

Chapter 1 : Wicklow History: The Last County | calendrierdelascience.com

County Wicklow (Irish: Contae Chill Mhantáin, [ˈkʲelˠn̪ˠ t̪ˠẽˠ ẽˠ • ˈt̪ˠs̪ˠẽˠ]ˠ ˈwan̪ˠ t̪ˠẽˠ ãˠn̪ˠẽˠ]) is a county in calendrierdelascience.com last of the traditional 32 counties to be formed, as late as , it is part of the Mid-East Region and is also located in the province of Leinster.

Flint arrow heads and cutting edges have been found in tilled fields at Ballygannon, northeast of the village. The elevated land surrounding the Rock of Kilcoole now the site of the village itself would have been a natural high ground ideal for observation of the coastal plain, and for defence. Scholars have posited two competing explanations for the name of Kilcoole. Reference is made in the Annals of the Four Masters c. Scholarship published in the early s refuted this claim with one source indicating that Cill Cuile Dumha was instead a site in County Laois. The currently accepted history of the name is associated with Christian monks and the establishment of a monastic cell at Kilcoole. Subsequent years and sources show a variety of spellings, but all seem to be a reference to a church of Comgall or Comgaill. The Down Survey of Ireland was taken from 1656 in the aftermath of the Cromwellian invasion. This map was produced at a scale of 1: Down Survey Map s Before the Railroad: Country Houses and Travel by Stage Written references to Kilcoole begin to appear regularly in the late s as travel writing became popular. Wilson followed the route from Bray to Wicklow and wrote of Kilcoole: Half a mile from Mr. At Kilcool are an inn and the ruins of a church. Between Kilcool and the sea is the celebrated salt marsh of Cooldross, kept by Mr. Gibbons, remarkably efficacious in curing surfeited horses. Three quarters of a mile beyond Kilcool, on the R. The inn that Wilson refers to is probably a new inn which was opened just that year by one Francis Ellis. This was a typical advertisement of the day: Advertisement for a New Inn at Kilcoole Another inn is known to have existed before this time , managed by Mark Byrne who died in From Topographia Hibernia published in by William Wenman Seward we learn that during this time, fairs in Kilcoole were held on Whit Monday formerly an important public holiday falling in May or June , and 4th September. At the end of the s regular news sheets began to be published which sometimes featured items on Kilcoole. An advertisement in the Dublin Evening Post for 13th March, read: Sir Hopton Scott in the chair. Most travellers at this time were focused on writing about the beautiful estates of the gentry, but life for the mass of people living in vernacular cabins and the village itself would have been very bleak by modern standards. Kilcool Village,“Distant sixteen miles from the Castle of Dublin, appears very much decayed, and the scarcity of fuel materially contributes to increase the wretchedness of its miserable inhabitants, whose precarious existence, depending on the occasional refreshment of car-men and feeding of horses, will be totally annihilated when the new Mail-coach road, running in a more horizontal direction, is finished. Happily, this prediction of total annihilation did not come to pass, and coaches continued to travel through Kilcoole until these were displaced by the railway. In the Ordnance Survey Map , Kilcoole is shown with a number of substantial dwellings and essentially the same major road network as today. Most houses lie along the main street running from the Upper Green to the intersection with Sea Road. Darraghville later the Convent was a well established country house in and shows with its two gate lodges and two areas of walled gardens. The large Ballygannon Estate is shown in its prime. This map was surveyed in the decade before the coming of the railway and the cottages later built along the sea front. Other features that have since disappeared are the Corn mill along Sea Road, the stream running under the main street to the mill, and Ballydonarea House later Greyfort on the Sea Road. The overall impression from the map is a small, quiet street surrounded by an area of large demesnes and a few smaller but substantial estates. James Fraser wrote in Kilcool contains about seventy houses, and many of them are of a very inferior description. In the village fair-green is a detached rock, which affords a good view of the country around, and near its base are the burial-ground and church ruins. Shipwrecks and naval disasters were a common occurrence in those days. In six boats from Bray, Windgates and Kilcoole were lost at sea while fishing for herring. The Railroad The development of a railway from Dublin down through Wicklow was to greatly improve access to Kilcoole, but despite this new technology, change and growth were slow to arrive. An inn or two in the village continued to cater to guests even with the decline and disappearance of the stage route which had been a mainstay of the

