

## Appendices

From his many writings I have chosen some examples to highlight his many historical interests. The first two, relating to memorial transcriptions, are from his last published article in the *Journal of the Old Bray Society*, No. 3, 1992, and unpublished notes written at the request of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, which distill over fifteen years of research and gives practical advice on how to clean and read memorials, the best equipment and clothing to have and is based on experience (I have included a few hints of my own, Ed). This advice should be invaluable to anyone interested in transcribing memorials in their area; essential for the rescue and preservation of a unique source as part of mankind's historical heritage.

Third is a letter to Helen Roe about decorated headstones. Fourth is a 1955 light-hearted entry to a newspaper competition that illustrates his knowledge of Irish place names. Fifth, a 1963 letter, is a 'nostalgic' look at the 'good old days' using the colourful vocabulary of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century newspaper reporter. Finally I have included excerpts from various obituaries and a bibliography.

### Recording Memorial Inscriptions

Graveyard memorials are a source of genealogical information very often overlooked. While parish and civil registers of births marriages and deaths give a certain amount of information, they do not give extended family relationships. Assuming that one knows the family place of burial, most burials take place, or took place, in the parish of origin of the male line. Then a search of the graveyard is an essential step towards filling gaps in a family tree.

The majority of headstones, ledger slabs etc, tell the searcher the name of the erector, his/her relationship with the deceased, townland or address, age (not always the same as shown in the register) from which date of birth can be estimated, also details of some subsequent burials of members of the same family. Sometimes, the name of an individual who died away from home is included, for instance, 'died in Australia', died in the Convent of ... Dublin', and so on. In the case of a female, her maiden name is sometimes included and, in exceptional cases, the name of her father. Two memorials of this type can be seen in St. Peter's Church graveyard, Little Bray: 'In loving memory of my husband/Richard Butler of/Suirville, Co. Tipperary who died at his residence, Woodbury, Wimbledon/12<sup>th</sup> August 1902 aged 68 years and our infant son Richard Joseph who died at Bray, Co. Wicklow/on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1871/ and of Mary Anne Butler his widow/who died 1<sup>st</sup> October 1910 aged 80'.

It can be seen that the memorial was erected before Mary's death. Who added her name? The register can help here. Is Richard buried there? Only the register can confirm this. Note the lead back to Tipperary for Richard's possible lineage. The second example from the same graveyard: 'Sacred to the memory of/Julia Daly otherwise Doyle of Bray Co. Wicklow/(daughter of Mr. Simon Doyle of Killencarrig)/died 10<sup>th</sup> April 1866 aged 38 years/also their beloved child/James Simon/died 30<sup>th</sup> November 1865 aged 6 months/Erected by her affectionate husband/James Daly'. Note that Julia's father is

described as Mr. Simon Doyle indicting his social status. The words 'otherwise', 'alias' or 'nee', always denotes a maiden name, the latter two being the more common. For brevity, I quote a memorial from Killadreenan: 'Symon Do(yl)/e dyed third of November 1711/his brother James dy/ed June the 1<sup>st</sup> 1717'. It will be seen that no attempt has been made to space out the words to fit the lines.

Having found a memorial of interest, the problem of reading the inscription can arise. Abrasive material such as sandpaper, a wire brush, a nail, or gravel should never be used under any circumstance. They damage the stone beyond repair leaving the evidence forever more. Grass is another abomination! It leaves a nasty black mark, which will never be rain-washed off. On a dry stone chalk cannot be beaten, break a stick in half and rub sideways across the inscription, the lettering should then stand out. Early morning dew if removed gently with the back of the hand will also make a letter stand out, for the water remaining in the letter form a contrast with the surround. Moss and light flaky lichen can be removed with a paint scraper. Mine is 2½" wide and if pushed gently across the inscription will remove the obstruction without damage. To remove ingrained lichen is a longer process. First, a diluted mixture of detergent of the type used in washing delicate fabrics should be made up. Try the effect of the detergent on some inconspicuous part of the stone, say, at the base. After a short while, wash the spot with clean water and see if the surface has been damaged, if not and the lichen has been softened, than a slightly stronger mix can be used. The testing may have to be done over a period of a few days. Once the correct mix is found, then wash the surface of the stone, wet it well, and either with the paint scraper or a plastic pot scourer (not a metal one) remove the lichen. Do not expect results immediately, frequent applications over a period of weeks may be necessary. The stone should always be washed with clean water afterwards.

High summer is not the best time of year for transcribing memorials. Insects, hot sun and inquisitive locals can be a hazard. My experience shows that a cold crisp frosty winter morning, with a weak low sun, is by far the most suitable time of year. The clear light and the absence of strong shadow make all the difference.

In addition to the paint scraper, I find the following equipment most useful: a whitewash brush for clearing leaves, twigs, glass, etc., from slabs; lots of cleaning rags; a wooden toothpick or cocktail stick for cleaning lettering; a gallon can of clean water for washing stone or for making a mud pie where the lead is missing from the letters (don't forget to wash the stone afterwards); a secateurs for cutting briars, etc. and a spade for removing sods from a buried slab, the sods to be replaced.

For clothing, Wellington boots are essential in the long grass of an unkempt graveyard. They give the ankles and legs protection against broken wreath glass or rusty wire frames, blood poisoning is a real danger from cuts or prods of such material. Heavy duty trousers are also useful for keeping out the cold and rain, a good quality anorak with an Aran type pullover also helps to keep you warm. I prefer a hood to a hat or cap, it is less likely to be caught in the undergrowth and keeps the back of the neck dry. (Make sure lower back is protected from the wind, a problem when crouched over a semi legible flat

stone with your back to a damp cold wind whistling up your back, a waterproof kneeling mat is also useful, Ed.)

