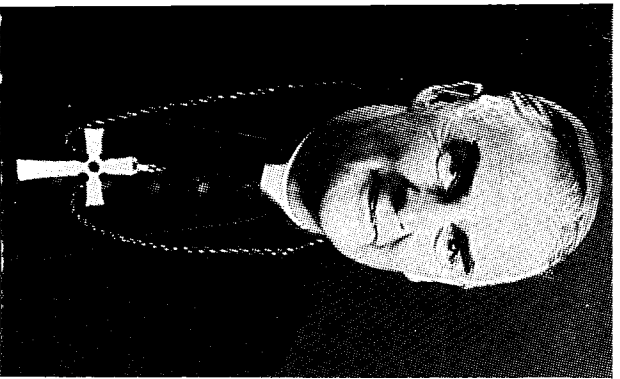


Bishop's House,
Newry.



To mark the 150th Anniversary of the dedication of Saint Michael's, the Parish Church of Dromara. Canon Bernard Treanor, the Parish Priest, and his co-operators have written this very valuable and interesting account of the history of the parish, its priests, religious and people.

A church is a place of prayer, a place where God's people assemble to publicly acknowledge their dependence on God, to listen to his word and to offer him their praise, adoration and petition. It is a place where the waters of divine grace abolish sin and give new life in Baptism, a place where the pilgrim People of God through their offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass are constantly renewed and sanctified. The coming together in a church, the raising of minds and hearts to God, the receiving of the one Body and Blood of Christ, is a communion, a uniting, a building up of the people as the family of Christ in that place. The church, the material building, thus becomes the symbol of the particular local community, the sign or reminder to all of the presence of a people of faith in the area. It represents the bishop, priests and people united through the Gospel and the Eucharist in a common bond of faith and love. The story of a church is the story of its people.

The story of Saint Michael's is a story of such a community, of priests and people, who, despite great difficulties, struggled to build it, to furnish it, to extend it and to maintain it throughout the last 150 years. The latest chapter in this story, — the recent extensive renovations, symbolises very well the faith, generosity and community spirit of the present generation of Dromara

parishioners. While making good the ravages of time and weather, they have taken great care to preserve and enhance the inheritance of the past, and the very fine architectural character of the church. Its beautiful warm devotional atmosphere fittingly symbolises, in fact, a people imbued with the love of Christ and of one another; its finely cut-stone exterior with its tower pointing to the heavens reminds us of a people strong in faith, having God as their Father. Restored and renewed the church represents a people aware of their human weaknesses, constantly emending their lives and strengthening their faith, so that this faith is handed on to the next generation with an increased vigor and adapted more closely to the needs of our age.

The Parish of Dromara and the Diocese of Dromore owe a great debt of gratitude to Canon Treanor for the scholarship, initiative and energy he has long displayed in the field of local history, civil and ecclesiastical. In the preparation of this booklet, and in many other works, he has stimulated others to co-operate with him. He has encouraged an increasing general interest in diocesan and parish history. The writing of this book must have been a labour of love. He can be assured that his parishioners of Dromara, his brother priests and the people of the diocese, will find in it a source of pride, a stimulus to thank God for his goodness and an incentive to all of us to keep united, in faith and love, with Christ who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

FRANCIS GERARD BROOKS.
(Bishop of Dromore.)

25th October, 1985.

FOREWORD

This booklet has been compiled to mark the occasion of the 150th anniversary of the dedication of the Church of St. Michael, the Archangel, Dromara. The anniversary is another important milestone in the life of the Parish.

This account tells the story in brief outline of the Parish of St. Michael, through which the River Lagan flows, and of its Church.

In recording the lives of the priests much use has been made of the Campbell-Keenan manuscript which gives a brief, but authoritative account of all the known Bishops and priests of Dromore Diocese from the earliest times to the present day.

The records show that relations between the community of St. Michael's Parish, Dromara, and the communities of the other Churches in this neighbourhood have always been good and happily this is also true today.

My thanks are due to two parishioners, both members of the teaching profession, who co-operated with me in compiling this booklet, namely Mrs. Kathleen O'Hare and Mr. Jim McNeill. I should like also to thank Mr. Kieran Clendinning for his fine contribution on the significance of various aspects of church architecture.

Our Bishop, Most Rev. Dr. Francis Gerard Brooks, was most helpful, as always, during the recent renovations at our Church and he has encouraged the production of this written record. I wish to thank him most sincerely

It is with a feeling of great joy and heartfelt thanks to God that the people of this Parish greet the celebration of the 150th anniversary of their Church in this year of 1985.



CANON B. TREANOR, P.P.

CONTENTS

	Page
DROMARA PARISH AND ITS PRIESTS	1
THE TOWNLANDS OF DROMARA PARISH	12
CLERGY BORN IN DROMARA PARISH	14
CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, DROMARA — SOME HIGHLIGHTS	17
THE SCHOOLS OF THE PARISH	20
CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, FINNIS, DROMARA RECENT RENOVATIONS	22
SYMBOLISM IN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE AND ORNAMENTATION	26
MASS ROCKS AND MASS HOUSE IN DROMARA PARISH ...	30
INTERVIEW WITH A DROMARA-BORN CENTENARIAN	33

DROMARA PARISH AND ITS PRIESTS

The Church of Dromore was founded by St. Colman at the beginning of the 6th century. The Church of Dromara probably began later in the same century as an offshoot of the Church and monastery of Dromore.

In the sixth century and for the succeeding three or four centuries the church in Ireland was organised on monastic lines. There were no parishes as such and each area was administered spiritually from the local monastery.

It is assumed that the Church of Dromara was sited on the bank of the River Lagan at or near the spot where St. John's Church of Ireland stands. The original church, with probably a small monastic settlement, may have stood within the graveyard there which has a in part semi-circular boundary. Early churches were often erected within a circular rampart.

Irish monastic foundations, however small, were usually made in good pasture land and near an abundant supply of water. These conditions existed at Dromara. In fact the good quality of the pasture there is evidenced by the very name Dromara which is derived from the Irish 'Droim Bearach,' the hill of the heifers.

In time the monastic organisation of the Irish Church changed and parishes, more or less as we know them today, were formed. This development resulted from the decisions reached at a number of national Synods held in Ireland in the 12th century.

The first written reference to Dromara occurs in an official ecclesiastical Taxation document of the year 1306 A.D. This document lists all the parishes of Dromore Diocese and in it our Parish is referred to as the 'Church of Drumberra.'

From that time onward some names of the priests of this Parish begin to appear in various church records. The first such priest mentioned is Gilbert Machnerney who was Vicar, i.e. Curate, of the Parish 1427-40. John McSlay was Rector i.e. Parish Priest, in 1441. William Rooney was Vicar in 1460 and Peter Rooney was Rector in 1529. Thomas McCormack was Rector in 1539. These surnames have a familiar local ring even today.

Then follows a gap of 165 years in the records which is explained by the turmoil of those years.

During the Penal Days the parishes of Dromara and

Magheradroll were united. The earliest record of priests of the Dromara parish, subsequent to the Reformation, is in the year 1704. This was to Father Darbey Mackey. Father Mackey was a native of Levallyreagh where he resided in the parental home. He was registered as Parish Priest of Dromara and Magheradroll at Downpatrick on July 11th, 1704, and was then aged fifty-six years. Father Mackey was ordained by Doctor Patrick Plunkett, Bishop of Ardagh, in 1682 and died in Levallyreagh in 1726.

In the report of the Protestant bishop to the House of Lords in 1731 both Dromara and Magheradroll are recorded as having only one priest. According to O'Lavery, in his History of Down and Connor, the C. C. of Magheradroll at that time was Father Patrick Dugan, so it would seem to be a correct assumption that he was the one priest in Dromara in 1731, to whom the bishop was referring. The unsettled state of the country in the aftermath of the Cromwellian era would account for records being somewhat sketchy.

Father Dan O'Fegan signed a document, which is now in the Propaganda Fide archives, appointing him Parish Priest of Dromara and Magheradroll, on 23rd September, 1741. On 12th September 1766 he signed a further document as P.P. of Dromara.