village proper. Early s The next phase in the development of Kilcoole did not come until the early 20th century, when modern ideas about social welfare, sanitation and housing began to emerge. The building of cottages for poor labourers began in the second decade of the s and continued up until the automobile began to predominate mid-century. The Lower Green has a few houses built. A number of houses have been built on Sea Road some of which are still in existence, including Donarea Lodge, the two large semi-detached dwellings Elton and Albion , Ballydonarea Lodge and Sonas Sanitorium. The old house marked Ballydonarea on the map is now Grey Fort. The great heavy horse breeds slowly disappeared making way for early tractors. Poverty was slow to disappear, but by the s life in Kilcoole had transformed completely from a century before. Eithne, schoolmaster at Holy Faith Convent. Under direction of the Irish Folklore Commission, schools throughout Ireland wrote down local folklore and tradition. The hand-written journal provided by Sister Eithne amounted to 38 pages of which many were dedicated to local history. [Click here to read this interesting account.](#) Parts of these Mass Paths still exist as a well-used amenity of the local area.

Wicklow (Irish: Cill Mhantáin, meaning "church of the toothless one") is the county town of County Wicklow in calendrierdelascience.comd south of Dublin on the east coast of the island, it has a population of 10, according to the census.

Mar12 In October the Hon. Garech Browne, then aged 19, discussed with his friend Ivor Browne later a well-known psychiatrist, the problems Irish traditional music faced securing a wider audience than was then the case. At the time both men were students of Dubliner Leo Rowsome who played the uilleann pipes, the bellows-blown bagpipe which evolved from ancient Irish warpipes. It was believed a market did not exist for such material. Garech had already been thinking about establishing his own music label to record and distribute the music of traditional performers. But in an Ireland anxious to embrace modernisation, musicians like Rowsome were regarded as an anachronism, a roadblock on the way to progress. Following his conversation with Ivor Browne other people were drawn into the project including poet John Montague and genealogist Liam Mac Alasdair. However the group of friends pluckily pooled their resources and pressed ahead. The company responsible for this and later recordings was given the name Claddagh Records. Today known for the rings symbolising love and friendships but originally a fishing village, Claddagh is a district close to the centre of Galway city where the river Corrib meets Galway Bay. Only in was Claddagh incorporated and Garech could assume the position of company chairman. Thereafter the business, while always remaining small, began to flourish and as the s progressed more and more albums were produced. Patrick Kavanagh, like Rowsome the finest exemplar of his craft, was persuaded into a studio where he read almost everything he had written. The distinctive richness of the Claddagh catalogue is due to its mixture of music and spoken word. The rich, bittersweet voices of Robert Johnson, Big Bill Bronzy, John Lee Hooker and others would have died with them if they had not been recorded, but because they were preserved, they became the foundation on which modern jazz has grown and flourished, as modern Irish music has also, because of those early recordings. In Samuel Beckett oversaw the recording of extracts from his theatre work being read by the actor Jack MacGowran. One of the other distinctive features of Claddagh Records releases from the start has been the exceptionally high calibre of the sleeve artwork and notes. What we tried to do was get the arts to speak together. As is often the case with enterprises of this sort, much of the work undertaken over the next few years was necessary but invisible. Among the more noticeable structural alterations, however, was the restoration of chimneys and battlements to their original height and scale since parts of both had been altered in the 19th century, as had the windows. The return of the latter to their original Gothic form is the most immediately dramatic modification of the building and the one which demanded the greatest assault on the structure, since sections of the external walls had to be removed. Once that work was completed, the coved ceilings of rooms affected were re-done. The result was even more radical than had been anticipated: In addition to the installment of arched windows, a new staircase – in fact an 18th century one salvaged from another house – was installed, as were appropriate chimneypieces in the drawing room and dining room. Internally the house was thoroughly redecorated, albeit in a style that recalled its previous incarnation. For this assignment, Garech called on the services of two friends who knew Luggala well and were sympathetic to its distinctive character: David Mlinaric and Angela Douglas. He was by no means a passive client. His taste is pretty similar to mine. Other papers for the house were printed by Irish specialist David Skinner. The library curtain fabric was made by Atkinsons in Northern Ireland. The red silk velvet for the drawing room curtains came from France, and the silk for the inner curtains was made in England by Humphries Weavers. Every single item in the house is special in some way – nothing was off the peg. Even the carpets were specially dyed. As an instance of the trouble taken over the furnishings, the drawing room settee, originally made for Russborough, is now covered burgundy-coloured velvet. This fabric was gauffered, or stamped, by a firm in Lyons using surviving 18th century wooden cylinders which broke during the process, meaning this technique can never be repeated. The process of moving back into the house began the following month, but refurbishment work went on for some time longer. It seems unlikely since no one