I find that a ring note-book with the spiral at the top, a writing board and a supply of ball point pens (and pencils, pens leak and ink smudges easily on damp paper, Ed.) is best for the actual recording. A large clear plastic bag big enough to cover both hands and writing board is most useful during rain. Face into the wind, otherwise the bag will 'balloon' away!

Some years ago, when transcribing a table tomb in Blessington, I had great difficulty in its decipherment, then it started to snow! Just what I wanted, for by running my paint scraper backwards across the lettering and compressing the snow, I now had white letters on a black background. Problem solved!

When transcribing, copy the inscription exactly as written and do not edit errors. Spelling mistakes and other 'oddities' can add interest to the project. Watch for abbreviations, especially at the end of a line. For instance, take the word 'Mar'. Is there a small 'y' or 'gt' either over the 'r' or slightly to the right? – Mary or Margaret? An example of a problem stone, the one mentioned above from Blessington. With great difficulty I had read '... William Wills(on?) of Will(im?) ...' The snow helped to clarify this and I read '... William Wills of Willington, Co. Wicklow'. The year was the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and the old f for s was used in part of the inscription.

The older slate memorial with scroll script rarely causes problems, it is only in later years when the convention of using lightly incised figures was in vogue that problems began. To distinguish between a 1 and a 4, between a 2 and a 9 can be difficult (not to mention 3 and 5, Ed.); what to watch out for here is the cross stroke on the 4 or 2. Sometimes the figure 8 is cut like an S. A strange error found on stones of all ages is the reversal of the letter N, the down stroke slopes from top right to bottom left (*N*).

One final word of warning: Beware of broken glass. Wreath glass can break into very small slivers and be unnoticed in moss, leaves, twigs, etc. So, never clear such dross by hand. Broken bottles or jars can also cause a nasty cut. I have ruined more than one pair of Wellington boots from jagged fragments of glass. A cut received in a secluded part of a graveyard is especially dangerous, for such areas are often used as a public toilet. My kit also includes plasters of 'Elastoplast' type and a small bottle of disinfectant. A change in clothes can be advisable because travel by car or public transport in wet apparel is not to be recommended.

Correspondence with Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland

The Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland

63 MERRION SQUARE, DUBLIN 2

Telephone 761749

.....23.....*May*..... 19.86....

Mr. Brian J. Cantwell,  
Krybreen Chalet  
Blacklion  
Greystone  
Co Wicklow

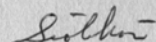
Dear Mr Cantwell,

Our Treasurer, Dr Rhoda Kavanagh, has asked me to write to you on behalf of the Council of the Society, and thank you for the last volume of the Memorials of the Dead of Wexford, which you presented to the library. A report of your work was given to the last Council meeting and the entire Council was very pleased to hear that you had finished the main work on Wexford and were now completing the index.

I needn't tell you how valuable the volumes are to our library, or how they are already in use.

Congratulations on a fine job, and please accept the Society's cheque for the volumes you have presented to the library.

Yours sincerely,



Siobhán de hÓir (Mrs.)  
Asst. Secretary

P.S. I still hope that you will write an article on how to record graveyards, with particular reference to the Irish graveyards you have recorded. I still laugh when I think of your remark that most people who record headstones make the mistake of going out in parties of more than one!

# TRANSCRIBING MEMORIAL INSCRIPTIONS

Brian J. Cantwell

From time to time, I am asked for tips on how to bring up memorial inscriptions, what equipment used, best time of the year, etc. So, the following few notes may be of interest. However, it must be stressed that these are my personal methods, other transcribers can, and do, use other means and methods.

**EQUIPMENT** used is of personal choice, mine includes:

**A paint scraper**, 2 1/2 - 3" blade. This is used for scraping moss, dirt and some lichens from slabs, table tombs, etc. Also, by being drawn backwards, can compress snow or mud into lettering, thus making decipherment easier.

**A soft haired whitewash brush** for removing leaves and twigs, also for washing memorials.

**Cleaning slabs** for drying memorials after rain or washing, you cannot have too many.

**Chalk**. Common white school chalk, with the sticks broken in half, applied sideways across the lettering will bring up most inscriptions. Especially, if rubbed in with the palm of the hand (this not for delicate skin!).

**A scalpel** is useful for cutting briars and light overgrowth.

**A slash hook** for clearing heavier growth. I like the 'J' or golf club type.

**A water container** for washing memorials. Also for making a 'mud pie' for rubbing on white marble headstones with unpainted lettering. This type almost impossible to read in bright sunlight. Be sure to wash down afterwards. I find a 1 to 1 gallon plastic screw cap container best.

**A pliers** for cutting barbed wire and for rejoining afterwards.

**A writing board** made from heavy duty board or 1/2" ply with the spring clip at the top is best. One made from metal is, I find, unsuitable, it is hard to hold when wet and can be very cold too.

**A spiral bound notebook** with binding at top is easier to manage than any other type. In wind, edge binding makes it almost impossible to keep book open.

**Ball-point pens**, both black and red. The 'BIC' type which enables you to see the ink level is best. I use red for underlining secondary names, thus making subsequent indexing easier. Spares are advisable (I usually have not less than three of each), it is very easy to drop a pen in the long grass or for it to roll off a tomb and be lost.