On the 26th November, 1773 Father John Pullaine signed a document as a pastor, but the parish is not stated. However, in 1776, Father Pullaine signed a document as P.P. of Dromara. These signatures are recorded in the Propaganda Fide archives.

Father Francis McKenny was P.P. of Dromara and Magheradroll from 1781 to 1788. A native of Dromara Parish, Father McKenny was Vicar General of Dromore Diocese at the time of his death. He resided in the townland of Ballymacarn North, where he held a farm of twelve acres rented from Lord Moira at a "rent of £11. 1. 9 British, for and during as many years as he shall remain priest of the parish of Magheradroll, not exceeding thirty years." The lease is in the Public Records Office, Belfast. Father McKenny died in 1788 and is interred in the cemetery attached to St. John's Church, Dromara, which was formerly in Catholic hands. A tombstone that previously marked his grave and that of another priest also named McKenny is not now visible.

FORMER DROMARA PARISH PRIESTS



CANON A. McMULLIAN,
1958 - 1967.



FR. E. McCONVILLE,
1933 - 1958.



FR. P. McEVOY,
1920 - 1933.

Following Father McKenny's death the union of the two parishes was dissolved.

Father Daniel Mooney apparently succeeded Father McKenny as parish priest in 1788. Father Mooney entered the Irish College, Salamanca in 1775 and his name appears as C.C. of Dromara and Magheradroll in the old parish register in 1783. The Catholic Qualification Rolls record him as parish priest in 1793. He was still parish priest in 1796. At a meeting of all denominations held in Dromara on February 26th, 1796, to consider the disturbances in Counties Armagh and Down and the circulation of threatening letters, tribute was paid to Father Mooney's "unremitting exertions to preserve peace and regularity within the parish" — a quote from the Northern Star, February 29th, 1796. He is said to have died in 1812.

Father Francis Reavey, probably a native of Dromara Parish, followed Father Mooney as Parish Priest. He began the erection of the church in Finnis in 1825 to replace a small chapel at the rear of the Parochial house. In a clergy list of 1823, Father Reavey is recorded as "prebendary — i.e. Canon — of Dromara." He died towards the end of 1826.

Father Peter Murphy, son of Owen and Rose Murphy, Mullaghmore, Hilltown, succeeded Father Reavey in December, 1826. He was educated at Maynooth and ordained by Dr. O'Kelly, in St. Mary's Newry, in 1820. Father Murphy was first appointed curate in Newry, 1820-1825, then Adm. in Newry 1825-1826. He was parish priest of Dromara from 1826 to 1829. Father Murphy was prominently identified with the erection of the then Pro-Cathedral, Newry, and took an active part in the agitation for Catholic Emancipation. A noted preacher, he engaged in many Religious controversies with Protestant clergymen during his pastorate in Newry. The Newry Examiner of August 11th, 1841, described him as "a shining ornament of the Church." Other monuments of his pastoral zeal are the churches erected at Burren and Warrenpoint and the old schools at Carrick and Mayobridge. Father Murphy died in Warrenpoint, on July 23rd., 1845, aged fifty four years, and was interred in Burren cemetery.

After Father Murphy came Father Michael John McCarran, a native of Ryan in the parish of Saval. He was educated



FR. J. SAVAGE,
1907 - 1920.



FR. J. O'HARE,
1903 - 1907.



FR. D. MALLON,
1885 - 1903.



MGR. D. McALISTER,
San Francisco.

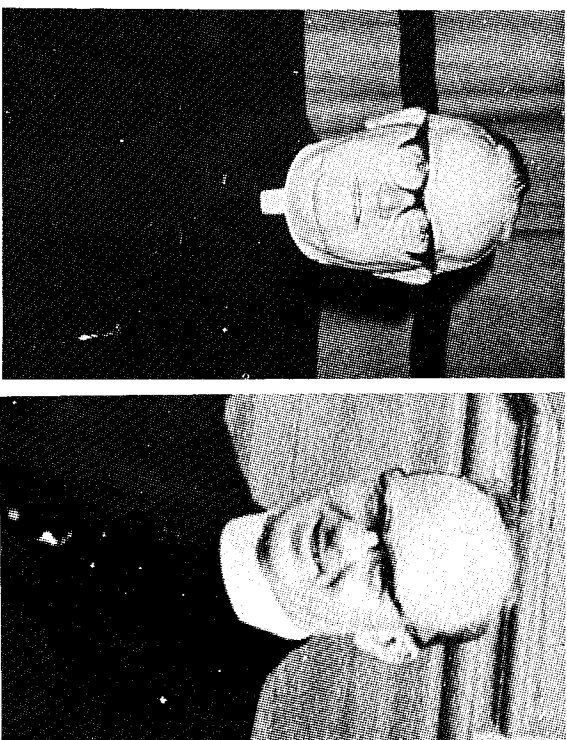
at Maynooth and ordained by Dr. Murray, Archbishop of Dublin, at Pentecost 1821. He was parish priest of Seagee from 1821 to 1826, and was Adm. Clonallon 1826 to 1829. He was appointed Parish Priest of Dromara on March 20th, 1829. He retired from Dromara in 1836 and died a pastor in Nova Scotia.

When Father McCartan retired from Dromara in 1836 his place was filled by the temporary appointment of Father Thomas Brady as Administrator, 1836 to 1838. Father Brady was born in the parish of Dromara, educated at Maynooth and ordained in Newry by Dr. Blake in 1834. He was C.C. in Annacloe 1834 to 1835 and in Clonduff from 1835 to 1836. He was administrator in Dromara 1836-1838. He returned to Annacloe first as C.C., and later as Adm. He was appointed Adm. and later P.P. Drumgath in 1840. He died on 23rd of August, 1864, and was interred in Barmeen Church.

Father Peter Devlin was appointed P.P. of Dromara on September 8th, 1838. He was born in the parish of Clonduff in 1791 and was educated in Wexford College and ordained by Dr. Derry in Newry in 1814, and the same year became Adm., Kiltbroney. On the 1st August 1817 he was appointed P.P. Magheralin, where he remained until his appointment in 1838 as P.P. of Dromara. In 1844 Dr. Blake appointed Father Devlin Vicar General. He died on June 3rd, 1850 and was interred in Dromara Church.

Father John Irwin succeeded Father Devlin on 10th June, 1850, as P.P. Dromara. He was born in Loughgall, Co. Armagh, and was educated at Carlow College. In 1842 he was appointed Principal of the Diocesan Seminary, Newry, and was ordained by Dr. Blake the same year. Father Irwin was C.C., Newry, from 1842 to 1845 and was transferred to Dromara as C.C. He was appointed Vicar Forane in 1874 and Vicar General in 1878. His death took place on December 7th, 1885, and he was interred inside the church in Dromara.

Father Daniel Mallon was appointed to Dromara, as Adm. in 1884 and, on the death of Father Irwin, in December 1885, he became P.P. Dromara. Born in the townland of Ballydoo in the parish of Drumgath, Father Mallon entered Maynooth in 1860 and was ordained by Bishop Leahy in Newry Cathedral on the 18th of August, 1867. His first appointment as curate was to Aghaderg, 1867 to 1868. From March to September 1868 he



CANON M. H. O'ROURKE, P.P.
Banbridge.

FR. P. KELLY, C.C.,
Dunmore.

ministered in Seapatrick and from September 1868 to 1872 he was curate in the parish of Kiltbroney. His final curacy was in Newry from 1878 to 1884. From there he came to Dromara. Father Mallon travelled to the United States in order to collect money for the extensive renovations to the church in Finnis. In 1902 he was appointed Adm., Clonallon by the Holy See and in 1907 he became Parish Priest of Kiltbroney. On June 7th, 1918 Father Mallon was appointed to the prebendal stall of Lanrumon in the Diocesan Chapter. He died in Rostrevor, March 28th, 1921, and was interred in Kiltbroney Cemetery.