else takes as much care over his appearance or over co-ordinating the colour, texture and fabric of his clothes. For all that, Garech is neither vain nor exhibitionistic. He does not particularly care to have attention drawn to what he is wearing and can seem almost abashed when this occurs. He is far from being a poseur, dislikes the company of those who are merely so and is probably most at ease when least noticed. He can, however, talk eloquently on the history and development of costume and loves to describe each element of his extensive wardrobe. Garech Browne is a true dandy, not in the rather frivolous sense by which this term is customarily dismissed, but in the more serious fashion that dandyism has always been understood among the French. Individual in his fondness for mixing unusual tones and materials, he still complies strictly with what could be construed as old-fashioned rules of correct dressing. If the colouring of his clothes is original, the cut is not: But he has no desire to look the same as every other well-dressed man. Garech says he has always loved good clothing. In adulthood he chose to follow the example of his father and grandfather, and has his coats and suits made by London tailors Lesley Roberts. Ties and braces come from a wide variety of sources including Hermes, Charvet and Lanvin. Whenever his clothing is specifically made for him, he provides the raw materials. These come from various sources including silk poplin from Egypt, Thai shot silk and heavy raw silk from India. His shoes are made not just from leather but also the skin of sika deer and ostrich and even elephant ears. Buttons, most often of mother-of-pearl, come from The Button Queen in London. His wardrobe is extensive but consistent; suits tend to be ordered in batches of four or five, and all of them carry the date of manufacture inside a breast pocket. In addition, they are without exception immaculately finished and in many cases interchangeable: Taking pleasure in colour is a trait of the dandy. He will wear the finest silk beneath the coarsest tweed, he will allow one pattern to jostle with another for predominance, and is not afraid of striking sartorial notes which on another man might be perceived as discordant. In addition, there is an attention to detail which must usually escape everyone but Browne himself. A late 19th century French dandy, the Prince de Sagan, used to have his black silk top hat lined in green leather, a small luxury likely to be appreciated only by himself. Similarly Garech will use the most brilliantly-hued silks inside his suits where they will be seen by his eyes alone. This is the mark of the true dandy. Men were completely limited in the colour of their kimonos, so they had brighter shades hidden underneath. He has enjoyed the income to dress well but this does not explain his interest in clothes. After all, there are plenty of wealthier people who look neither so polished nor as stylish as he. To be original is to invite disapproval. Dandyism is a form of contained rebellion in which certain rules are broken but others strictly obeyed. It is also often a form of aesthetic self-expression, an opportunity to give public voice to private interests. In memory of the Hon.

Chapter 3 : Shillelagh, County Wicklow | Revolv

This website was developed by the Wicklow Heritage Forum as an action of the County Wicklow Heritage Plan. We hope to showcase the wonderful natural, built and cultural heritage of County Wicklow through these pages and encourage you to participate by sharing your information, stories and photos.

Wicklow was the last county formed because of rebellious clans. Wicklow was the last county in Ireland to be formed. Plans to shire Wicklow had been in place since but rebellious clans stalled them. It gives a comprehensive history of the county. They were driven off their own land and into the mountains in Wicklow by the Norman invasion. They located themselves along the east coast from Newtownmountkennedy to Arklow and up as far as Glenmalur by the early s. The two clans allied through marriage and declared war on the incoming Anglo Normans. During the 14th and 15th centuries the natives continued to harass the invaders. Together the clans fought the English and killed the Lord Lieutenant in Between them they occupied east and west Wicklow by the 16th century. Garoid Og Fitzgerald was the Lord Deputy. On being summoned to England in he appointed his son, Silken Thomas, vice deputy. These alliances between Gaelic chieftains and English nobles were viewed as dangerous by the English who set about breaking them up. He requested that his territory be shired and called County Wicklow. However, this move was rejected by his clan and a new chief was elected. By the authorities were preparing to shire Wicklow to create a new county of Wicklow and Ferns. The plans for a new county had to be scrapped in the face of open rebellion. The final bell tolled for them with the Flight of the Earls. It is generally accepted that the county was finally shired in The rest was declared royal lands. Phelim fought the issue for many years. Phelim continued his fight for the return of his lands and petitioned the King in A commission of enquiry was established but found against him. After his death his sons, Brian and Hugh, continued his quest. The former Gabhall Ranalagh was also changing hands.

