

The Parish
of
Milltown - Ballyglass

12th June 1988

We publish this booklet to commemorate a historic day in the life of our parish. Not only is it the first occasion that an Ordination ceremony has been held in the parish but the fact that not one but two young men from the parish are to be raised to the priesthood on the same day and in their local church makes it a unique occasion. We congratulate Kieran and Michael and rejoice with their parents and families.

Kieran and Michael are the successors of a long line of young Milltown men who devoted their lives to the service of God, some on the home mission and many on far foreign fields. We wish them many fruitful years in the service of the Lord.

Our congratulations are also due to their parents and families for the support and encouragement they must have given during the long years of study and preparation.

Whatever trials and tribulations await these young men in the years ahead, and the priestly vocation can be a very demanding one they can always find comfort and consolation in Christ's reply to St. Peter.

"I tell you solemnly, there is no one who has left house, wife, brothers or sisters, children or land for my sake or the sake of the Gospel, who will not be given repayment many times over in this present time and in the world to come, eternal life."

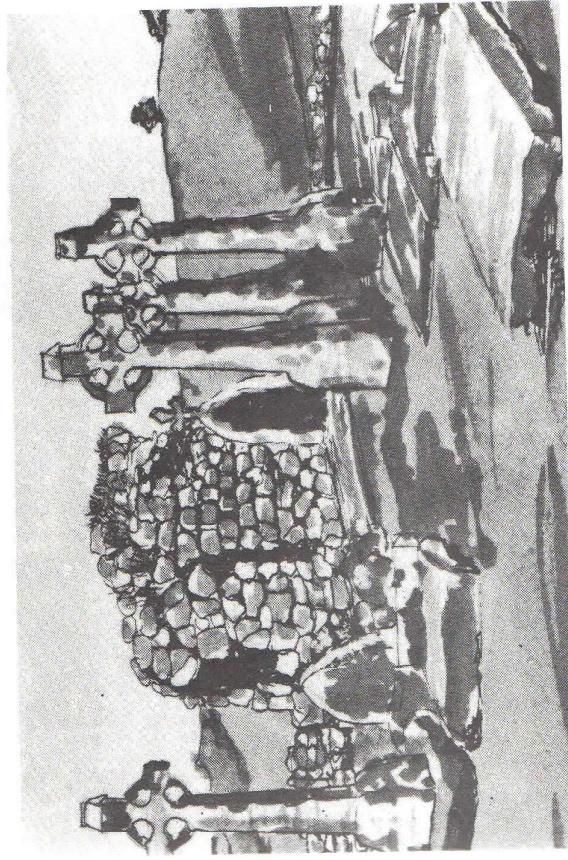
THROUGH THE PAGES OF HISTORY

The ancient parishes of Addergoole and Liskeavy form the present parish of Milltown. In the year 1306 Addergoole was listed as one of the parishes whose tithes supported the chapter of the Arch-diocese. In 1496 the Pope sent a mandate to the Abbot of Holy Trinity Tuam, the Dean and one of the Canons of the chapter to collate to the perpetual vicarage of Addergoole!

To Thomas O Keallachayn, William O Conkeanyan and Odo Odremday canons of the church of Tuam, mandate in favour of John O Conkeanyan (Concannon) who, as he assents is in his 20th year and of noble birth. The Pope has learned that the perpetual vicarage of the parish of Addergoole, Tuam is vacant at present and has been for so long that by Latern Statutes its collation has lawfully devolved on the Apostolic See although Eugene O Kneecadan who bears himself as a priest of the said diocese has detained it without any title or support of law, temerariously and de facto, for a certain time as he still does. Therefore he commands that the above three, if having summoned Eugene and others concerned they find the Vicarage whose annual value does not exceed 5 marks, to be vacant, shall collate and assign it to John, inducing him, having removed Eugene and causing John to be admitted and the briefts, rights and obventions thereof to be admitted to him.

THREE PARISHES: In his history of the Archdiocese Monsignor Dalton states that in the middle Ages three parishes, Kilclooney, Liskeavy and Addergoole represented the present parish of Milltown.