Father John O'Hare was appointed Parish Priest in succession to Canon Mallon on the thirteenth of January, 1903. A native of the townland of Knockanarney, in the parish of Donaghmore, he was born in 1854, the son of James O'Hare, and educated in the Irish College, Paris. Father O'Hare was ordained by Doctor Leahy in Newry Cathedral on 18th November, 1877. He was C.C. Aghaderg, 1877-1879, Drumgath 1879-1891, and Newry 1891-1903. He was Parish Priest of Dromara from 1903 to June 1907, and was then transferred as P.P. to Dunmore. At his own request he was transferred to Seagee as Parish

Priest on September 22nd, 1920. He died on September 16th, 1934, and was interred in Barr Cemetery.

Father John Savage followed Father O'Hare as Parish Priest of Dromara on June 4th, 1907. He was born in Lisburn, entered the Irish College, Salamanca, in 1877 and was ordained by Mgr. Beleta, Bishop of Zamora, in the church of St. Vincent, Zamora, on December 17th, 1881. Father Savage arrived back in Ireland in June 1882. For the next three years he ministered in Birmingham until in 1885 he was recalled to the Diocese and appointed curate in Clonduff. In January, 1903, he was transferred to Mayo/bridge, where he remained until 1907, when he was appointed Parish Priest of Dromara. Father Savage died on March 30th, 1920, and was interred in Dromara, in front of the church.

Father Peter McEvoy was appointed Parish Priest on April 9th, 1920. He was born in the parish of Lower Drumgooland in 1857, educated at the Irish College, Salamanca, and ordained by Mgr. Martinez, Bishop of Salamanca, in the Episcopal Oratory, on March 25th, 1882. Following ordination he became vice-rector of the college in Salamanca, a position he held until 1887. Father McEvoy was curate in Ballela from 1887 to 1903, in Clonduff from January, 1903 to 1904, and in Lurgan from November 1904 to 1920. He was a prominent worker in the Gaelic Revival Movement in the North and was a personal friend of Mr. De Valera. Owing to failing health, Father McEvoy retired on February 23rd., 1933. He died at the residence of his brother at Ballynoe, Downpatrick on July 7th, 1935, and was interred at St. Patrick's cemetery, Leganaddy, Downpatrick. There is a window to his memory in St. Michael's Church, Finnis, Dromara.

Father Edward McConville was appointed Parish Priest on 1st April, 1933. Born in Drumlough in the parish of Drumgath, he was educated at Propaganda College, Rome, which he entered in 1899 and was ordained on 21st May, 1910, by Cardinal Respighi in the Lateran Basilica. Father McConville was a nephew of Very Reverend M. McConville, D.D.P.P. Tullylish, and Very Rev. P. Canon McConville, P.P. Donaghmore, and uncle of Very Reverend Thomas McConville, present Parish Priest of Mayo/bridge. He was C.C. Donaghmore 1910-1913, Tullylish, August 1913-1916, Magherain, February, 1916-1917,

and Kibronney, July 1917-1933 from which Parish he was transferred in 1933 to Dromara as Parish Priest. On the 8th October, 1958, Father McConville resigned his Parish due to ill health and retired to Dublin, where he died on the 19th March, 1972. He was buried in Dromara in front of the church, 21st March, 1972.

Father Alexander McMullan became the new Parish Priest of Dromara on 8th October, 1958. He was born in Legananny in the Parish of Upper Drumgooland on the 14th February, 1904. Educated at St. Colman's College, Newry and Maynooth, Father McMullan was ordained on June 17th, 1928. Following ordination he was appointed on temporary mission in Liverpool and in 1929 he was recalled to the Diocese and became Chaplain to the Carmelite Convent, Glenvale, Newry, until 1933 when he was transferred to Derrytrasna for two years before being moved to Warrenpoint as Curate in 1935. There he remained until he was appointed Parish Priest of Dromara in 1958. On 15th November, 1963, Father McMullan was appointed Canon of the Cathedral Chapter and four years later, on 18th October, 1967 he was transferred to Ballynahinch as Parish Priest. Canon McMullan died very suddenly on Monday, August 4th, 1975, and was buried on August 7th in the cemetery at Ballynahinch. He was a brother of the Reverend John McMullan of the Missionary Society of St. Columban and presently curate at Tullylish and of Sister Rose of the Mercy Order, Newry, and Sister Clement of the Franciscan Order, Dundalk.

Father Michael Henry O'Rourke was appointed Parish Priest in succession to Canon McMullan, on October 17th, 1967. A native of Leitrim Parish, he too, like his predecessor, was born in the townland of Legananny. Father O'Rourke was educated at St. Colmans College, Newry, St. Kieran's College, Kilkenny and the Irish College, Rome, where he was ordained by Mgr. Traglia in the Lateran Basilica on the 8th April, 1939. Following ordination he was on temporary mission in the Diocese of Leeds from 1939 to 1943. On 27th March, 1943 he was recalled to the Diocese and appointed C.C. in Gargory. In 1948 on June 9th, Father O'Rourke was transferred to Gilford and on the 21st September, 1959 he went to Derrytrasna, from where, on October 17th, 1967, he was appointed Parish Priest of Dromara. Presently Parish Priest of Banbridge since January 22nd, 1972, he was

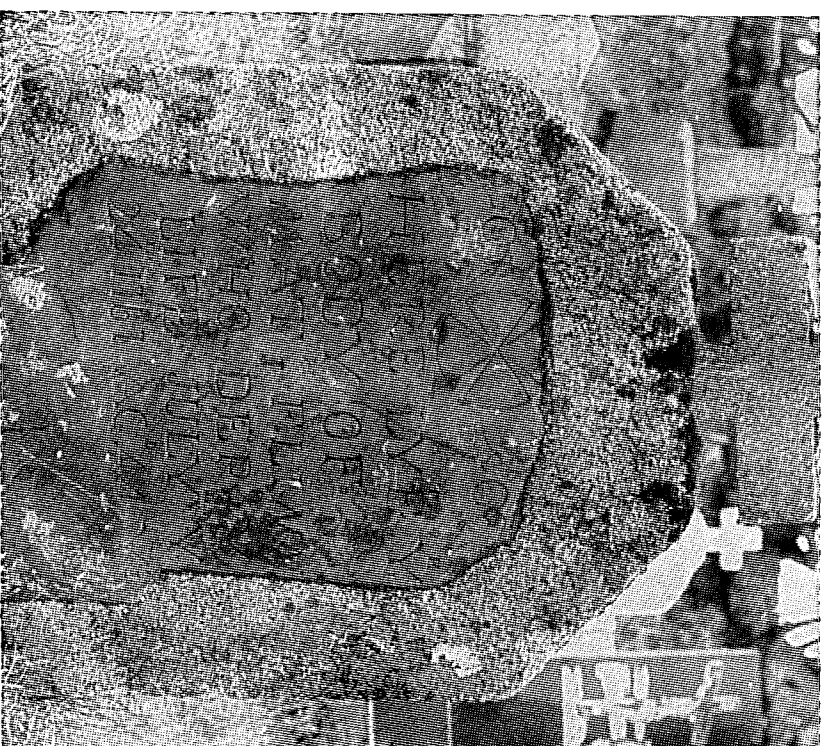
appointed Canon of the Diocesan Chapter on July 28th, 1980.

Father Bernard Treanor, the present Parish Priest, followed Canon O'Rourke to Dromara on January 22nd, 1972. A native of Carrickmastay, Warrenpoint, he was educated at St. Colman's College, Newry and Maynooth, at Fribourg University 1938 to 1939 and at Dromantine College, where he was ordained by Most Reverend Dr. Mulhern on the 10th March, 1940. Father Treanor was on supply in the Dromore Diocese during 1940 and until the 22nd of August, 1942, when he was appointed Chaplain to the Convent of Mercy Home, Warrenpoint. He was on sick leave from August, 1944 to October 1946, after which he was on mission in the Los Angeles Diocese until July, 1947. On returning to the Diocese he was again on supply until December, 1948, when he became Chaplain to the Convent of Mercy, Warrenpoint, and on July 8th, 1949 he was appointed Chaplain to Cabra Convent. On March 20th, 1955 Father Treanor was appointed C.C. in Annacloy from where he was transferred to Hilltown on 1st October, 1961, remaining there until his appointment as Parish Priest of Dromara. On 24th January, 1984, he was made a Canon of the Diocesan Chapter.