Chapter 4 : s: The Great Famine - Wicklow's Historic Gaol Wicklow's Historic Gaol

Origins The area of present-day Kilcoole was doubtless an attractive location for settlement in Ireland's early history. Flint arrow heads and cutting edges have been found in tilled fields at Ballygannon, northeast of the village.

Wicklow Harbour A ship in Wicklow Harbour Since , the town has undergone significant change and expansion reflecting the simultaneous growth in the Irish economy. Considerable residential development has taken place to the west of the town along Marlton Road R More recently, housing developments have been concentrated to the northwest of the town towards the neighbouring village of Rathnew. These factors have led to a steady growth in population of Wicklow and its surrounding townlands while its importance as a commuter town to Dublin increases. He notices that -lo was never used outside Norway cf. Furthermore, this word is almost never combined with a male name or a general word meaning "a category of person". Moreover, "Viking" never appears in toponymic records. For him, the first element can be explained as Uikar- or Uik- "bay" in Old Norse and the intermediate N of the old forms is a mistake by the clerks. However, all recorded forms show this N. That is the reason why Liam Price [8] says it is probably a Norwegian place-name and A. It has an interesting folklore of its own. Saint Patrick and some followers are said to have tried to land on Travilahawk beach, to the south of the harbour. Manntach toothless one , as he became known, was undeterred and returned to the town, eventually founding a church. Although its anglicised spelling Kilmantan [12] was used for a time, it gradually fell out of use. History[edit] Main Street During excavations to build the Wicklow road bypass in , a Bronze Age cooking pit Fulach Fiadh and hut site was uncovered in the Ballynerrn Lower area of the town. A radio carbon-dating exercise on the site puts the timeline of the discovery at BC. In the mid-9th century, Vikings established a base which took advantage of the natural harbour at Wicklow. Sir Charles Coote , who led the troops is then recorded as engaging in "savagely and indiscriminate" slaughter of the townspeople in an act of revenge. Ruins of the Franciscan friary in Wicklow Though the surrounding County of Wicklow is rich in bronze age monuments, the oldest surviving settlement in the town is the ruined Franciscan friary. This is located at the west end of Main Street, within the gardens of the local Roman Catholic parish grounds. Other notable buildings include the Town Hall and the Gaol , built in and recently renovated as a heritage centre and tourist attraction. The East Breakwater, arguably the most important building in the town, was built in the early s by Wicklow Harbour Commissioners. Wicklow Gaol was a place of execution up to the end of the 19th century and it was here that Billy Byrne, a leader of the rebellion , met his end in He is commemorated by a statue in the town square. The gaol closed in and is today a tourist attraction with living displays and exhibits. Also a service is operated twice daily to Arklow via Rathdrum. Wexford Bus operates 9 services to Dublin and 10 from Dublin each day. However they do not go through the town, dropping passengers at the Grand Hotel before continuing on to Arklow. Oak Hill Cricket Club is located 7.

Chapter 5 : County Wicklow - Ireland Genealogy Projects (IGP)

The history of County Wicklow, the Garden of Ireland. The History of Wicklow. Between the old counties of Carlow and Dublin in the Irish province of Leinster, there was once a wild and untameable frontier land.