There were ancient churches at Addergoole, Liskeavy and Kilclooney. There was also a penal day church, little bigger than a barn in Drim. The old name for Belmont Lake, "Loch na hAltora" would suggest that Mass must have been celebrated on a tiny island on the lake shore. Surrounded as it was by a huge quaking swamp or 'scrath-ghlugair', it certainly would afford protection from mounted red coats.



Liskeavy Churchyard

Ballyglass,
Scardaune.

February, 1880.

Gentlemen,

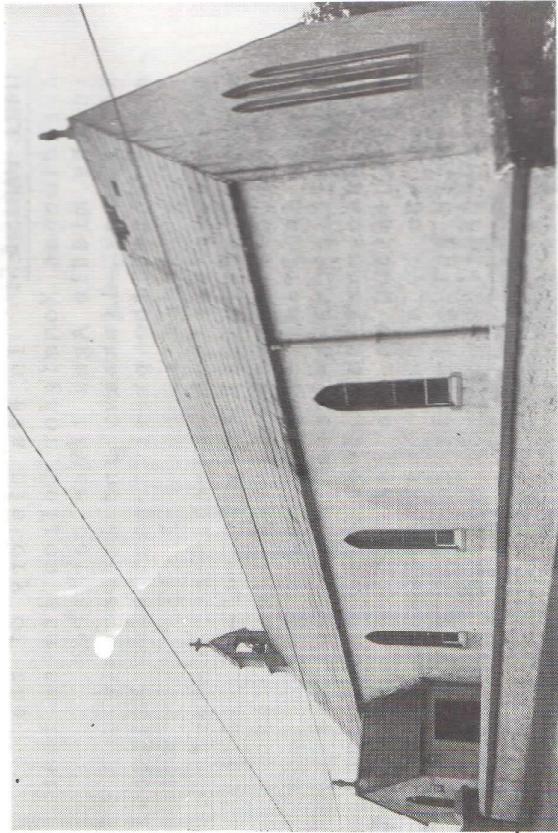
Before answering questions which you have reasonably asked, allow me to say words of explanation. The inhabitants of Ballyglass and other townlands for which we have applied for relief have for time immemorial considered themselves as a separate district from the parish of Liskeavy to which this district was lately annexed in Co. Mayo and were formerly in the parish of Crossboyne.

There were many disputes between Parish Priests and Rectors over these townlands.

The Dean and Chapter of Tuam and the late Rev. Mr. Browne, Rector of Crossboyne had a law case over the Tithes some years back.

The villages in question form a small parish in themselves. They have their own church and the C.C. obtains his living there although he has to attend in the parish of Milltown.
Rev. James Heaney is Secretary of the Milltown Relief Committee and Fr. Tom McWalter is the Chairman. It was at Fr. McWalter's suggestion that we formed a Ballyglass Committee as a separate parish.

John Coyne } Secretaries
Rev. James Heaney }
Committee Members: John Gill, Peter Dermody,
Martin Singleton, Michael Heaney, John
Coyne, James Heaney and Martin Kenane.



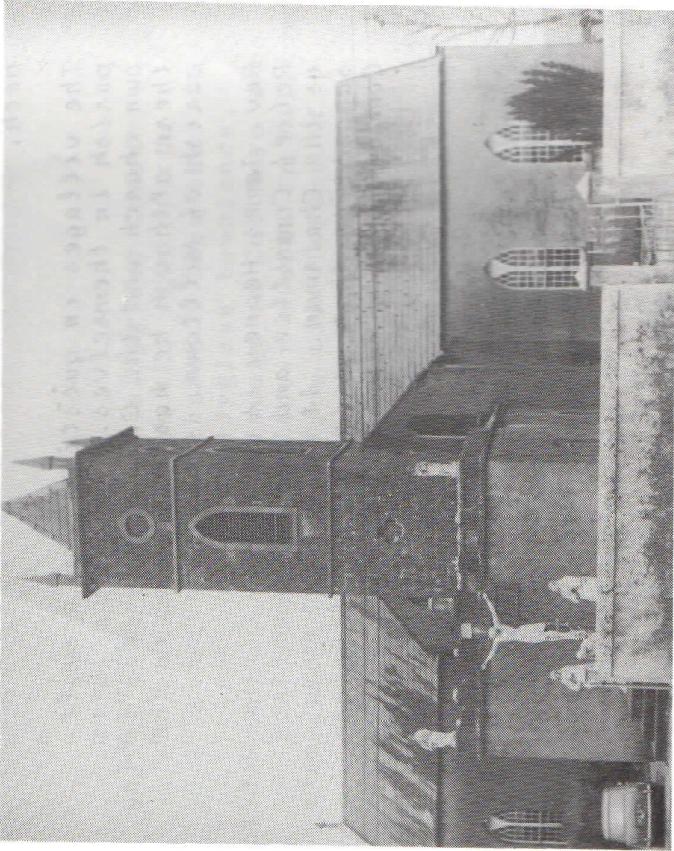
BALLYGLASS CHURCH: Ballyglass Church was built in 1879 on the site of the original thatched church. That the citizens of the Ballyglass townlands, especially those situate in Co. Mayo were not too happy with their status in Milltown parish is evident from this letter of Fr. James Heaney to the Mansion House Relief Committee.