3 June 1986

Krygreen Chalet  
Blacklion  
GREYSTONES  
Co. Wicklow

Dear Siobhán,

That which has been long threatened has now come - at last! Herewith a few notes on transcribing memorials which may prove of interest.

On Saturday last, I had a choice of playing SNAP with my grandchildren or preparing these notes - I choose the lesser of two evils. So, with background music of shouts, screeeemes, shrieks and yells (HE hit me - SHE hit me - got offa me knee I'm busy - SNAP - its mine - NONNNNNOOO its mine - SNAP - I told you before get offa me knee I cant type with you lot preasing tab key - SCRAM and such like) I set too, herewith the result.

Sincerely

3

and date of death only, ignoring the name of the erector and his/her relationship and townland or address. In some extreme cases I have seen so-called transcriptions which give the name of the first person mentioned and nothing else. The name of the erector (or, as in Tomacork, Co. Wicklow, the 'Erectress') can be just as important as the basic inscription.

**Clothing**. To keep warm is a first essential. I wear heavy mole-skin type trousers, ordinary socks with heavy woolen knee length socks over, an Aran sweater in addition to a normal pullover, a waterproof outdoor jacket with a detachable hood and mittens. I find it difficult to hold a pen if wearing gloves, also they hold the wet and dampen the pages of the notebook. A change of trousers, or jacket should be kept in the car, to drive a long distance when wet can cause problems. One should not forget that there is a world of difference between a warm car and an exposed graveyard on the coast or mountain side in a sleety east wind. For foot-wear, I recommend best quality wellington boots. They give protection against broken glass wreaths, rusty wire frames, jam jars, briars, wet grass and muddy conditions. They also keep the feet warm. A cut from a briar or a prod from a rusty wire can be very painful, especially if on the shin. A packet of waterproof bandages of the Elastoplast type should also be in the kit.

**Terminal date for transcriptions**. Normally, I do not record graveyard memorials dated later than 1880, although I think that 1900 is a better terminal year. Details of later interments can be obtained from parish and other public records or registers. I make exceptions where memorials bearing later dates are beside or near ones of earlier date. Then I transcribe all, with a note of their relative position, i.e. on same grave, side by side, etc. This to facilitate researchers and to show family connections. In churches, I transcribe all memorials, dedications, windows, etc. irrespective of date. This is important, for on the closure or redecoration of a church, such memorials are very often removed and destroyed; thus all record of families no longer resident in the district, are lost.

**Where are the graveyards?** For counties Wexford and Wicklow I spent a lot of time examining the O.S. 6" maps. I transferred every reference to a graveyard, burial ground or church to index cards. I then checked such publications as the *Memorials, Burials, History, Local Parish Clergy and Parishes, Flood's History of the Diocese of Ferns*, local parish histories for all references to memorials. Any references found were transferred to the index cards. Local newspapers are also a useful source of information - marriages, deaths, patron days, historical notes can help to build up a useful work basis. For field work, I transfer the map markings on to O.S. 1" maps mounted on stiff board, this helps to pin-point the graveyard and reduce driving. From experience, I find local enquiries worse than useless.

2

**A transparent plastic bag** large enough to cover the writing board, with lots of room for two hands and pen is a must for transcribing in the rain. If windy and wet - face into the wind! Otherwise all will be blown away.

With the exception of the slash hook, all the other items will fit in a carry bag.

**Lichen-incrusted memorials** are, possibly, the most difficult to transcribe. I find that a weak solution of 'MOSGOL', a proprietary moss remover, is the most effective. Included in my kit, but only taken when necessary is a large putty bucket with a tight fitting lid. This I bring already prepared and with the help of a squeeze-dry long handled mop, wet the stone thoroughly. It may take a few applications, over a period, before the lichen can be wiped or brushed off. Afterwards, I wash the memorial in fresh water, it is most important that the stone be not damaged in any way or marble discoloured. To remove green stain, caused by copper nails, requires more than usual effort - here I only try to remove enough to read a letter or figure.

**Two DONTS**. Never, ever, use a wire brush, this damages the stone and removes the patina of age. Another abomination is to use grass, this leaves a most unsightly stain that remains for years.

**Best time of the year**. I prefer to transcribe between early September and the end of May. During that period, the light is better as the sun is lower and casts a more oblique shadow. During the summer months, flies and sun glare can cause problems, to say nothing of nettles, thistles, brambles and, possibly, worst of all - the inquisitive locals. By the time one has explained in detail what you are up to and heard all about the history of all buried in the graveyard, it is time to go home.

**Best time of the day**. I like to be at a graveyard not later than 8.30a.m. Frost or dew on a stone, plus low sun, facilitates reading. During the afternoon reading becomes more difficult as the setting sun can shine directly into ones eyes. For me, four or five hours on a cold day is all I can take!

**What to transcribe**. I record an inscription exactly as carved; spelling mistakes, corrections of errors and such like being especially noted. I also show line terminals. I ignore quotations from the Bible and Psalms. I also ignore lengthy eulogies detailing the virtues of the deceased, unless, of course, they contain material of a genealogical nature. For instance, a memorial may be erected to, say, a Mary Brown. Her 'virtues' are set out in ten or twelve lines, these may include references to her being 'a wife and mother', or a 'teacher beloved by her pupils', etc. If that sort of information is not otherwise included on the memorial, then I make a précis of the inscription. It is of the utmost importance that the basic inscription be recorded fully. Some transcribers record the name of the deceased

What then? Having transcribed the memorials, I number each entry in my notebook and prepare an index card for each surname, incorporating the index number. Secondary surnames are also abstracted with the appropriate cross-reference. I use scrap cards of playing card size which I obtained from printers' off-cuts. I index under the name of the first named deceased, i.e. if, for instance, a memorial is erected by a Mary Brown in memory of an Ann White, then White is the primary name and Brown the secondary. Only after the index cards have been put into alphabetical order do I commence typing my report. I have found that for every hour spent in the field, I spend four hours at my desk or in research.