Like much of the east coast, it is a county that remains quite rich in records. Average start dates are for Roman Catholic baptism registers and for marriages. Some go back to But there are several anomalies. Church of Ireland records for Glendalough are lost. Church of Ireland records generally start a lot earlier. The most significant entries on the missing list are for Derrylosary, in the Glendalough area, and Arklow where CI registers have not survived. Marriage records, which have already been transcribed, will be added this summer see Update box, top right , and death registers will follow at some time in the future. Catherine is on the board of the IFHF and is highly enthusiastic about the online facility. The query will say something along the lines of: And even if they could read, for reasons of deference, respect or fear they would not readily point out to a clergyman, doctor or other figure of authority that they had spelt the name wrong. Similarly, our ancestors had a different attitude to age. Recorded ages, once out of the childhood range, should therefore be treated with caution. But some problems are. There may be some quirk. This instinct typically comes into play in three areas: So I started the research in the townlands around Avoca because it was a huge copper mining area. When it ceased production, many local families migrated to North East England in search of work in coal mines. Although gut reaction plays its part, Catherine aims to take a scientific and logical approach to every genealogy research project carried out by Wicklow Family History Centre. The indexes can be particularly useful because they list names of families or townlands mentioned in the text, and she can quickly flick through relevant ones to see what they reveal. She says such books often throw up a link that is so obscure it may not otherwise have been uncovered or accessed. A single-volume report may cover several generations, and all findings are put into context together with the reasoning for her approach and her conclusions. In addition to her genealogical and historical expertise, Catherine brings enormous enthusiasm to her role as acting archivist and manager of the Wicklow Family History Centre. But while she undoubtedly loves her work, she can only stretch so far.

Chapter 6 : THE 15 BEST Things to Do in County Wicklow - (with Photos) - TripAdvisor

Online Irish ancestral Birth, Death and Marriage records for Co. Wicklow. Genealogy research center - Wicklow Family History Centre.

Sitemap The History of Wicklow Between the old counties of Carlow and Dublin in the Irish province of Leinster, there was once a wild and untameable frontier land. This land consisted of an ancient mountain chain that ran parallel to the coast, southwest of Dublin city, for over one hundred miles, petering out into small hills in the county of Wexford. The mountains were weary, ravaged by millions of years of water and wind erosion. Across the tops of the mountains and hills of this chain there was an open country of forbidding bogs, somehow, and strangely, covering all but the loftiest peaks. On the flanks of the mountains there were forested valleys: Along the coast of this inhospitable land the foothills of the mountains met a narrow ribbon-like plain of saltmarshes scarcely more than mile at its widest point, punctuated in places by hills and mountains that ran to the sea and terminated in fierce wall-like cliffs. In the most recent conquerors of Ireland, the English, finally decided upon the best way of dealing with this wild hostile zone that loomed so threateningly close to Dublin: The new county was named "Wicklow", an Anglicisation of Wykynlo - believed to be old Norse for "Viking Land" - as almost all of the coastline south of Dublin had been dominated by Norse settlements throughout the Middle Ages. Then they surrounded the new county with a perimeter of military installations located on all the roads leading into or out of it. The human inhabitants of Wicklow, the so-called "Wood Kerne", were regarded as mysterious and dangerous. The English could do little more than guard the main roads that ran along either side of the mountains to ensure a safe passage to Wexford by the coastal route, and to Carlow in the interior. Although lands and titles were granted to various families, such authority was impossible to enforce in the mountains. While the wolf was hunted to extinction in the rest of Ireland, it survived in Wicklow. It seems the last killing of a wolf in Ireland was just over the Wicklow border, in County Carlow, in , but sightings persisted into the early 19th century. While the British Empire was busily "civilising" far flung virgin territories in North America, Australia and the Indies, it was failing to infiltrate the relatively tiny area of wild land positioned on the doorstep of its second city. Furthermore, in the "Wicklow Gold Rush" began in the south of the county. Thousands of freelance miners poured into the area and set up camps in some of the valleys. The landowners were powerless to stop them, and several months elapsed before an army was despatched from Dublin to drive them out of Wicklow and allow the government to take control of what turned out to be a vast goldfield. To this day it is unknown how much gold the miners successfully removed. But it is very likely that this enormous financial injection, and the crushing of the hopes and dreams of so many native people, helped lead to the outbreak of the Rebellion, which almost toppled British colonial power in Ireland. Most of the decisive battles of this rebellion took place in and around Wicklow, where the terrain favoured the rebels. Michael Dwyer, the last rebel leader, continued to fight on in his native Wicklow until he finally surrendered to terms in , and was promptly transported as a prisoner to New South Wales in Australia, where he later served as a police constable. Finally, in the early 19th century, they began to build a road into the very heart of the mountains, the so-called "Military Road". It was designed to divide Wicklow down the middle and make it governable. But the road was a failure. It cost too much to build, maintain and to man, and did nothing to tame the wilderness. Inevitably it was abandoned. However, in some circles attitudes to this wilderness softened and changed radically. In the late 18th century, painters began depicting the landscape of forests and valleys as a romantic idyll. It is quite an experience to visit the National Gallery of Ireland, in Dublin, and view paintings there depicting the Powerscourt Waterfall and surrounding landscape, and to then visit the waterfall and find some of the same ancient trees depicted in the paintings still standing. But these same painters did not shy away from depicting the tempestuous and frightening elements of this landscape either, greatly adding to the mystique of the place. During the Industrial Revolution Wicklow was quarried for building materials and plundered for gold, lead and other valuable minerals, but the rural landscape itself was largely unaffected, and abandoned mines and quarries were quickly reclaimed by the natural world. The terrible calamity that was the Great Famine, in the late s, affected Wicklow with an influx of starving refugees,

