The Kilkenny Field Name
Recording Project

MEITHEAL NA bPÁIRCEANNA

Looking East from Ossory Hill

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Contents

Foreword

This book provides a preliminary synopsis of the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project which records the old field names in the county. Six years of endeavour and partnership are presented in this beautiful publication which we hope will be treasured by all. Kilkenny is a rural county with a rich farming heritage. The naming of fields is an important part of that heritage and of local folklore.

The Project is a wonderful example of the Heritage Office of Kilkenny County Council working with local communities for mutual benefit. Kilkenny County Council is proud to have supported the project through the work of the Heritage Office, the County Heritage Forum and funding through the County Heritage Plan. The assistance of the Heritage Council is acknowledged and much appreciated.

We are deeply indebted to those who engaged with the project. Tremendous voluntary work has been undertaken by the community in the process. The project and publication have only been made possible through several thousand voluntary working hours provided by local people and local communities.

This publication provides a lasting legacy, which will become a valuable reference source in the future. It demonstrates the importance of heritage to local communities and the benefits of developing partnerships between Kilkenny County Council and local communities.

The publication will also promote the continuation and expansion of the Field Name Recording Project to other communities in County Kilkenny and beyond.

Cllr. Matt Doran
Cathaoirleach
Kilkenny County Council

Colette Byrne
Chief Executive
Kilkenny County Council

Introduction

The vision of the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project is to work with, and facilitate, local communities to record the old field names of County Kilkenny, and to establish a permanent and publicly accessible archive of the results.

The project is funded under the County Heritage Plan Programme by both Kilkenny County Council and the Heritage Council. The Kilkenny Heritage Forum have supported and promoted the project since its inception.

The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project is a celebration, and defence, of the local; local heritage and local communities. Recording field names is a tangible link to the past. A name such as *Hickey's Field* recalls where a long departed family once lived and worked. *Donkey's Field* suggests where an animal was once grazed. *The Mill Field* may relate to a building and industry which has long vanished.

Place-naming, and its importance, has been studied by many in Ireland and internationally, and we have gladly drawn on their experiences and expertise. It is fitting that one of the greatest scholars of Irish place names and place name mapping, was a Kilkenny man, John O'Donovan, born in 1806 near Slieverue. Today, almost 200 years since O'Donovan produced his *Field Letters* for the Ordnance Survey, tools such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) enable us to digitally map the exact location of each field, in order to produce a permanent, on-line, searchable and accessible record.

The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project commenced in 2010 following discussions with the Kilkenny Heritage Forum, and taking its inspiration from the Townlands Project. It commenced with a series of internal consultative meeting and drafting sessions. Over the intervening six years, we have undertaken many public meetings, workshops and exhibitions throughout the county, produced survey

forms, collated results and enjoyed numerous chats over cups of tea in townlands throughout Kilkenny. Valuable advice and assistance was received from many sources, as outlined in the Acknowledgements section.

The engagement of Alan Counihan as the Project Co-ordinator has been of tremendous assistance to the project. Alan has worked with great vision, dedication and energy to facilitate the project reaching its current potential.

This publication marks a key milestone. Having collected over 7,000 field names across 190 townlands, we are now in a position to commence analysis for similarities, links, Irish language origins, etc.

Over 80 volunteers have contributed time, energy and thousands of voluntary work hours to the project. The occasion provides a valuable opportunity for us to express our gratitude to these volunteers and to celebrate the results of their endeavours. A sincere "Thank You" is formally extended to them all. Their tremendous dedication is very much appreciated and is simply invaluable. The success of the project is a testament to their contribution. The title of our book, *Meitheal na bPáirceanna, The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project,* signifies the co-operative nature of the partnership which developed to deliver the project. Working with such interested and dedicated people has been a joy and inspiration.

Within the pages of this publication the curious reader will find much of interest about the landscape of Kilkenny and its cultural heritage. The field names recorded by the project offer rich insights as to how previous generations have lived on the land, and the way we live and work within it now. This is really a book about places and the people who inhabit them. It includes an assessment and analysis of the most commonly recorded field names, and the categories or typologies of name. There are heartfelt contributions from some of our volunteers and a list of all volunteers who contributed to the

project. We have an essay exploring the field names and birthplace of John O'Donovan and a comprehensive glossary of Irish (Gaelic) field names recorded. We anticipate that this publication, and the accompanying database, will be invaluable to local people, students, heritage groups/historical societies, historians, geneaologists, Irish place name specialists, Irish language specialists, academic researchers and the diaspora.

The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project is a marvellous heritage and community initiative. It is most fitting that we have produced a publication of the highest standard which illustrates and documents our achievements to date, and sets a course for the continuation of the project. We hope that this publication will encourage and inspire others to record their local heritage.

Dearbhala Ledwidge
Heritage Officer
Kilkenny County Council

The Eleven Acres, Carrigeen

Harvest Time:
At Work in the Fields
Alan Counihan

View from Tobin's Hill, Tullabrin

The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project has been in existence since 2010. Beginning in that year with a partial field name survey of just one parish and one surveyor, the project has since coordinated and archived the survey work of over eighty survey volunteers and has recorded over 7,000 field names from 190 townlands in the process. An examination of the field names recorded over the past six years by the project shows that the overlay of these minor place names upon the county's landscape is rich and full of interesting detail; a patchwork fabric inlaid with the details and histories not only of individual families and the topography of the land within which, often over generations, they led or still lead out their lives, but also of their activities which have helped to form and shape the appearance of our landscape today. The names of our townlands, our fields and our landmarks are the essential threads that hold that quilted fabric together. If we do not tend to its stitching the entire weave will quickly unravel and the secrets of an oral heritage handed down across the generations will be lost forever.

Each separate field within our landscape has been a container of hopes and of memories for its owners down the years and almost every single one has had a name at some time or another. It is the individual families that have farmed and now farm those fields who most often have maintained their names across generations. In earlier

times the field names might have been more commonly known within a community through the sharing of work among farms at crucial times of the year most especially during the harvest. This sharing of work, or the 'Meitheal' as it was known, involved each farmer helping a neighbor to save the crop and receiving help to save his or her own crop in turn. People came together as a team for the mutual benefit of all.

The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project is such a 'Meitheal'. It involves the work of survey volunteers who give freely of their time to record the names of all the fields within the townlands where they live or where they were born. It involves the generosity of farmers and landowners whose sharing of privacies, of names families have given to their fields, enriches the community as a whole. Why do they do it? Within these pages some survey volunteers give expression to personal, historical, social or cultural reasons; in many instances all of these together. Whatever the reasons, underlying them all is an understanding of community, of what it is that makes a place unique and a desire to contribute towards its enrichment. This they all have done and the cultural heritage of this county and its landscape is all the richer for their work and their kindness.

Planning a survey, Gathabawn

Toberbríde, St Brigid's Well, Kells

The Harvest: Assessing the Work

L et us look at the field names that the 'Meitheal' of landowners and survey volunteers have harvested for the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project since its inception. To date the majority of field name surveys have been carried out in the east, south-east and north of the county. However, there is sufficient field name data available from other regions of Kilkenny to make some representative findings.

The field names recorded by the project's survey volunteers can be separated into various descriptive categories. It is no surprise to note that the primary category of field name recorded denotes private possession of a parcel of land, but there are many others that are more revealing not only of the lives of the owners, their

communities and their activities but also of the nature of the land itself and the heritage it contains.

Of all the field names recorded to date those denoting possession comprise by far the largest group. However, given the variety of ownership involved, that particular group or category does not contain the most commonly recurring field names. Those names that do occur with most frequency are listed in Table 1 (below).

Field name	Number of times recorded
The Quarry Field	53
The Well Field	49
The Kiln Field	41
The Rath Field	36
The Knock(s)	18
Coshier (Caitheamh Siar)	15
Three Corner	14
Cummer (Cumar)	11
Riasc	10

Table 1 The field names that occur with most frequency

It is no surprise that the three most popular field names recorded relate to the essential needs of people, animals, soil and habitation. While *The Well Field* is listed second in this table, when other field names that include the word '*Well*' are also considered – *Easka Well, Acre Well, The Soot Well, The Bog Well, Peg's Well, The Well Glen, The Well Hill, Staunton's Well Field, The Dipping Well* – it is clear that field names referring to wells and springs are by far the most common within the county. Water and access to it are of primary importance in the farmed landscape.

After water comes stone. *The Quarry Field* and *The Kiln Field* will be easily recognisable by most for their interrelated roles in the

provision of stone for building and the development of lime for the improvement of soil. *Three Corner* is a description of a three-cornered plot of ground.

The Rath Field signifies the presence, or erstwhile presence, of a rath or enclosure. The majority of raths in Ireland date to the early Medieval period between 500-1100 AD. The field name is most common in hilly country and poor pastureland. They are a rarity in the townlands so far recorded in the south of the county where most of the land is in tillage and many raths have been ploughed out over the years. The presence of a rath in a field is also acknowledged in other field names such as *The Raw,* or *Raheen*.

The Knock or *The Knocks* is a field name that occurs most frequently in South Kilkenny. It has not been recorded in townlands north of

Rath Field (Rath of Eremon), Rathbeagh

Kilkenny City. The root of the word lies in the Irish word *Cnoc* for a hill but *Knock* refers specifically to a small hill on which gorse, furze or whins are grown for fodder or firing.

Coshier (also recorded as *Caushier* or *Kosheer*) is a corruption of the Irish field name *Caitheamh Siar* which translates, literally, as *Throw Back* and refers to the agricultural practice of leaving a plot of land fallow for at least a year after a crop was harvested or after it having been reclaimed.

Cummer is a corruption of the Irish word *Cumar*, a ravine or gully, usually with water running through it while *Riasc* (often recorded as *Reeske*) signifies rough marshy land.

There are many other field names in both Irish and English that recur regularly but with less frequency throughout the county. Among these are *The Park, Páirc, Páircín, Crochtín* (very common in South Kilkenny and denoting a small field of less than half an acre), *Móintín* (a little bog), *Currach* (a wet bog or marsh), *The Slugh or Slugaise* (from S*logaire* in Irish, a swamp or swallow hole*), The Glen, The Closhaun (*possibly *Clóseán* a small stink mire or *Claiseán* a small trench*), The Triangle, The Pond Field, Cnocán (*a hillock*), Shanagarry (*from *Seangharraí,* Old Garden*), The Faha (*from *Faiche* in Irish, a lawn or level playing field*), Mointeáin (*a Boggy Place*), The Island, Cruckawn (Cruachán,* a Little Stack*) The Hatchet Field, The Road Field, The Field behind the House.*

The list would be much longer if variants and compound forms of the most commonly recurring field names were included.

A more effective way of examining the field names of Kilkenny will be to look closely at the categories into which they can be divided.

1. Possession

The most common form of field name denoting possession is one that defines a specific field or patch of ground as belonging to a particular individual or family. It is sometimes the case that the field name still exists after the individual has died or the family has left the farm. Typical examples include *Tom's Acre, Peg's Meadow, Mag Brigid's Haggard, Magree's Meadow, Harper's Field, Moll's Bog, Tadie's Well, Dwyer's Corner, Tobin's Hill, Holland's Glen, Foskin's Knock, Finn's Field, Daniel's Garden and Watt's Gap.*

However, many field names denoting possession are less specific in their description of the field or land in question. Examples of these include:

Walshe's, Dowling's, Disney's, Hogan's, Minister Murphy's, Mollie Gaule's, Maisie Dargan's, Biddy's, Coady's, Wall's, Kinsella's, Bags Ryan's etc.

In some townlands there can be a predominance of field names denoting possession. In the townland of Three Castles in Freshford Parish 89% of the field names recorded denote possession in forms similar to those listed above.

While field names denoting possession tell us little about the landscapes of Kilkenny they do hold a history about its inhabitants, often stretching back generations, and they are of particular interest to genealogists.

2. Location

One of the primary reasons for naming a field in the first instance is in order to distinguish one particular patch of ground from another and to locate it specifically within the farm. Field names that specify a particular location form the second largest category of field names recorded. Some examples of these are listed below:

The Road Field, The Cross Field, Bridge Field, River Meadow, The Church Meadow, The Back of the Chapel Field, Field under the Pit Field, Under

Reek, Over The Car Road, The Cowhouse Paddock, The Back of the Meat Factory.

Apart from the rich history that might be associated with ancient buildings of prayer or other monuments these are otherwise strictly utilitarian labels that tell us little apart from the fact that a silage pit, a cowhouse or a meat factory may have adjoined, or been located in, the field in question.

There is another type of field name denoting location that describes a field in terms of its relationship to other fields or its location within the farm.

Upper Field, Middle Field, Lower Field, Far Field, Near Hill, Back Field, Over Wire, Under Wire, Upper Bog, Lower Bog, First Bog, Second Bog, The Back Meadow, The Far Strips, Field across the Road, The Field below the Silage Pit Field, Field opposite John Dalton, Fornint Brophy's, The Height.

There is a final type within this category that describes a field directly in relation to the farmhouse itself, and these are the most common type of field names denoting location.

Paddock over the House, Back of the House, Field in front of the Door, The Field under the Door, The Hall Door.

3. Size

The third largest category of field names recorded is that which denotes the size of a field. Again the appellations are strictly utilitarian and offer little to the imagination.

The Twenty Nine Acres, The Twenty Acres, The Twelve Acres, The Seven Acres, The Four Acres, The Three Acres, The Acre.

A more descriptive type of field name also falls within this category.

The Long Field, Big Meadow, The Long Garden, Big Drain Field, Big Little Field.

The three categories examined so far clearly reveal a practical and utilitarian nature although some field names among them do reveal historical riches within their surrounding landscape.

4. Shape and Topography

The utilitarian emphasis is also constant in one type of field name denoting the shape of a field, especially one that is not rectangular.

The Triangle, Three Corner, The Three Corner Field, Upper Three Corner, Lower Three Corner, The Triangle Bog, Ciarsúir (a handkerchief; "so named as its triangular shape looks like a gentleman's pocket handkerchief ")[1].

In the following examples of field names in this category the language grows more descriptive and allows one to better imagine the landscape within which the field is situated.

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1 Quoted by Noelle Phelan, Survey Volunteer.

The Humpy Field, The Narrow Neck, The Humpy Back Field, Long Tail, Bell Field, Flat Field, The Hollow Fields, The Steep Part.

The final type of field name within this category offers a broader view of the landscape and provides descriptions of its topography.

The Glen, The Hills, The Marshes, The Bogs, The Rocks, The Bottoms.

5. Soil Type

This category of field names is a small one but it does contain names that provide practical and utilitarian information about the nature of the soil within a field or holding that would have been essential to any farm family. Some of the names involved are more imaginative and revealing than others.

Dry Field, Sand Corner, The Hungry Field, The Hungry Corner, The White Sand, The Bad Acres, The Big Rushy, Spewy Bog.

6. Vegetation (Crops and Wild Plants)

The category of field names that describe vegetation or crops within a field or landscape is large and varied. It ranges from descriptions of grasses and crops to those of trees, fruits, wild plants and flowers. Those field names that refer to grasses and tillage crops are most likely recent, probably temporary, and dependent upon the ability of the soil within the field to carry them. They are a good example of the dynamic nature of field names.

Here follow some examples of field names recorded by survey volunteers that denote grasses and other crops.

The Grass Seed, Hayseed, The Rye Grass, Trefoil, The Rapes, The RVP [2], The New Grass, Big Clover.

Tillage Field, Barley Hill, Corn Field, The Rye Field, The Oaten Paddock.

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2 RVP is an Italian rye grass blend grown for pasture and silage.

Beech Trees in Micky Walshe's, Tullabrin

Turnip Field, Potato Field, Pea Field, Beet Field, The Mangle Haggard [3].
Then there are those examples of field names that refer to crop storage.

The Rick of Straw, The Reek, The Hay Haggard, The Silage Pit Field.

Also within the category of field names denoting vegetation are those
fruits that can be harvested whether they grow wild in the hedgerows of
the field or within its bounds. Some of these include:

The Wild Orchard, Paírc an Úill*, The Apple Garden, The Pear Field, The
Blackcurrant Field, The Cherry Field, Chestnut Field, Sloe Pit.*

Included here also are those field names denoting harvestable plants
which, though often inedible, were essential to subsistence or self-
sufficient lifestyles in earlier times. Among these were willow and hazel
rods upon which the making of baskets and of thatching scollops

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3 A Mangle (also Mangel) is a member of the beet family of root crops with a high fodder
output.

depended and which gave rise to names such as:

The Sally Field, Sally Garden, and *The Osiery.*

Given that the category of vegetation should encompass all that grows within a landscape or field we include those field names that describe the plants which grow on more marginal ground:

Mossy Field, The Rushy Field, The Ferny Field, The Furzy Field, The Furry Knock, Fraoch Mór (Big Heather), Thistle Field, The Furze Corner, Scrub.

Wild Iris / Yellow Flag

Field names describing the wildflowers that flourished in some fields during the year, some of which might have been used for dye, also belong to this category:

The Flaggers (Wild Iris), The Cuckoo Flower Field, Daisy Field, Poppy Field, The Dreimire Buí (Yellow Wort).

Finally there are those field names that describe woodland or fields bounded by mature trees:

The Beech Wood, The Deal Trees, The Crab Trees, The Ash Meadow, The Holly.

All of the field names within this category allow us to imagine the landscape within which they occur.

7. Animals (Livestock and Wildlife)

While smaller and less diverse, the category of field names denoting animals that are, or once were, kept within the fields is equally revealing.

This category can be divided into those field names that refer to animal husbandry such as:

Horse Field, Sheep Field, Calf Field, Pet Field, The Mare's Field, Ass's Field, The Bull Field, The Goat Field, The Pig's Field, The Cow Park, Páirc na mBó, The Stallion Field, The Deer Park, Ducks' Field, The Cat's Garden, The Bees' Field.

It also includes those field names that refer to the habitations or visits of wild animals:

The Covert, Fox Shore, Fox Field, Fox Cover Hill, The Hare Field, Rabbit Field, Rabbit Burrow, The Burrows, Badgers' Field, The Snipe Bog, The Cock Field, The Wild Boar.

The Rookery, Gort Filibín (Field of the Lapwing), Tobar na gColm (Well of the Dove), Tobar na Snaga (Well of the Snails).

Sheep in Coolnabrone

8. Activities (Work, Play and Prayer)

This is a fascinating category for it reveals many surpising activities that offer an insight into the life of communities, of work and of human interaction. Among its contents are the following field names:

The Fair Field, The Smithy Field, Forge Field, The Crush, The Brickyard, The Fish Market, The Pig Market, The Sallies, The Osiery, The Kerry Hole, Milking Field, Sandpit Field, Colliery Field, Pit Yard, Bore Hole, Air Shaft, The Ferryman's Corner, The Dump.

Many of the activities and trades to which the field names refer are those that we would expect to find within any townland but there are one or two surprises. *The Fish Market* is a field in the parish of Lisdowney far from the sea and a good distance from the River Nore. *The Pig Market* refers to an area of commonage on the upper slopes of the townland of Ballygub New that seems an unliklely location for a pig market although the name avers its existence. *The Kerry Hole* refers to a stretch of the River Clodiagh where sheep (Caora) used to be washed and dipped in years gone by. *Pit Yard, Bore Hole* and *Air Shaft* refer to the small mines that were once active within those fields of Firoda Lower or Glenmagoo in the Castlecomer area.

There are many other activities referred to in the field names of this category, many of them to do with sport, such as:

The Hurling Field, The Racecourse, The Coursing Field, The Cricket Field, The Football Field, The Tennis Court.

Other activities referred to allow us imagine the fields and lanes recorded as once being full of lively music, of hushed prayer and of laughter:

The Piper's Garden, The Piper's Stile, The Mass Rock, The Mass Field, The Pleasure Ground.

The Pleasure Ground might at first suggest a field for the enjoyments of the senses or the flesh although its owner might have been unlikely to so boldly advertise its attractions. The name is not an unusual one

Moneyhole, Ballyrafton

being most often associated with landed estates of which there once was one in the townland of Clone where this field name was recorded. There is also a *Pleasure Ground* in Woodstock Demesne near Inistioge.

9. Historic Events and Legends

Field Names within this category often refer to national events that impinged on the lives lived out among these fields and that had a powerful effect upon them. Among field names in this category that were recorded in the course of the work of the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project are:

Parnell's Garden, Poll Leabhair, Poll Saighdúirí, Barrack Field, Grenadier's Paddock, Cú Bhuí (Con Bhuidhe), The Shells, The Waste.

Parnell's Garden refers to a rally allegedly held by Charles Stuart

Parnell in the course of the North Kilkenny By-Election of 1890. The field name is inscribed on the cut stone pillars that lead into this field in Tullabrin townland.

Poll Leabhair (Hole of the Book) in Rathbeagh townland refers to a local legend that the forces of Oliver Cromwell threw the Holy Book of Rathbeagh Church, which they had just sacked, into a quarry hole in this field.

The field name *Cu Bhuí (Con Bhuidhe),* recorded by the volunteer as *The Cunawee*, is given to several fields in the townlands of Grogan and Davidstown in the Slieverue/Glenmore area of South Kilkenny and clearly predates the enclosure of that landscape. The field name refers to an old legend telling of the arrival of St. Patrick to lands near Ballincrea village. According to that legend an old woman of that place sent him a pie as a gift of welcome. The saint was wary of that gift and, having examined it closely, found its primary ingredient to be the body of a large yellow hound that he then brought back to life. However, upon seeing the animal run wildly away the saintly man thought better of his mercy and had the animal slaughtered again. Insulted by the gift, he put a curse upon the inhabitants of the place so that they would never throughout time be without a lame, deaf or dumb person. This field name also occurs in the townland of Atateemore or Blackneys, birth place of the great 19th-century scholar of Irish place names, John 0'Donovan, who in 1851 provided a great written description of the legend[4].

Fields called *The Shells* in Coolnamuck townland in the parish of Inistioge derive their name from a mortar barrage by the Black and Tans who were stationed across the river at Woodstock House during the War of Independence.

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4   *On the Traditions of the County of Kilkenny*; John O'Donovan, Transactions of the Kilkenny Archaeological Society, Vol 1, No 3, pp 362-372, Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, 1851.

The Castle Field, Sandfordscourt

The Waste is associated with the overnight disappearance of 14 families from Aughkiletaun townland in the parish of Powerstown during the years of the Great Famine.

All of the field names cited above tell of real or legendary events that happened within the county's landscape, lending it a great cultural richness.