Decorated headstones. As my transcriptions are primarily for genealogical purposes, I do not describe the stone or its decoration. To do so would increase the size of each report, to say nothing of the extra time required in the graveyard. Where memorials have been described in the J. R.S.A.I. and other publications, then I make a general reference in the short introduction to each graveyard. To include a plan of the graveyard would be an excellent idea, provided that one has the time and skill. For an all-county survey, such as that for Wexford and Wicklow, it is out of the question. Detailed plans of the 430 graveyards surveyed in those two counties would require an extra volume.

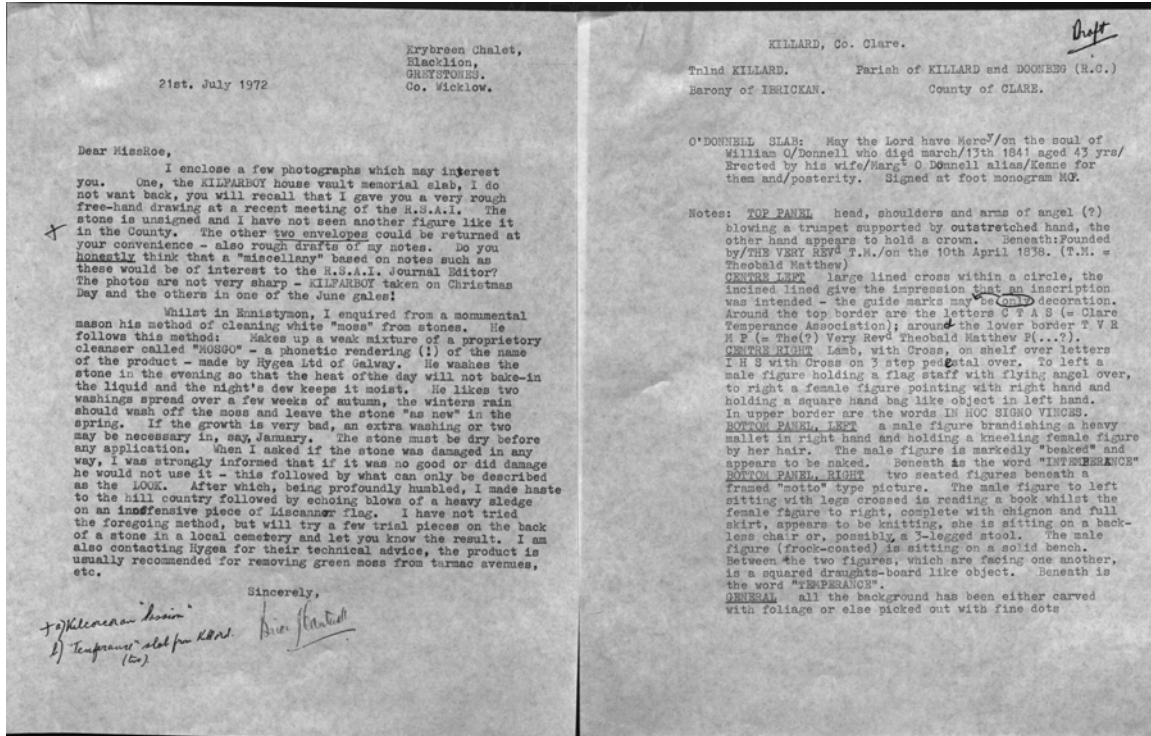
How many in a team of transcribers? This is a matter of choice. I prefer to work alone! Where two or more persons gather a lot of time is wasted in chat. Also, very few people will follow my odd (eccentric?) habit of leaving home at 6.30 am on a cold and frosty morning to drive for upwards of two hours to a graveyard, record non-stop for hours without a stop for warming drinks. When I find that my concentration is slipping or that brain says 'STOP', then I can do so without having to consider any one else.

A final point. I have never used a tape recorder with any degree of success. It is easier to write a spelling variation than to have to repeat it letter ~~for~~ letter in a recorder.

To revert to working alone. It must be stressed that this can be dangerous, to meet with an accident in an isolated graveyard is not a pleasant prospect. I always let my wife know exactly where I will be working, this gives peace of mind to both of us.



## Letter to Helen Roe



## Place Name Competition

Quidnunc (Seamus Kelly), Irishman's Diary, *Irish Times*, June 1955, set a competition to make an itinerary of Ireland visiting places with the number one to twelve in the name. His entry (June 14<sup>th</sup>), which won a consolation prize, is a light-hearted look at the country's place names.

Before starting the Tour (Limerick) I had to decide which Ballycar (Clare) to take. The obvious choice was, of course, my Long-ford. For Moneygold (Sligo) I raided my Pennywell (Limerick) and taking out Silvermines and Golden (Tipperary) sovereigns. I set out for Delgany Golf Club, where I was advised that the most convivial companions would be Tomcoyle and Barnacoyle Big from near Newcastle.