but the people of this wilderness had a plentiful supply of food available from the land and sea. The refugees from elsewhere in Ireland stood a good chance of surviving if they managed to reach Wicklow. But this only provided another habitat for nature to colonise. And this wild land is thriving. It is still a place of genuine mystery. In some key respects it is virtually unexplored. In winter it can still be impossible to cross from one side to the county to the other without travelling around the mountains, the passes being impenetrable due to snow and ice. Wicklow can still be cut off from the rest of the world by a heavy snowfall, or heavy rains, and the people of Wicklow can find themselves needing rescuing with special all-terrain vehicles designed for the icy wastes of the Arctic. In summer it is transformed, with the valleys becoming veritable jungles, and temperatures and weather-patterns separated into microclimates, varying in accordance with altitude position and aspect. But it is always humid and always unpredictable. To this day Wicklow retains its fierce dignity, and, for this reason, it is a paradise for wildlife, and a little-studied mystery for archaeologists to unravel.

Chapter 7 : Wicklow - Wikipedia

Wander through wild Wicklow. As a must-see experience along Ireland's Ancient East, Wicklow truly is a walker's calendrierdelascience.com the km Wicklow Way to the lush trails of Avondale House and Forest Park, there's adventure for every level of hiker and nature explorer.

Thus the Brabazon family, Earls of Meath, begin with a Belgian mercenary at the battle of Hastings in and gallop through the centuries to the 21st century. The Earls of Wicklow astonish British society by their continuing dalliance with the Catholic faith. The Wingfields of Powerscourt build arguably the most impressive Palladian mansion in Ireland and sire the mother of Sarah, Duchess of York. Wicklow, on Thursday 8th December This book is currently out of print but should be available from many libraries in Ireland, or if you have specific enquiries, try contacting the author directly. Until recent centuries, every generation simply came and fell like fields of wheat. When one contemplates the extraordinary legacy of our lost ancestors, it seems they understood the machinations of our planet better than we do. It matters not whether these forbears were from the icy Artic or the plains of Africa, the deserts of Arabia or the forests of Europe. In every land there are testimonies to the ingenuity of forgotten people. County Wicklow, the soft, mountainous terrain in which this book is set, sparkles with the granite legacy of these ancient people. Circles of rock echoing a harvest moon, standing stones pointing to a solstice morn, mounds of grassy earth where children once danced and old men fought. County Wicklow is a gorgeous part of Ireland. Between its voluptuous mountains and rocky coastline, it has entranced everyone from philosophical hermits and Vikings marauders to Hollywood film directors and the economic whiz-kids of modern Ireland. The nine principle families who feature in this book descend from adventurous people of courage and conviction who arrived in Wicklow when Ireland was a violent island perched on the edge of the world. Some like the Humes, Dicks and Leslies were Scottish in origin, beneficiaries of Jacobite kings and the prosperous linen trade in Ulster. Some claim descent from exciting characters; the Wingfields from a Saxon warrior, the Brabazons from a Belgian mercenary who fought at Hastings. In the two hundred years following the Tudor invasion of Ireland in the midth century, each of these families established themselves as vital cogs in the colonial system. As such, their influence came to bear not just on their various land-holdings but also upon the whole of Ireland and, in many instance, upon the wider world beyond. Thus these families became intertwined with that extraordinary, mesmerizing, bewildering age of the Ascendancy. There is a growing awareness that history, good or bad, is made by people, real human beings with real human conundrums. Perhaps it is the influence of so many newcomers to our shores but Ireland is gradually coming to terms with its past. And not everything about it was awful. Any family history that focuses on the bare, irreducible facts of birth, deaths and marriages will quickly become unbearably tedious to read. Without the dramatic assistance of anecdote and description, the lineage of even the most enterprising of clans can prove exceedingly dull. I hope the tales told herein add a small splash of colour to the past. Many of the characters in this book were players on a stage that circulated the entire world. A cousin of the Wingfields of Powerscourt founded the first settlement of Jamestown, Virginia. Henry Ellis of Magherymore was Governor of Georgia. The Bartons made their fortune selling French wine to rich Americans. The philanthropic no-nonsense 12th Earl of Meath would undoubtedly have painted the globe in the colours of the Empire but, down at Glendalough, Erskine Childers would find the treatment of the Boers in South Africa soured his appetite for the imperial way. No family was unaffected by the conflicts of the 20th century. At Kilmacurragh, ownership of the ancestral estate was thrown into chaos by the death in action of all three Acton brothers. As regards these houses today, only Kilruddery and Fortgranite remain in the hands of their original owners. Powerscourt still carries the influence of the Wingfields through their close kinship with the Slazengers. The Powerscourt estate is now home to the a luxurious five star hotel. There are many in the neighbourhood of Glendalough House who recall the families of Barton and Childers though the house itself is gone. Mimi Hume passed away in , since when Humewood Castle has become a popular retreat for sportsmen and celebrities. Shelton Abbey is presently a reformatory prison and Magherymore is headquarters of the Columbian Missionaries. Kilmacurragh is a ruin awaiting restoration and