10. Monuments and Distinctive Features

This category is dominated by a field name, The Rath Field, already discussed previously (p.13). However, there are several others which might also be included and which similarly refer to the presence of historic or archaeological monuments.

Bullaun, High Bullaun, Low Bullaun, The Stone Row, The Moat, Castle Field, Near Court Field.

A red gate in Higginstown

Some of these field names retain the echoes of other ancient presences in our landscape. The name *Bullaun* (Ballán: a hollowed stone) is associated with the ritual practices of early Christianity and perhaps even earlier spiritual practice in Ireland. This would also have been the case with *The Stone Row.*

The Moat is a common field name throughout the county and denotes the presence of the remains of a fortified Norman habitation. Such field names allow us to recognize the echo of lives lived before us within our landscape and to share this place across the centuries and millennia that lie between.

Historic monuments are not the only marks of distinction that are used to specify a plot of ground. The feature that gives rise to the field name may be more humble in origin however special the reference might be to its owner.

Red Gate Field, White Gate, Green Gate, Cast Iron Gate, Wire Field, The Plank Field (to cross a stream on a Mass Path), etc.

In many cases the field name does not refer to any material feature within a field or its bounds but expresses the colour of the field itself, of its soil or of what grows within it as imagined or seen by its owner.

The Blue Bog, The Black Dyke, The White Height, The White Grove, The White Hill, The Yellow Knock, Red Bank.

11. Habitation

This is a category with but few field name entries but those included are important, being often the sole signifiers of past settlement patterns within a townland. *The Street* is a field name that recurs in the townlands of Aharney, Gaulstown (Muckalee) and Coolatogher and, like other field names that contain the memory of a settlement such as *The Town* and *Shanbally* (*Sean Bhaile*), it tells us of a small nucleated settlement of which there is no longer any physical trace.

In the townland of *Knockshanbally* (*Cnoc Sean Bhaile*) there is an area known locally as *The Lyons Den* because of the number of families with that name who once lived there.

12. Superstition

It is somewhat surprising that there are so few field names within this category given all the superstitious tales that fill many of the pages of the 1937-1938 Schools Folklore Collection. Perhaps fear of the otherworld and its denizens has dissipated among landowners in more recent times. Some field names, however, still acknowledge an earlier belief in other supernatural realms and their inhabitants with the most common being *The Fairy Field, The Ring of Trees,* and *The Lone Thorn.*

In the townland of Tullabrin there are several lone thorns standing isolated in the middle of fields. When asked if they are superstitious the owners of the fields respond in the negative yet the trees remain standing year after year. The landowners will not tempt providence.

13. Unusual and Folklore

This is perhaps the most intriguing category of all. It is difficult to ascertain the derivation or historical root of many of these field names although such mystery should intrigue the diligent survey volunteer. The collection of folklore and local history is an aspect of field name surveying that warrants more attention. Only local knowledge can solve the puzzles that some of the following names provide.

The Bone, The Crow, The Dagger's Haggard, Muscles Kelly, The Decoy, Holy Stone Field, St Stephen's Day Field, The Tolls, Copper Alley, The Fall, The Finger Post, The Hairy Acre, The Wet Weather, Dead Man's Field, The Black's Garden, Long Hats, The Six Counties.

Local knowledge did unlock the secret of a field known as *The Gaza Strip* that derives its name from an issue of disputed ownership. *The Dardinelles* suggests hardship and struggle, a sort of war upon the land, but the name has also been recorded in another county so perhaps there is a shared root to the occurrence. *The Gory Ring* suggests bloodshed of one sort or another whether it relates to fighting men or cocks.

Another unusual name recorded by a survey volunteer is *The Slang*. There is but one record of it among over seven thousand field names. A surprise lies in the frequency with which this same field name was recorded in County Meath. *A Slang* usually refers to a strip of land, often marshy and often near a river. Research to date indicates that this is a Hiberno-English word that originated in the West of England. Perhaps that is explained by its occurrence in the townland of Gaulstown (*Baile na nGall: Settlement of the Foreigner*)

Perhaps the most pleasing field names of all are those that express the pure and simple joy of being within a particular field, charmed by its unique magic. These names seem to speak of neither soil, toil nor hardship but of the simple wonder of being here at all.

Heaven, The Song Field, God's Acre, The Cosy Corner, The Handsome Meadow, The Sweet Field, Silver Park, Silver Shade.

Irish Field Names

In a county where Irish has not been spoken as an everyday language for several generations it would be reasonable to expect that there would be a very small proportion of Irish field names recorded in the course of the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project. Surprisingly, a large number of them have been recorded although most often in much-corrupted versions.

Of the more than 7,000 field names recorded to date, 14% are in Irish or of Irish origin. Their occurrence within the townlands of the county is varied although it is clear that they have survived best in those regions where the Irish language remained vital longest. In townlands to the north of the county the percentage of Irish field names recorded is very low, whereas in the south-east of the county it is a surprising 29%.

In some townland survey returns (eg Barna townland in Freshford Parish) 0% of the field names recorded were Irish or of Irish origin. By comparison, in the townland of Kilcross (Inistioge Parish) 35% of the field names recorded were Irish or of Irish origin, the highest percentage yet recorded. Perhaps, in the case of Kilcross, this is because no through road traverses the townland so that there has been less disturbance of place, cultural or otherwise.

Detail of Volunteer Survey Map of Grogan

The Irish field names that have survived on the farms of the county fit many of the field name categories discussed above. However, it is generally the case that Irish field names refer to the topography of the landscape and the nature of the ground or soil. When seeking to translate a corrupted or poorly recorded fieldname it is wise to seek the most practical rather than the most romantic solution.

Survey volunteers of The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project have been encouraged to record the landowner or informant pronouncing the Irish field names he or she is providing. This greatly simplifies the translation process and render it more accurate. Without local knowledge of a particular farm or field's topography the translation process becomes dependent upon the word itself which, if severely corrupted, can leave too much to the imagination and result in crude approximations or wild inaccuracies. In such instances there might be as many as three possible versions of an Irish field name. For example, in the townland of *Ballyhobuck* in South Kilkenny the volunteer recorded the field name *Tolla Gowe.* As written it is gibberish and offers the possible solutions of *Tulach Gabhann (Mound of the Smith), Tulach Gabhair (Mound of the Goat), Tulach Geabhair (Mound of the Fresh Shoots).*

Given such challenges it was considered important to examine the corrupted versions of all field names in Irish that had been provided to the Project by landowners or recorded phonetically in writing by the survey volunteers so that the relevant Irish root words, and thereby their translations, might be deciphered. This process has led to the development of a Glossary of all field names in Irish recorded within the county. Armed with such a useful resource, and with knowledge of the topography and nature of the ground in any townland, the understanding and translation of corrupted Irish field names should become a simpler task for all involved in field name surveying. This new *Glossary of Kilkenny Field Names in Irish* is included within this publication.

A list of root words, of which the above is but a sample, has been an

essential tool for the attempts at translation of many Irish field names from their corrupted form as remembered, transcribed or recorded.

Pathways to an older time

An analysis of the field names in Irish recorded in each major survey area within the county is outlined in the table below. The percentage results should not yet be considered as a final and accurate representation of the occurrence of such field names within the county due to the differing number of townland surveys within each survey area from which the percentage has been extrapolated.

Parish / Community Survey Area	Number of Townland Surveys	Percentage of Irish Field Names Recorded
Gathabawn	2	0%
S. Kilkenny/Slieverue	2	3%
Freshford	15	3%
Lisdowney	31	4%
Castlecomer	5	5%
Connahy	9	8%
Tullahought	2	9%
Goresbridge/Powerstown	23	12.%
Muckalee	1	13.8%
Rathcoole C.P. & Surrounds	11	17.6%
S.Kilkenny/ Glenmore	20	25.7%
Inistioge	12	26.5%
Ballyfoyle	2	27.8%

Table 2: Percentage of Irish Field Names in Survey Areas 2010-15

Nonetheless, paying due attention to the list of townland surveys per community survey area, the list does reveal the regional occurrence of Irish field names across the county and shows a marked increase in percentage from north to south and in those regions where Irish longest remained vital as a spoken language.

Field names in Irish are those deemed most worthy of preservation by both landowners and survey volunteers. It is as though they offer pathways to an older time, to the life and language of our forebears, to the memory of a landscape and way of life that is threatened by the drive to higher productivity and the bureaucratic efficiencies that would rather record a field as a numbered block of pasture or an animal as a grazing unit. Field names, whether in Irish or in English, will continue to come under threat and the time to record them cannot be delayed. The work to date of The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project's survey volunteers has shown us the cultural richness that the field names often contain. Let us continue our efforts to record and retain them. The harvest is in but let us soon return to the fields again.
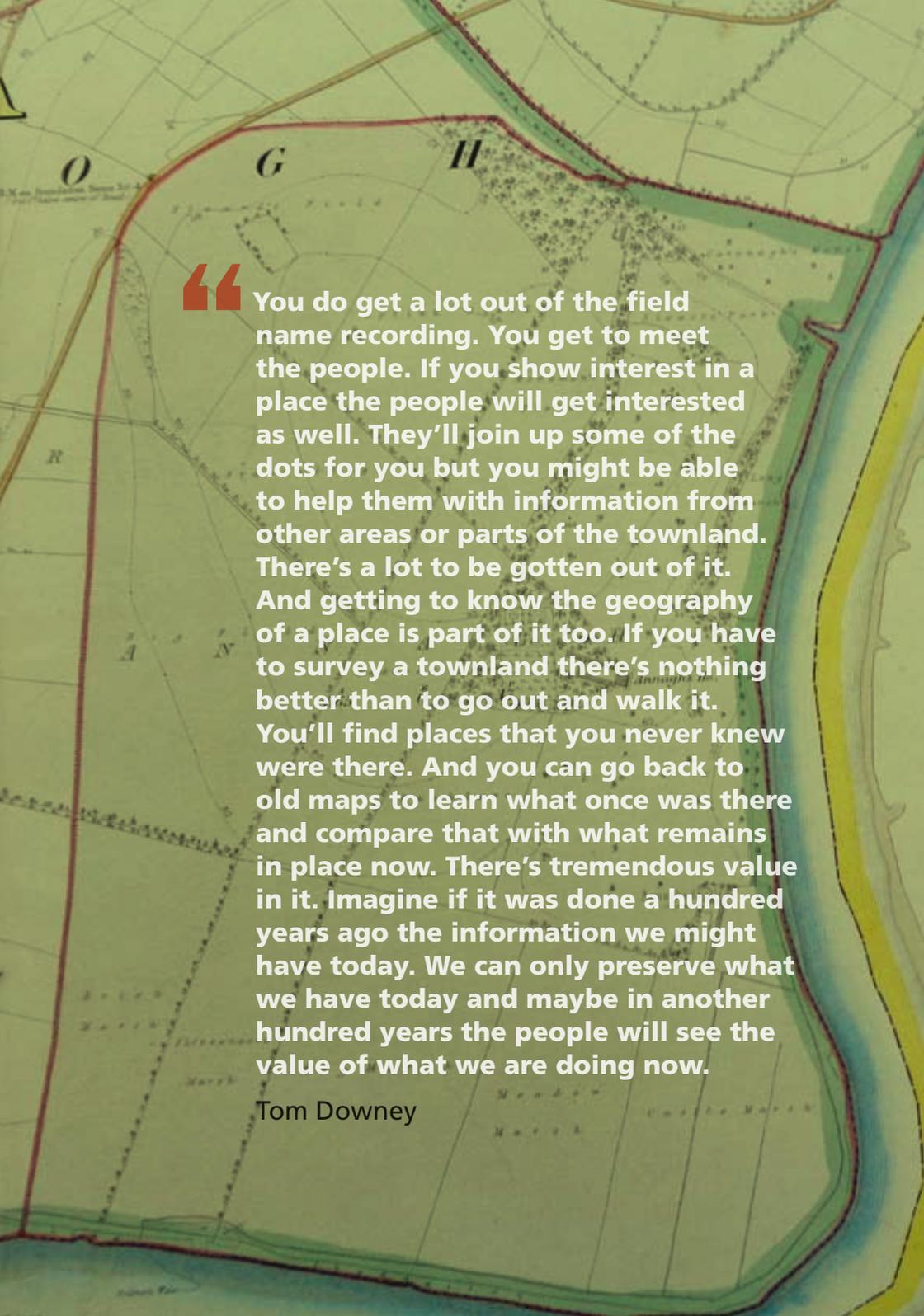
"You do get a lot out of the field name recording. You get to meet the people. If you show interest in a place the people will get interested as well. They'll join up some of the dots for you but you might be able to help them with information from other areas or parts of the townland. There's a lot to be gotten out of it. And getting to know the geography of a place is part of it too. If you have to survey a townland there's nothing better than to go out and walk it. You'll find places that you never knew were there. And you can go back to old maps to learn what once was there and compare that with what remains in place now. There's tremendous value in it. Imagine if it was done a hundred years ago the information we might have today. We can only preserve what we have today and maybe in another hundred years the people will see the value of what we are doing now.

Tom Downey

1

MEITHEAL 1

> **I place great value in this work. Sure the field names are being lost every day. People die and the names are dying with them. We have to save them now.** Jimmy Sheehan

Mick Brennan

Paddy Butler

Eilís Costelloe

Kieran Costelloe

> **A lot of the old field names are gone now because so many of the fields themselves have disappeared. Their ditches were taken away and the names went with them. And if a family dies out the names often die with them. It's good to get what we can.** Mick Brennan

> **I am delighted to have played a small part in helping to retain this important piece of rural heritage. Meeting with landowners and hearing their stories about the land and the origins of the field names is a privilege.**
> Deirdre Doyle

Dick Claridge

Mick Cormack

Deirdre Doyle

Dennis Drennan

Deirdre Dunne

Paddy Delaney

> **You have to have the right personality for this kind of work. There's no point being shy about it. I used to know everybody because I worked for the ESB and had no trouble walking in anywhere. And people are only too glad to share the field names. I'd like to have them all recorded around here before they are gone.** Dick Claridge

The Meitheal
Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project
Survey Volunteers

It is impossible to quantify in hours the amount of time dedicated to the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project by our survey volunteers and especially by those who co-ordinated the survey in their parish area. It is, however, possible to recognise the invaluable work of all those who have given so generously of their time and energy over the past six years. Without them this project would not be possible and the remarkable harvest of field names they have gathered would have remained unrecorded. The table lists those survey volunteers who have undertaken townland surveys over that time or who have surveys currently underway. Every effort has been made to include all volunteers presently active on the project and we regret if there have been any omissions. We are also most grateful to those members of the Meitheal who provided family maps and photographs to the project or who forwarded field name information from beyond the county or abroad.

Area	Volunteer	Townland surveyed
Ballyfoyle	Mick Brennan	Knocknew, Leapstown
Callan	Joe Kennedy	Callan area, 15 townlands
Castlecomer	Margaret O'Neill	Kiltown, Firoda Upper, Firoda Lower, Skehana
Castlecomer	Máire Downey	Kiltown
Castlecomer	Margaret McGrath	Smithstown
Castlecomer	Michael Walshe	Firoda Upper or Glenmagoo
Castlecomer	Jim Murphy	Firoda Upper or Glenmagoo
Clara	Anne Maria Walsh	Kilmacar
Connahy	Tom Downey	Connahy, Ardaloo
Connahy	Joe Rice	Ballyrafton, Lismaine
Connahy	Brigid Lennon	Swiftsheath
Connahy	Stephen Holmes	Suttonsrath, Ballycarron
Connahy	Eileen Gunner	Newtown, Webbsborough
Connahy	Shem Kavanagh	Sleveen
Connahy	Teresa Dollard	Maudlin
Graiguenamanagh	John Maher	Aghclare
Freshford	Ned Kennedy	Freshford Parish Survey Co-Ordinator
Freshford	John Hennessy	Three Castles Demesne, Naglesland
Freshford	Michael Cormack	Monabrika, Clintstown, Bawntanameenagh, Baunaniska, Moat, Freshford. Crowhill, Threecastles
Freshford	Michael Bergin	Garranamanagh
Freshford	Paula Dowling	Belville

Area	Volunteer	Townland surveyed
Freshford	Tom Kavanagh	Barna
Freshford	Mags McCarthy	Baunmore or Balleen Upper
Freshford	Paddy Butler	Cooleeshal Beg
Freshford	Frank Keoghan	Purcells Garden
Gathabawn	Marie Stapleton	Ballylehaun, Gorteenamuck
Gathabawn	Renee Fitzpatrick	Coolcashin
Gathabawn	Paddy Fitzpatrick	Ballygowney, Ballyring Upper, Garrydague
Gathabawn	Eddie Lawlor	Garrydague
Glenmore	Dick Claridge	Glenmore area, 28 townlands
Goresbridge	Ned Moran	Powerstown Civil Parish (23 townlands), Upper Grange
Goresbridge	Nicholas Murphy	Barrowmount
Goresbridge	Jim Nolan	Barrowmount
Goresbridge	Noel Drennan	Garryduff
Goresbridge	Sean Gavin	Garryduff
Goresbridge	Colette Murphy	Lower Grange
Goresbridge	Kim Carr	Lower Grange
Goresbridge	Michael Prendergast	Castlekelly
Hugginstown	William Dalton	Lismatigue
Inistioge	Richard & Maryellen Corelli	Ballyvool
Inistioge	Carmel Cummins	Clonamery, Kilcross, Fiddaun Lower, Fiddaun Upper
Inistioge	Deirdre Doyle	Coolnamuck, Oldcourt, Clonamery

Area	Volunteer	Townland surveyed
Inistioge	Luke Grennan	Ballyreddy, Slievecarragh
Inistioge	Jamesy Murphy	Glentiroe, Glensansaw
Inistioge	Anne Doyle	Kilmacshane
Inistioge	John Kirwan	Ballyvool, Ballycocksoost
Inistioge	Frank Sullivan	Cappagh
Inistioge	Dick Meaney	Cullaun, Ballinabarney, Lennaght
Inistioge & Bennettsbridge	Nora Brennan	Ballygub Old, Ballygub New, Sheastown, Wallslough
Johnstown	Kathleen Renehan	Warrenstown
Lisdowney	Eilís Costelloe	Clontubrid and Lisdowney Parish Co-Ordinator
Lisdowney	Michael O'Gorman	Blackwood, Rathbeagh, Clone, Inchbeg, Inchmore.
Lisdowney	Deirdre Dunne	Tifeaghna Browne, Tifeaghna Mt Garrett
Lisdowney	Catherine Fitzpatrick	Archerstown
Lisdowney	Paddy Delaney	Acragar
Lisdowney	Fintan Dunne	Aharney
Lisdowney	Michael Dunne	Aharney
Lisdowney	Dennis Drennan	Ballyconra
Lisdowney	John Kennedy	Ballyconra
Lisdowney	Pat Tallis	Graigueswood
Lisdowney	Michael Campion	Inchbeg
Lisdowney	Kieran Costello	Lisdowney, Balleen, Lodge Demesne West

Area	Volunteer	Townland surveyed
Lisdowney	David Kenny	Lisdowney, Balleen, Lodge Demesne West
Lisdowney	Brian Lyons	Grange
Lisdowney	Patricia Burns	Lodge Demesne East
Lisdowney	Paddy Dunphy	Moneenaun
Lisdowney	Joe Murphy	Parksgrove
Muckalee	Matty Hogan	Gaulstown
Slieverue	Josephine Freyne	Rathpatrick
Slieverue	Anna Griffin	Kilmurry
Stoneyford	Sean Raggett	Ballycaum
Stoneyford	William Wallace	Rathduff
Stoneyford	Jimmy Sheehan	Stonecarthy East, Cherrymount, Lawcus
Stoneyford	Pat O'Neill	Barrettstown
Stoneyford	Richard Hogg	Floodhall, Oldtown, Knocknabooley
Stoneyford	John Sheehan	Stonecarthy, Floodhall
Stoneyford	Robert Finnegan	Cottrellsbooley
Tullahought	Mary Egan	Tullahought
Tullahought	Lena Power	Knickeen
Windgap	Noelle Phelan	Baunreagh, Lamoge, Ballygowan Reade, Srughawadda, Currahill
Woolengrange	Pat Muldowney	Rathduff, Newhouse
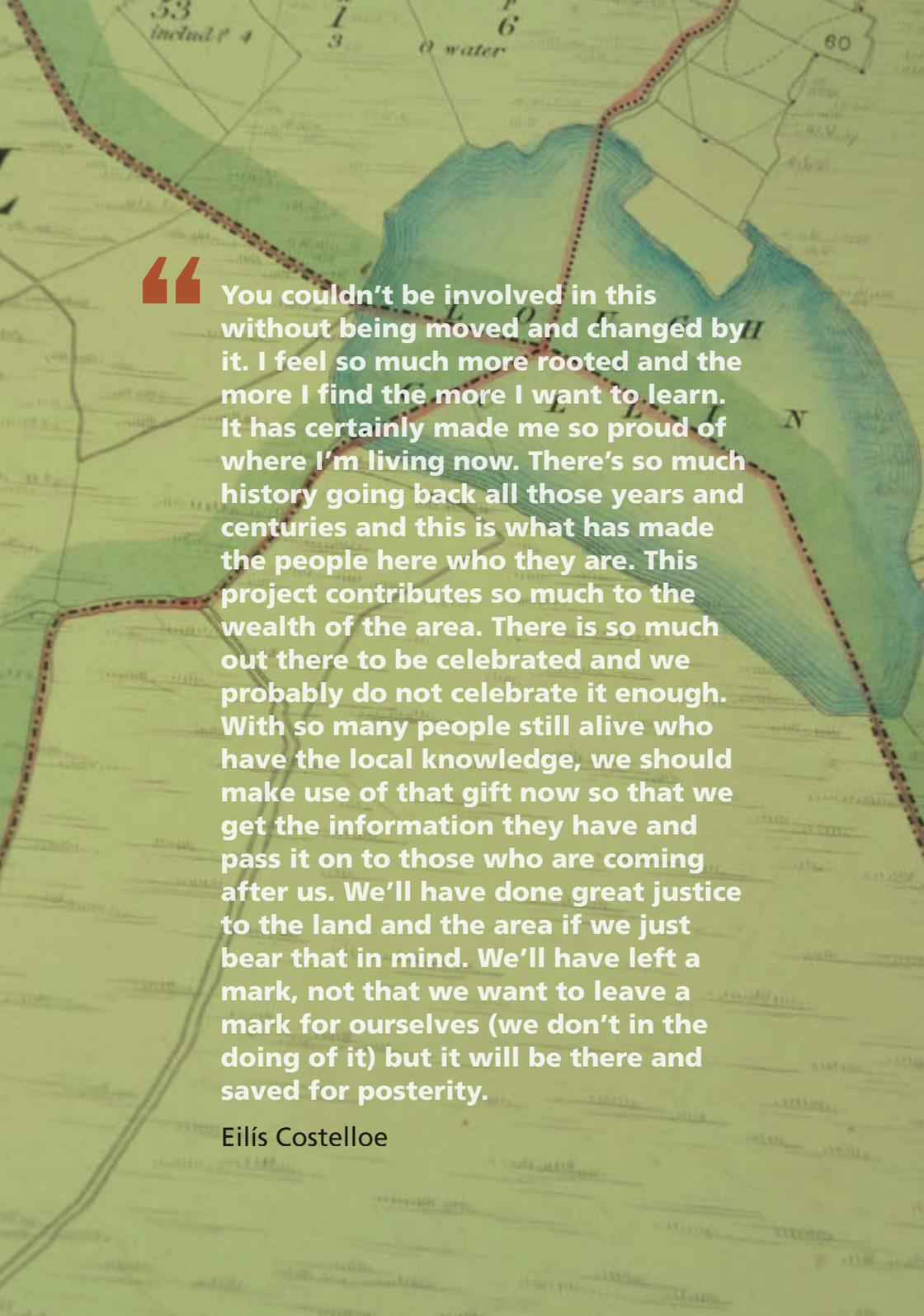
> **You couldn't be involved in this without being moved and changed by it. I feel so much more rooted and the more I find the more I want to learn. It has certainly made me so proud of where I'm living now. There's so much history going back all those years and centuries and this is what has made the people here who they are. This project contributes so much to the wealth of the area. There is so much out there to be celebrated and we probably do not celebrate it enough. With so many people still alive who have the local knowledge, we should make use of that gift now so that we get the information they have and pass it on to those who are coming after us. We'll have done great justice to the land and the area if we just bear that in mind. We'll have left a mark, not that we want to leave a mark for ourselves (we don't in the doing of it) but it will be there and saved for posterity.**