The first recorded Curate of the post-Reformation period in Dromara was Rev. Andrew Murnin. He was ministering in the Parish in 1783 and apparently was succeeded by Rev. Daniel Mooney who later became P.P., Dromara. From that time, except for the years 1899-1915 and some other lesser gaps, there was a successive line of Curates up to the year 1933. Their names, the years of their curacies and their places of origin, where known, are as follows:

Rev. Michael Magin (1837-1838), Co. Tyrone.
Rev. John R. Cunningham (1838-1839), Newry.
Rev. Thomas Ryan (1839-1841).
Rev. John Callan (1839-1841).
Rev. Terence Fegan (1841-1844), Annacloy.
Rev. John Byrne (1844-1845), Aghaderg.
Rev. John Irwin (1845-1850), Loughgall.
Rev. Andrew Brennan, (1851-1853).
Rev. James McKenna (1853-1856).
Rev. Hugh Mooney, (1856-1857), Annacloy.
Rev. Charles Kenney, (1857-1860), Seagoe.
Rev. Matthew Lynch, (1868-1869), Drumgath.

Rev. Thomas Gallery, (1869-1870), Magheralin
Rev. Patrick Quail, (1870-1871), Gargory.
Rev. Charles McKay, (1872-1875).
Rev. Murtagh McPolin, (1876-1881), Clonduff.
Rev. Henry Devlin, (1882-1886), Clonduff.
Rev. Daniel Grant, (1886-1891), Mayobridge.
Rev. John McAlister, (1891-1895), Dromara.
Rev. Thomas McGrath, (1895-1898), Clonallon.
Rev. Michael O'Neill, (1915-1916), Dromore.
Rev. James McCorry, (1918-1922), Seagoe.
Rev. Patrick McCartan, (1922-1931), Workington.
Rev. Edward Smyth, (1931-1933), Liverpool.



MATTHEW FLINN DIED IN 1767.
The oldest tombstone in St. Michael's Cemetery.

THE TOWNLANDS OF THE DROMARA PARISH

All sixteen townland names in Dromara Parish are derived from the Irish language. Most of the names describe some feature, physical or otherwise, of the area in question.

These notes on the derivation of the townland names are based on the research on the townland names of Dromore Diocese carried out by the late Dean Mooney, a native of Ballynahinch Parish, and a former Parish Priest of the Diocese of Dromore.

There must have been an abundance of whitehorn in AUGHNASKEAGH in former days because the name represents the Irish 'Aohadh na Sceach', the field of the whitehorn.

ARTANA is from the Irish 'Artramnach', high ground, and if you go there you will be struck immediately by the number of the high rounded hills, technically known as drumlins, in the area.

Apparently BEGNEY was once a glebe, i.e. church land, as the name is derived from 'Beag-neimhe', small glebe.

A cross to mark an event or simply to indicate a local boundary was a feature of the countryside in bygone days and this explains the name CROSSGARE which is from the Irish 'Cros Cihcurr', short cross.

There was an oratory or chapel in the townland of DERRY. This is indicated by all the old forms of the name. The old and fuller form of the name represents 'Doire Lathrigh Dairthi' which means the oakgrove containing the oratory site. Where was the oratory? There is no trace of it now but the view that it once existed is further strengthened by the fact that the adjoining townland of Begney was once church land. The oratory was probably a chapel-of-ease of Dromara Parish.

DREE is a shortened form of the Irish 'Baile na Droinge', the townland of the portion. Dree was also known as 'Drum-vinedy' meaning it would seem, the hill-ridge of Aidith's portion. Aidith and his clan ruled the territory of Iveagh from the 10th to the 12th century. After that time they were superseded by the Magennis clan as rulers of the Barony of Iveagh. Aidith got one portion of the land in question while some one else got the other portion which as we shall see was Drinn.

The River Lagan rises in the townland of Dree on the west side of Slieve Croob. The summit of Slieve Croob is the meeting point of five townlands, Dree, Drinn Dooglen, Slievenisky and Legananny, four parishes Dromara, Ballynahinch, Drumaroad

and Leitrim, and two dioceses, Dromore and Down and Connor. DRINN has the same origin as Dree. The two townlands join each other and seem to be the two halves or portions of one original townland.

DROMARA, a small townland, which enfolds the village, must have been noted for the good quality of its pasture because the name is derived from 'Droim Bearach', hill-ridge of the heifers.

DRUMADONEY represents 'Droim an Domhnaigh', Sunday hill. Possibly this was a favourite place for festivals which were often held on Sundays.

Up until the 1600's Ireland was heavily wooded and the name FINNIS is a reminder of those days. It is from the Irish 'Fidh-Innis', wooded island. Why island? If you look at the Ordnance Survey map you will see that the townland is almost completely encircled by water namely the Lagan river and its tributaries.

GRANSHA is from the Irish 'Grainseach', granary. The area must have been notable for its grain and there were at least two cornmills there almost within living memory.

For some reason places are sometimes designated half-townlands even though the other half is not otherwise mentioned. That is the case with LEVALLYREAGH which comes from 'Leath-bhaile Riabhach', grey half-townland. Why grey? Possibly this refers to a period in the distant past when this area was not yet brought into cultivation.

MOYBRICK is obviously a very ancient name. It is from the Irish 'Ma Thoiric', the plain of the wild pig. In early times when woods of oak and beech abounded in Ireland it was customary for kings and chieftains to keep great herds of swine which fed on mast and were tended by swine herds.

MOYDALGAN was not always as well cultivated as it is today because the name comes from 'Ma Dealgan', plain of the briars.

The blackthorn formerly abounded in MULLAGHDRIIN because the name represents the Irish 'Mullach Draighin', blackthorn hill.

The derivation of MONEYNABANE is not certain. The name seems to represent the Irish 'Muine na Baine', the thicket in the unfilled land. The reference could be to a time when the area was not yet made amenable to the plough.

CLERGY BORN IN DROMARA PARISH

As noted in the section on Dromara Parish Priests, Father Francis McKenny and Father Thomas Brady were natives of the Parish. It is surmised that Father Francis Reavey, the Parish Priest who began the building of St. Michael's Church, was also a native of Dromara.

The following notes record the remaining native born clergy.

FATHER PETER POLIN was educated at Maynooth and ordained in 1820. He became P.P., Magheradroll in 1826 and died or retired in 1832.

FATHER BERNARD McALEENAN was educated at Maynooth and was ordained in 1859. He was Adm., Dromara 1881-83. He was appointed P.P., Tullylish in 1895 and died in 1897.

FATHER JOHN MCKENNY was a member of a family long associated with the Parish of Dromara. He was educated at Maynooth and ordained there by Doctor Fennelly, Bishop of Madras on the 24th June, 1878. For the subsequent eleven years until 1889, Father Mackenny ministered in the Diocese of Down and Connor. On returning to the Dromore Diocese, in September, 1889, he was appointed curate in Lower Drumgooland. This was to be the beginning of a very long ministry to that parish, for after a curacy of twenty two years, on November 8th, 1911, Father Mackenny was appointed Parish Priest of Lower Drumgooland in succession to Dr. MacConville. He died on 25th of January, 1937, aged eighty-three years and was interred in Garrymore cemetery. In July 1928, Father Mackenny celebrated the Golden Jubilee of his elevation to the priesthood. He was a kinsman of the Very Reverend Francis Mackenny, P.P.V.G., of Dromara and Magheradroll.

FATHER JAMES MCKENNA was born in Drinn on the 1st February, 1854. He was educated at the Diocesan Seminary, Newry, entered Maynooth on September 8th, 1871, and was ordained 24th June, 1878. He ministered in the diocese of Down and Connor.