Rossanagh is a ghost of its former self. So now, as the story goes, I raise my glass to the past. The property came to the Acton family during the 17th century at the end of which they built the original house of Kilmacurragh or Westaston. During the 18th century, the forward thinking Tom Acton planted an arboretum that is now in peak condition with an exceptional array of crimson rhododendrons, Irish yews, giant shaggy podocarpus and exceptional pleasure grounds, carpeted in bluebells in the spring, birdsong echoing around the branches of trees from Peru, Tasmania, the Middle East, Indochina. The Bartons descended from the great wine-growing family of Straffan in Co. Kildare while the Childers hailed from England and were of a more intellectual bent. Their young were raised at Glendalough House, known to the family as Glan, sheltered beneath Djouce Mountain and close to the waters of Lough Dan. In the run up to independence, Robert Barton and his cousin Erskine Childers found themselves increasingly drawn into the fray. He established the family at Kilruddery and his grandson was created 1st Earl of Meath in 1800. Over the next three hundred years, the family consolidated its influence in Wicklow, Ireland and the wider world of the British Empire. A strong sense of philanthropy, evident since the establishment of the Meath Hospital in the 18th century, became the guiding force of the 12th Earl and his Countess during the reigns of Queen Victoria and Edward VII. The father and grandfather of the present Earl were distinguished war heroes and this close knit Wicklow family continues to generate characters of great charm and generosity. In the late 18th century, a prudent marriage to the sole heiress of the Chief Baron of the Irish Exchequer brought the extensive Dennis estates in Kerry, Cork and Dublin to the family. A similarly lucrative marriage settlement in 1800 introduced Thomas Dennis to West Wicklow when he succeeded to the Pendred estate at Fortgranite outside Baltinglass. Further marriages to the Bakers of Tipperary, the Crosbies of Kerry and the Handcocks of Westmeath further increased their social network. In the early 20th century, the inventive Colonel Meade Dennis pioneered the concepts of radio-transmission and submarine detection at his office in Fortgranite. From the outset they were an unusual clan with a tremendous penchant for the arts. Hugh Howard emerged as one of the great collectors of the early 18th century while his brother acquired the great library of Lord Chancellor West. The Howards were equally adept at collecting wealthy wives. Marriages with the Boleyns, Forwards, Arnolds, Darnleys, Charlemonts, Powerscourts and Abercorns ensured their position in high society. Created Viscounts in 1800 and subsequently elevated to the Earldom, four sons of the family sat as Representative Peers between 1801 and 1832. Protestant by birth but often Catholic by persuasion, the family was caught up in one of the most extraordinary legal battles of Victorian times. His cousin Lady Katherine Howard established a charitable foundation and was the last of the Howards. In other words, he would again be running as a Conservative, this time in support of Benjamin Disraeli who had lately succeeded Lord Derby as leader of the party. Indeed, the Wicklow landowner was successful in every election bid from 1801 through to 1885. But if one was looking for a reason why he had not felt it necessary to explain himself in the run-up to the election, perhaps he was simply too busy watching his most remarkable legacy take shape beneath Keadeen Mountain in West Wicklow. The Humes traced their origin back to Scotland and slowly rose through the rank and file of the Irish Ascendancy from the late 17th century onwards. Inter-marriage with the exceptionally wealthy linen family of Samuel and Quintin Dick provided enough money for the family to be considered one of Co. Wicklow. However, with the support of the Cecils, he swiftly regained favour and rose to become a prominent courtier during the reign of King James II. Sir Thomas was created a baronet on 30th June 1703. His grandson, Sir Richard Ellis of Wynham in Lincolnshire, was a zealous non-conformist and author of a book entitled *Fortuita Sacra* which is extremely rare. Sir Richard was returned to Parliament twice for Grantham, and three times for Boston, commencing in 1741. He became MP for Dublin and indeed every generation of the family held a seat in the Irish Parliament right through to the Act of Union in 1800. By dint of prudent marriages to families such as Bligh, Fownes and Bunbury, the Tighes became one of the wealthiest commoner families in Ireland. With a reputation for frugality, they had amassed over 16,000 acres by 1800, primarily in Counties Kilkenny and Wicklow. For years they held court at Rossanagh outside Ashford. The family had a remarkable talent for encountering the literary greats. Plagued by an asthmatic gene, many of the family perished young but the line continues to prosper, inspire and amuse to this day. Their magnificent gardens at Woodstock in Co. Kilkenny are presently being restored. Perhaps Rossanagh will one day have a similar happy fate. Built in the 18th century, the house was tragically devastated by fire in 1940. The estate takes its name from the de la Poer family who built a