Eilís Costelloe

2
MEITHEAL 2

> **This survey work is creating an awareness of our heritage. It's something that will be there when the people now are gone, a legacy for the coming generations. For anybody who has any connection with their place this will only add to their sense of belonging.**
>
> Máire Downey

Paddy Dunphy

Máire Downey

Tom Downey

Fintan Dunne

> **It's important to hold onto them for some go back a very long time. I'm very interested in learning about the names of other people's fields. My children are learning our own field names and that's learning about their place. They'll know where they are and where they come from.** Fintan Dunne

> **All in all, this survey was very rewarding and at times great fun. My knowledge of the locality improved and I am more aware of its history. Every townland has its own story and character. Each is unique. It was great to be able to contribute so that our heritage is not lost.** Anna Griffin

Mary Egan

Catherine Fitzpatrick

Anna Griffin

Luke Grennan

Renee Fitzpatrick

Nicholas Kenny

> **We were all enthusiastic when we started out first! And it was great to be a part of it. Field names let us know about our history, our families and the like. There's memories in the names of people who used to live here but who left or emigrated. There's a generation here now that are passing away and they have all the store of knowledge.**
> Catherine Fitzpatrick

Planted in My Bones:
The Townland of Ballygub
Nora Brennan

Cluan Castle, Clonamery

One trip up the narrow road was enough to transport me back to the web of my childhood, a time when the windows of my world didn't extend beyond the two teacher school at the Holy Stone, the little church by Clodiagh stream and the lanes and fields of our farm. The townland of Ballygub New, and more particularly Ballygub Old, has been home to my family since Famine times.

Now, over fifty years later, I was back armed with an Ordnance Survey Discovery map (no. 68) in my role as a survey volunteer for the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project. My brother first recorded the field names of the farm where I grew up. In turn the names of other fields in the neighbourhood were added and soon I had a total of 181 field names covering the townlands of Ballygub Old and Ballygub New. The townland lies to the south-east of Inistioge in the shelter of Ballygub Hill and Brandon Hill. To the west lie the townlands of Oldcourt and Kilcross and to the east, Cullaun.

Recording the field names in Ballygub was like opening a door. I met people I hadn't met since schooldays, old memories were revived and once again I walked the lanes and fields I travelled as a child. All farmers were eager to participate and there was a warm welcome everywhere I went.

From the data recorded, it is clear that the pulse of the past is very much alive and beating still. The people farming the land today continue to use the old names handed down from their ancestors. Many of these names are in Irish, especially in Ballygub New: names such as *Bán na Rátha,*

Carraig a Tine, Croichtíns, Gleannta Bána, Carragán, Gort na Píse, *The Slugagishs* and *The Screachs*. I wrote the names as I heard them, trusting that someone more skilled than I would interpret their meaning. Some fields were named after people long departed: *Daniel's Garden*, *Moylett's Fields, John Doolin's Field* and *Bridgie's*. Over the years, some of the old field names have been lost; for example, the land once owned by my grandfather and uncle is now farmed

Detail of Ordnance Survey 6" map, 1839, Ballygub New

by others, the old names disappearing as people died and land changed hands.

Other features were also noted in the townlands. The left turn for Ballygub on the main Inistioge-New Ross road is known as The Holy Stone. Further along the road to Ballygub, the remains of an old forge at the top of Ellen's Lane are barely visible. My older siblings remember the forge in use in the early 50s. Nearby, Woodstock School, which closed in the late 1940s, now lies in ruin. In Ballygub Old one field has a scooped-out corner where a shell exploded when the Black and Tans were in Woodstock. There is also a double ditch next to that field. An area known as *The Wells*, is listed on the Ordnance Survey map as *The Springs*. In the 1940s and 50s the central well here served the three families living in the area with pure drinking water. Now much of *The Wells* is marshy and overgrown.

On the road to Ballygub New the ruins of a kiln are still visible, though

Detail of Nora Brennan's survey map of Ballygub New

covered in a dense thicket of bushes and grass. In Ballygub New the water pump remains at the crossroads in the centre of the village. Some new houses have been built; old ones have been restored while others have been left to return to nature. An interesting feature when looking at the Ordnance Survey map for Ballygub New is the particular pattern to the fields which is not evident in Ballygub Old. In the former the fields are often narrow, elongated strips of land each surrounded by common stone ditches similar in feature to the field patterning in Kilcross and Ballyshane. Running through the townland is an intricate web of laneways connecting fields and homesteads. A few of the lanes are now overgrown and impassable. One such lane in Ballygub New leads down to Clodiagh stream, part of which was known as *The White Hole*. I remember it from childhood because it was there that sheep were brought to be washed before being shorn.

Of significance too in the townland of Ballygub New, and mentioned by all farmers, is the presence of the Mass Rock. It is situated at the bottom of a gully next to Clodiagh stream and close to the butt of Brandon Hill, in a very remote and tranquil place. According to Owen O'Kelly, in his book *The Place-Names of County Kilkenny*, Mass was celebrated at a sceach at the foot of Brandon and also at a rock called *Altaruish,* i.e. *Alt an turais*, the gully of the devotional station, in Penal days. Nearby a square rath is filled with lush trees. As in many other places around Ireland, the rath

remains undisturbed, respecting still the old pagan belief that the spirits of the dead resided there. There are remains of a settlement still visible on Ballygub Hill known as *Croke's Garden* and an area known as *The Pig Market.*

Lastly, no trip to Ballygub is complete for me without a ramble down Ellen's Lane to Clodiagh chapel. Built in a valley beside Clodiagh stream around 1700, it was said to be the only church for miles that escaped the wrath of Cromwell because it was not visible from the road. It is a treasure in the townland and in recent years has become a popular wedding venue. Mass paths flow towards it like streams from the surrounding townlands. The chapel is currently being renovated. Our ancestors in Ballygub Old went to the chapel by Ellen's Lane while those living in Ballygub New went by the Mass Path. This path ran from the bottom of the village through Corcoran's fields and ended at the bend of the road near Clodiagh church.

On a personal level, the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project was a most rewarding experience and I felt privileged to be part of it. I was reminded of the ancestors, those who created the fields and toiled the land, those who eked out a living during Famine years and all who gathered at the Mass Rock to pray. It brought into focus too my own love of the place, how the land shaped and nourished me; not just physically, as we grew most of our food produce, but emotionally and spiritually too. There were hard times as well; days thinning turnips or picking the last of the potatoes on a cold October evening. I thought especially of my father. He knew every stone and ditch in the townland having grown up in Ballygub New and married into Ballygub Old. The house where I grew up was used as a feeding station during The Famine. The then owner T. Jekylle is remembered locally as having distributed Indian meal during the Famine years, which was dubbed "Jekylle's Pap". He was a founder member of the Old Kilkenny Archaeological Society and reported a souterrain in the yard 'in which there was a number of bones found' (Owen O'Kelly, *The Place-Names of County Kilkenny*).

A memory that stays with me from childhood is of Sunday afternoons when, with my siblings and mother, we would stand on the brow of *Scuab Field* and gaze down on the Nore valley, identifying the local landmarks like *Cluan Castle*, the two teacher school at the Holy Stone, the cluster of trees sheltering Clodiagh church, and, in the distance, the town of New Ross. The following poems of mine reflect thoughts on the fields and my journey to find the Mass Rock.

Fodder

Every field, a harvest of memories,
some yielding more than I could absorb,
others a toll of hard labour,
knee grinding days in furrows,

all fertile enough to have
planted in my bones ditches
ripe for picking, fruits
sweet as a field of sun-dried hay

in late June, my father crowning
a haycock with twine and two stones,
my sister walking through
the golden stubble, satchel on one arm,

a pot of sweetened tea between both hands.
In the shade of the haycock
we gathered; mugs of tea, currant bread,
the hessian bag no less than gold.

Mass Rock

Mid-summer, month of the mead moon,
my brother and I journey by jeep over rock and rut,
the lane dusty from weeks of drought.

Nine months before, the harvest moon,
was my first attempt – a friend and I so near
our destination, not knowing it, turned back.

Now the honeyed scent of summer,
elderflower, furze, ditches laced
with honeysuckle, foxgloves lean and lanky.

The lure of their tiered bells, my fingers
capped in lavender, hands waving
out and about, elegant as a Thai dancer.

Above the gully, silage has stripped
the field bare. I follow the blue and white
check of his shirt, silver waves of his foot soles

on the fleecy green bank, meandering
down among bushes, bramble, stone
to arrive by the water's edge.

Trees lean in, join branched hands above
Clodiagh stream. From townland to townland people
came here, a sheltered place back-dropped

by Brandon Hill, guarded by spirits in the trees.
The rath nearby lush with cover.
Beneath the skin of recent years

stone smooth as bone, an altar laid bare.
We stand remembering our ancestors – the silence,
the stillness, the stream, too fluent for words.

The Mass Rock, Ballygub New

3 MEITHEAL 3

" Sure we have to save them. People don't know the value of their history. There's a lot has been torn out, moats with carved stones all pulled out in a heap. Our history has to be saved and the field names are all part of it.
Matty Hogan

" I enjoyed the field name survey work. It was a big sociable community event. For me as a relative stranger it was also a process of discovery. We've saved what might so easily have been lost in the area and it's great for the young people coming after us.
John Kennedy

Matty Hogan

Tom Kavanagh

John Kennedy

Edward Kennedy

" It's great to have my townland recorded. I'm all in favour of saving the field names. They were an essential part of heritage and of farming life. You had to know where places were. They're all for putting numbers on them now and that's all linked to the farm payments. John Maher

> **Localised knowledge of old Ireland is disappearing. This is about keeping our history and I suppose it's something that should have been done years ago and better doing it now than never doing it. Sure we're always discovering things we didn't know or thought we knew.** Mary Egan

Joe Kennedy

Frank Keoghan

John Kirwan

Ned Moran

Ann Murphy

Margaret McGrath

> **There has been a strong interest in local history in Freshford since the collection of folklore by schoolchildren in the 1930s. When complete, the recording of the field names now underway will add a new dimension to our store of knowledge about the parish. Future generations will be greatly indebted to the volunteers currently working on this project.** Ned Kennedy

Walking in Kilcross
Carmel Cummins

The Rocks, Kilcross

The townland of Kilcross lies east and north east of Inistioge, extending from the banks of the river Nore to the uplands towards Brandon. You arrive in its heartland by crossing the bridge, walking straight uphill, and turning left at Meaney's of the Mill. You walk past the ruin of Brown's forge, past the Holy Well and when the tarred road gives out you can continue through the townland on its labyrinth of laneways. Left is the Bothar Hive, which curves round that part of the settlement centred on the ruins of the medieval Cill na Croise from which Kilcross is derived. Straight ahead can eventually lead to the rath. A right turn will have you follow the Leinster Way until the view opens down a valley towards Rathleen and Fiddaun Lower, then rises to Fiddaun Upper. On the horizon, Saddle Hill is north west, Coppanagh north, Brandon, north east. You will cross the Sruhnasilloge on its way to meet the Nore at Ballygallon. You can then walk on into Sally Bog and then to Graignamanagh or you can climb Brandon.

I have had two reasons to be in Kilcross: to walk there, and in 2014 I went there to collect field names. One flowed from the other. When I came to live in Inistioge 13 years ago, I had moved from Sligo and I missed it. *An tUrlár*, 'the floor' of North Sligo, where I had been living, stretches

seawards to Mullaghmore and Streedagh. To the east, the land rises dramatically into the Dartry Range, bookended by Ben Bulben to the south and Ben Wiskin to the north. I missed the vistas, the sunrise over the mountains, the sunsets over the Atlantic. I remember needing solace from dealing with the change of place, of job, with the loss of an established life and the need to summon enough energy to make another. I had made it to Inistioge but I had not found my feet.

In 2004, a year after my arrival, I read in the Inistioge Local Area Plan of the 'density and elegance of Inistioge as a settlement, with a sheltered central space away from the river more typical of pre-Renaissance Italy.' I read that it should have given me 'an immediate sense of place and a feeling of having arrived.' But it did not. I was feeling hemmed in. I was probably inclined to agree with Archer's assessment from 1667: 'this is a place that has never seen the sun rise and shall never see it set'. The beautiful walks on the Point Road and in Woodstock were somehow also a bit too civilised.

Walking on Brandon seemed a good and necessary escape from the urbanity of the Square. I bought Ordnance Survey Discovery Map 68, identified the South Leinster Way and set out up Malone's Hill towards Kilcross. I was not at all prepared for what I found. It was another world. Off the tarred roads, I met the Kilcross of unpaved lanes, grassy and stony by turn, flanked by tall, wide dry-stone walls. In summer the walls have a lush trimming of grasses, wild flowers and fern, stands of foxglove, marjoram and willow herb, with an abundance of wild strawberry, and later, fraocháin, blackberry, sceachóirí. On a warm day there may be glimpses of small lizards basking on mossy stones. Further from habitation the walls become a mostly hidden framework around which extensive hedgerows have evolved, high and deep. Sceachs, in dimension more tree than bush, sally, a few ash and hornbeam, a lone sycamore, bracken, furze, brambles and an embroidery of small plants; vetches, wood sage, tormentil. In places some of the lanes were so deeply rutted

Holy Well, Kilcross

as to be nearly impassable in winter. But I welcomed the surmountable challenges. Beyond the walls, there was access towards Sally Bog to the slopes of Brandon with its wide open skies. I had found my díseart, both a wilderness and a refuge. As in the best tradition of the díseart, it proved not an escape or a place removed from reality but a place where reality might reveal itself more spaciously. I have come to feel a deep sense of gratitude to and for Kilcross. Therefore, when the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project held a meeting in Inistioge in April, 2014, I thought recording Kilcross might be a way to honour a unique and very interesting place. After 11 years, a small 'thank you' of some kind was owed.

   I made a very slow start, but on a sunny day in June 2014 I went with my neighbour Billy Ashe, then aged ninety-five, on a tour of Kilcross. Billy died in April of this year. Without him this work would not have been done. He brought me to his home place, where Marie, his daughter, her husband Padraig and their family now live. His daughter Harriett and her

The way to the Rath, Kilcross

family also still live in Kilcross. Billy directed me to the various landmarks in the townland: the site of the mill, the holy well, ruined church, lime kiln, ruined forge, ruined house of the stonemasons, the turn on the lane where his horse bolted and overturned his cart. He still puzzled over what had startled the animal. The stone masons were the Mulrooney family, the last generation of them being brothers, Neddie, Pat and Martin. There my 'research' languished, other than verifying each structure on the 1839 Ordnance Survey map and finding what the renowned historian Canon William Carrigan had to say about Kilcross in his *The History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Ossory* (1905, Vol 4, P114-115). He identified the church and townland of Kilcross as belonging to the Augustinian Canons of the Priory at Inistioge in medieval times, while suggesting that the ruined church dates from pre-Norman times. But desk work, however interesting, was not what was required. Fortunately, from October 2014, Geraldine Fox's kind introductions to her neighbours made the field names recording in Kilcross possible. I wonder now about my initial reluctance,

the reticence of the 'blow-in'. At every turn I met only courtesy, hospitality and willingness to share information. It was a privilege and pleasure to sit at kitchen tables while the landowners of Kilcross oriented themselves into the map of their place.

'Where is the rath?' was a question often posed. That rath was the North Star by which nearly everyone navigated, as it has likely been for centuries. Everyone used the correct Irish pronunciation. Sometimes it was the finding of a lane that made sense of the map. Then a finger would follow its contours as confidently as the lane itself is walked. Fields would be identified and the names flowed out – *Rath Field, Bawn na Rath, Ballaghrath, Bán na Trues, Bán na gCloch, Gart Feithid, Tournanicks, Labart, Bóthar Hive, Garry Nixon, Bántas, Seanagort Curraghs, Tullawn, Bearna Bhuí, An Dréinire Buí.*

In all, I collected 130 fieldnames. It is not a complete survey, but these field names provide an insight into the history and geography of habitation and of language in Kilcross. Corrected original versions of Irish field names listed in the survey, with English translations, are provided in the *Glossary of Kilkenny Field Names in Irish* elsewhere in these pages**.**

Field names then and now

While I was collecting individual field names, I wondered what documentary evidence there was on Kilcross field names and field patterns, generally. The obvious starting point in search of that evidence was the Griffith Valuation carried out between 1848 and 1864, with detailed information on where people lived in mid-nineteenth-century Ireland and the property they possessed or worked. The information on Kilcross includes the list of land occupiers and the fields held by each, which are numbered. The number of each field was recorded on a map, which was produced in 1852 but based on the Ordnance Survey map of 1839. It is a valuable tool as it allows for direct comparison between land distribution in 1852 and the present. It

offers an opportunity to review the manner of that distribution, whether it indicates a consolidated or dispersed pattern of land holding. A direct comparison of field patterns can also be made between 1852/1839 and the current status as regards the stability of the field pattern, i.e. the survival or not of individual field plots.
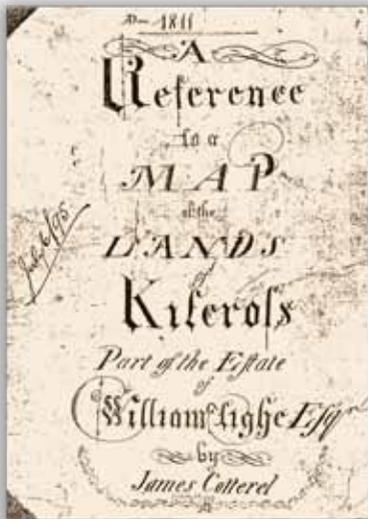
1811 Survey for local landlord, William Tighe

In January 2015, a neighbour, Andy Cotterel (hero of Woodstock Gardens' restoration), arrived at my door and said 'You're interested in Kilcross'. He then handed me a copy of the 1811 survey of the townland, prepared for the local landlord William Tighe, listing the forty-four tenants and the land they worked, each field with its name. The map that would have accompanied this survey has not yet been discovered among the Tighe Estate papers. Still, the existing document yields valuable clues and it is a veritable treasure trove of field names, in Irish and English. It is a rare if not unique resource, that enables comparison between fields then and now.

With these documents available, my engagement with Kilcross expanded to an exploration of what could be learned by comparing the current status of fieldname usage, field pattern and farm occupancy with that recorded in the 1811 survey and in the Griffith Valuation of 1852. The first question I explored in some detail, the others less so. I am no historic geographer, just an interested amateur.

Discovering the number of Kilcross fieldnames in Irish or obviously derived from it, and still in use, was one of the most interesting and

satisfying aspects of this survey. The 1811 survey provided an invaluable cross-reference. Names which have persisted since 1811 until today include *Rath Fields, Bawn na Rath, Bántas, Bán na gCloch, Bán na Trues, Tuar an Chnoic, Curraghs, Seanagort, Bearna Bhuí, Tullawns, An Dréimire Buí.* Field names in English which re-occur are *The Pins, Lower Hill Field, Pound Field, Rocks and Bassett's Field.*

In Irish, the fieldnames are self-explanatory and nearly all refer to the nature of the land - as stony, hilly, boggy, a meadow, a hill meadow - or to a feature in the landscape, such as the rath. But I was left with one puzzle. In ainm Dé, cad is Dréimire Buí ann? The reference to An Dréimire Buí in Owen O Kelly's *The Place-Names of the County of Kilkenny' (*1985*)*, has it as '*a yellow steep hill'.* In the *Atlas of the Irish Rural Landscape* (2011) Edward and Fidelma McCarron explain it as '*a steep narrow strip of land, usually uncultivated'.* Local historian John Kirwan says it refers to furze which would agree with the explanation of uncultivated land. But to make matters more interesting, I found a reference in Scots Gallic to a plant *Dréimire Gorm* (Bittersweet) and then a reference in Irish to *Dréimire Buí* as the plant Yellow Wort, from which a yellow dye is extracted. It is of the gentian family and may also have been used as a substitute for Centaury (*Dréimire Mhuire*), also of the gentian family, a traditional remedy to treat complaints of the digestive system.

Since there is a certainty that the Irish phrase refers to this useful plant, does the field name helpfully suggest a deliberately uncultivated place where it was once accessed? Inistioge-based weaver Lucy Braddell, who extracts dyes from local plants, has not heard of it nor did my walking by the field margins of Nixons of the Yellow Ladder reveal any specimen. However, courtesy of Heritage Officer Dearbhala Ledwidge and Jimi Conroy, Conservation Ranger, I know it has been recorded at Thomastown Quarry.

