer's day, the shore of Lough Gur is packed with people who have all come to cool themselves in the soft waters of the lake. The scenic beauty of the place and the calm which it exudes gives one a great feeling of peace and tranquillity. [has become well known over the decades, nationally and internationally]

However, another aspect of the Lough Gur area which tends to be forgotten and perhaps about which not very much is known, is how interesting a place it is in the sphere of archaeology. Not alone is it interesting but is one of the most important archaeological sites in the country. Excavations were carried out in this area in the 1950s, as many of the local people will remember,

and the findings from those excavations were to result in Lough Gur being one of the foremost sites in the country. It was found that this area has been inhabited from about 3000 BC [4000 BC] up to the present day. Evidence of remains from all the Ages have been found, ie, the Stone Age, Bronze Age, Iron Age and the Middle Ages. We will speak here about a few of the finds from the different Ages.

The Stone Age

It is remains of the Neolithic Period which are found in Lough Gur. The Neolithic, which means New Stone Age, dates in Ireland from around 3000 BC to around 2500 BC, and it was the age in which farming predominated. Man had begun to domesticate animals and plants; he began to sow and cultivate crops and to use animals for purposes other than just killing them for food. The dog was probably the first animal to be domesticated, and then the horse, which incidentally became a much bigger animal in its domestication. Stone, of course, was used for the making of all implements, hence the name Stone Age. Well, back to Lough Gur! What remains of the Neolithic period can be found here? Man always wanted a roof over his head, and Neolithic man was no exception to this, so we find the remains of Neolithic houses. These houses seem to have been mostly oval in shape, but a few rectangular ones have also been found. They are to be found at Knockadoon, which is the promontory projecting into the lake. If you do go to have a look at these houses, don't be disappointed, because you'll find only the foundation stones in a circular or rectangular form. The oval houses belong to the Neolithic Period, but some of the rectangular ones belong to the Bronze Age (which comes later). In those houses, remains of hearths were found, also pottery, pieces of stone axe-heads and some flint. About nine houses in all were found. Habitation there seems to have continued for a long time, the houses from the Bronze Age show this. One wonders what kind of life the farmer and his wife led in those days, plenty of food there for the present day Lough Gur farmers' imaginations!

The Bronze Age

The Bronze Age follows the New Stone Age, so-called because people began to use bronze instead of stone for the making of implements; one can imagine what an advance this was. The Bronze Age in Ireland begins around 2500 BC. First of all, Bronze Age houses are found at Knockadoon (as has already been said). Those were sometimes superimposed on the Neolithic ones, which shows a continuation of the occupation of this site from Neolithic to Bronze Age times. Early Bronze Age pottery, known as Beaker pottery, was found there. This is very definite proof that the houses belong to the Bronze Age.

Remains of burial sites from this Age have also been found in the Lough Gur area. Strangely enough, no tombs from the Neolithic Period have been found in this area; however, there is one from the Bronze Age. This type of burial tomb is known as a Wedge-Shaped Gallery grave, and it is to be found in a field on the right side of the road to Lough Gur, just before one comes to Mrs Jarman's house. There are about three hundred and eighty of those tombs in Ireland, and they have a western distribution mostly. (County Clare abounds in them). They consist of a long chamber, broader and higher at one end. The chamber sides, and sometimes the end, are usually built of a double line of slabs, the roof is made of flat slabs, but sometimes the roof consists of one large slab. Examples of this type are found in County Clare. In the gallery grave at Lough Gur there is a small chamber at the western end; this is not a very common feature of those tombs although it does occur sometimes. Those tombs were used for collective burials and belong to the Early Bronze Age, indicated by the findings of Beaker Pottery in them.