THE 'OLD CHURCH'

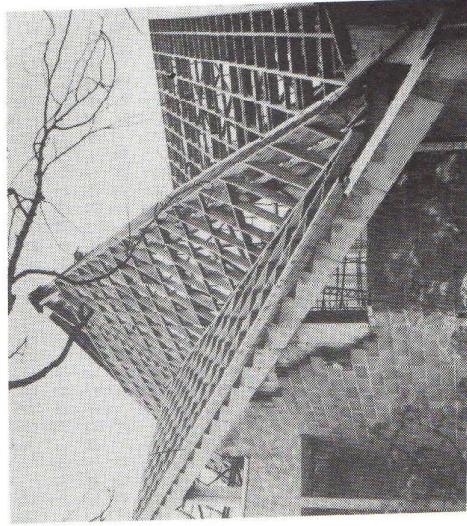
This church which we refer to as "the old church" was built in 1819 on a site donated free by the Bodkin family of Kilclooney.

It was cruciform in shape and the bell tower was a later addition.

Tradition has it the church organ, still in use, was built for Mount Mellary but was too high for the organ loft there so Fr. Patrick McWalters in Mt. Mellary arranged with Fr. Tom McWalters, P.P., Milltown, to have the organ installed in Milltown Church. Generous benefactors of the church that they were, the Kirwan Family of Dalgan paid for the organ.



He was appointed Warden of Galway and died in 1812.



VALENTINE BODKIN:

This distinguished member of the Bodkin Family was born in Kilclooney in 1745. He studied in the Irish College in Rome. He was appointed P.P. of St. Nicholas North, in Galway in 1770. He became Secretary to the Warden of Galway in 1773 - the warden of Galway had power to appoint priests to parishes. Valentine's uncle, Anthony Blake from nearby Dunmacreena was appointed Lord Archbishop of Armagh, Primate of All Ireland in 1758. Blake however absented himself from Armagh for long periods and was suspended in 1775.

Valentine Bodkin visited Rome in connection with the suspension and Blake was restored in 1777. Valentine Bodkin lived in Rome for more than a decade and played an important role as agent for 19 (nineteen) Irish bishops.

POPULATION FIGURES:

The following is an extract from a long letter in the Tuam Herald of 1880 written by a frequent contributor from Milltown who wrote under the nom de plume "Trump". The letters were written to an imaginary brother Peter in England and contained witty and caustic comment on local affairs.

Dear Peter

"The chapple bell began to ring and we went to Mass. I did not go far inside the door for the seat of my britches was torn on account of me being sittin down all winter with nothing to do. Well I got an awful crushin' for it was down at the end of the chapple everyman stopped when the priest turned to address the people he saw all gathered at the door crushin' wan another. It vexed him greatly. He said there was a crowd there Sunday after Sunday watching to rush out for a pint before the congregation would see them and that they nearly had worn a hole in the gable with their boots rubbin agin it. Well says I, I will not be a member of this scraping society after this day....."

The Census of 1861

This records that there were 537 households in Addergoole and 287 in Liskeavy a total of 824 households.

The total population is given as 4,720.

1879 - Fr. Heaney states that there were 700 houses in the parish of Milltown.