There are field names deriving from Irish which were recorded in 2015 but are not recorded in the 1811 survey. These are: *Ballaghrath, Gort*

Feithid, Labart, Bóthar Hive, Gortlalane, Garry Nixon. Other names have been lost since 1811, with the caveat that my recording is not complete for the entire townland. In 1811 spelling, these are*: Gurth More, Bawn Garragh, Garragh an Tubberagh, Carragawn Ruew, Gurth na Pissiag, Teigh Faddow, Bawn a Stiffeen, Gurthnascecha*, *Rath Bracke, Stuke.* These were translated in 1811 as *Large Park, Rough Park, Well Garden, Foxy Rock, Peas Field, Long House Field, Hairy Field and Bush Field*. *Rath Bracke* and *Stuke* were not translated. Suggestions could be *Speckled Rath* from *Rath Breach* and *Tree Trunk* from *Stoc.*

Field names in English from 1811 which do not re-occur in 2015 (again, with the caveat that the recording is not complete for the entire townland) are *Turk Field, Carthy's Garden, Power's Garden , Joyce's Field , Gate Field, Knob Field, Nicholas's Field, Flax Field, Ashe's Park, The Smith's*

Cottage Garden, Cotterel's Farm, Commons. It is probably reasonable to conclude that the *Commons*, which is listed as 'proportionally divided' in 1811, has since been enclosed.

Ancestral fields

The usage of family names is also of more than passing interest, as it can denote continuity. Families of Ashe, Hackett and Meaney live in Kilcross in 2015, as they did in 1811. But time's inevitable attrition is revealed where the surnames of other families live on only in the names of the fields they once worked, *Brown's Hill, Murphy's Field, Hanrahan's Field, Barron's Field, Garry Nixon, Nixon's of the Yellow Ladder, Bassett's, Mulrooney's Field, Delahunty's, Synnott's Fields, Cody's*. It is worth noting however that in many cases blood lines continue through the female line though surnames were surrendered on marriage. For example, the descendants of the Browns of Kilcross are still thriving in the area but as Kehers and O'Briens. Other field names derived from surnames are *Parker's, Cullen's and Crowe's*. These surnames are not on the 1811 list but are in the Griffith Valuation list of 1852. Some field names incorporate first names: *Larry's Haggard, Onnie's (Honora's), Toby's, Kit's Rock*. I find these field names as moving as the Irish ones, and certainly as interesting. How might they be read? As an indication of an understanding of how reluctantly or sadly land is relinquished? As some desire to honour and remember ancestral others from whom the land was inherited? Are they simply about peasant proprietorship? Or do they suggest the intimacy, the attachment, that can exist between land and the human organism? This last is well understood in Kilcross.

With the 2005 and 1839 maps for comparison, another question that arose was whether it could be established if a re-occurring name referred to the same plot of land in 2015 as it did in 1811. Without a map from 1811 we can't prove this for certain, but I couldn't resist playing with what evidence there was.

Looking at the map details below it can be shown that the field called The Barna Wee/Bearna Bhuí today (1) exists exactly as it did in 1839. So, can it be inferred that this field is one of the fields called Yellow Gap Field/Barnagh Bui in 1811? Two fields called *The Tillawns* today (2) hold the same field pattern since 1839. Are these two of the *Park a Tullawn* of 1811? Two fields, each called *The Pins* (3), hold their boundaries intact since 1839. Are these therefore two of the four Pin Fields of 1811.
In 2015, a field called A*n Dréimire Buí* (*An Dréimishe Buí* as recorded) - or also called *Nixon's of the Yellow Ladder* - (4) exists as it did 1839.
So this may be one of the two fields recorded as *Yellow Ladder* in 1811, one being farmed by John Nixon.

Kilcross, Ordnance Survey 6" map, 1839

Kilcross, Ordnance Survey Map (revised 2005)

For the history of field patterns, their persistence or loss, the reader can simply compare the 1839 and 2015 maps for him or herself. I would argue that the persistence of the field pattern is quite high for the whole townland. This may be an effect of the type of farming carried out in Kilcross, which comprises suckler cows, sheep and dry livestock farming. It does not call for the large machinery that tillage requires. The inadequacy of the lanes to take modern tractors was a cause of concern expressed by one landholder for whom silage making is a crucial part of the year's work.

The final 'technical' question that I explored was tenancy and ownership patterns as between the Griffith valuation of 1852 and 2015. I deliberately did not hone in on this aspect in detail. It was not the remit of the project (fascinating though it is) and it could be seen as intrusive. So I simply present one small sample of the rath area, which shows a continued dispersed pattern of land holding. In 1852 there were nine tenants; in 2015, six landowners. Each different colour indicates one tenant in 1852, one landowner in 2015. The two fields not coloured on the map from 1852 did not have an identified tenant.
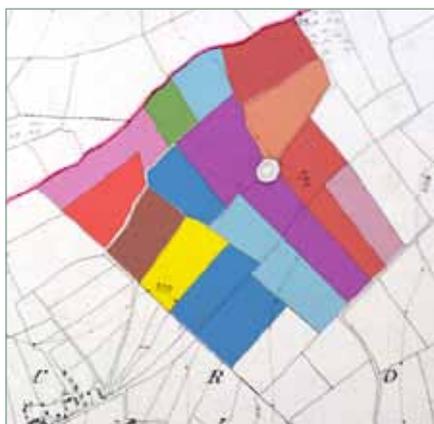
1852: Each different colour indicates one tenant
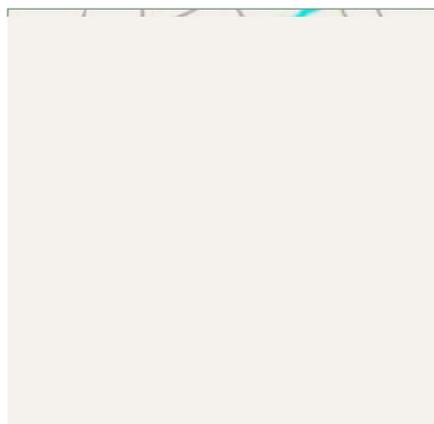
2005: Each different colour indicates one landowner

The history of land holding

This dispersed nature of land holding in Kilcross has an interesting history. In the preamble to the 1811 survey, James Cotterel - no relation to Andy Cotterel who supplied it to me - decries the partnership system of land distribution, which had a number of tenants (two to four) lease a plot of land jointly, which then allowed them '*to give each partner... his portion of good and bad land'. Cotterel says 'it is generally difficult to get them to agree in the subdivisions of their holding, hence arise disputes which are not terminated probably for many years, and in no instance do they ever agree without a quarrel*.' He claims '*In such cases, the tenant never becomes independent, nor will the landlord, while he suffers such a practice to exist on his estate, ever receive the rent which an industrious tenant, with a distinct holding could afford to pay*.' But James Cotterel can hardly be considered a disinterested commentator. It is not difficult to believe that he was reflecting the wish, if not the intention, of the commissioner of his work; the only social contract to be encouraged being that between tenant and landlord and no consideration to be given to wider issues of communal good, and certainly not ones that might be independently (that word again) entered into by the farmers themselves.

In the light of this history, it was worthwhile to view the field names that different farms still have in common in 2015. Five have fields called *Raths,* twelve have *Banta* (often referred to as *Bántachts*), three have *Bán na gCloch,* two have *Bán na Trues*, C*urraghs* and *Seanagort*. Is this a relic of the deliberate dispersal of differing land quality parcels within the local partnerships?

In many places farms are not consolidated and it is fascinating to see the traces of a much older order fossilised within present patterns of land holding, as in Kilcross. It is equally fascinating to view parts of the field pattern in Kilcross as possibly reflecting a medieval, or older, open field system where plots of land were divided in long narrow strips,

the length of which was based on what could be ploughed without stopping to rest and the width on the number of furrows which could be ploughed in a day. (see Michael Tenison's article *Field Systems explored in the Inistioge Area* (*Old Kilkenny Review, 1998*). These long fields make interesting and beautiful shapes on a map. The fields themselves are very beautiful. It is likely too fanciful to suggest that this beauty was consciously preserved over centuries. But it is not fanciful to observe that in Kilcross today an awareness of that beauty is carried as deeply as a pragmatic understanding of each field's use.

Stories from Kilcross

As well as the information gleaned from maps and field names, wider issues impinged on Kilcross and I found a great willingness among the people of Kilcross to share these other stories.

"*Did you hear of Sally Bog?*" many people asked. A tale from the neighbouring townland of *Sally Bog* tells of the assisted passage to North America of thirty families, sometime between 1848 and 1849. It is not remembered as some kindly intervention by Fr. Doyle of Graignamanagh, who provided the funding for their passage. It is seen rather as the local parish priest doing dirty work for the landowner, Lord Clifton, and abetting the clearance of the townland. Later, in the deserted settlement, the same priest had a house built, which his nephew occupied. No amount of recent revisionism to have Fr. Doyle portrayed in a better light cuts any ice in Kilcross. Memories are held long here and it is the poetic truth of memory that is adhered to. Or maybe it is just the honest truth? It is quite likely the people of Sally Bog walked through Kilcross to the American Road through Woodstock to board ship at New Ross. What memory would such pilgrims leave on those remaining neighbours who watched their flight?

"*Do you know this is a famine relief road?*" John Knox asked. As we

Shelter, Killcross

record *Bán na Trues,* John indicated the lane on its northern boundary. Later I traced its length in the Griffith Valuation map of 1852 but then confirmed that it was recorded in the Ordnance Survey map of 1839. There is no reason to doubt the road could have been improved and widened as part of relief works, but it is more likely it was planned and developed as part of William Tighe's improvement works, which a map from 1835 indicates were also progressing in another part of the estate. Certainly, the road has a different 'feel' to the others that wind around the settlement, its straight lines at variance with their more relaxed contours. The other lanes, nearer the 'street' of Kilcross, have the sense of the tracks that Robert Macfarlane writes about in '*The Old Ways'* tracks that were first marked out by walking. '*Humans are animals and like all animals, we leave tracks as we walk'.* Over time these become '*the habits of the landscape... acts of consensual making.*' Part of the pleasure of walking these lanes is a sense of simply being one of the myriad humans who have walked them over centuries. You can get

perspective on your place in the scheme of things in Kilcross.

"*Do you know of the hollow lane?*" Paddy Knox asked. He added that it possibly indicates a souterrain leading from the rath (*An Ráth Mór*). Jack, his grandson, stout stick in hand, led us there. He knew the tree that marks it. He paused, raised his staff. For a moment he was an apprentice Prospero summoning the elements. For the same moment I was drawn into old fears and fascinations. It was after all a rath we were dealing with. Anything could happen. Jack struck the ground. It rang hollow on cue. The rath itself *(An Rath Mór)* is an impressive but more or less impenetrable acre site. From it one can take in the beauty of the long fields sloping to the south. On the side of the central mound there is the entrance to a badger's sett. Later, my nephew told me that badgers love raths. *'They find the souterrain and set up home"* he says.

A Frank Brown is listed as renting '*the Smiths Garden and a cabbage garden and house'* in the 1811 survey. In 1852 an Alexander Brown is recorded as renting just over 10 acres. "*That was Brown's Forge.*" In the bright summer sunshine, Billy Ashe indicated a wisp of ivy-covered ruin. "*I never remember it working in my day*". But he did remember what hearts were forged there. Eddie Keher's grandfather, Edward, was born here, and George Brown's father, Frank. Both were sons of Michael Brown, the last blacksmith and farrier in Kilcross. Their story told to me by Eileen O'Brien, Edward Browne's granddaughter, is more in the line of a saga.

Edward emigrated from Kilcross in 1896 to a post with the Hong Kong police, where he later encouraged three local men to join him. On generous leave during his career there he married Mary Tobin whose family ran a general store on the Square, Inistioge. He returned home permanently in 1923. Their daughter, Noreen Browne, married Stephen Keher. Eileen is their daughter and their son is Eddie, called after his grandfather. His remarkable hurling career started on the Square, where

the myth is he trained for scoring goals and points by aiming the sliothar at the Swaddling House windows. More accurately, Eddie thanks Martin Walsh, his primary school principal, for schooling him in basic hurling skills.

The story of Frank Brown, Edward's brother, also involved emigration, in his case to England, with his wife Mary Lackey from Tullagher (Ballyneale to be precise). Their son George grew up in Manchester and was politicised by his experience of working and unemployment there. After the General Strike of 1926 his interest in politics increased, he joined the British Communist Party and stood as one of its candidates in municipal elections. With more than five hundred other volunteers from Britain, George went to Spain in 1937 to support the Republican government in their war against fascist rebels. He was posted to the front line as a soldier in the Fifteenth International Brigade and was killed at the Battle of Brunete on 6 July 1937.

The story of how the Keher family dealt with the progression from an unwritten family motto 'For God's sake, don't talk about that communist' to a proud reclaiming of an anti-fascist hero is a whole other story and leads one to think that revisionism in history is sometimes a very good thing. And it's not hard to imagine that Kilcross would teach resolve - ó ghlúin go glúin – for the playing field, even the battle field.

In listening to all these stories it became clear that discovery for me was long known by the people who live here, and by family members who may not live in Kilcross now, but whose links with the townland are still strong. For example, it was Micheál Buachaill, living in Thomastown, who introduced me to *An Dréimire Buí* with all its complexities.

Neccesity or nostalgia?

Does any of this matter? Is the work of field name recording a process of necessity or nostalgia? I suggest it is necessity. Knowledge of a field name, a story, an historic structure is a means to bond us more closely to where we live. I think of young Jack Knox again. In his family the repetition, the handing on, seems as generative, and as necessary, as the farm work itself. I think of his ease walking the lanes, stick in hand like a staff of office. That continuance is his office.

So now, for me, the map of Kilcross carries all these resonances. While maps as artefacts, detailed Ordnance Survey maps in particular, chronicle changes in landscape and land use over time, they also hold something of the land's timeless presence, or rather of its capacity to hold all time. On stony lanes in Kilcross, you walk into the past. You walk within the present through swathes of rich grass ready for silage-making. You walk with Jack in his busy present, with his hope-filled thoughts of the future. In Kilcross it is all one.

On my most recent walk in Kilcross I noticed that building had started on a fine new house. Only a few courses of blocks had been laid but it was clear that large windows will face the view, across to the western bank of the river. The foreground to the south-west has the high ground of Killeen leading to wooded Mount Alto. Further west the patchwork of Kilmacshane leads to a view across country to the contours of Sliabh na mBan on the far horizon. Already the new house, somehow, seems as settled as Billy's home place. Maybe the family who will live here already knows how the afternoon and evening sky can blaze with sunbeams. Maybe they have known it all their lives. Other than on foot, there is no through road in Kilcross. But when you get to Kilcross, where else would you want to go?

Mar sin, bfhiú é, ach an fiú é?

I mo chás féin, is é an rud is luachmhaire domsa, thar rud ar bith eile, ná an méid a d'fhoghlaim mé faoi shaibhreas na Gaelainne i gCill Chainnigh. Nach ait é, nár chúis bhróin nó fiú náire dom é nach raibh a fhios agam cheana, faoin oidhreacht atá againn anseo, nach raibh eolas dá laghad agam faoi Sheán Ó Donnabháin nó a chuid saothair? Nach raibh a fhios agam gur áitigh mo shin-seanmháthair ar an bhfoirm daonáirimh 1901 go raibh Gaelainn aici. B'shin Gaelainn ó dhúchas.

Mar sin ní aon ionadh é go raibh an Ghaelainn fite-fuaite tríd ár gcuid Béarla, le linn m'óige, le tionchar an-mhór orainn, idir stórfhocail agus cruth ár gcainte. Ni rabhamar riamh 's*tupid*' nó '*foolish*' i dTulachar ach go minic bhíomar mar 'amadán', 'óinseach' nó '*stuacán*'. Ní rabhamar riamh 'cynical', mar dhea. In ár dteach, níor thit cupán riamh '*in bits*' ach '*i smidiríní*' ó am go ham. Ní raibh na focail '*hawthorn*' nó '*haws*' agam go dti go raibh me fásta suas. Ba leor dúinne '*sceach*' is '*sceachóirí*' a úsáid'. Fós, is iad sin na chéad fhocail a thagann chugam faoin bplanda sin. Ní raibh a fhios dá laghad againn cad ba '*bilberry*' ann ach bhí sár-am againn gach Iúil ar Fraochán Sunday. Is aistriúchán díreach é, gnáth–bheannacht mo mháthar '*God bless the work*' ó '*Rath Dé ar an obair*'. Níor óladh sláinte éinne um Nollaig, Oíche Cinn Bliana nó ag aon fhéile mhór eile ach '*Go mbeirimid beo ag an am seo arís*' a deireadh ag na hócáidí sin. Bhí rian na Gaelainne le cloisint in usáid na n-aimsirí gnáthchaite is gnáthláithreach go dtí gur fhoghlaimíomar nach raibh ár '*Tullagher English*' inghlachta.

Agus an chuimhne is ansa liom ná a bheith ag éisteacht amach ar '*a leanbh*' úsáideadh mar ghnáthfhocal ceanúil orainn. Bhíodh sé mar thaisce agam. Bhíodh 'a leanbh chumhra bhán', go mór-mhór ó na seandaoine, mar leigheas ar ghach olc. Anois, sílim go raibh cineáltas glún ann i slí eigin a mhothaigh mé. Ach is taithí

phearsanta a bhí ann agus níor dhein mé aon nasc idir sin agus ár gcuid Gaelainne sa bhunscoil. Bhí sí sin mar theanga iascachta againn (faraor, gan mhothúcháin, ach amháin tír-ghrá, gan chomhrá, gan chaidreamh) ag brath ar an múinteoir áirithe, ó Ghaillimh, ó Chíarraí nó ó Choláiste Phádraig, Droim Conrach. Níor linne í.

Ach anois, i mo thuairim, is cúis mhór cheiliúrtha é, saothar tionscadal Ainmneacha na bPáirceanna i gCill Chainnigh. Is linne iad *Bán na Cráin*, *Bán na gCloch*, *An Fraoch Mór*, *An Mhóin Gharbh*, *Tobar na mBan*, *Garraí Crann Bán.* D'fhéadfaí a rá go bhfuil athchóiriú beag déanta againn ar shaothar na Suirbhéireachta Ordanáis a chuir leagan Béarla ar gach logainm. Táimidne tar éis leaganacha Gaelainne, le ciall shuntasach leo, a aimsiú as leaganacha Béarla nach raibh bun ná barr orthu, ná aon bhaint acu le dinnseanachas na tíre (mar shámpla, *Tuar an Chnoic* ó *Tournanicks*, *Láib Árd* ó *Labart*). Mar sin, tá sé soiléir

go bhfuil tábhacht faoi leith ag baint le hainmneacha i nGaelainn atá beagnach i ngach feirm, go mór-mhór i ndeisceart an chontae. Táimidne ag aimsiú gurb é an talamh corp na tire, baill bheata na páirceanna, agus an teanga a guth is a hanam.

Cúpla mí ó shin chuaigh mé chuig Reilig Glasnaoin chun ómós a thabairt do Sheán Ó Donnabháin. Tá sé curtha san áit onórach sin, an Ciorcal Uí Chonaill. Tá leacht breá aolchloch Chill Chainnigh aige. Rinne Coiste Éigse Sliabh Rua athchóiriú ar a uaigh, ach ba chóir duinn uile i gCill Chainnigh, ní amháin muintir Sliabh Rua, cuimhneamh ar an gCúigear Máistir, agus an gaisce a rinne sé ar son teanga is stair na tíre. Nílim ag déanamh aon chomparáid idir a scoláireacht agus ár saothar ach tá nasc ann, agus tá inspioráid i saothar An Donnabháinigh. Agus is linne é.

Níl aon suim agam an Béarla a chaitheamh amach (samhlaigh saol gan Shakespeare?) ach ba bhreá liom go mbeadh deireadh curtha leis an gcogadh cathartha idir ár ndá theanga oifigiúil. Tháinig siad, tráth, ón bhfréamh céanna i ré bunúsach na dteangacha Ind-Eorpach! Ní ualach iad an Ghaelainn agus Béarla le chéile ach deiseanna. Pé stair atá ann, ní ganntanas atá againn anois ach saibhreas is féidearthachtaí.

Agus mar fhocal scoir, tá oidhreacht níos doimhne agus níos ársa againn i gCill Chainnigh ó thaobh na Gaeilinne de, ná oidhreacht na hiománaíochta. Tá súil agam go mbeimid chomh cleachtaithe leithe is chomh bródúil asti lá éigin.

"All the small farmers and farm labourers around here also fished the river and they knew all the names that were on the water and on the land. If those names are not preserved now they'll never be preserved. There are always going to be people interested in history and the generations to come will get a chance to learn what the land was like in our time. We're preserving something for posterity. It's a celebration of place. If we don't save it now the youngsters will never have it.