We crossed the Wicklow Hills to Fournaghts near Naas, where the party was joined by Moira (Armagh) and Florence Court (Fermanagh). Off, then, to One Man Pass, Two Mile House (Kildare) and Three Castles (Kilkenny); then through Fore (Westmeath) and Five Alley (Offaly)

Having admired the Shannon from Sixmilebridge (Clare) we collected Emly (Tipperary) who was wearing a nice Emyvale (Monaghan) of Pallasgreen (Limerick), with Cappawhite (Tipperary) trimmings - Oola-la! (Limerick)



After some Moone (Kildare) gazing we arrived at Seven Stars (Kildare). Near Eighter (Cavan) we called to see Virginia (Cavan) who gave us a welcome Glasson (Westmeath) of Irishtown (Dublin).

Back south once more, we passed Nine Mile House (Kilkenny) and the Tenter Fields (Dublin). Though we had left our Shillelagh (Wicklow) behind, we braved the north once more, to call at Eleven Lane Ends (Armagh) before making one final stop at the Twelve Bens (Galway).

We traveled more than an Inch (Kerry), a Rail Yard (Kilkenny) or a Ballyleague (Roscommon), in fact, many a Milestone (Tipperary) was passed. Starting out on Shrove (Donegal) Tuesday, we felt Freshford (Kilkenny), but we were so Ballyragget (Kilkenny) the following Sunday's Well (Cork) that we felt like going to Hospital (Limerick). However, instead we ended up, most appropriately, on the Scilly Island (Lough Derg, Tipperary).

#### Letter – 'Happy Days of Long Ago'

While researching his family tree he spent many hours in the National Library reading the Freeman's Journal tracking down the date of his grandmother's date of death, which probably inspired the following letter, *Irish Times*, 23/3/1963

Your daily 1863 feature recall to mind those happy days of long ago when Myles and I could enjoy our milk without interference from doctors, horse and otherwise. As I turn over the pages of your contemporary, the *Freeman's Journal*, happy memories come crowding back. During the month of March, 1893, headlines showed that we had, in those carefree and happy days, one awful and devastating flood, and the Dublin firemen were kept busy by alarming, fearful, terrible, destructive and great fires. Ships in distress were the subjects of exciting and horrible scenes and of perilous adventure. Robbery, outrages and occurrences were alarming, sensational, unfortunate, extraordinary, diabolical and disgraceful. There was "another revolution in South America", whilst nearer home – in Ireland and England only – there were four attempted, two ordinary and one determined suicide, also dreadful, shocking, fatal, terrible, sad and sudden deaths. The murder of thirteen adults and four children was, possibly, below average.

Other peaceful signs of the times include, later in the year, a strike of printers – they demanded a reduction of the working week from 57 to 54 hours. Naturally the Master Printers had to resist this unreasonable and outrageous demand. The nurses in the Richmond Hospital were seeking a reduction of two hours in their fourteen-hour day. The Board of Guardians of a certain Midland Workhouse, with great consideration for the ratepayers, refused to employ a night nurse. After all, with the wards securely locked each night and the doctor calling twice a week, the inmates were getting the best of attention.

Ah! How happy we were then with nothing to worry about except, perhaps, the state of Gladstone's health and the fate of a few bloodhounds sent after thirteen escaped convicts. After all, it was not fair to send such valuable dogs after so many dastardly ruffians.

Yours, etc.

Obituary Excerpts

J. N. S. R., *Journal of the County Kildare Archaeological Society*, Vol. XVIII, p. 108, 1992-3

Brian joined in 1947-8 and served as Hon. Auditor, Hon. Treasurer and Editor at a time when the affairs of the Society were at a very low ebb. With others he managed to ensure the Society's continuance, the finances overhauled, he initiated the investment of life memberships in Post Office saving certificates.

For many years he looked after the surplus journals. He purchased a set of the first nine volumes of the Journal, which had been the property of Lord Walter Fitzgerald, for the Society. He was a regular attendant at Council meetings and outings and we were pleased to have him with us at our Centenary Dinner.

Seamas O Saothrai, *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. 122, p. 157, 1992

Brian Cantwell was in his youth an enthusiastic cyclist and member of the Cyclist's Touring Club. He saw much of Ireland and Irish antiquaries became for him an abiding interest, so that over the years he built up a valuable library on the subject. He became a member of this Society in 1943 and was elected Life Fellow in 1964. He served as Assistant Honorary Treasurer from October 1946 until 1949, as joint Honorary Treasurer from 1950 until 1962 and as the Society's Treasurer from 1963 until 1967.

It was Justice Liam Price who urged and encouraged him to undertake the copying of the county Wicklow gravestone inscription. Some years after Liam Price's death Brian became involved in the Irish Genealogical Research Society's tombstone sub-committee, set up largely at his initiative around 1972.

D. M., *Irish Railway Record Society*, Vol. 18, no. 119, p. 104, 1992

He had been a regular attender of meetings and outings and had made it a practice of attending the AGM on a regular basis, where he put forward many constructive ideas. He was always a most courteous and generous man and will be sadly missed in IRRS circles.

Julian Walton, *Irish Genealogical Research Society*, Vol. 8, p. 468, 1992-4

The scope of Brian's tombstone project was breathtaking ... Never before had such a project been undertaken for an entire county, and furthermore Brian set about it single-handed. There were battles with briars and other hostile vegetation, clergy to be visited and reassured; and inquisitive passers-by to be treated with patient courtesy. Harsh Wicklow winters had to be endured – I remember Brian's descriptions of how he went unshaved to give his face better protection from the wind. There was the long slog of transcribing in isolated and overgrown graveyards. Finally, there was the tedious task of arranging the transcriptions in alphabetical order and typing them out.