FATHER JOSEPH DOYLE was born in Finnis, educated in Maynooth, and was ordained by Doctor Leahy in the Diocesan Seminary, Newry, on February 2nd, 1884. He was curate in Ballela from February 1884 to 1886, in Magheralin from July 1886 to 1890, in Seagoe from 1890 to 1895, in Kiltbrooney from

February 1895 to 1901 and in Newry from 1901 to 1907. On November 14th, 1907 he was appointed Adm. in Newry and continued to minister there until 1914, when he was appointed Parish Priest of Tullylish.

Father Doyle was appointed to the prebendal of St. Colman's and Lann, on the 28th January, 1925 and Canon Theologian on February 14th, 1927. He died suddenly in the Parochial House, Banbridge on Sunday, June 8th, 1935 and was interred in Lawrencestown Cemetery.

FATHER DANIEL McALISTER was born in Drinn in February, 1861. He was educated in the Irish College, Paris, which he entered in his 21st year, and was ordained by Doctor Leahy in Newry Cathedral, on September 8th, 1887. From 1887 to 1891 he served on temporary mission in Glasgow. He was curate in Lurgan from July 1891 to 1905, in Warrenpoint from October 1905 to 1924 when on October 13th of that year he succeeded Canon MacGennis as Administrator. On March 7th, 1927, he was appointed to the Cathedral Chapter and on the 5th November, 1934, he was appointed Canon Penitentiary. Canon MacAlister was made Archdeacon of Dromore on June 6th, 1937. He died 24th June, 1949, and was interred in Burren Cemetery.

FATHER DANIEL POLLEN was born in the townland of Crossgare. He was educated at the Irish College, Salamanca and ordained by Mgr. Francis X. Valdes Y Noriega, Bishop of Salamanca, on June 12th, 1910. He was curate in Tullylish from July 1910 to December 1911, in Newry from December 1911 to December 1917, in Rostrevor from 1917 to 1919 and in Banbridge from 1919 to July 1935. On the 6th July, 1935 Father Pollen was appointed Parish Priest of Annacore and on 28th January, 1941 he was transferred to Magheralin. He was appointed to the prebendal stall of Drummeragh in the Cathedral Chapter on April 6th, 1950.

FATHER JOSEPH BYRNE was born in the townland of Levallyreagh and educated at Maynooth. He was ordained there by Doctor Morristoe, Bishop of Achonry on June 20th, 1915 and served on temporary mission in America until 1920. He was curate in Dunmore from October 1920 to 1931, in Annacore from January 1931 to 1932 and in Burren from May, 1932 until his appointment as Parish Priest of Upper Drumgooland on

February 11th, 1941. He died in Newry on October 10th, 1952 and was interred in Leirim Cemetery.

FATHER DANIEL McALISTER was born in the townland of Munnabane. He was educated at Maynooth and the American College, Rome and ordained in 1929. He served in the diocese of San Francisco. He was a nephew of the Very Reverend Canon Pollen, Parish Priest of Magheralin. He died in California on January 14th, 1965.

FATHER PATRICK KELLY was born in Toronto, Canada and reared in Dree. He was educated at St. Colman's College, Newry from 1928 to 1932. In response to a call for Irish students by the Bishop of Agen, a diocese in South West France, he went to a Seminary in Bordeaux in 1935. He was ordained in France on 29th June, 1940 and appointed on the same day curate at the Cathedral, Agen. On December 4th, 1945, he was appointed Parish Priest of Samazan and on the 21st June, 1950 he was appointed Dean of Canton du Mas with residence in the village of Le Mas d'Agenais. In his capacity as Dean he had a team of six priests, French, Dutch and Irish, who had the care of thirteen parishes. In July 1973 he sought his release from the Diocese of Agen for health reasons and was appointed curate in Derrymacash on the 1st August, 1973, and was transferred as curate to Derrytrasna on the 6th July, 1975. He was incardinated into Dromore Diocese on December 21st, 1976. He was appointed curate in Ballela on 30th December, 1982.

Three ladies, formerly parishioners here, are in the Religious Life:

SISTER MARY MALACHY, formerly Sarah Teresa Byrne, is a member of Sisters of Mercy, Sligo.

SISTER MARY LELIA, formerly Frances Byrne, is a member of the Holy Faith Convent, Wicklow. Both the above are sisters and come from Levallyreagh, Dromara.

SISTER MARY PAUL ANTOINE, formerly Margaret McCartan, is from Artana, Dromara, and is a nun in Little Sisters of the Assumption. She is now stationed in Cork.

CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, DROMARA — SOME HIGHLIGHTS

The Church of St. Michael, Dromara, a rectangular building in dressed stone, stands impressively on a hill overlooking the Dromara-Rathfriland road. The freestone is said to have been quarried beside the Lagan River in the townland of Dree just a few hundred yards upstream from the church site. The facade of the church is surmounted by granite pinnacles and an ornamental granite plinth rising to a granite cross in the centre on which is cut the date 1835 in Roman numerals. The church was designed by Mr. Thomas Duff, Newry, a well-known architect of that time who also designed Newry Cathedral. The erection of the Church began in 1825. It was completed and dedicated in 1835.

The square tower of the church, with turret surmounted by a cross in iron, was a later addition and was completed in the year 1896. The quoins of the tower and the church, the buttresses, and all window frames in both tower and church are in granite.

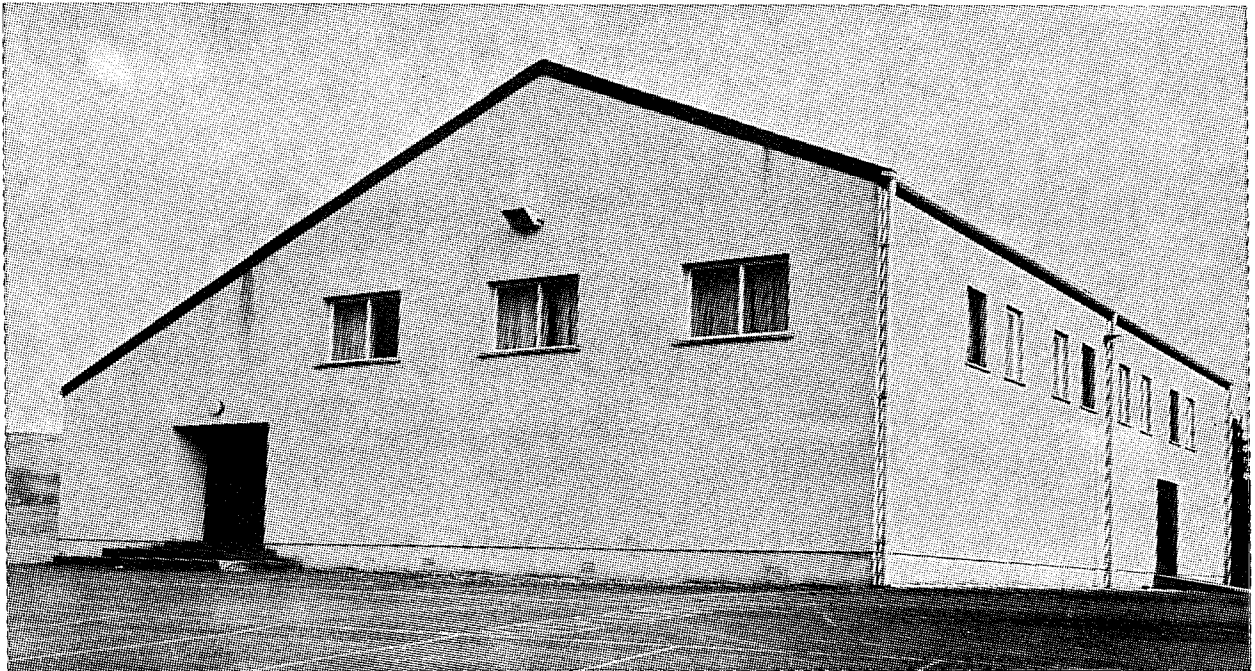
Simultaneously with the building of the tower in the early 1890's the church was re-roofed, the gallery constructed, the seats made and the sanctuary and sacristy added. The internal woodwork is a feature of the church. The fine well constructed seats, the handsome gallery and porch and the artistic altar rails are all in pitch pine and blend harmoniously. These in turn are fittingly crowned by the arched timber ceiling which is also in pitch pine. Tradition has it that this internal woodwork was carried out by the Dundalk firm of McAdorey and that the church seats were made in Dundalk, brought by train to Dromore Station and transported to Dromara on horse-drawn drays. The bell in the church tower was cast in a Dublin foundry and bears the date 1896.