Jamesie Murphy
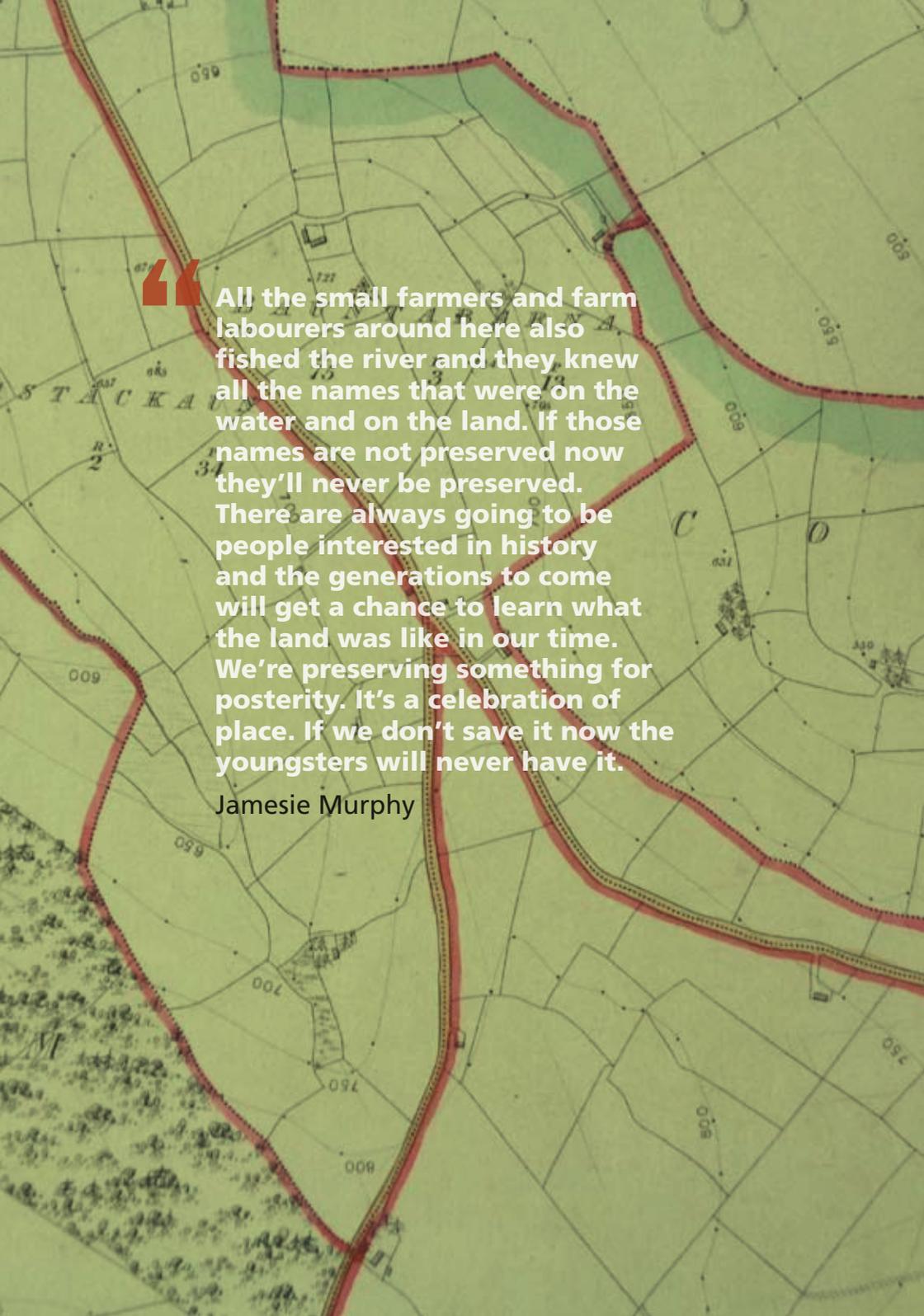
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"It's fascinating when you start to delve down into it. Look at the field names. You know we have some old headstones down in St. Catherine's Church in Rathbeagh and one dates back to 1526. It was neglected and the writing was disappearing slowly but surely. It's the same with the field names. You have to protect them or they'll be gone too. Michael O'Gorman

"There is great value in this work. I've a great regret that it was not done twenty-five or thirty years ago. We should be saving our heritage. All the information is being lost generation by generation.
Dick Meaney

John Maher

Dick Meaney

Ned Moran

Michael O'Gorman

"I've learned a huge amount about the townland from this survey work. Perhaps the biggest benefit of it will be the carrying forward of place names and field names, the local history of this townland, for centuries to come. I've discovered much about this place that I did not know before. It has been a good and rich experience. Frank Sullivan

> **We could lose all these names so quickly if we're not careful. They are part of the history of our families and our communities. We have to pay attention to them or they'll be lost and a lot else along with them. People are leaving the land as it is and the connection with the landscape is being lost. If we don't know where we've come from how will we know where we're going?** Michael Prendergast

Margaret O'Neill

Michael Prendergast

Frank Sullivan

Michael Walshe

> **The recording of the field names brings us closer to our past and to the people who lived and inhabited the landscape. Stories about those people and the naming of their fields form part of our rich cutural heritage.** Margaret O'Neill

> **They should have been recorded thirty or forty years ago and we'd have got an awful lot more of them. There's no telling how many of them have disappeared. If we'd left it any longer there'd be none at all.** Michael Walshe

Three Corner, Gaulstown

Field Notes:
The Townland of Atateemore
Alan Counihan

View west from Atateemore

The townland of Atateemore (or Blackneys) is situated in the south-east of County Kilkenny in the parish of Kilcolumb and the Barony of Ida. The old Irish name for the townland was Áit an Tighe Mhóir (The Place of the Big House) but it has appeared on maps in its anglicised form ever since the first Ordnance Survey of Ireland mapping at a scale of six inches to one mile was carried out between 1824 and 1846. Locally it is now variously pronounced as Atimore or Áitimór. There is no record that might throw light on the alternate name for the townland, Blackneys, although the historic six-inch map first produced by the Ordnance Survey suggests an association with the settlement at the centre of the townland. No other houses outside of this small settlement were recorded on the map.

The townland comprises almost 174 statute acres (106 Irish acres) of mostly well-drained open pasture land, which slopes quite steeply from east to west, offering wonderful views of the county and the Walsh Mountains to the west, the plains of north Waterford and the Comeragh Mountains to the south, with nearby Tory Hill to the north.

6" Ordnance Survey map 1839-40
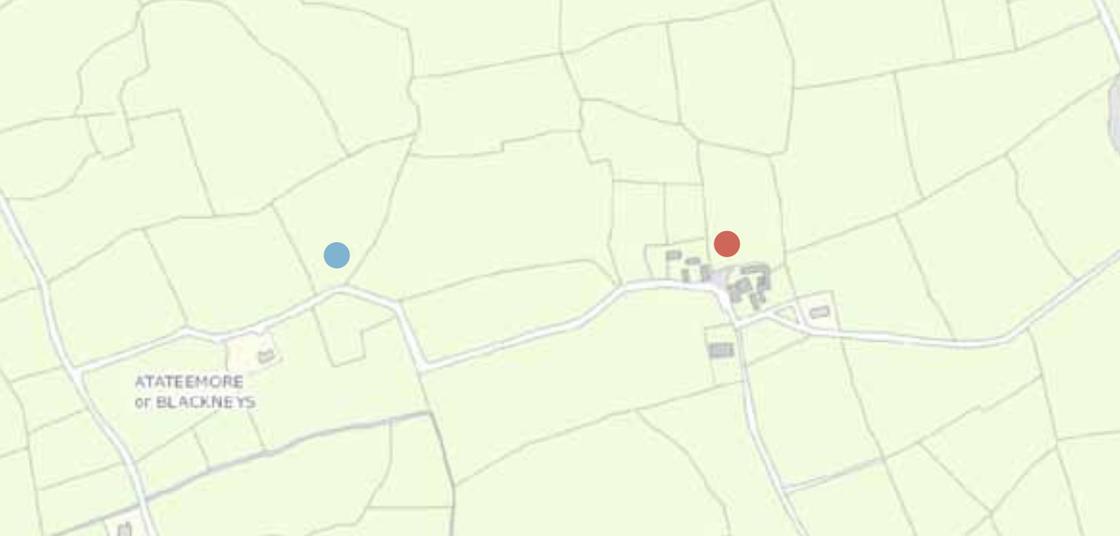
Possible locations of John O'Donovan's birthplace

It is sparsely inhabited. The farmhouses that once comprised the settlement of Blackneys are now part of out-farms and only three other houses presently exist within the townland. The well-hedged fields are relatively small although they were once smaller still. On the historic six-inch OS map, eighty-one fields were delineated while on the OSI map of 2005 the number had fallen to fifty-one. Over the past one hundred and eighty years it is probable that there has also been a great reduction in the number of the townland's inhabitants.

Atateemore is justly well known on account of one of its erstwhile inhabitants. John O'Donovan, the famous etymologist and orthographer, often referred to as The Fifth Master, was born here in 1806. His father, Edmund O'Donovan, who claimed noble lineage dating back centuries, was a small tenant farmer while his mother, Eleanor (née Hoberlin), was descended from Cromwellian planters. The exact location of the house in which John was born is uncertain although many attest that it stood within the settlement or farm village of Blackneys (see map above). However on a recent visit to the townland an alternate location (blue circle) was indicated by a farmer whose family have lived nearby for

Possible location of John O'Donovan's birthplace at the farm village of Blackneys

generations and who heard the claim made by elders of the locality many years ago. No trace of a building remains at either place although shards of broken china in the immediate area of the first site (red circle) suggest it is the more likely location of the two.

John began his education in a hedge school but by the age of seventeen his gifts of intelligence, a prodigious memory and curiosity saw him studying Latin and the classics in Dublin. By the age of twenty one he was working professionally as a copier and translator of ancient Irish manuscripts for James Hardiman, the Commissioner of Public Records. This opened many doors for him and by 1830 he had secured employment as a member of the Topographic Department for the Ordnance Survey Office which since 1924 had been engaged in the remapping of Ireland to a detail never anywhere before achieved. He spent the first three years of his employment with the Survey investigating the names of places and people listed in ancient Irish manuscripts and only began fieldwork in the countryside in 1834.

The cultural purposes and consequences of the Ordnance Survey's naming or renaming of the Irish landscape have been well explored in

Brian Friel's play, Translations. Indeed it has been suggested that one of the play's leading characters, Owen Hugh O'Donnell, is based on John O'Donovan[5]. Like Owen in the play, the role of O'Donovan and his fellow translators in the Topographical Department was to determine the correct spelling of each place name but they had no control over the final names to be eventually engraved upon the maps. No doubt they were also aware that Irish place names were never going to be included upon a map being created by a colonial administration, the intention of which was to anglicise and standardise those place names from the outset. Nonetheless, O'Donovan and his fellow orthographers in the Topographical Department took their work most seriously in the hope that their efforts would contribute eventually to a national cultural archive.

All of the place names gathered by military engineers during the course of the Irish Ordnance Survey were recorded in Name Books. In these books the engineers and their subordinates in the field were instructed to record the ancient and current forms of the place names they encountered and to list local spelling and pronunciation where possible. Given the complications of possible religious prejudice, linguistic ignorance and the fact that the engineers often used the local gentry, landlords and clergy as their source of information it is small wonder that in many instances the names eventually engraved upon the maps - and still in use today - bear no relation to their original Irish form. No doubt in those areas where Irish had, by the 1830s, already disappeared as a spoken language, many old Irish place names were already corrupted or unrecognisable. Nonetheless it is difficult to imagine how, for example, *Tulach an Iarainn* (The Mound of the Iron) in County Waterford was recorded as Tallow, or how *Teanga* (tongue or language) in County Westmeath was recorded as Tang.

Attempts were certainly made to avoid such 'barbarous' translations

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5   *Civilising Ireland, Ordnance Survey 1824-1842,* Stiofán O'Cadhla, Irish Academic Press, 2007, Dublin; p.218.

where possible. Once completed by the military staff, the Name Books were then passed on to the topographical assistants of the Survey for research and verification. The latter were often appalled by what they found. In 1837 O'Donovan wrote to his superior, Lieutenant Thomas A. Larcom, complaining that the Name Books for Roscommon had been 'very rudely.. very carelessly done' and went on to further write that 'these blunders are scandalous'[6].

The processes used by O'Donovan and his colleagues in the Topographical Department to research and verify the place names in the Name Books should be of interest to all who have an interest in the preservation of local history. O'Donovan's method of research involved interviews with the oldest and wisest of each neighbourhood he visited throughout the length and breadth of Ireland in order that he might learn the correct pronunciation of each and every recorded place name. Ideally the *shanachies* and *seers* he sought out among the *aborigines* would also be native Irish speakers[7]. Then, having further examined on foot the landscape to which the place name belonged, he would list his research results and orthographic recommendations in a separate column in the Name Books. As he wrote of his process:

> *The pronunciation of the names of townlands has been taken down from the viva voce of the most intelligent of the Irish natives in every parish, by one intimately acquainted with the general and local pronunciation of the language, and with the orthography of the ancient and modern language of Ireland.[8]*

In addition to his work in the development of the Survey's Name Books O'Donovan also created a voluminous correspondence to the Ordnance Survey that outlines and elaborates on his countrywide research and which, while not written for publication, was intended to inform the

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6 Ordnance Survey Letters, Roscommon, 26.8.1837.
7 Ordnance Survey Letters, Fermanagh, 1834, p.72.
8 Ordnance Survey Memoirs of Ireland, Belfast 1990-98, Vol 36, p.61

creation of the Memoirs that the Survey originally intended to produce for each county but only one of which was ever published. These Survey Letters have proved a great resource to Irish scholars ever since. As Patricia Boyne has written:

> It is worth noting that almost every writer of a history of a county or district in Ireland, or author of a paper read before an archaelogical society, has drawn on O'Donovan's writings in his Survey letters [9].

O'Donovan's contribution to Irish scholarship did not end with the cessation of his work for the Ordnance Survey in 1842. Over the next 19 years until his death in 1861 he earned a precarious living through the translation and editing of ancient Irish manuscripts. This work included an edition of *The Annals of the Four Masters* and, with his colleague and friend Eugene O'Curry, an edition of *Seanchus na hÉireann,* The Ancient Laws of Ireland, more familiarly known as The Brehon Laws. This great Gaelic scholar who made such a valuable contribution to the cultural heritage of Ireland is buried in Glasnevin Cemetery, in Dublin, far from his home place of Atateemore.

John O'Donovan is credited with investigating the spelling of 144,000 place names for the 62,000 townlands recorded in the Survey's maps. He was thorough in his investigations for he considered the link between language, landscape and collective memory to be in peril at the time. As he wrote from Roscommon in 1837:

> I have now done with the territories in this county, and have, to my great satisfaction secured information which if neglected for ten years more (ie longer) could never be recovered, and I may style my researches in that way, "Restitution of Decayed Intelligence".[10]

O'Donovan did not investigate place names that referred to ownership of land or fields as he considered these too ephemeral by nature. Much of

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9   *John O'Donovan: a biography – Studies in Irish Archaeology and History,* Patricia Boyne, Boethius Press, Kilkenny; 1987. P.17.

10   Ordnance Survey Letters, Roscommon, Vol 2, 1837, p.44.

the countryside would have been enclosed by the 1830s and the matrix of fields so produced would have offered an enormous subcategory of minor placenames. In a Survey letter from Sligo he cautions his superiors "*not to give on the Maps names of loughs and places called after farmers now living, or people gone many years since to America, because such names will give way to others in a very short time.*"[11]

It comes as a surprise then to learn that O'Donovan did record the field names for his own home townland of Atateemore. Exactly when he recorded them is unknown although the Survey Letters dealing with his native parish of Kilcolumb were forwarded to the Topographical Department from Limerick and are dated Sept 1839. This list was published in 1959 and 1960 by Padraig Ó Niathain, Director of the Irish Placenames Commission and is listed below exactly as it appeared in print[12].

An t-Ard, The height - a rising ground just over the village.
Garraidh(e) an tigh(e), The Garden of the House
Garraidh(e) na bpiast, field or Garden of worms.
Poll Donabhán, Donovan's Hole.
An bán ó thuath, the northern field, i.e. North of the village
An bán ó dheas, The Sourthern (sic) field, i.e., South of the village
Gort na tin-aoileach, Garden of (i.e. at) the Limekiln. highroad).
Gort Láir, the Middle Garden, (middle between village and
High Road).
Bárr a'bháin ó thuath, the top or upper part of the northern field.
Con bhuidhe, yellow hound.
An sliadh (for sliabh) (insert tradition), the mountain covered with
furze and heath.
Gort a' t-sléidh [(6)], the Garden or field of the Mountain.

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11 Ordnance Survey Letters, Sligo, 1836, p.5.

12 Names of Fields in the Townland of Atateemore in the Parish of Kilcollam, Barony of Ida, Co Kilkenny; Patrick Nyhan, Old Kilkenny Review 1959.
Names of Fields in the Townland of Atateemore, County Kilkenny; P O'Niathain. Old Kilkenny Review, 1960.

Tiobar an t-sléigh [(6)], *the Spring gushing from the mountain, fons Montis.*

Tiobar an chloidhe, *The Well of the Ditch, or Mound.*

Tiobar an chriathadóra, *the Well of the Sieve-maker (insert reason).*

Tiobar na lachan, *the Duck's well.*

Móin bhog, *Soft Bog.*

Móinteán, *a Boggish place.*

Móin láir, *the Middle Boggy Field.*

Tóin na móna, *the bottom of the Bog.*

Tuille Thóin na móna, *the stream running at the bottom of the Bog.*

Bán na Rátha, *field of the Fort or Rath (a Rath on it).*

Cnoícin [(7)] *Gaodhlach*, *the Irish little knock (the Irish have furze* [(8)] *comprised in their notion of Knock* [(9)]*).*

Crochtín Philib' *Philip's little garden.*

Móinéar or Móin-achaidh na bhfraochán, *the Boggy field of bilberries.*

Tóin Mhóin-achaidh na bhfraochán, *the bottom of the Boggy field of Bilberries.*

Mullán Joe, *Joe's gently sloping little field.*

Fé thóin tighe Joe, *Under Joe's House (a Road).*

Reilig na ngadhar, *Burial place of the Dogs.*

Cloch an fathaich, *the Giant's stone.*

An linn, *the Pond.*

An gabhlán. *The forked little field, between two streams at their confluence.*

Garraidh (e) nuaidh, *New field.*

Sean -g(h)arraidh(e), *old field.*

Lóca [(10)] *fada*, *the long strip of land.*

Móinteán garbh, *the rough Boggish field.*

The following are O'Niathain's footnotes to this list:

[(6)] *Recté: tsléibhe.* [(7)] *Recté: cnoicín.*

(8) The Gaodhlach very likely refers to Aitleann Gaodhlach (Ulex Gallii) which most probably grew on the hill. I am indebted to Miss Scannell, National Museum, for the botanical information.
(9) Knock, the anglicised form of Cnoc = a hill: diminutive, Cnoicín.
(10) A possible reading is "laca". Probably ' leaca' is intended.'

This list of thirty-six field names is by no means comprehensive for there were eighty-one fields within the townland of Ateemore at that time. However, they probably reflect those with which O'Donovan was familiar as a child, his family having been forced to leave Ateemore for the nearby townland of Redgap when he was but ten years old.

In 2015 a volunteer with the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project, Dick Claridge, undertook a field name survey of the townland of Ateemore. Dick is a native of the adjoining townland of Davidstown and is familiar with all the local lands and landowners. Two of the families listed in the Griffith Valuation survey of 1838 as resident in Ateemore are still landowners there today though non-resident.

The list of field names recorded by Dick Claridge for The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project are listed below exactly as they were submitted. Thirty field names were recorded out of a total of fifty-one fields within the townland.

1. Cormick's First Field.
2. Cormick's Second Field.
3. Behind Sinnott's.
4. Field at Home.
5. Cormick's Bog.
6. Little Bog.
7. Kill Field.
8. Field of Well.
9. Back of Nolan's.
10. Poll a Bán
11. The White Grass.
12. Bog of Well.
13. The Cover of Carrigbegs.
14. Bán a Sted.
15. The Cover.
16. Mullally's.
17. Hay Field.
18. Knock Field.
19. High Field.
20. Truckteen.
21. Inside Field.
22. Second Inside Field.
23. The Bog.
24. The Green Field.
25. Long Bog.
26. Gaul Áwn.
27. Mullally's
28. The Kill.
29. Car Road Field.
30. Vereker's.

Map (2005) showing fields in Atateemore recorded in 2015.

A: Area once known as Mount Kearney.

B: Possible birthplace of John O'Donovan

C: Lime Kiln.

It is clear that there is little correlation between the field name lists of 1839 and 2015. Much of this will be due to the disappearance of Irish as a spoken language even though this part of South Kilkenny has the highest percentage of Irish (or corrupted Irish) field names recorded to date within the county of Kilkenny. Much of the land has changed hands over the years with new owners putting new names on their new properties much as O'Donovan had warned in 1836. There are however a few links between the two field name lists across the centuries.

- Field Number **10** (2015) *Poll a Bán* is clearly a corruption of the field name *Poll Donabhán* listed in 1839.

- Field Number **14** (2015) *Bán a Sted* might be a corruption and related to *Gort a' t-sléidh (sic),* the Garden or Field of the

Mountain. *Bán an tSléibhe*, the Pasture of the Mountain would be the corrected modern form.

- Field Number **18** (2015) *Knock Field* might well refer to *Cnoícin Gaodhlach* of O'Donovan's list. A *Knock* in South Kilkenny usually refers to a small hillock covered in furze or gorse.
- Field Number **20** (2015) *Truckteen* is clearly a corruption of *Croichtín* and quite possibly refers to the *Croichtín Philib* of 1839.
- Field Number **26** (2015) *Gaul Áwn* is clearly a corruption of *An Gabhlán* as it appears on O'Donovan's list.

Field Number **7** (2015) *Kill Field* does not refer to O'Donovan's *Gort na tin-aoileach*, *Garden of (i.e. at) the Limekiln highroad*). The 'high

Volunteer Dick Claridge beside the Lime Kiln in Atatteemore

road' still forms the eastern boundary of the townland whereas the *Kill Field* is on the western boundary and the 'low road'. There still stands in good condition a fine lime kiln in the boundary ditch of the *Kill Field* (see Figure 5*)*. Of O'Donovan's *Gort na tin-aoileach,* or its lime kiln, there is no longer a trace.

The field name lists from Atateemore offer a perfect example of how field names in Irish change and also become corrupted over generations. It was a problem that O'Donovan and his colleagues encountered in their work for the Ordnance Survey in the 1830s and it is a challenge for all those involved in place name and field name surveys today. It is most desirable, as O'Donovan also advised, that in the process of recording place names or field names volunteers attempt to hear the names actually pronounced, viva voce, by their informants before committing them to paper. It is even more preferable, especially for those with poor Irish, that they use a recording device in these instances when possible. The place name or field name can later be deciphered and translated with some hope of accuracy.

One of the fields on O'Donovan's field name list from Atateemore is **Con Bhuidhe**. This field name was not recorded by Dick Claridge in 2015 although he did record it as **The Cunawee** and **Cú Bhuí** for the adjoining townland of **Davidstown** in 2013. The field name is associated with a local legend, which O'Donovan recorded in his Survey letters from Kilkenny in 1839. Within the field in Davidstown called the Cunawee there is a small mound near its eastern boundary that contains at least one bullaun stone. The exact location of the bullaun stone is marked on the map in **Figure 4** as a red dot across the road and to the right (east) of field number **16**. It is entirely possible that the name **Con Bhuidhe**, corrupted as **Cunawee**, is a place name that predates the enclosure of the townland so that several fields created in the course of that process might also have been given that name. It is entirely possible, for example, that Field Number **16** (2015) **Mullaly's** was

Mound and bullaun stone in the Cunawee / Cú Bhuí field

once the *Con Bhuidhe* of O'Donovan's reference. The field name *The Cunawee* was also recorded nearby in the townland of **Grogan** by Dick Claridge in 2013.