castle here in Norman times. In , the property came to the possession of Sir Richard Wingfield, a prominent general in the English army. In time, the family received the honours of a Viscounty. They continued to exert an influence on Irish affairs right through until the last century. The Slazengers who run Powerscourt today are closely related to the present Viscount. Yet it is still interesting to read about those who did, and do, lay claim to such titles. Turtle Bunbury and Art Kavanagh themselves bearers of historic names bring us back to the heydays and low days of lords, earls, viscounts, baronets and other "gentlefolks" of the counties of Wicklow and Meath. Many, if not most, of these people, as in almost every county in Ireland, acquired their titles and lands in one of just a few ways, through conquest, confiscation and plantation, royal favour, descent and inter-marriage, while not a few estates were actually purchased. Both books are exhaustively researched and lavishly illustrated. Read and see how the other 10 per cent lived not so long ago. Now, his next book is being printed, ready for publication in December. It will include many rare and fascinating photographs. Among the great characters who will people the pages of this book is the 8th Earl of Wicklow, otherwise Billy Wicklow. Billy Wicklow was one of the great characters of Dublin, of a type no longer seen around the city streets and hostelrys. The family estate, at Shelton Abbey, was declared bankrupt in and eventually became an open prison. The story of the transmitter and the Dennis family is just one of the fascinating passages in a beautifully illustrated book due to be published in December. Inevitably, the Viscounts Powerscourt and their neighbours, the Earls of Meath and Wicklow are included. Kildare Turtle Bunbury holds an extraordinary talent in making historical facts accessible to people who may find the past rather overbearing. His style is swift, charismatic and above all else, passionate and respectful for people who made an impact in Irish society.

Chapter 8 : Wicklow - Ireland's last county

Blessington, Wicklow Russborough is a stunning Palladian Mansion, open 7 days a week offering guided house tours in English, German and French. Located 22km from Dublin City off the N81 and km from Blessington, County Wicklow.

Chapter 9 : History â€“ Kilcoole, County Wicklow

County Wicklow. There's a good reason for County Wicklow's nickname of the Garden of Ireland. This beautifully scenic county is a lush mixture of forested valleys, fertile hills, miles of sandy beaches and old fashioned seaside resorts.