There are four pairs of stained glass windows in the body of the church. The sanctuary windows are also in stained glass. All the other windows in the church and in the tower, each with a religious pictorial motif, are in ornamental leaded glass and these, as well as the four pairs of stained glass windows already mentioned, were the kind gifts of various people down the years whose donations are recorded in each window.

The four mural panels in the sanctuary were erected in the year 1911 and seem to have been the personal gift of the Parish Priest of that time. The four panels, which are in coloured opal



SANCTUARY OF ST. MICHAEL'S.



ST. MICHAEL'S PAROCHIAL HALL, FINNIS, DROMARA.

Building began September, 1977. Officially opened and blessed 3 February, 1980.

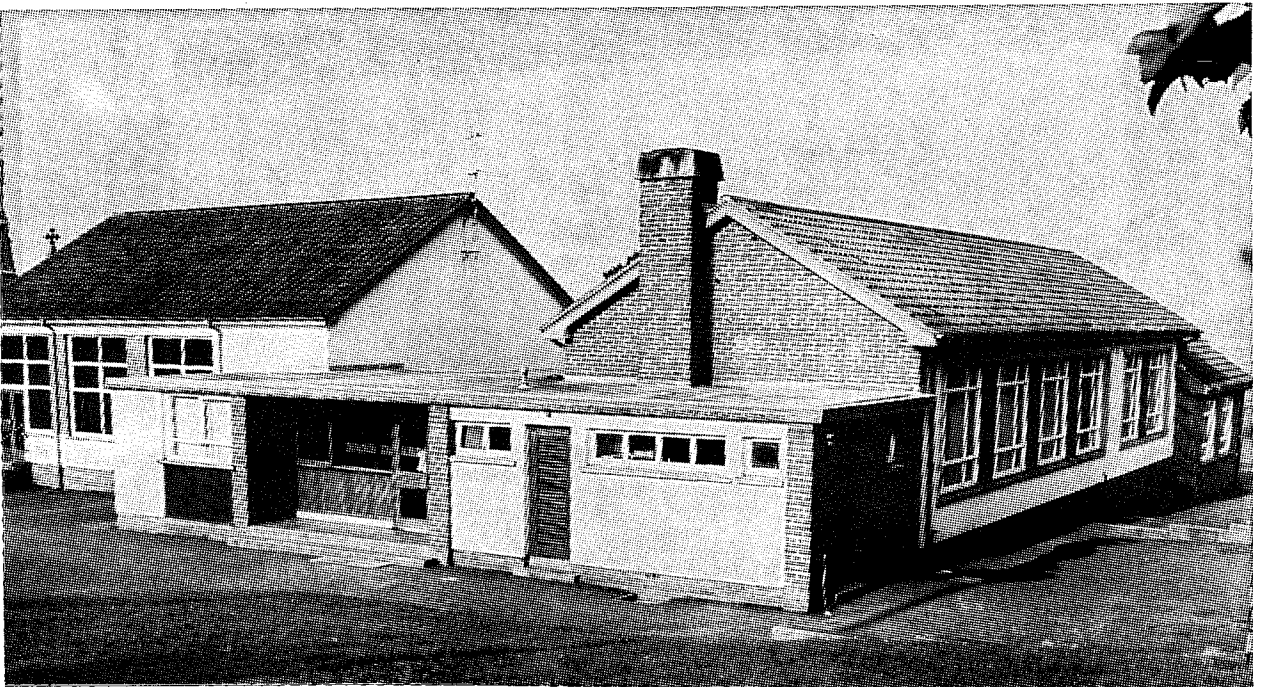
glass tiles which have been painted and fired, depict the Arch-angels Michael, and Raphael, and a Nazareth scene. The fourth panel, which is a mosaic of opal glass with a gilt background, is a very faithful replica of Leonardo Da Vinci's Last Supper. The backing of this latter panel deteriorated and the picture had to be re-mounted and restored in 1983. The restoration was the gift of a local family and this is recorded on a plaque under the mural.

THE SCHOOLS OF THE PARISH

The new St. Michael's Primary School, Finnis, Dromara, was erected by Canon McMullan, P.P., and it was officially opened and blessed on 24th September, 1964. The School was extended by Fr. M. H. O'Rourke, P.P., (now Canon O'Rourke, P.P., Banbridge), and the extension was opened for use on 1st September, 1971.

The old National School, Finnis, which stood in the present Church car park, was erected in 1844. It closed for use as a school in June, 1964, and was then used as a social centre before being demolished in July, 1980.

The National School at Munnabane, Dromara, was erected in 1836 and was in use until its closure in June, 1964. The building is still standing.



ST. MICHAEL'S PRIMARY SCHOOL, FINNIS, DROMARA.

CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, FINNIS, DROMARA — RECENT RENOVATIONS

The tower of the Church was pointed from top to bottom during the months of August and September 1983, two months which were exceptionally dry and sunny. The tower was scaffolded all round and to the top for this work.

At that time also the stone valley at the base of the turret which rises from the square top of the tower was waterproofed. The method used was to cover the valley area with a special rubber type mineral felt called 'Thermawell' which was put on with adhesive.

When the above work was completed the facade of the church was scaffolded and pointed and a coat of silicone was applied to it. Two coats of silicone were applied to the tower after the pointing work.

As a follow-up the timbers of the church gallery which were in contact with the tower were replaced as they were found to be badly affected with wet rot.

Major repairs in the inside of the church were begun in mid-August, 1984. The wooden floor of the church had extensive wet rot throughout its whole area. It was decided on the advice of the architects, Messrs. J. L. O'Hagan and Co., Newry, and with the approval of our Bishop, Most Rev. Dr. Brooks, to lay a new floor and to damp proof the walls of the Church using the Rentokil electro-osmotic method. The old floor was excavated and the above plan put into effect.

The new floor is basically a concrete floor with the necessary damp proof sheeting and with a two-inch layer of polystyrene for heat.

The central heating pipes were repaired, four new radiators added and a new oil-fired heater was installed. A new floor was laid in the underground heating chamber.

There was some wet rot in the timbers at the bottom of the church porch. The portion under floor level was removed and the remainder of the affected area was injected with a special Rentokil fluid designed for such conditions.

There was extensive wet rot in the kneeling board at the altar rail and the board was removed and replaced by a new one. The roof space timbers, that is in the area above the ceiling,

were all treated by Rentokil against woodworm as were also the joists and floor boards of the gallery and the timbers over the sanctuary. In this later case it was possible to inject spray into the hidden side of the timbers by removing some of the panels.

When the main floor was laid the church was scaffolded and the ceiling was cleaned and given three coats of varnish. The church was completely re-wired and a complete set of new light fittings was installed.

The church seats, which are in pitch pine and were made about the year 1890, were cleaned by sand blasting and three coats of varnish were applied. The interior walls of the church and of the sacristy were given two coats of paint.

Non-slip tiles were laid in the centre and side aisles and in the area in front of the altar rails. Carpet was laid under the seats. A hardboard covering was placed on the gallery floor boards and the area was carpeted. The kneeling board on the gallery was carpeted as was the kneeling board at the altar rails. The stairs to the gallery were also carpeted.

The above internal church renovations which had begun on Monday, 20th August, were completed by Friday, December 21, and people were back in church for Sunday, 23rd December 1984.