Writing between 1897 and 1903 Canon William Carrigan refers to the place name of *Cunnia-Vwee* describing it as:

> a small field … situated on Davidstown hill, on the bounds of the townland of Atateemore. There is nothing remarkable in it, at present, but two small cairns, or heaps of stones, one about the centre of the field, the other close to the fence at the north side. The former merely consists of loose stones thrown carelessly together. The latter is of the same description, and measures 6 or 8 feet across; in its upper surface are embedded two large rough blocks

*of stone, one having an artificial bowl 1 foot in diameter and I foot deep; the other having a similar bowl I foot in diameter and 4 or 5 inches deep. The deeper bowl always contains some water and is known as **Thubber Phaudraig** or **St Patrick's Well**.*[13]

In his Ordnance Survey letter dealing with the parish of Kilcolumb O'Donovan elaborates on the legend associated with the place name (and later field names) associated with the Con Bhuidhe.[14]

In the townland of Baile Dhathi or Davidstown in this parish not far from the high road which divides it from Blackney's part of Attatemore, is a monument of great antiquity called Gluin Phadruig, ie genu Patricii. It consists of a 'blind well' and a heap of stones on which is placed a larger stone with two remarkable hollows said to be the impressions of St Patrick's knees. The following legend is told for the origin of this monument:

"When St Patrick was traversing Ossory for the purpose of building churches, congbhails and cities he came to this beautiful elevation called Conna bhuidhe, and being struck with the amenity of the place and the beauty of the prospect (for he was a great admirer of scenery) he came to the resolution of building there a Cathedral and city which he afterwards, for reasons which will presently appear, placed at Waterford. He employed labouring men to dig the foundations of the Cathedral and houses, and masons to build them, and continued the work with cheerfulness and vigour for some days. At last a pagan woman out of Ballincrea (whose name is fortunately forgotten, but it is supposed she was the ancestress of Nicholas Bacach, the Garsun Balbh and the Sawney Ribby) came to him with an offering of a dish of roasted meat for his dinner, which Patrick received with many 'grazagams'. On uncovering the dish he

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13 History and Antiquities of the Diocese of Ossory, Vol 4; Rev Wiliam Carrigan, C.C.; Dublin 1905; p.98

14 Ordnance Survey Letters, Kilkenny, 1839.

did not like the aspect of the meat, and thought he perceived the paw of an unclean animal. He was immediately struck with nausea, and kneeling upon the next stone to him he laid his two hands over the roasted animal in the dish, in the form of a cross, and prayed to God to restore whatever animal it was to its original life and shape. And lo! He had no sooner finished his prayer than a 'yellow hound' (Cuin bhuidhe) started into life and leaping out of the dish ran in the direction of Waterford! Patrick was struck with disgust and horror at the sight, and turning to the working-men he said in a solemn voice : 'Pursue and kill that hound, for she will kill every man and beast which she will meet in her course'. The men pursued her with their spades, shovels and pickaxes, and overtaking her on the lands of Treanaree about a mile to the east of the place whence she started, succeeded in killing her there. There they buried her, and over her grave a small stunted white-thorn bush is now to be seen, called Sgeithin na con, i.e. 'the little thorn' of the hound. The stones near this bush are impressed with the marks of a greyhound's feet, and one of them exhibits the figure of a greyhound in miniature.

   In consequence of this ominous occurrence St Patrick abandoned his project, but erected this heap of stones as a memorial of his intentions, placing on top of it the stone on which he knelt whilst he prayed and which was stamped with the impression of his two knees. He called the place Connawee in memorial of the resuscitation of the hound and pronounced an awful malediction on the woman who had thus profanely insulted him, and on her descendants, and place of abode.

   Malluighim, malluighim baile in Chraedh
   Nar fheicid nec ela
   Gan daoine dona lan do saet
   Assuide co la an bhrath.

Sceitim mallacht nimhneac uaim
Air slicht nemh-ghlan na mna
Ni cluinter as a m-beolaibh fuaim
Acht malluighteacht cec la.
S' ni feicfidh nech in bail ud
Edh soillsigid esca is grian
Gan duine bacach, balbh, gud: -
Malluighim iad co dian.
Malluighim.

Translation

Accursed be Ballincrea's people
From whom the hound was sent to me
As long as bell shall ring in steeple,
As long as man and time shall be.
Accursed the black breed of the woman
Who served me with this filthy hound
From their wry mouths thenceforward, no man
Shall hear but foul, impious sound.
Accurs'd the place! Behold I strike it
With my red bolt and seal its doom
May all good men for e'er dislike it,
May it be curs'd with deaf and dumb.

It is believed that the malediction of the great Patrick still remains in full force, as the inhabitants of Ballincrea are remarkable for blaspheming, and it has not been since the memory of tradition without a lame, dumb, or wry-mouthed man. I could say more about the present inhabitants of Ballincrea, but I leave them under the patronage of St Patrick, who will take care of them.

Whatever truth lies in this tale there is a deal of humour and mischief also. Perhaps some childhood memories and family hurt lie behind O'Donovan's mockery of the inhabitants of Ballincrea. But the inhabitants of Atateemore, if they are aware of their local history, have much of which to be proud. Once again a key to the history of a landscape and of a place is held in a place name. It is a legacy that O'Donovan, considered by many to be Ireland's first historic topographer, has left to the country. That legacy has inspired and continues to inspire the work of the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project.

John O'Donovan. Born Atateemore, 9th July 1809. Died Dublin, 9th December 1861 (buried in Glasnevin Cemetery).

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View of Sliabh na mBan from Tullahought

A Glossary of Kilkenny
Field Names in Irish

The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project 2010-2015

Compiled by Alan Counihan, Carmel Cummins
and Micheál Ó Diarmada

Clais an Eyeshin (Clais an Aifrinn), Vale of the Mass, Ruthstown

Given the surprising number of field names of Irish derivation recorded by survey volunteers over the past six years (14%) it has become clear that the development of a glossary of those field names would be of great value in any future survey work carried out in the county. Not only will it allow volunteers to provide more consistent records and spelling of Irish field names but it will also be of assistance in the understanding and possible meaning of a field name when it is pronounced by the owner of the field or by any other informant.

Unfortunately, very few of the field names gathered by the Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project between 2010 and 2015 have been audio recorded. Rather each volunteer has provided written phonetic renderings of their townland's field names as they have heard or have interpreted them. Otherwise, the field name has been provided to the volunteer in writing by the landowners themselves as best they can interpret or remember them. In most cases the Irish field name has been spelled using the English alphabet which complicates matters even further. We might take it for granted that, in a county where - apart from small pockets in the parishes of Glenmore, Tullagher and Rathcoole – the Irish language had disappeared from daily use by the late 19th-century, the Irish field names handed down through families with little knowledge of spoken Irish over the intervening years were likely themselves to have been already corrupted. Above all it must be emphasised that field names belong to the oral tradition and that prior to this survey the vast majority of them have never been written down.

While it is not possible to ensure that the renderings and translations

of all the field names provided in this glossary are correct it can be said that the methodology used has been cautious, conservative and, hopefully, effective

Taking each field name in its written form as provided by the survey volunteer we have tried to decipher its meaning using the resources of dictionaries and other works published on the subject of Irish place names. The primary dictionary resources have been *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla* by Niall Ó Dónaill (1977) and *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Béarla* by Rev. Patrick S. Dineen (1927). The other publications on which we have relied are *The Place-Names of County Kilkenny by* Owen O'Kelly (1969), *The Field Names of County Meath* (2013) and *The Irish Names of Places* by P. W. Joyce (1869).

The Place-Names of County Kilkenny by O'Kelly is an especially useful resource for any field name survey work within the county for in the course of his work the author gathered the names of several fields within a majority of Kilkenny's 1595 townlands. While the fields listed by O'Kelly are not identifiable by location they do offer the volunteer a potential trove of comparative names for those pronounced by the landowners of the townland under survey.

The Irish Names of Places by P. W. Joyce is also a wonderful resource for those who can lay hands upon a copy. Joyce laid great store in the remarkable work carried out by Kilkenny's John O'Donovan from Atateemore for the Ordnance Survey of Ireland between 1830 and 1842, most especially his survey correspondence and the Field Name Books created for that Survey's Topographic Department. Within the first three chapters of Joyce's publication much can be usefully gleaned as to the decipherment of place names and, by extension, the names of fields. Rooted in the advice that pronunciation is essential to the decipherment of a field name's correct form or spelling the reader is offered guidance as to the effects of elision, the softening of consonants, eclipsis, aspiration and the inclusion of the definite article

in the case of compound names. Joyce devotes a a particularly useful chapter to "Corruptions" within which he offers examples of the frequent interchange of the letters *l*, *r*, *n*, and *m*. Dealing with the letters *l* and *r* he cites the following example from Kilkenny:

'Biorar', watercress, is now always called in Irish 'biolar', in which form it enters into several names as, for example, Aghaviller, a parish in Kilkenny; the Four Masters call it Achadh biorair (Ahabirrer), The Field of the Watercress, but the present spoken Irish name is Achadh-bhiolar, from which the English form is derived.

He shows the interchange of the <u>sound</u> of the letters *ch* to *f* through the example of *Knocktopher* (*Cnoc-a'-Tochair, Hill of the Causeway or Togher*); of the sound of the letters *th* to *f* through Tiscoffin (Tigh-Scoithin, Scoithin's House) and of the sound of the letter *n* to the letter *r* an example of which was recorded by our survey (*The Crocken, An Cruachán, The Little Hill or Hillock*) in the townland of Mount Nugent Upper.

All of the above resources were indispensable in the decipherment of many of the field names recorded but there still remained a large percentage that defied attempts to unlock their secrets. The key to those secrets lies in regional pronunciation and the fact that Irish as spoken in County Kilkenny had its own dialectical peculiarities. Of special assistance in the decipherment and translation of these field names was Micheál Ó Diarmada, a native of *Crowbally* (*Cruabhaile*) townland in South Kilkenny. Micheál, the retired Principal of St Kieran's College in Kilkenny, is a fluent speaker of Irish and familiar with its local nuances, especially those of the southern part of the county where the highest percentage of field names of Irish origin were recorded.

Micheál was able to highlight those field names where the letters *th* in the written word have been replaced by those of *ch* in the spoken word. An example is a field name in Ballinclare townland recorded as

Auke (Ách, from Áth, a ford). Another example reveals the common instance in Kilkenny Irish where the letter *r* is replaced by the letter *s* in pronunciation so that the field name recorded as *Bally Gá Vouse* in *Ballinlammy* townland can be correctly presented as *Baile Dhá Mhóir*. Other examples of field names showing this interchange are *Slugisha* (*Slogaire, a Swallow Hole*), *Clais an Eyeshin (Clais an Aifrinn)* and *Garryhoister (Garraí Oirthir, Front Field).*

Given that so many of the field names of Irish origin or derivation have been so heavily corrupted, there can be no certainty that we have presented all of them in their original and correct form within the glossary. It has been a rule of thumb that field names refer above all to land quality, topography and ownership and so we have avoided the more romantic or mythic possibilities that some names might have suggested.

The first column in the glossary presents the field name exactly as recorded and provided by the volunteer. The second column presents the field name in its most likely form in Irish. Where there is doubt or a degree of guesswork involved the name is followed by a (?) or question mark. In the third column a translationin English is supplied of the suggested correct Irish form.

Within this third column the field name in English is often followed by a name in brackets which references the source of the translation. The key to these references is as follows:

(Dineen): Rev Patrick S. Dineen, *Foclóir Gaedhilge agus Bearla.*

(Flanagan): Deirdre Flanagan & Laurence Flanagan, *Irish Place Names.*

(Joyce): P. W. Joyce, *Irish Names of Places.*

(Moylan): Seamus Moylan, *The Language of Kilkenny.*

(Ó Diarmada): Micheál Ó Diarmada.

(Ó Donaill): Niall Ó Donaill, *Foclóir Gaeilge-Béarla.*

(O'Kelly): Owen O'Kelly, *The Place-Names of County Kilkenny.*

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Árd	Árd	High Ground or Height	Ballinclare
Ard Mór	Árd Mór	Great Height	Ballinclare
Ard na Locht	Árd na Leacht?	Summit or Height of the Flat-topped Hill?	Ahanure North
Aska	Easca	Sedgy Bogland (Dinneen)	Purcellsgarden, Tomnahaha
Auchra	Acra	Acre	Tomnahaha
Auke	Áth	Ford (Ó Diarmada)	Ballinclare
Auke Maclogue	Áth	Maclogue's Ford (Ó Diarmada)	Farnoge East
Bá Mhór	Baidhe Mhór	Big Swath	Knockbrack
Baithin	Beitín	Field of top-burnt soil. A place where heaps of sods and roots were burned and ploughed back in during reclamation (Moylan)	Smithstown
Bal a Bean	Bealach Bhinne?	Summit Path or Summit Way?	Ballinclare
Ballaghrath	Bealach Rátha	Rath Path or Rath Way (Way to the Rath)	Kilcross
Ballawn	Ballán	Cup-like hollow in a rock. Often ritualistic	Kilmacshane
Ballock	Bealach	Path or Way	Glencoum
Bally a killeen	Baile an Chillín	Settlement of the Little Church	Rahard
Bally Gá Vouse	Baile Dhá Mhóir	Big David's Town (Ó Diarmada)	Ballinlammy
Ballyconra	Béal Átha Conra	Conra's Ford Mouth (O'Kelly)	Ballyconra
Bán a Clea	Bán an tSléibhe	Mountain Pasture (Ó Diarmada)	Farnoge West, Rahillakeen
Bán a Sted	Bán an Stoid	Stump Field, Cornstook Field (Ó Diarmada)	Atateemore
Bán Ard	Bán Árd	High Pasture	Ballyhomuck, Grogan, Tullaghought

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Bán Easpaig	Bán Easpuig	Bishop's Pasture	Oldcourt
Bán Ghearr	Bán Gearr	Short Pasture	Kyleadohir
Bán Láns	Bán Lána	Lawn (or Lane) Pasturage (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea
Bán Mór	Bán Mór	Big Pasture or Field	Ballincrea
Bán Mór Clioch	Bán Mór Claíoch	Big Fenced Pasture (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea
Bán na gCloc	Bán na gCloch	Pasture of the Stones	Glensansaw
Bán na gCloch	Bán na gCloch	Pasture of the Stones (or 'Stony Park' as recorded in Cottrell's 1811 survey of Kilcross for William 'Statistical' Tighe)	Kilcross
Bán na Rioch	Bánta Riabhach	Striped or Brindled Pastures	Kilcross
Bán na Trues	Bán na Tríur	Pasture of the Three (persons)	Kilcross
Bawnogue	Bánóg	Little Enclosure (in Plantation times a Bán was an enclosed secure area for the protection of cattle) (Ó Diarmada)	Knockshanbally
Bán Riach	Bán Riabhach	Fallow Land (Dinneen) Striped Pasture	Rathinure
Bán Tirim	Bán Tirim	Dry Pasture	Clonamery
Bán Uisce	Bán Uisce	Watery Pasture	Aylwardstown
Bannor Dubh	Branar Dubh?	Black Lea or Unploughed Ground	Ballyhomuck
Bánta Lawn	Bánta Leathan?	Wide Pastures / Grasslands	Ballyrahan
Bántas/ Bántachts Bántrachts	Bánta	Pastures / Dry Pasture Lands / Grassslands	Kilcross
Barleen	Barr Lín	Flax Crop	Knocknew
Barna	Bearna	A Gap	Connahy
Barna Wee	Bearna Bhuí	Yellow Gap	Kilcross

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Barr Killa	Barr Coille	Top of the Wood, Crop of the Wood	Aylwardstown
Barr na Farraige	Barr na bhFargán, Barr na Fearnóga? Barr an bhFéaraigh?	Top of the Ledges? (Ó Diarmada); Summit of the Alders? Top of the Pasture?	Ballinclare
Barr na hÁille	Barr na hAille	Top of the Cliff (or rock)	Cramersgrove
Barrallóige	Baile Uí Laodhóg	O'Logue's Settlement (O'Kelly & O'Diarmada)	Rochestown
Bawn	Bán	A Pasture. 'Bán' also means a grassy field, an old pasture under hay, a cattle enclosure (a Bawn), a field near farmyard (Moylan)	Ballygub New
Bawn Darragh/ Bawn Darrig	Bán Doire	Oak Grove Bawn (O'Kelly) / Oak Grove Pasture	Ballygub New
Bawn na Claush	Bán na Claise	Field of the Trench	Knockbrack
Bawn na Crawn	Bán an Cráin (Bán an Cránach)	Sow's Field	Clonamery
Bawn na Gleannas	Bán an Ghleanna	Glen Pastures	Ballygub New
Bawn na Racha	Bán na Rátha	Pasture of the Raths (O'Kelly)	Ballygub New
Bawn na Rocha	Bán na Rátha? Bán na Roca?	Pasture of the Raths? Field of the Wrinkles (old famine drills?) (Ó Diarmada)	Ballygub New
Bawn-a-gay	Bán na Gaoithe, Ban na nGé?	Windy Pasture (Ó Diarmada), Goose Green	Newhouse
Bawnaskeaghawn	Bán na Sceachán	Pasture of the Little Sceachs (Hawthorns)	Agha
Bawngara	An Bán Garbh	The Rough Pasture	Ballygub New
Bawnsuck	An Bán Suthach? Báinseach?	The Fruitful Pasture (Dinneen) A Grassy Plain (Ó Diarmada)	Courtnaboghilla

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Baytin, Beytin	Béitín	A Field of top-burnt soil. A place where heaps of sods and roots were burned and ploughed back in during reclamation (Moylan)	Knickeen, Tullabrin
Beanna Gleannas	Bán an Ghleanna	Glen Pasture	Ballygub New
Beitin	Béitín	A Field of top-burnt soil. A place where heaps of sods and roots were burned and ploughed back in during reclamation (Moylan)	Knocknew
Binin Eadh	Bínnín Aoidh?	Hugh's Little Peak? (Ó Diarmada)	Tinislatty
Bó (Field)	Bó / Both	Cow Field / Hut Field	Rathinure
Bo na Faiche	Botharín na Faiche	Lane of the Playing Field	Kilkieran
Boherkill	Bóthar na Cille / Bóthar na Coille	Road of the Church / Road of the Wood	Kiltown
Bóisín na Gort	Bóithrín na Ghoirt	Boreen or Lane of the Fields	Parksgrove
Bon Kales	Bán Caol	Narrow Pasture	Gaulstown (Gll)
Boreen Cara	Bóithrín Carra / Bóithrín Cortha	Stepping Stone Boreen (Ó Diarmada); Bendy Boreen	Whitesland
Bosheen	Bóithirín	Boreen, Little Lane	Ballygub New, Kilmacshane
Bosheen Fada	Bóithrín Fada	Long Lane or Boreen	Rathinure
Bosheen Gearr	Bóithrín Gearr	Short Lane or Boreen	Rathinure
Bosheen na Teampall	Bóithrín an Teampall	Church or Chapel Lane	Grogan
Bóthar Hive	Bóthar Shuímh?	Road of the Settlement	Kilcross
Boula	Buaile	Booley or Milking Place	Farnoge East
Bouladuff	Buaile Dubh	Black Booley or Milking Place	Aharney
Branner Bog	Branar.	Soft Lea or Unploughed Land	Gaulstown (ME)

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Branner Bán	Branair Bán.	Lea or Fallow Pasture	Gaulstown (ME)
Briege Hara	Bríd (Ó) Hara?	Brigid O'Hara's? (Ó Diarmada)	Rathbeagh
Brogue Field	Páirc Bhroghach?	Filthy Field (foul smelling) (Ó Diarmada)	Kilmurry
Buaile	Buaile	Booley or Milking Place	Lisdowney
Buille Muc	Buaile Muc	Pigs' Booley	Connahy
Bun	Bun	Bottom or Stump (Dinneen)	Johnswell
Bunlockin	Bun Lochán, Bun Leacan	Lower Lake or Pond (Ó Diarmada) Bottom of the Slope	Grogan
Bush na Móna Lane	Bóithrín (Bosheen) na Mona	Little Bog Road	Ballyhomuck
Canekeen	Cnoicín	Hillock	Ardaloo
Carood Field	Páirc Chairéad?	Carrot Field? (Ó Diarmada)	Glentiroe
Carrageen	Carraigín	Little Rock	Rathpatrick
Carraignatine	Carraig Aitinne	Rock of the Furze (O'Kelly)	Ballygub New
Carrig an Uisce	Carraig an Uisce	Rock of the Water	Rahard
Carrigawn	An Carracán	Rocky eminence or 'rough scabby land' (Dineen)	Ballygub New
Carrigeens	Carraigín	The Little Rocks	Oldcourt
Casheleens	Caisealíní	Little Stone Forts or castles	Cramersgrove
Cashiers, Caushier	Caitheamh Siar	Fallow Land / not reseeded with grass after a crop. Literally a 'throw back' (Moylan)	Curraghlane Lr, Cramersgrove, Sandfordscourt
Chuitheen	An Cuithe	Little Pit or Pool (Dinneen)	Rathbeagh
Ciarsúr	Ciarsúr	Handkerchief	Baunreagh
Cillín	Cillín	Little Church or burial place of unbaptised infants	Seskin South, Rathinure
Claddagh	Clais Fhada	Long Trench (O'Kelly)	Oldcourt