1862 - Confirmation

The Tuam Herald reports that the Archbishop (McHale) accompanied by Rev Thomas McHale administered Confirmation to 400 at a ceremony in Milltown Church.

May 1912 - Confirmation (T. Herald report)

The Archbishop (Dr. Healy) administered Confirmation to 272 school children and a number of adults.

May 1988 - Confirmation

The Archbishop Dr. Joseph Cassidy administered Confirmation to 78 school children.

Trump.

OUR PARISH CLERGY



Fr. Patrick Gill came to Milltown as P.P. in December 1986. Born in Louisburgh Co. Mayo. He attend the local Boys National School and later St. Jarlath's College, Tuam. Having completed his secondary education , he entered St. Patrick's, Maynooth where he was ordained in June 1953.

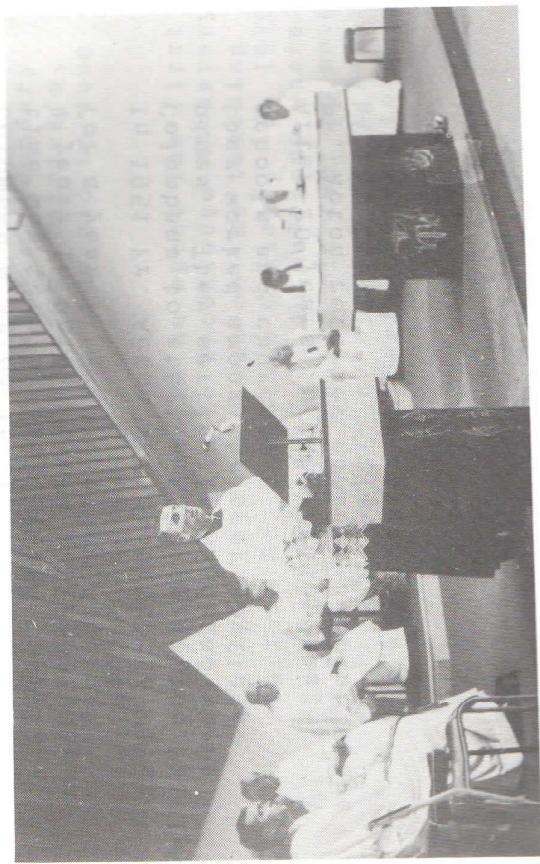
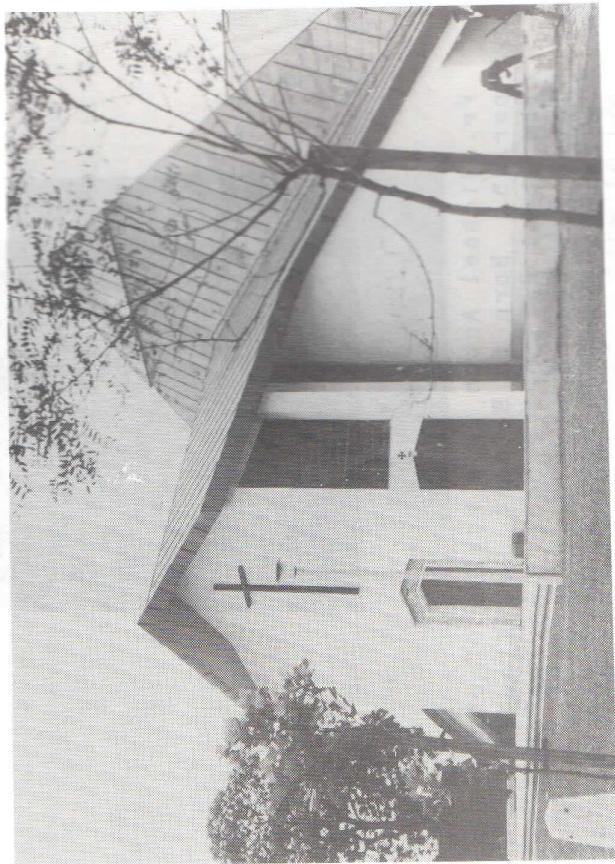
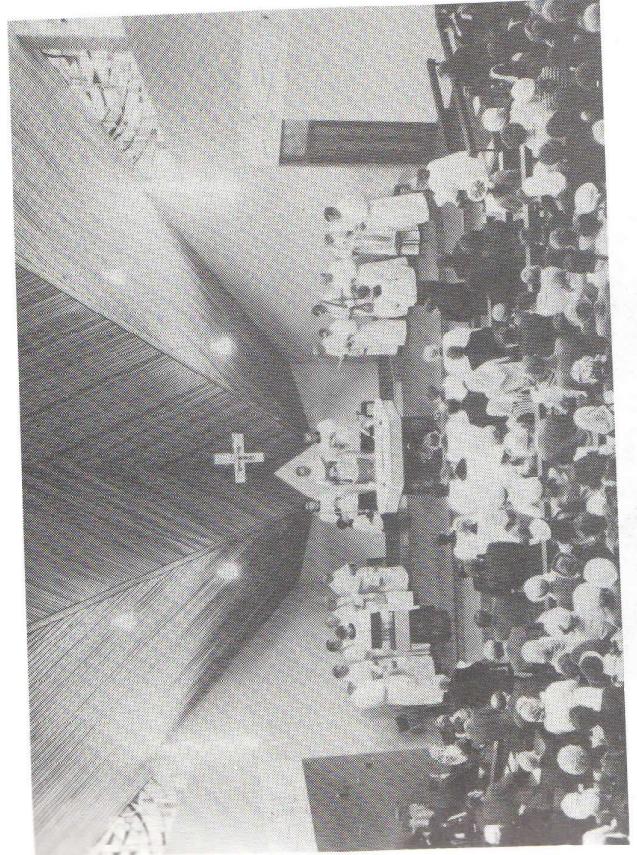
After his ordination he spent the first year as chaplain to Brooklodge Monastery, and from 1954-1970 was on the teaching staff on St. Jarlath's College. In 1970 he was appointed C.C. in Mulranny where he served for 11 years. In 1981 he moved to Headford where he spent 5 years before his appointment as Parish Priest to Milltown.