AT OFFICIAL OPENING OF ST. MICHAEL'S PAROCHIAL HALL, 3 FEBRUARY, 1980.



Left to right: D. McKay, F. McEvoy, L. O'Hagan (Architect), Canon Treanor, Bishop Brooks, Canon O'Rourke, H. McEvoy S. Branniff.



GROUP AT OPENING OF PAROCHIAL HALL, 3 FEBRUARY, 1980.

SYMBOLISM IN CHURCH ARCHITECTURE AND ORNAMENTATION

(This account was specially contributed for this booklet by Mr. Kieran Clendinning. A native of Lurgan, he is a member of the committee of Dromore Diocesan Historical Society, and as a professional journalist he takes a keen interest in the artistic and symbolic aspects of church architecture).

The door of the church is Christ. In the larger Cathedral Churches of Europe the entrance to the church door is surrounded by sculptured figures and panels of saints who help in the spiritual approach to God, suggesting to the people the heavenly aid available in the universal conflict with sin and despair.

The nave or main body of the church takes its name from the Latin, *Navis*, meaning a ship. It is so called because the church is often depicted in sacred art as a ship moving heavenwards, while the seats or pews are like ancient galleys with the congregation and celebrant "pulling together" during the service and prayers of the liturgy.

The sanctuary which is usually decorated with ornament and stained glass depicting God and his Angels and Saints, represents Heaven. During the liturgy the priest, robed in vestments of white, symbolises the angels who surround the Divinity.

The sanctuary is usually raised several steps above the nave and usually separated by an arch, which symbolises the bridge which the just will cross from earth to heaven on the day of judgement.

The altar in the sanctuary is not a decorative accessory of the church, but vice-versa, since it symbolises Christ. The first churches in Ireland sheltered the altar only, the congregation standing outside.

The placing of the altar also decides the orientation of the church. The altar is placed in the east because there is the source of light. It points to Jerusalem, the heavenly city.

The upper surface of the altar is of a single slab of marble or stone, symbolising Christ the cornerstone of our salvation; on it are enscribed five crosses symbolising the sacred wounds. Between the central cross and the front edge is the "Confessio" in which are deposited the relics of the saints.



MURAL PANEL ON NORTH WALL OF SANCTUARY.

The surface of the altar is covered with a white linen beneath which is placed a similar covering of waxed linen symbolic of Christ's funeral shroud.

The front or base of the altar is usually divided into three panels, symbolising the Trinity. The centre panel usually displays a scene of the Last Supper, or the Chi-Rho monogram, one of the oldest Christian emblems formed by the abbreviation of the Greek word for Christ.

The lamp placed in the sanctuary, usually a light from a single source, represents Christ the Light of the World while candles, symbols of joy and peace, can be three-fold symbols.

When extinguished, a candle typifies at once the pillar of cloud which led the Children of Israel by day, and the body of Christ.

When lighted, the candle signifies the pillar of fire which was Israel's guide by night and under the New Law the glorious body of the living Christ. The placing of five pieces of incense in the form of a cross in the Easter Candle represents the five most precious wounds of Christ.

Today we, the inheritors of the faith brought to this diocese of Dromore by our patron St. Colman, need to practice our faith in the presence of God, and train our children to look to the church for moral guidance.

The early Irish saints saw God's presence in every aspect of life and turned to him for guidance in everything they did.

The practice of prayer was strong enough to resist the onslaught of pagan values on our faith for over 1,400 years; and it will be by the practice of prayer that it will survive to the coming of Christ in his Majesty at the day of Judgement.



MURAL PANEL ON SOUTH WALL OF SANCTUARY.

MASS ROCKS AND MASS HOUSE IN DROMARA PARISH

Strangely, there is only one definite Mass Rock site traditionally pointed out in this parish. This site in the north east foothills of Slieve Croob, is in the townland of Drinn on the Rogan farm and at a point about half a mile from Castlewellan Road. As this is a comparatively inaccessible site it is likely that it was used only in more troublous times. It was known as "Craigaltara," i.e. Altar rock.

According to tradition there was also a Mass Rock on the farm of Fort House in the townland of Drinn. Its exact location has not been handed down but it is thought that it may have been sited near Drin Road and a few hundred yards west of Fort House. It was called "Parknahaltar," i.e. the Altar field.

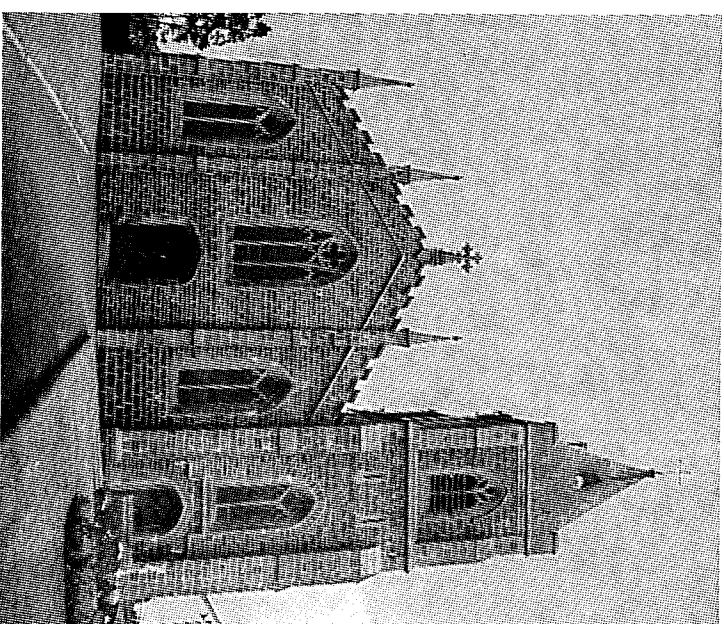
The tradition about the above two Mass Rocks was recorded by Patrick Brogan in a note signed by him and deposited in the Archives of Dromara Parish. Patrick Brogan, of Drinn, died 3rd November, 1939, aged 75 years.

The other possible Mass Rocks in the parish are only vaguely referred to in tradition. Most likely the chief Mass sites were in the neighbourhood of the present Church of St. Michael. One such site suggested was by the River Lagan, a little upstream from the present Parochial House. Another suggested site was a flat garden where a tributary stream joins the Lagan near Finnis Bridge. No doubt Mass sites in those days were changed around according to the circumstances, including the weather.

Further evidence that the vicinity of the present Church was popular for Mass sites is suggested by the fact that a well a few hundred yards from Finnis Bridge was called Toberdoney, i.e. Sunday Well. It often happened in Ireland that a well associated with a Mass site was called by this name. Probably a well was so named because water from it was used at Mass on Sunday and also because people could quench their thirst there after a long walk to Mass on the Lord's Day. It is interesting to recall that water from this Toberdoney was carried for use in the present church and in the Parochial House within living memory. The well in question was in Finnis townland in a field now owned by Sean McKay.

A Mass House, or chapel, was erected in Finnis apparently about the year 1760 and this was used until the Church of St.

Michael was opened in 1835. The present two-story outhouse with the arched entrance in the Parochial House yard was obviously the Mass House. The building is approximately 30 feet long, 14 feet wide and 14 feet to the eaves. When the building was no longer used as a chapel the present internal dividing wall, loft and stairway would have been constructed. The Parish Priest would have lived elsewhere within the Parish, either with his relatives, because the Parish Priest of that time was often a native of the Parish, or on a small rented farm. The present Parochial House was erected in 1840. The cemetery's origin seems to be more or less contemporaneous with the erection of the Mass House as the oldest legible tombstone is dated 1767. Up till about 1820 some Catholic families continued to bury their dead in the cemetery at St. John's Church, Dromara.



CHURCH OF ST. MICHAEL, FINNIS, DROMARA.