He participated actively in the Military History Society and in several other local historical societies, where his infectious enthusiasm enlivened many meetings. His

humility, concern for the sensitivities of others and puckish sense of humour made him an engaging companion

Sean Cloney, *Wexford Historical Society Journal*, No. 14, 160-1, 1992-3

His work with the firm brought him into contact with those who traded and consumed those commodities, which included alter wines. He would, in lighter moments, recount the foibles of some parish priests and the welcome graciousness of some Reverend Mothers, who had – for liturgical and medicinal purposes, they assured him – been wont to receive regular deliveries of certain products of the vine

Blessed with an unusual measure of that basic need, common sense, he made it a solid springboard to develop an extraordinary insight into the diverse aspects of human nature, with its passions and eccentricities. His great wit, linked to a wonderful sense of humour, permitted him greatly to enjoy the often silly posturing of others. The dissection of sham or a fraud was his specialty, since he was a careful and thorough researcher; yet he was ever most kind and considerate to those who would follow his eminent example.

In those (graveyards) he diligently transcribed the epitaphs of the great and famous, yet he gently trod with reverence the burial mounds of the numberless poor and lowly:

In steeple church, or wasted close  
There they alike in trembling hope repose

We have lost a great man, poet, literatus, raconteur, researcher, but above all a great friend of Wexford and its people. May Brian have that happy repose which he so richly deserves.

Richard Nairn, *Irish Wildbird Conservancy Newsletter*, Summer, 1992

He was, to those who knew him well, a valued friend and colleague, and he is sadly missed. In the last years of his life, he worked harder than most people half his age and became a vital member of the IWC office staff even though he was never formally employed by the IWC

It was shortly after his retirement from the Irish Kennel Club in 1982 that I approached him to help out with IWC membership records. He had no hesitation in accepting although we had little to offer him in exchange. I can still picture him working in the cramped office in Greystones, entering each new subscription on its appropriate record card. In those days, it was really a part-time ‘retirement’ activity and he had days off for one of his favourite pastimes – train journeys with his wife Krystyna. He knew the CIE timetables as if he invented them and he must have traveled on his free rail card through almost every station in Ireland. Although not an ornithologist, he liked the great outdoors and he was an unfailing supporter of branch outings and meetings in North Wicklow, where he lived.

As the IWC membership grew in 1987, and the headquarters was moved to its present location in Monkstown, Brian took on more and more of the office workload. He dealt

with not just membership records, but with cash lodgments, office bookkeeping and liaison with branch secretaries. When the organization could no longer function without the aid of an office computer, he turned his attention to the laborious task of entering and checking all of the membership records in the new database. The new technology brought many teething problems, but Brian would never give up and he stuck with every task, no matter how difficult, until it was completed. I am sure that the other staff (including myself) must have caused him even greater frustration but he rarely complained. He had endless patience and never refused a request for help or explanation, no matter how tedious. His happy out look and sense of humour made him a pleasure to work with.

Brian judged people by their actions and he had no time for pious aspirations. He was a man of few words who believed in getting on with the job. The work that he did for the IWC was careful and consistent and his contribution has been enormous. He was unswerving in his loyalty and dedication to those who appreciated his work and friendship.

Pat O'Leary, *The People, Wexford*, 6/2/92

Today it is a proud, sad, but in many ways a happy responsibility to salute the memory of one of this region's most persistent friends, a man whose labour of love and interests puts every parish and half-parish, without exception, in his debt.

In this gargantuan task there was no ancient graveyard in this area left unvisited. Even if he had to hack through jungle and be torn to bits by briars and nettles, Cantwell soldiered on, bruised, battered but unbowed. The storm may have been over his head or the tombstone wedged flat with the weight of years. It made no difference. This man would not be stopped.

In other words the most obscure descriptions, the most worn and most deeply buried are all now as an open book, due to the heroic persistence and fascination of this one indomitable man.

Brian's death was unexpected by many friends for he wrote to some telling them of illness but in a typical lighthearted style. He left this world before many of them realized there was much amiss

And it surely was a call beyond the grave that Sean Cloney was selected amongst the few honoured to lead the prayers alongside our gallant comrade's bier.

His name will forever whisper with the breeze among the mossy stones, the sorrels, yews and ghosts of our venerable God's acres in Co. Wexford.

### Bibliography

My father never kept a record of his publications but had complementary journal copies of many of them. This list has been compiled by trawling through the many local historical journals of Wicklow, Wexford, Kilkenny, and Kildare, etc. The list of unpublished transcriptions has been taken from the *Irish Genealogist*, 1972-82, when the Tombstone Sub-Committee discontinued, supplemented by *Irish Genealogical Research*

*Society – Tombstone Inscriptions*, Vol. 1-2, 2001 (which has an useful history of the sub-committee) and National Archives 1182/1/33. I wish to thank the librarians of Bray Library, Wexford Library and Wicklow County Library for their assistance in tracking down local history journals. A partial list appears in 1182/1/29 that also notes extracts in *EIRphile*, nos. 2 & 3, *Gaelic Gleanings*, Vols. I-VIII, and *Irish Grave Humour* by Raymond Lamont-Brown, 1987.

Newspapers articles and copies of letters to editors were kept in a family scrapbook, references below are from this source, but there were others. Articles are generally historic and letters are either historic or a satiric look at current events. Finally there is a list of authors and journals etc. that were used during the compilation of the eleven volumes.