Fr. Michael Acton is a native of our parish. Born in Belmont, he attended the local National School. Having completed his secondary education at St. Jarlath's Tuam, he entered St. Columban's Navan where he was ordained in 1946. After his ordination he set out for the Columban Mission in China which at this time was torn by revolution. He spent 4 years in China before moving to Japan for a year.

In 1951 Fr. Acton was amongst the first Columbans to start a mission in the Philippines. They settled in Mindanao where they worked among the poor, building schools and churches. After 20 years in the Philippines, Fr. Acton returned home to Belmont where he now lives.

**Dedication of New Church,
Milltown, August 1970**

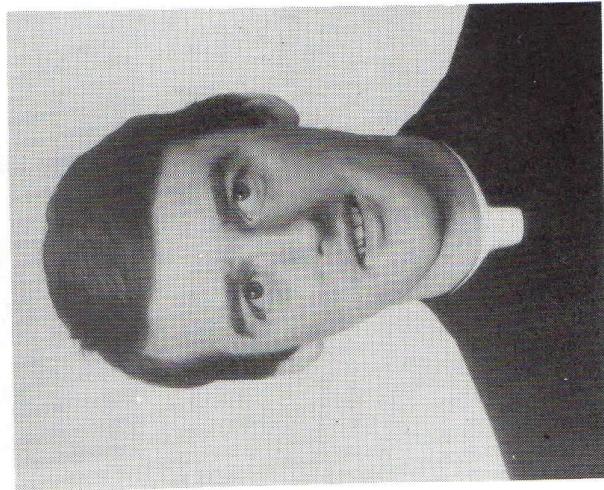




MICHAEL

Michael is the eldest son of Michael and Katie Gormally of Killaphrausoge. He received his early education in Milltown National School and later attended the Vocational School, Tuam. He worked for 5 years in Digital in Galway before going to Maynooth.

He has 3 brothers and 4 sisters.



KIERAN

Kieran is the son of Frances and the late Eamon Blake of Liskeavy. Educated in Milltown National School and later at St. Jarlath's College. Before going to Maynooth, Kieran studied at U.C.G. and obtained a B. Comm degree in 1983. Kieran has 3 brothers and 4 sisters.