Another feature of the Bronze Age in Ireland is Stone Circles. They are found in most parts of the country, and there are about one hundred and fifty of them altogether. They consist of a ring of Stones which may be continuous or may be separated one from the other. An earthen bank is sometimes associated with the circle of stones. At Grange, opposite Paddy [now Tim] Casey's house on the western side of the lake, is one of the biggest Stone Circles in the country. It is a very large Stone Circle; it being about one hundred and fifty feet in diameter, and it has a massive bank that is about fifty feet in width. The Stone Circle and the bank must have been contemporary because the stones are supported by the bank. The entrance to the bank is lined at either side with small upright stones and gives access to the interior between two large portal stones. Bronze objects have been found here eg a bronze bracelet, part of a bronze awl and a strap of bronze. There are different theories what those Stone Circles were. Professor Hawkins of Boston University says in his article in "Antiquity" that there may have been (a) moon and sun observatories, (b) a counting device for predicting the extremes of the moon on the horizon and for eclipses, and (c) that they may represent a particular example of a general culture. Stonehenge in England is an example of a very massive Stone Circle.

The Iron Age

The remains from the Iron Age which we have in the Lough Gur area are two strongly built Stone Forts. They can be found in Tim Crowe's field [*now the property of Pat Mulcahy*], which is on the left-hand side of the road going to the lake and about four hundred yards from the Cross of Lough. Those ringforts are the commonest type of monument in the country, there being about thirty

thousand of them altogether. They can be built of stone or earth, the stone ones have a western distribution, stone being very plentiful all along the west coast. In this part of the country all the ringforts are earthen ones, it is strange then that the two forts at Lough Gur are built of stone. One explanation may be that the people who built the forts in question may have migrated from Kerry, where the material used for building was stone. Those ring-forts, whether of earth or stone were usually dwelling places, the bank of earth or stone being sometimes used for defensive purposes. In the inside area, oval or rectangular houses can be found. With regard to the two forts at Lough Gur which are called Carraig Aille I and II, the first one is about thirty metres in diameter and has walls three to four metres thick. It has an entrance which is one and a half metres wide and on the inside there are steps leading up to the wall. There is no greater evidence of well-built houses here, the remains found are more like that of huts or lean-to structures; this means that the wall was used as one side of the houses. Carraig Aille II is about thirty-five metres in diameter and has very massive walls. There are also lean-to structures here but remains of round and rectangular houses have also been found. There is also a trace of a small compartment which probably served as a shelter for a single person, perhaps for a sentry. There is evidence of a long period of occupation because there is a change in housebuilding between the earliest layer and the subsequent ones. Remains of the Roundhouses were found on the first layer and in the second there are traces of rectangular ones. People continued to live here long after the ramparts had fallen into disuse because they had built one house partly over the destroyed fort wall and other rectangular houses with walled yards, outside the fort. The eighth century AD is the earliest date to which the fort can be assigned. Evidence from Carraig Aille II shows that it had a farming community, a plough sock and shears being two of the finds from there.

On the island in the lake, there are the remains of an old building. This is said to have been the castle of Georoid Iarla, the fourteenth Earl of Desmond, who is said to still haunt the lake. In the fifteenth century, three castles were built at Lough Gur, they were strongholds of the Earls of Desmond. The Black Castle or the remains of this castle can be found at the foot of Knockadoon, on the north-east side of it. It can be seen, in from the road, across from Wesley Wesley's. *[now the De Bossinger family property]*

The second castle is "Bourchier's Castle", which was one of the principal strongholds of the Earls of Desmond. After the defeat of the Desmond Rebellion, Elizabeth I of England granted it to Bourchier. This is the castle which is near Thomas Ryan's house. Thirdly, there is a low mound on Knockfennel. It is said a castle stood there, but if so there is no information about it.

Lough Gur is well worth a visit; when one is there, the atmosphere of the place seems to force one's thoughts back to the past. It is a lovely place to look at and a very, very interesting place to think about.

References and Notes:

(1) <http://www.ainm.ie/Bio.aspx?ID=3043>

(2) Editorial Note: It is recognised that since Hazel wrote her article on Lough Gur some forty years ago, new 'thinking' on the archaeology of the area has emerged (and continues to do so) in some respects, particularly with regard to 'dating'. This does not detract from her most informative account.

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