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Clash	Clais	Trench or Ditch	Annaleck Lr, Ballyconra, Boherkyle, Coolatogher
Clasha a Tomas	Claiseanna Tomacha?	Bushy Trenches	Lodge
Clashwinis	Clais Mhuiris?	Maurice's Ditch	Knocknew
Clastabawn	Clais Bhán	White Ditch or Trench	Clonamery
Cleevauns	Cliathán, Cliath Bhán, Cliath Bháin	Side of a hill (Dinneen) White Hurdle, Pasture Hurdle	Ballinclare
Clehada	Clais Fhada	Long Trench (O'Kelly)	Oldcourt
Cloch Bhuí	Cloch Bhuí	Yellow Stone	Annaleck Lr
Cloghbicknee	Cloch Buaice Chnoic	Hill Crest Stone?	Pollagh
Clooneen	Cluainín	Little Meadow	Acragar
Closhaun / Closhawn	Cloiseán? Claiseán? Cloichreáin?	Little Foul Marsh (Diminutive form of Clois, a stinking marsh (Dinneen))? Little Trench or Ditch (diminutive of Clais)? A Stony Place (O'Kelly)	Garranamanach, Kiltown, Tullabrin
CloshFinches	Clais Fuinseoige	Ash Tree Ditch or Trench	Knocknew
Cluen	Cluain	Meadow Bog	Clonamery
Cly Dine	Claí Doimhin	Deep Ditch	Attateenoe Lr
Cnoc Rua	Cnoc Rua	Red or Brown Hill	Aharney
Cnocán Bán	Cnocán Bán	White Hillock	Knocknew
Coill	Coill	Wood	Threecastles
Coill an Ash	Coill an Easa	Wood of the Waterfall	Glensansaw
Coill Dair	Choill Daire	Oak Wood	Graigueswood
Coill Durrow	Coill Daire	Oak Wood	Tinislatty
Coill Gort	Coill Ghoirt?	Wood Field?	Carrigeen, Threecastles

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Collaun	Cúlán	A Back Angle (O'Kelly)	Ballygub New, Cullaun
Comeragh	Cumarach	Channelled or valleyed ground	Ballygowney
Commer	Cumar	Ravine	Annaleck Upper
Commer Field	Páirc an Chumair	Field of the Ravine	Lisdowney
Cool	Cúl	Back of the hill	Coolnabrone
Coolnamuck	Cúil na Muc	The Nook of the Swine	Powerstown West
Coolsilla	Cúil Sailí	Nook of the Willow	Kilmacshane
Coonagh	Cúinne	Corner	Firoda Lower
Coonya Mór	Cúinne Mór	Big Corner	Tullabrin
Coort-Nic	Chúirt Chnoic?	Hill Court (Ó Diarmada)	Baunreagh
Corcán	Carracán? Corcán?	Rough scabby land? (Dineen) Rocky Patch (Ó Donaill)	Garranamanach
Corkeen	Currachaín?	Little Wet Marsh,	Scart
Corrigatinas	Carraig Aitinne	Rock of the Furze (O'Kelly)	Ballygub New
Corrigaun / Corrigawn	Carracán	Rocky eminence or 'rough scabby land' (Dinneen) Rocky Patch (Ó Donaill)	Boherkyle, Ballygub New
Corrigeen	Carraigín	Little Rock	Ballincrea, Ballyrahan
Coshear, Cashiers.	Caitheamh Siar	Fallow Land / not reseeded with grass after a crop. Literally a 'throw back' (Moylan)	Knickeen, Pollagh
Cosheer, Coshere, Coshair	Caitheamh Siar	Fallow Land / not reseeded with grass after a crop. Literally a 'throw back' (Moylan)	Ahanure North, Knocknew, Leapstown, Ardaloo, Threecastles
Coshel	Caiseal	Cashel (a stone fort)	Aharney
Cossan Aussey	Cosán Easa? Cosán Hahessey?	Waterfall Path? Hahessey's Path (Ó Diarmada)	Grogan

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Coul na Shinne	Cúil na Shéine? Cúl na Sine?	The Whistling Nook? The Hill of the Breast? (Ó Diarmada)	Annaleck Lr
Couls	Cúla? Coillidhe?	Hill Backs or Back Slopes? Woodlands (Joyce)?	Rahard, Rahillakeen
Creteen	Cruitín	Little Hump, Little Eminence or Summit (Dinneen)	Skehana
Crett na gCruac	Cruit na gCruach	Hill of the Small Peaks or Stooks (Ó Diarmada)	Firoda Lower
Crey Wee	Cré Bhuí	Yellow Clay or Marl	Physicianstown
Crickeen	Cnoicín	Little Hill	Newhouse, Pollagh
Crickeen	Cnoicín	Little Hill	Powerstown East
Criochán	Cnoiceán	Little Hill ('Cnoc' was pronounced 'Croc' in parts of Kilkenny) (Ó Diarmada)	Tullabrin
Crit	Cruit	Hump, Little Eminence, Summit (Dinneen)	Gorteen
Criteens	Cruitíní	Little Humps (Dinneen)	Firoda Lower
Crocadh Móinteáin	Cnoc an Mhóinteáin	Hill of the Moorland (Ó Diarmada)	Slievecarragh
Crocken	Cnocán	Little Hill	Mt Nugent Uppr
Croichtín, Croichín	Crochtín	Small Field. Very common in South Kilkenny where it usually refers to a field of half an acre or so (Ó Diarmada)	Clonamery, Knickeen
Croker	Cruach? Cróch?	Stack, Rick or Hilltop/?Place of Wild Saffron? (Perhaps local slang for a hurling field?)	Knocknew
Crook Beg	Cruach Bheag	Little Hillock, Small Stook	Ballyhomuck
Crookán	Cruachán	Hillock / Little Rick (Dinneen)	Powerstown East
Crookawns	Cruachán	Hillock / Little Rick (Dinneen)	Kilkieran
Crookteen	Croichtín	Little Field (half acre or less) (Ó Diarmada)	Grogan

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Crorkeen	Croichtín	Little Field (half-acre or less) (Ó Diarmada)	Boherkyle
Crucán	Cruachán	Hillock / Little Rick (Dinneen)	Archerstown, Clonamery, Rathbeagh
Crucán Rua	Cnocán Rua	Brown (or red) hillock	Curraghlane Lr
Cruchteen	Croichtín	Little Field (half-acre or less) (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea, Ballinlammy
Cruckawn	Cruachán or Cnocán	Hillock / Little Rick	Newhouse
Cruckteen	Croichtín	Little field. Very common in S. Kilkenny. Usually less than half-an-acre (Ó Diarmada)	Ballygub New
Cruhoon	Cró hUain	Lambs' Pen	Tullabrin
Crutcheen	Croichtín	Little Field (half-acre or less) (Ó Diarmada)	Coolatogher
Cruteen	Cruitín	Little Hump, Little Eminence, Summit (Dinneen)	Coolnabrone
Cú Bhuí	Cú Bhuí	Yellow Hound	Grogan
Cuainne Stile	Cúinne	Corner Stile	Parksgrove
Cuata na Cré	Cuithe na Cré	Clay Pit	Rathinure
Cúi Gí	Cúl Gaoithe	Windy Hill Back or Angle (Ó Diarmada)	Kiltown
Cúl Rua	Cúl Rua? Cúil Rua?	Russet Hill-back? Red Nook?	Clintstown
Cuinne	Cúinne	Corner or Nook	Ballygowney, Ballyrafton
Cul na Boga	Cúl an Bhogaigh?	Hill-back of the Boggy Ground	Purcellsgardem
Cúla Cúm (Coúm)	Cúl an Chúim	Back of the Valley	Annaleck Lr
Cúla Millish	Cúil Milis	Succulent / Sweet Nook (Ó Diarmada)	Rahard

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Cúlabhú	Cúl an Bhugha? Cúil an Bhugha?	Hill-back of the Bluebell? Nook of the Bluebell? (Ó Donaill)	Connahy
Cúlóg Watt	Cúlóg Mhait	Matt's little Nook	Tullabrin
Cumínus	Coimín	Commonage (Ó Diarmada)	Farnoge
Cummar, Cummer	Cumar	Ravine or Gully with water running through it, a river confluence	Coolatogher, Johnswell, Kiltown, Kilkieran,Tullabrin,
Cunawee	Con Bhuidhe	Yellow Hound	Grogan
Currach	Currach	Wet Bog, a Marsh	Cramersgrove, Coolnamuck, Clonamery, Knocknew, Kilcross, Smithstown, Tomnahaha.
Currack, Currick	Currach	Wet Bog, a Marsh	Attateenoe Lr, Tincouse
Curragh	Currach	Wet Bog, a Marsh	Aharney, Lisdowney,Kilcross, Kilmacshane, Rossinan, Tinislatty
Curragh Cliath	Currach Cliath	Wet Bog of the Hurdle or Wattle	Ballincrea
Curragh na Boulá	Currach na Buaile	Marsh of the Booley or Milking Place	Curraghlane Lr
Cut na Ghana	Cuithe na nGéanna?	Den or Pool of the Geese? (Dinneen)	Aylwardstown
Cut na Shog	Cuithe an Sheabhaich ? Cuithe na Síog?	Hawk's Den? (Dinneen) The Fairy's Den (Ó Diarmada)	Aylwardstown
Cútheen	Cuithín	Little pit or pool	Glencoum
Dranna	Draighean?	Blackthorn?	Clonamery
Dréimishe Buí	Dreimire Buí	Yellow Wort, Yellow Ladder	Kilcross

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Drime Breek	Droim Riabhach (Riach)	The Striped or Brindled Ridge	Mt Nugent Lr
Droim Cáit	Drom Cháit	Kate's Hill-back (O'Kelly)	Gaulstown (ME)
Droim Daimh	Drom Daimh	The Ridge or Hill-back of the Oxen	Gaulstown (ME)
Dromeens	Droimíní	Little Ridges or Hillocks	Johnswell
Dromman	Dromán	Hillock or Ridge	Clone
Drummond	Dromán	Hillock or Ridge	Rathbeagh
Easca	Easca	Sedgy Bog (Dinneen)	Tullabrin, Rahard, Threecastles
Eske	Easca	Sedgy Bog (Dinneen)	Baunta Commons
Faha	Faiche	Playing Field, Lawn or Green, Smooth Land, Level Place	Kilkieran, Grogan
Fásough	Fásach	Wild ground or un-cropped pasture	Ballinlammy
Fathas	Faichí	Lawns, Greens, Smoth Lands or Level Places	Ballincrea
Feadawn	Feadán	Little Stream	Tullabrin
Fear ná Gaelle	Fearann na gCaola	The Land of the Sallies (Ó Diarmada)	Boherkyle
Feernasallogue	Fearann na Saileog	Land of the Sally Rods / Sallies (Ó Diarmada)	Firoda Lower
Fraoch Mór	Fraoch Mór	Big (expanse of) Heather	Grogan
Gabhamor	Gabha Mór? Gabhar Mór?	Big Blacksmith (Field)? Big Goat (Field)	Moat
Gabhaltacht	Gabháltas?	A Rented Farm (Dinneen)?	Knocknew
Gaileen	Gaibhlín	Little Fork (Ó Diarmada)	Coolnabrone
Gairdín	Gáirdín	Garden	Ballincrea, Bishopsland
Gairdín na Gearlt	Gairdín na nGearailt	Fitzgerald's Garden (Ó Diarmada)	Ballyhomuck

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Gal Knocks	Geal Chnoic	Bright Hills (Ó Diarmada)	Aylwardstown
Gallabullaun	Garraí Bhulláin	Bullaun Garden (Garden of the Bullaun Stone)	Connahy
Gallyrooneys	Garraí Rooney, Garraí Rúnaí.	Rooney's Garden, Garden of the Secrets	Cramersgrove
Gallywalter	Garraí Walter	Walter's Garden	Knockshanbally
Gan a Slotha	Gleann na Slata	Glen of the Rods (Ó Diarmada)	Ballyrahan
Gantaneens	Gleanntáiníní?	Little Glens? (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea
Garí Bucha	Garraí Buaice	Top Garden	Rahard West
Garraí	Garraí	Garden	Knocknew, Maudlin
Garraí Coundaí	Garraí Chúil an Tí	Garden at the Back of the House	Rahillakeen
Garraí Dioch	Garraí Díge? Garraí díochach?	Garden of the Dyke (O'Diarmada) Humped or Humpy Garden?	Rathinure
Garraí Féara	Garraí Féarmhar?	Grassy Garden	Rahillakeen
Garraí Glas	Garraí Glas	Green Garden	Rathinure
Garraí Goolan	Garraí Gualainn	Garden of the Mountain Shoulder (of the Bluff) (Dinneen)	Tullabrin
Garraí Hurra	Garraí Thoraidh	Fruit Garden	Ballincrea
Garraí Mhaithis	Garraí Mhaithis	Mathew's Garden	Knocknew
Garraí Moontáin	Garraí Móintáin	Bog Garden	Rathinure
Garrai Nouthas	Garral Nua Theas?	New South Garden? (Ó Diarmada)	Rahillakeen
Garrai Nú	Garraí Nua	New Garden	Rahillakeen
Garraí Uisce	Garraí Uisce	Garden of the Water / Watergarden	Knockbrack
Garrán Bán	Garrán Bán	White Grove	Cramersgrove
Garrí Gough	Garraí Garbh	Rough or Coarse Garden	Farnoge West

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Garrí Seoirse	Garraí Seoirse	George's Garden	Ballincrea
Garrí Una	Garraí Una	Una's Garden	Ballinlammy
Garrig a Noulter	Carraig an Altóir (Carraig na hAltóra)?	Altar Rock? Mass Rock?	Rahard
Garris	Garraí	Garden	Ballincrea
Garry Fada	Garraí Fada	Long Garden	Tullabrin
Garry Neil	Garraí Néil	Neill's Garden	Knocknew
Garrybaichea	Garraí Beacha	Bee Garden	Knocknew
Garrycrowe	Garraí Cró?	Garden of the Pen or Fold?	Tinnakeenly
Garrycrubeens	Garraí Crúibín	Garden of the Mountain Berry (O'Kelly)	Boherkyle
Garryhoister	Garraí Óiste? Garraí Oirthir?	Hosty's Garden (O'Kelly), Front Field. (O'Diarmada) ? (In Kilkenny Irish the 'rth' becomes 'sh')	Knocknew
Garrylacken	Garraí Leacan	Garden of the Slope	Tullabrin
Garryowen	Garraí Eoin	Owen's Garden	Tullabrin
Gaul Awn	Gahblán	Little Forked Field	Ateemore
Ginamona	Tigh na Móna	Bog House	Clonamery
Glamock	Gleann na Muc? Glac Macha? Glair Macha?	Glen of the Pigs (Ó Diarmada)? Cattle Field Hollow, Cattle Field Stream?	Rathnasmolagh
Glan-ta-vaughans	Gleannta Bána	White Glens	Ballygub New
Glaun	Gleann	Glen or Valley	Ballylehaun
Gleann	Gleann	Glen, or Valley	Carrigeen, Tullabrin
Gleann Salach	Gleann Saileach	Sally Glen or Valley	Connahy
Gleanta Bawns	Gleannta Bána	White Glens (O'Kelly)	Ballygub New
Glenmore	Gleann Mór	Big Glen or Valley	Courtnaboghilla
Gloin	Gleann	Glen or Valley	Annaleck Lr

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Glown	Gleann	Glen or Valley	Boherkyle
Glowry	Glóras? Glórach?	Young soft, sappy grass (Dinneen)? Noisy (Ó Diarmada)?	Lismaine
Glynn	Gleann	Glen	Ballygub New
Goddie Buí	Gaid Buí? Garraí Buí?	Yellow Withes, Yellow Garden?	Ballincrea
Goddy	Gaid?	Withes?	Swiftsheath
Godramawns	Na Gadramáin?	Place of the Osiers (Ó Diarmada)?	Newhouse
Gorawalla's Bog	Portach Gharraí an Bhaile?	Settlement Garden's Bog (Ó Diarmada)?	Tomnahaha
Gorrig Púicine	Carraig Púicín, Garraí Púicín	Rock of the Little Sprite, Fairy's Garden	Swiftsheath
Gorry	Garraí	Garden	Knocknew, Maudlin
Gorrygare	Garraí Gearr	Short Garden	Kilmurry
Gort a Gleanna	Gort an Ghleanna	Field of the Glen or Valley	Rahillakeen
Gort a hort	Gort a Choirce?	Field of the Oats (Ó Diarmada)?	Blackwood
Gort a Lock	Gort an Locha / Gort an Loca	Field of the Lough / Field of the Sheep fold	Ballyhomuck
Gort Caol	Gort Caol	Narrow Field	Coologue
Gort Feitid	Gort Féitheach, Gort Féithe	Swampy Field, Field of the Osier or Sally (Dinneen)	Kilcross
Gort in Fuinseog	Gort an Fuinnseoige	Ash Tree Field	Purcellsgarden
Gort Marha	Gort Mhartha?	Martha's Field	Tullabrin
Gort Mór	Gort Mór	The Big Field	Blackwood
Gort na Clover	Gort an Chluthair?	Field of the Shelter or Recess (Dinneen)?	Aylwardstown
Gort na Grainne	Gort an Ghráinne? Gort an Ghrinn?	Grain Field, Granite Field. (Dinneen)? The Gravel Field (Ó Diarmada)?	Glencoum

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Gort na Hile	Gort na hAille	The Field of the Cliff (Ó Diarmada)	Tincouse
Gort na Leaca	Gort na Leaca	Field of the Flagstones	Rathinure
Gort na Muirse	Gortanna Muirisce	Low-lying, Marshy Fields	Oldcourt
Gort na Parc	Gort na Páirce	The Pasture's Tillage Plot (Ó Diarmada)	Clone
Gort na Pishe	Gort an Pise	Vetch or Pea Field	Annaleck Lr, Ballygub New
Gort na Snog	Gort an Snaga? Gort na Snaga?	Field of the Treecreeper? (Ó Diarmada) Field of the Snails?	Aylwardstown
Gort na Stanna	Gort na Stainge	Ditch Field, Pole Field (Stang: a ditch, a pole) (Dinneen)	Cramersgrove
Gort Nú	Gort Nua	New Field	Ballincrea
Gort Orla	Gort Eorna?	Barley Field	Connahy
Gort Philipin	Gort Filibín	Field of the Lapwing	Ballyhomuck
Gorta Bhorge	Gort an Faroige?	Field of the Terrace (Dinneen)	Connahy
Gorta Droma	Gort an Droma	Ridge Field	Connahy
Gorta Hocha	Gort an Choirce? Gort Uachtarach?	Upper Field? (Ó Diarmada) Upper Field?	Connahy
Gorta Spout	Gort an Spairt	Field of the Poor Turf (Ó Diarmada)	Clonamery
Gortán Tee	Gortán Tí	Small Field of the House	Rahillakeen
Gortavawrish	Gort an Bhráthair? Gort an Abair?	The Brother's Field? ('Bhráthair' becomes 'Bhráthais' in KK dialect) (O'Diarmada); Field of the Marsh?	Knocknew
Gorteen	Goirtín	Little Field	Scartnamoe
Gorteen Cuiltre	Goirtín Coillte?	Little Field of the Woods?	Oldcourt
Gortha Mhuiris	Gort Mhuiris	Maurice's Field	Knocknew

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Gorthavara	Gort an Bharra	Top Field of Field of the Crop (O'Diarmada)	Knocknew
Gortlalane	Gort Leathan	Wide Field	Kilcross
Gortnalunac	Gort na Loingeach?	Field of the Fens?	Coolcashin
Gotha Kael	Guta Caol	Narrow Mire	Grogan
Green Uische	Grinn Uisce	Clear Water (Ó Diarmada)	Ballygub New
Grin a Faha	Gairdín an Fhaiche?	Garden of the Level Ground (Ó Diarmada)?	Ballyhomuck
Grin a Gealt	Gairdín na nGealt?	Garden of the Wild Ones (O'Diarmada)?	Ballyhomuck
Grúgán	Gruagán	Hard Patch of Land (Dinneen)	Grogan
Gurt-a-Volla	Gort an Bhalla? Gort an Bhaile	Wall Field? Settlement Field (Ó Diarmada)?	Rathduff
Gurteen	Goirtín	Little Field	Ballyhomuck, Farnoge West
Gurteen a Howard	Goirtín an Ghabhair?	Goat's Little Garden (O'Diarmada)?	Ballyhomuck
Gurteen Rásta	Gurteen Róiste?	Roche's Garden?	Farnoge West
Gurteens	Goirtíní	Small Fields	Gorteen
Gurtlettin	Gort Leathan? Gort Leitir?	Wide Field? Steep Hillside Field (O'Diarmada)?	Knocknew
Kickawn	Cnoiceán	Little Hill	Carrigeen
Kile Beag	Coill Bheag	Small Wood	Glencoum
Kill	Cill / Coill	Church / Wood (Also common vernacular for 'Kiln')	Grogan
Killeen	Cillín? Coillín?	Little church or a Burial Ground for unbaptised infants? A Small Hazel Wood (Dinneen)	Rathinure
Killíní	Coilliní? Cillíní ?	Small Hazel Woods or Hazel Nuts (Dinneen)? Burial Grounds (Infants or Unbaptised)?	Firoda Lower

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Kinloch	Cionn (Ceann) Locha	Head of the Crop Strip. Loch: a shared division of a tillage field (Moylan); Head of the Lake or Pond (O'Diarmada)	Tullaghought
Knock	Cnoc	Hill (a Knock in Kilkenny usage usually describes a hill covered in gorse or furze) (Ó Diarmada)	Ballygub New, Ballyrahan, Courtnaboghilla, Clonamery, Glentiroe, Glensansaw, Gorteen, Grove, Kilmacshane, Kilmurry, Oldcourt, Rahillakeen, Rahard West
Knocknashilloge	Cnoc na Saileoige	Hill of the Willow, (Sally Hill)	Ardaloo
Knock Roo	Cnoc Rua	Red or Brown Hill	Rathduff
Knockawn	Cnocán	Hillock	Threecastles
Knockeen	Cnoicín	Little Hill	Seskin North
Knocknashee	Cnoc na Sí	Fairy Hill	Newhouse
Knocks	Cnoic	Hills	Ballincrea, Ballinlammy, Ballyhomuck, Grogan, Rahard
Koshier	Caitheamh Siar	Fallow Land / not reseeded with grass after a crop. Literally a 'throw back' (Moylan)	Kiltown
Kyle	Coill	Wood	Clone
Kyle Bán	Coill Bháin	White Wood, or Wood of the Enclosure	Cramersgrove
Kyle Beag	Coill Bheag	Small Wood	Cramersgrove
Kyle Daingean	Coill Daingean? Coill Daingin	Dense Wood ('Daingean' translates as : secure, resolute, fortified. 'Dense' seems appropriate to the context of a wood) (O'Diarmada)? Wood of the Fort or Fort Wood	Cramersgrove