### **Books**

*A Cantwell Miscellany*, Greystones, 1960

*Memorials of the Dead – N. E. Wicklow*, Vol. I, Greystones, 1971-4

*Memorials of the Dead – S. E. Wicklow*, Vol. II, Greystones, 1973-5

*Memorials of the Dead – S. W. Wicklow*, Vol. III, Greystones, 1975-6

*Memorials of the Dead – N. W. Wicklow*, Vol. IV, Greystones, 1977-8

*Memorials of the Dead – North Wexford*, Vol. V, Greystones, 1979-80

*Memorials of the Dead – East Wexford*, Vol. VI, Greystones, 1981-83

*Memorials of the Dead – South East Wexford*, Vol. VII, Greystones, 1984

*Memorials of the Dead – South West Wexford*, Vol. VIII, Greystones, 1984

*Memorials of the Dead – West Wexford*, Vol. IX, Greystones, 1985

*Memorials of the Dead – Supplementary Volume for Counties Wexford and Wicklow and composite index to entries in Vols. I-X*, Vol. X, Greystones, 1986

*Memorials of the Dead – South Dublin*, Vol. XI, Greystones, 1990

### **Articles**

Find of Palstave at Newbridge, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society* Vol. XIII, no. 2, pp. 117, 1948-9

Notes of Young's Tour of Ireland, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society* Vol. XIII, no. 3, pp. 135-6, 1950-2

Back Numbers of the Journal – Subject Index, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society*, Vol. XIII, no. 3, pp. 158-166, 1950-2

Municipal Boundaries' Survey, 1836: Athy & Naas, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society* Vol. XIII, no. 4, pp. 170-6, 1953

Municipal Boundaries' Survey, 1836: Carlow & Portarlinton, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society* Vol. XIII, no. 5, pp. 247-53, 1953

Review of David Allen – *The History of a Family Firm 1857-1957*, by David Allen, *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, Vol. LXXXVIII, 1957

Monumental Inscriptions from the Church and Graveyard at Kilmacduagh (Gort), Co. Galway, *Irish Ancestor*, Vol. VII, I, pp. 26-35, 1975

Tombstone Recordings, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society* Vol. XVI, no. 1, p. 67, 1977-8

Two Memorial Inscriptions from county Wicklow, *Old Kilkenny Review*, Vol. 1, no. 5, pp. 348 & 355

The Family Bible of John Ganley of William Street, Limerick, *Irish Ancestor*, Vol. XI, No. 2, 1979, pp. 84-5

Memorials to Military and Naval Personnel in Co. Wicklow, *The Irish Sword*, Vol. XV, no. 58, pp. 45-56, 1982

Memorials of the Dead in West Clare, *The Other Clare*, Vol. 7, pp. 24-6, 1983

Occupations noted on some North and East Wexford Memorials, *Journal of the Wexford Historical Society*, No. 9, pp. 20-26, 1983-4

God's Acre, *Irish Wildbird Conservancy Newsletter*, No. 38, Jan 1984

Occupations noted on some South and West Wexford Memorials, *Journal of the Wexford Historical Society*, No. 11, pp. 20-26, 1983-4

Memorial Inscriptions, Castledermot, Timolin & Killeen Cormac, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society* Vol. XVI, no. 5, pp. 510-26, 1985-6

Memorial Inscriptions with Kildare Connections, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society* Vol. XVI, no. 5, pp. 527, 1985-6

Memorial Inscriptions with Kildare Connections, *Journal of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society* Vol. XVI, no. 5, p. 527, 1985-6

Some West Wicklow Memorial Inscriptions, *Journal of the West Wicklow Historical Society*, No. 2, pp. 27-34, 1985-6

Some Memorial Inscriptions from Kilmore Parish, *Journal of Kilmore Parish*, No. 4, 1985-6

Occupations noted on some North Wicklow Memorials, *Journal of the Cualann Historical Society*, No. 2, pp. 10-13, 1986

Occupations noted on some East and South Wexford Memorials, *Journal of the Wexford Historical Society*, No. 10, pp. 83-94, 1986-7

Some South Wicklow and North Wexford Memorial Inscriptions, *Arklow Historical Society Journal*, pp. 13-23, 1987

Memorial Inscriptions, *Glynn – 1789-1989*, Glynn Bicentenary Committee, 1989

Some Wicklow Town and District Memorial Inscriptions, *Wicklow Historical Society Journal*, Vol. 1, no. 2, pp. 48-52, 1989

Rosbercon Graveyard, *Old Kilkenny Review*, Vol. 4, no. 2, pp. 717-730, 1990

Some Wicklow and other Memorials, *Journal of the Cualann Historical Society*, No. 3, pp. 35-7, 1990

Persons who died in 1798 & 1799, *The Past*, No. 17, pp. 73-6, 1990

Some Memorial Inscriptions (from Fethard on Sea area), *Templetown Parish Magazine*, Vol. 1, no. 6, 1991

Some Memorial Inscriptions from the Kilmore area, *The Kilmore Journal*, No. 20, 1991

Headstones of Glendalough, *Roundwood and District History and Folklore Journal*, No. 4, pp. 19-20, 1991