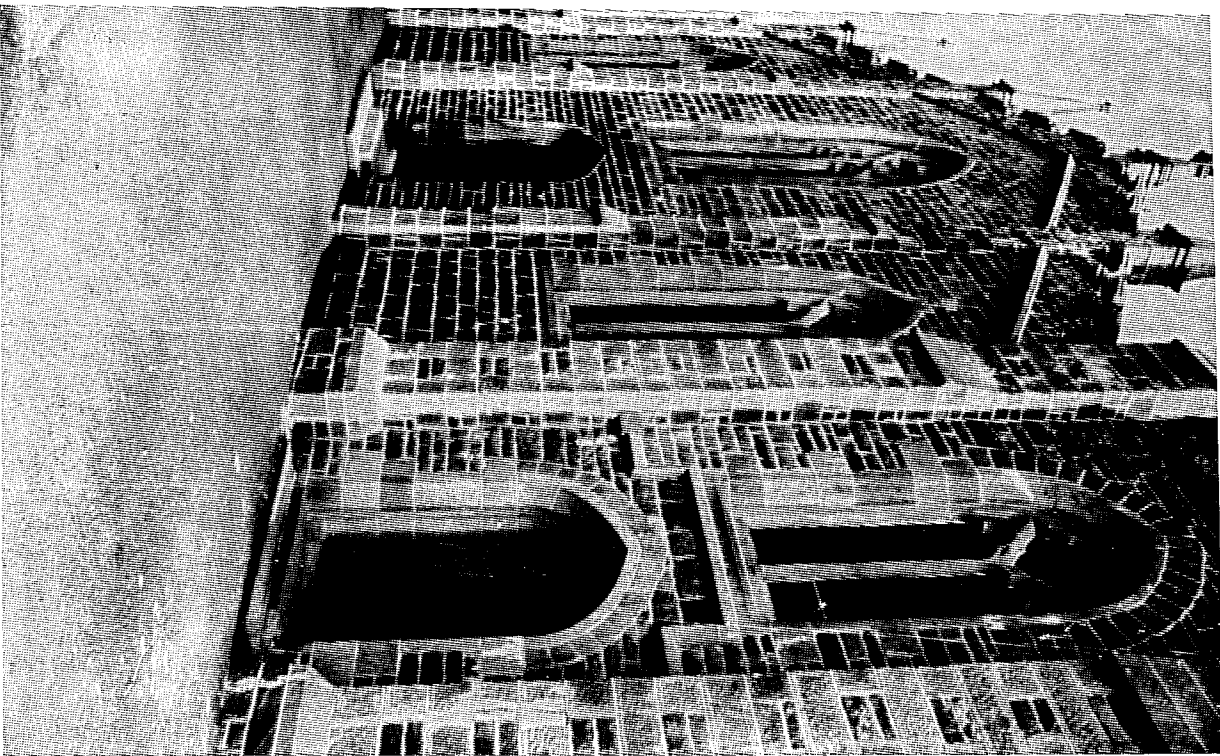
INTERVIEW WITH A DROMARA-BORN CENTENARIAN

Danny Lavery was born on December 28, 1884 and lived in the parish of Dromara for seventy five years of his life. He resided in the townland of Munninbane near a spot known locally as the Point. Danny's mother died when he was only eighteen months old and he was reared by his grandparents. Danny is very much a "character" and for a centenarian his memory is clear and accurate, even in small details. This, along with Danny's obvious gift for story-telling provided for a rich and revealing interview, uncovering facts about the history of St. Michael's Church, Finnis, Dromara, and the folklore of the surrounding area.

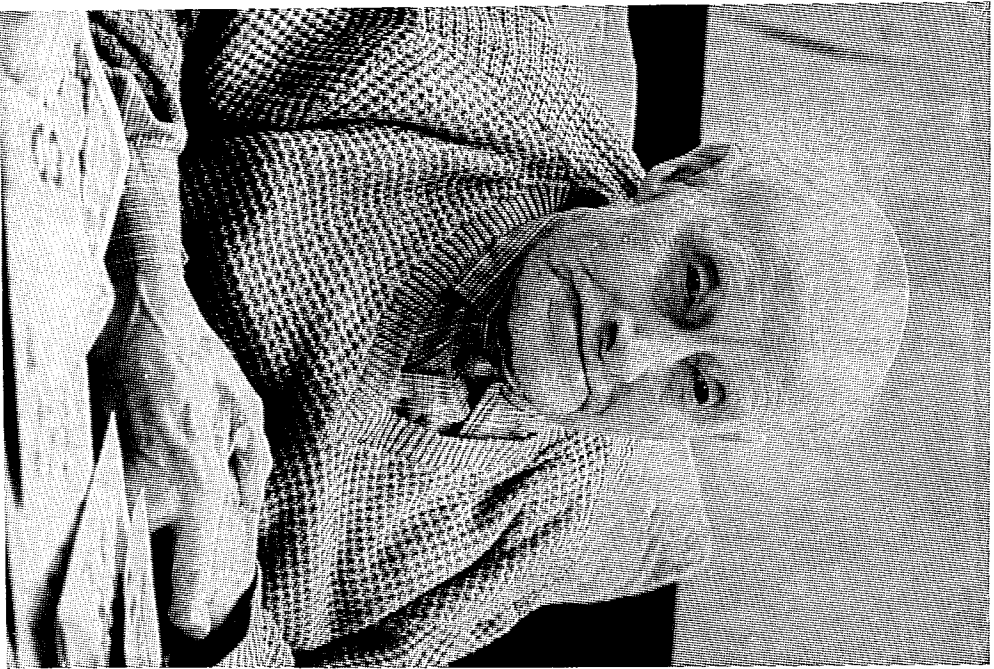
Danny's reminiscences begin during Father Mallon's time as Parish Priest. He remembers him as a priest who was a great preacher. "He made a sound like speaking in a barrel." Danny can recall how Father Mallon undertook major renovations and improvements including extending the church by adding the ceiling, building the belfry and installing new seats — "the best in the country." Father Mallon travelled to England and America raising and collecting funds to finance the improvements.

These renovations certainly caused some upheaval and Danny can remember being in the church for Mass and being able to look up at the open sky. During that time the men were permitted to wear their hats in church. The belfry had been started by Father Mallon's predecessor, Doctor Irwin, but a lack of funds led to it only being partially built. Father Mallon discovered that the existing structure was seriously weakened by rotting mortar and damp so he demolished it and built the belfry from the ground. On the completion of the repairs Danny recalls how Father Mallon charged the parishioners one penny to sit in the gallery instead of the customary half-penny that the people paid on entering the church. The logic was to prevent the people from "thronging up the gallery."

Danny can recall the bell arriving and whilst waiting for confession seeing it sitting at the back of the church. "She's a good 'un," was Danny's evaluation of it, as he remembers how he was almost deafened when later workmen allowed him to hear the bell ringing. Danny reckoned the bell weighed one and a half



THIS CLOSE UP PICTURE SHOWS THE FINE STONEMWORK
OF ST. MICHAEL'S.



DANNY LAVERY

tonnes. The year was 1896 and as Danny emphasised, men “wrought for their money in those days. He himself earned eight shillings a week as a young man, he remarked.

Father Savage, Danny recalls, was a “quiet wee man and a lovely wee priest” who always started Mass after the time to accommodate late-comers. This inevitably resulted in Mass

starting up to twenty minutes late with the priest and the people going home sometimes at two o'clock, “starving for a bite.”

Danny recalls Father Savage erecting the two stained glass pictures on either side of the altar. It is very probable that Father Savage paid for them with his own money. At the same time the green glazed tiles were put up around the walls of the sanctuary.

Father McConville carried out further repairs when he was appointed P.P. in 1933. A serious damp problem had developed with the result that paint would not stay on the walls. According to Danny an architect from Belfast by the name of Green was wceding his grandmother's grave one day and Father McConville got into conversation with him and together they examined the church walls and decided what was needed to repair them. Consequently the walls were stripped of plaster and allowed to dry for two years. At the end of the two year period, the walls were re-plastered and coated with a damp-proofing paint.

It was also about this time, possibly 1958, that Danny left the parish to take up residence in Dunmore where he still lives hale and hearty today.