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Kyle na Currach	Coill an Churraigh	Wet Marsh Wood	Tullabrin
Labart	Láib Árd	High Mire or Swamp (Dinneen)	Kilcross
Lacha	Leaca	Slope	Mt Nugent Lower, Johnswell
Lacken	Leaca	Slope	Clonamery
Lateens	Léataíní	Little Open Drains	Connahy
Law na Mona	Mullán na Móna	Hillock of the Turf	Firoda Lower
Leaba Culothe	Leadbh Cúlánta/ Láib Cúlánta ?	Secluded Strip (of land) / Secluded Mire? (Dineen)	Farnoge West
Leaca	Leaca	Slope	Gaulstown (Me)
Leenauns	Líonán	Small Flax (Dinneen)	Kilkieran
Leshnock	Loiscneach	Dry heath for burning. (Moylan). Spring fires encouraged new growth of grass and herbs for high butter content in grazing cattle	Ballincrea
Lobbersheen	Leadbh Oisín? Láib Oisín?	Oisín's Strip (of land)? Oisín's Mire or Swampy Place?	Farnoge West
Loch Wee	Loch Bhuí	Yellow Pool	Ballyhobuck
Lochan	Lochán?	Little Pool or Pond (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea
Lock(s)	Loch(a), Loc(aí)	Pond(s), Pen(s) or Enclosure(s)	Purcellsgarden
Lockan, Locken	Lochán?	Little Lake, Pond or Pool (Ó Diarmada)	Firoda Lower, Ballincrea
Lockans	Locháin	The Little Pools	Rahillakeen
Lockin Sash	Lochán Seasc?	Dry Pond?	Connahy
Lough	Loc. Loch	A pen or fold. A small lake, pool or pond	Ballinclare, Monarche Commons
Lough Drinne	Loch Draighne	Pool of the Blackthorns	Archerstown
Lough Kil-a-Rí	Loch Coill (Chill) an Rí?	Pool of the King's Wood (Church) (Ó Diarmada)	Archerstown

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Loughs	Locha, Loctha	Ponds, Pens or Enclosures	Threecastles
Lought	Leacht?	Gravemound, Cairn or Monument/ A low flat-topped Hill (Dinneenn)?	Rathpatrick
Lugnagree	Lag na Graí	Horses' Hollow	Tullabrin
Lushnach, Lushnock	Loiscneach	Dry heath for burning (Moylan) Spring fires encouraged new growth of grass and herbs for high butter content in grazing cattle	Ballincrea, Ballinlammy, Knocknacuppoge
Lyess	Leigheas?	Cure (after some curative plant?)	Tullabrin
Máise Buaile	Buaile Mháise	Mary's Booley or Milking Place. ("Máire" pronounced 'Máise' in Kilkenny dialect) (O'Diarmada)	Tullabrin
Maise's Field	Páirc Mháire	Mary's Field	Ballincrea
Mal an Guthar	Mala an Ghuta	Slope or Incline of the Mire (Dinneen)	Skehana
Maoingarra	Móin Garbh	A meadow of coarse grass (Dinneen)	Courtnaboghilla
Mash	None	Marsh (S.KK. vernacular)	Aylwardstown
Mealocks	Na Meallóga?	The Knolls (Dinneen)	Rahillakeen
Moan Whale	Móin Mhaol	Bare Bog (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea
Moanroe	Móin Rua	Red Bog	Moanroe
Mockgaha	Machaire	Flat low lying country, a field. (Dineen)	Knocknew
Moin Jack's	Móin Jack's	Jack's Bog	Grogan
Móin Tomais	Móin Tomáis	Thomas' Bog	Tullabrin
Móinéar	Móinear	Meadow	Smithstown
Mointáin	Móinteáin	Stretch of Bogland, Moor, Land growing rough, coarse herbage,	Ballyrafton, Kilmurry
Món nGall	Móin na nGaill	Foreigner's Bog	Sandfordscourt

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Móna Beag	Móin Bheag	Little Bog	Cramersgrove
Móna Gorra	Móin Gharbh	Rough Bog.	Ballyreddy
Monteen	Móintín	Small stretch of bog	Carrigeen
Moon Dothis	Móin Dubhuisce	Black Water Bog (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea
Moon Whales	Móin Mhaol	Bare Bog (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea
Moon-ty-awn	An Mointeáin	The Boggy Place	Newhouse
Moona Caus	Móin an Chabhsa	Causeway Bog (Ó Diarmada)	Rahillakeen
Moonabawn	Móna (Móin) Bhán	White Moor	Maudlin
Moonard Bog	Móin Árd	High Bog	Attateenoe Lr
Moonatarra	Muine an Tairbh	Thicket of the Bull (Ó Diarmada)	Ahanure North
Mooneygatha	An Muine Gada	The Thicket of the Osiers	Knocknew
Moonsheen	Móintín	Small stretch of moorland (the slender 't' evolves into the spoken slender 's') (Ó Diarmada)	Ballylehaun
Moontáin, Moontaun	Móinteán	Stretch of bogland, bog, moor. Reclaimed Moor, Land growing rough coarse herbage	Rathinure, Baunreagh,, Ballyhomuck
Mount a Garrí	Mointeáin an Gharraí	Moorland Garden	Rathinure
Múla Muckas	Mullán Muc?	Hillock of the Pigs?	Rahard East
Mullaun	Mullán	Elevated ground, a hillock with a field near the top of a hill	Glensansaw, Gorteen
Múllawn Bán	Mullán Bán	White Hillock	Glencoum
Ná	An Áth	Ford Hill?	Grogan
Nannie's Gurteen	Goirtín Nannie	Nannie's little Field	Farnoge West
Naoi Deacha	Naoi dTeacha	Nine Houses	Rathinure
Naskin	An Easca	The Sedgy Bogland (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Near Drummond	Dromán	Near Hillock or Ridge	Rathbeagh
Nickeen	Cnoicín	Hillock	Ballinclare
Nickeen	Cnoicín	Little Hill	Ballyconra
Páirc	Páirc	Field	Carrigeen, Firoda Lr, Knocknew
Páirc na nÓg	Páirc Mónoige?	Bogberry Field? (O'Donnell)	Maudlin
Pairc a Dinna	Páirc na Doimhne	Field of the Pit (Ó Diarmada)	Ballinlammy
Páirc a Naoie	Páirc na nGéanna?	Field of the Geese	Ardaloo
Páirc a Rá	Páirc an Ráithe	Field of the Rath	Ballyhomuck
Páirc a Tosa	Páirc na Tóise	Front Field, First Field, (Dinneen)	Kilcross
Páirc an Áthais	Páirc an Athair	Father's Field	Lismaine
Páirc an Earra	Páirc an Earra	Boundary Field	Tullabrin
Páirc an Eirish	Páirc an Oidhre	Heir's Field	Grogan
Páirc an Íothla	Páirc na hÍothlainne	Barn Field (Dinneen)	Cramersgrove
Páirc an Uailich	Páirc an Uailigh? Páirc an Uaillighe	Field of the Load? Field of the Howling (O'Diarmada)?	Rathinure
Páirc an Úill	Páirc an Úill	Field of the Apple	Carrigeen
Páirc an Úirc	Páirc an Uirc	Field of the Hollow (Dinneen)	Cramersgrove
Páirc Bán	Páirc Bhán? Páirc an Bháin?	White Field, The Bawn Field	Parksgrove
Páirc Beg	Páirc Bheag	Little Field	Aylwardstown
Páirc Carraig	Páirc Carraige	Field of the Rock	Cramersgrove
Páirc Connery	Páirc Uí Chonaire	Connery's Field	Leapstown
Páirc Easca	Páirc Eascach	Marshy Field	Cramersgrove
Páirc Garra	Páirc Gharbh	Rough Field (Ó Diarmada)	Ballyconra
Páirc Glas	Páirc Ghlas	Green Field	Tullabrin
Pairc Mór	Páirc Mhór	Big Field	Farnoge West

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Parc Avery	Páirc Ámharaí?	Field of Good Fortune? (Ó Diarmada)? Lucky Field	Kilmacshane
Parc Beg	Páirc Bheag	Small Field	Curkacrone
Parc Croocteen	Páirc Croichtín	Little Field	Kilmacshane
Park	Páirc	Field	Ballygub New, Coolnabrone, Grange, Farnoge West, Kilmacshane, Newhouse
Park Coosheen	Pairc Chuaisín? Páirc Cois Eidhinn?	Field of the little Hollow (Dinneen) Field beside the Ivy (Ó Diarmada)?	Physicianstown
Park na Rob	Páirc na Rob	Field of the Hog or Pet Animal	Broadmore
Parkeen	Páircín	Little Field	Monarche Commons
Parkeencnockain	Páircín Cnocáin	Little Hillock Field	Knocknew
Parkluk	Páirc Loca	The Field of the (Sheep) Fold	Aharney, Ballygub New
Philipine	Filibín. Philibín?	Lapwing (a plover that flocks in wet ground). Little Philip's (Ó Diarmada)	Rahillakeen
Polisha	Poll Uisce	Water Hole	Ballinlammy
Poll a Bán	Poll Donnabhán	O'Donovan's Hollow	Atateemore
Poll Leabhair	Poll Leabhair	Hole of the Book (local folklore tells of Cromwell's forces having thrown the Holy Book of Rathbeagh Church into the quarry hole here)	Rathbeagh
Poll Mal óg	Poll Meallóige?	Hole of the little Hill or Lump?	Ballyring Upper
Poll Saighduirí	Poll Saighdúirí	Soldiers' Hole or Hollow	Davidstown
Poll Uisce	Poll Uisce	Water Hole	Ballyhomuck
Pollavoon	Poll an Mhúin	Cess Pit (Ó Diarmada)	Connahy
Poul a Copple	Poll na gCapaill	Horse's Hollow	Rahard

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Páirc Mushroom	Páirc Mhuisiriún	Mushroom Field	Glentiroe
Páirc na Eúaise	Páirc na hEorna?	Barley Field (Ó Diarmada)?	Ballyconra
Páirc na Gabhan	Páirc an Ghabhann? Páirc na Gamhna?	The Blacksmith's Field? Field of the Calves?	Swiftsheath
Páirc na gCapaill	Páirc na gCapaill	Field of the Horses	Johnswell, Tinislatty
Páirc na Gealta	Páirc na Geilte	Grazing Field	Aylwardstown
Páirc na Geata	Páirc na nGeataí	Field of the Gates	Slade
Páirc na Habhna	Páirc na hAbhann	River Field	Connahy
Páirc na Laoi	Páirc na Laoi	Field of the Calves	Tullaghought
Páirc na Maw	Páirc na mBa	Field of the Cows	Tullabrin
Páirc na Seacht	Páirc na Seacht (nAcra)? Páirc na Seachbhadh?	Field of the Seven (Acres)? Heifer's Field (Dinneen)?	Suttonsrath
Páirc Rahilly	Páirc Raithní ?	Ferny Field (O'Diarmada)?	Tullabrin
Páirc Ruhgl	Páirc Urchaill / Ruchaill? Pairc Iorghaile?	Spancel Field? Fighting Field? (Ó Diarmada)	Parksgrove
Paircaile	Páirc Aoil	Lime Field	Connahy
Páirce	Páirc	Field	Grogan
Paircín	Páircín	Little Field	Ballyrafton, Carrigeen, Courtnaboghilla, Leapstown, Purcellsgarden, Tullaghought
Páircín Luachra	Páircín Luachra	Little Rushy Field	Knocknew
Paircín na Rea	Páircín na Réidhe	Little Field of the Level Spot (O'Kelly)	Ballyrahan
Paircín Williams	Páircín Williams	Williams' Little Field	Courtnaboghilla
Páircnockra	Páirc an Acra	The Acre Field	Knocknew

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Poul a Vadra	Poll an Mhadra	Hole or Hollow of the Dog	Rahillakeen
Poun Uisce	Poll an Uisce	Water Hole	Connahy
Pweeng Well	Pingin?	Penny Well	Clonygarra
Ragh	Ráth	Rath, Fort or Enclosure	Ahanure North
Raheen	Ráthín	Little Rath, Fort or Enclosure	Tullabrin
Raheens	Ráthíní	Small Raths	Archerstown, Baunastackaun, Parksgrove
Ráth	Ráth	Rath, Ringfort or Enclosure	Kilcross
Rath Tuas	Ráth Thuas	Upper Rath	Knickeen
Raw	Ráth	Rath, Ringfort or Enclosure	Purcellsgarden, Threecastles
Reesk, Reeske	Riasc	Marsh, Moor, Marshy ground	Broadmore, Coolatogher
Reisk, Reiske	Riasc	Marsh, Moor, Marshy ground	Knocknew
Relic	Reilig	Graveyard	Swiftsheath
Rhuands	Ruadháin	Russet coloured land (Ó Diarmada)	Ballinlammy
Riasc	Riasc	Marsh, Moor, Marshy ground	Kilkieran, Cramersgrove
Riasc Caol	Riasc Caol	Narrow Marsh	Cramersgrove
Rue Ain	Ruadhán	Red (Russet) Moorland (Ó Diarmada)	Rathpatrick
Scabawn	Screabán	Light stoney patch of soil (Dinneen)	Oldcourt
Scaharra	Scairbh?	Sharp Ledge (O'Diarmada)?	Rathinure
Scairt	Scairt	Thicket or Covert	Leapstown
Scarabock	Scarbhachá (O'Kelly); Scarbhfhaiche (Ó Diarmada)	Rough Land (O'Kelly); Rough Lawn or Green (Ó Diarmada)	Boherkyle

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Sceach Field	Sceach	Hawthorn Field	Oldcourt
Scheen	Sian? Scraithín?	Whistling (of wind)? Little Scraw?	Ballincrea
Sconce	Sconnsa	Fence or Drain (Dinneen)	Suttonsrath
Sconcells	Sconnsaí	Drains or Fences	Tullabrin
Scortnahawis	Scairt an Abhair?	Thicket of the Marsh (Dinneen)	Knocknew
Scorth	Scairt	Thicket or Covert	Maudlin
Scrahatten	Scraith Aitinn	Furzy Sod	Davidstown
Scrahasel	Scraith Asail	Donkey's Sod?	Grogan
Scrank	Screathan	Stony Slope (Dinneen)	Ballygub New
Screach	Scraith	Lea Land (O'Kelly) Scraw (Dineen), Grassy Sod (Moylan)	Ballygub New
Screen	Scraithín	Little Sod or Scraw; a divot	Glencoum
Screens	Scraithíní	Little Sods or Scraws; divots	Parksgrove
Scrivoose	Scraith Mhór	Big Sod or Scraw	Grogan
Scrock	Scraith	Lea Land (O'Kelly) Scraw (Dinneen), Grassy Sod (Moylan)	Newhouse
Scrucha Clay	Scraith an tSléibhe	Mountain Lea Land (O'Kelly)	Ballygub New
Scruck	Scraith	Lea Land (O'Kelly) Scraw (Dinneen), Grassy Sod (Moylan)	Ballincrea, Rahillakeen
Scuab	Scuab	Broom (Possibly where material for brooms grew?) A Sheaf (Dinneen)	Ballygub Old
Sean Bhaile	Sean Bhaile	Old Town	Grogan
Sean Scrawk	Sean Scraith	Old Lea Land or Scraw	Ballygub New
Seana Gort	Sean Ghort	Old Field	Blackwood, Farnoge West
Seana Gorths	Sean Ghort	Old Field	Attateenoe Lr

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Seanabhaun	Sean a Bhán	Old Pasture	Connahy
Seánacaughs	Sean Fhaichí	Old Level Fields	Coolnabrone
Seanacha	Sean Fhaiche	Old Lawn or Level Ground	Johnswell
Seanachaol	Sean Chaol	Old Marshy Stream (Flanagan), The Old Marsh or Wattle (Dinneen)	Oldcourt
Seanagarra	Sean Gharraí	Old Garden	Ballyreddy
Seanagort	Sean Ghort	Old Field	Kilcross
Seisc	Seisc	Coarse grass or sedge that grows in a marsh, used for making grass ropes and thatching (Dinneen)	Knockshanbally
Shanagarry, Shan a Garrai	Sean a Garraí	Old Garden (in southern Irish an extra "a" is often placed between the adjective and the noun) Dinneen	Carrigeen, Ballinclare
Shanavattin	Sean a Bhéitín	The Old Béitín or Field of Top-burnt soil (see 'Baytin' etc above)	Rathinure
Shanty	Sean Tigh	Shanty, Old House (Shebeen?)	Ballyrahan, Scartnamoe, Tullabrin
Shavaner	Searbhán?	Dandelion or Sow Thistle ('Sharafarn') (Moylan)	Tomnahaha
Skeagh	Sceach	Hawthorn	Curraghlane Lr
Skehóran	Sceach an Uaráin; Sceach an Fhuaráin.	Sceach (Hawthorn) of the Spring (O'Kelly); Sceach of the Well (Ó Diarmada)	Aughkiletaun
Skillig	Sceilig	Rocky Place or Crag	Lisdowney
Skreen	Scraithín	Little Sod or Scraw	Tinislatty
Skrehan	Screathan	A Stony Slope (Dineen)	Grogan

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Slough, Slugh	Slogaire	Swallow Hole, Swamp (Pronounced Slugaishe in Kilkenny; a fine example of the Kilkenny slender 'r' forming an 'sh' sound (Ó Diarmada)	Agha, Glensansaw Glentiroe, Clontubrid, Maudlin
Slugagish, Sluges	Slogaire	Swallow Hole, Swamp	Ballygub New
Slugisha	Slogaire	Swallow Hole, Swamp	Ballygub New, Foulksrath, Slade
Snucks	Scraitheanna	Scraws (Moylan)	Rahillakeen
Strally Boore	Sraith Lia Mhóir? Stráice Lia Mhóir	Big Stone Row (Ó Diarmada) Big Stone Strip.	Rathinure
Straw Dán	Stráideán	Small Farmyard, Street or Village (Dineen)	Rahard
Streileen	Straoilín	Untidy (Spot)	Rahard West
Struckaun	Stuacán	Stook (Ó Diarmada)	Annaleck Lr
Stysse	Staighre	Terrace or Stairs (Dineen)	Connahy
Tampall	Teampall	A small church	Pollagh
Teans	Tithíní?	Huts or Little Houses?	Ballincrea
Thien	Tighín	Little house or hut	Tullabrin
Thiheen Bawn	Taoidhin Bán? Tighín Bán?	White Mill Pond (Ó Diarmada)? Little White House?	Knocknew
Tillawn	Tulán	Knoll	Kilcross
Tobar	Tobar	Well	Clonamery
Tobar a Snogs	Tobar na Snaga	Well of the Snails	Ballyhomuck
Tobar Gleanna	Tobar an Ghleanna	Well of the Glen	Annaleck Lr
Tobar na Bean	Tobar na mBan	Well of the Women	Pollagh
Tobar na Boher	Tobar an Bhóthair	Well of the Road	Stakally
Tobar na Glór Uisce	Tobar an Ghlóir Uisce	Gurgling Well (Ó Diarmada)	Rahillakeen

Field Name as recorded	Possible Irish Name	Possible English translation	Townland where Name recorded
Tobar na Kiln	Tobar na Coille/ Tobar na Cille?	Well of the Wood/ of the Church or burial place?	Rahillakeen
Tobar Rú	Tobar Rua? Tobar Ruibhe?	Russet Well (from colour of water)? Sulphur Well ? (Ó Diarmada)	Ballyhobuck
Tobernaskeagh	Tobar na Sceach	Whitethorn Well	Baunta Commons
Tócher	Tóchar	Causeway	Ballinclare
Togher	Tóchar	Causeway	Rathbeagh
Tolla Gowe	Tulach Gabhann/ Tulach Gabhair?; Tulach Geabhair?	Mound of the Smith/ Mound of the Goat (Ó Diarmada)? Mound of the Fresh Shoots?	Ballyhobuck
Tom na Coille	Tom na Coille	Knoll of the Wood	Glencoum
Tor-a-Voligan	Tor an Mhulcháin	Bush of the Slough or Bog (O'Diarmada)	Rathnasmolagh
Torabh an Easpaig	Talamh an Easpaig	Bishop's Ground	Ballyhomuck
Tournanick	Tuar an Chnoic	Hill Pasture	Kilcross
Truckteen	Croichtín	Little Field (less than half-acre)	Ateemore
Tubberneena	Tobar na hAoine? Tobar an Aonaigh?	(Good) Friday Well? Fair Well?	Newhouse
Turroge	Tuaróg	Small Night field for cattle (or manured field) (Dineen) Tuaróg diminutive form of 'Tuar'	Tullabrin
Vaitheach or "Waha"	Faiche	Green, Level Ground, Playing Field	Ballyreddy
Voile	Faille?	Cliffs? (Ó Diarmada)	Ballincrea
Yellow Knocks	Cnoic	Yellow Hills	Rochestown

"My father and mother knew a lot of names in the area and that's how we have them. Saving the field names is preserving an identity that is fast fading. As it is, a lot of the names are already gone because fields are being amalgamated into ever bigger ones. Some of them have been there for centuries and in some cases they're becoming one big plain. It's a pity because the field names are an integral part of rural culture. Sad thing is many of them are already gone. They are rapidly fading away. It's good work to be trying to record and to save them.

Joe Kennedy

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To anyone we have omitted unintentionally, we offer our sincere apologies.

Dearbhala Ledwidge   Alan Counihan
Heritage Officer, Kilkenny County Council   *Heritage Consultant*
Project Manager   *Project Co-ordinator*

" I see great merit in it. I enjoyed doing the field name recording and I was delighted when I had it done. I think it's important that it was done and recorded properly. There are four farmers in this townland and the most recent arrival was left the farm and he came from elsewhere. And he had no names for any of his fields. They were gone. Names get lost when families die and others come into a place. Stuff can get lost so easily. So it's better to do this now, even if we're late doing it. The heritage is important.

Luke Grennan

> " The field names are a layer of our history that's there on the land. And in twenty or thirty years they'll be gone if they're not recorded. Then in another twenty or thirty years there'll be another layer. There are layers of history being laid down all the time. Look at the old Irish field names. They signify a special layer of history going back to when Irish was spoken in these parts. Most of the field names in this area were of family surnames and there's a memory preserved now of those lives in the landscape.

Ned Moran

A field of barley in Kilmacoliver

Celebrating the Field Names of County Kilkenny

The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project has been in existence since 2010. Beginning in that year with a field name survey of just one parish and one surveyor, the project has since supervised and archived the survey work of over eighty survey volunteers and has recorded over 7,000 field names in the process.

Kilkenny County Council

Kilkenny Heritage Forum

An Chomhairle Oidhreachta
The Heritage Council

The Kilkenny Field Name Recording Project