Persons who died in 1798 & 1799 (part 2), *The Past*, No. 18, pp. 45-53, 1992

Researching Graveyards, *Bray Historical Record*, No. 5, pp. 36-42, 1992

### Unpublished Transcriptions

Co. Clare	No. of Memorials	Year
-----------	------------------	------

Ardacra R. C.	2	1978-80
Ballyvaughan R. C.	5	1978-80
Coad	32	pre 1973
Cloony South	12	1973-5
Corofin (St. Catherine's)	24	pre 1973
Kilatedaun	15	pre 1973
Kilcorcoran	41	pre 1973
Kildeema	30	pre 1973
Kilfarboy	56	pre 1973
Kilfenora (except Cathedral)	48	pre 1973
Killaspuglonane	12	pre 1973
Killenagh R. C.	7	1978-80
Killernan	95	pre 1973
Kilnaboy	28	pre 1973
Kilmacrehy	50	pre 1973
Kilmurry Ibrickane	28	pre 1973
Kilshanny	30	pre 1973
Kiltenanlea R. C.	19	1978-80
Kilvodane	15	1973-5
Lisdoonvarna R. C.	10	1978-80
Miltown Malbay (C. of I.)	18	pre 1973
Noughaval R. C.	22	1978-80
Rath	17	pre 1973
Tooclaigh R. C.	2	1978-80
Co. Cork		
Abbeystrewey C. of I. (interior)	30	1973-5
Aughadown C. of I. (interior)	15	1973-5
Aughadown Old	33	1973-5
Caheragh C. of I	13	1975-8
Caheragh R. C.	4	1975-8
Kilcoe C. of I.	2	1975-8
Kilcoe Old	6	1975-8
Skibbereen R. C. Cathedral (interior)	13	1973-5
Co. Kildare <sup>1</sup>		
Naas (R. C. Church)	16	1981
Co. Sligo		
Sligo (St. John's C. of I)	36	1988

**Newspaper Articles, etc. about or with a reference to BJC**

*Wicklow People*, 5/7/74, 'Epitaphs from Wicklow Graveyards'  
*Wicklow People*, 10/3/78, 'Inoher Doyle, Arklow - reply'

---

<sup>1</sup> The *IGRS* incorrectly credits him with Kiltel, Co. Kildare. The transcriber was Conleth Manning (See *JKSAI*), who passed on the transcription to BJC who added a comment on one entry.



*Wicklow People*, 23/2/79, 'Fellowship for Genealogist'  
*Wicklow People*, -/9/81, 'You can be your own Grandfather'  
*The People, Wexford*, 19/2/82, Presentation Photo  
*The People, Wexford*, 16/4/82, 'Will Lecture Ui Cinselaigh Historical Society'  
*The People, Wexford*, 8/10/82, 'Recording Gravestone Inscriptions in Co. Wexford'  
*Southside Express*, 19/9/84, 'Matters of Grave Concern'  
*Irish Times*, 8/10/84, 'Tombstone History'  
*Irish Times*, 11/10/84, 'Tombstone History'  
*Irish Times*, 15/10/84, 'Tombstone History'  
*Bray People*, 28/8/87, 'Cualann Outing'  
*Bray People*, 21/10/88, 'Lecture'  
*The People, Wexford*, 2/2/89, 'Killed in American Civil War'  
*Bray People*, 26/5/89, 'Graveyard a Tourist Draw'  
*Bray People*, 25/8/89, 'Vandals pose a threat to Kilcoole Heritage'  
*The People, Wexford*, 14/6/90, 'Family History Workshop'  
*Bray People*, 6/7/90, 'Brian studies cemetery secrets'  
*Bray People*, 6/7/90, 'Graveyards are the gardens of our ancestors'  
*Bray People*, 24/8/90, 'Lecture'

**Letters to Newspapers Editors, etc. by BJC (dates in brackets are related letters)**

*Irish Times*, 14/6/55, Competition entry to An Irishman's Diary (13/6/55)  
*Irish Times*, 23/3/63, 'Happy Old Days'  
*Irish Times*, 4/10/66, Photo of signpost, Co. Mayo  
*Irish Times*, 15/5/70, 'Politics – Ambrose Bierce'  
*Irish Times*, 29/8/70 & 10/9/70, 'Festina Lente' (2/9/70)  
*Irish Times*, -/12/70, St. Kevin's Hospital  
*Irish Times*, 14/7/72, 'Jobs for the Boys'  
*Irish Times*, 1/12/75, 'Monastrevan?'  
*Irish Times*, -/6/76, 'Crystal Gift to King Juan Carlos of Spain'  
*Irish Times*, -/10/77, 'Pound Note'  
*Wicklow People*, 13/1/78, 'Killamoat Church'  
*Wicklow People*, -/2 or 3/78, 'Abbey Graveyard, Arklow'  
*Irish Times*, 10/8/79, 'Abbeystrewey Graveyard'  
*Wicklow People*, -/9/79, 'Oldest memorials in three Graveyards - reply'  
*Irish Times*, 8/11/80, 'Election Fever'  
*Wicklow People*, 5/3/82, 'Cullens and Annesleys – reply'  
*Irish Times*, 12/4/82, 'National Busworkers' Union'  
*The People, Wexford*, 6/8/82, 'Handcocks of Monaseed – reply'  
*The People, Wexford*, 15/10/82, 'Where is Sheemogue Graveyard?'  
*Wicklow People*, 3/12/82, 'Staffords – reply'  
*The People, Wexford*, 21/1/83, 'The Friary Graveyard, Wexford'  
*The People, Wexford*, 15/4/83, 'Old Wexford Salts – reply' (23/4/83)  
*The People, Wexford*, 9/9/83, 'A Grave Puzzle – Oulart'  
*The People, Wexford*, -/10/83, 'Yes – More Graveyards Restored'  
*The People, Wexford*, 3/2/84, 'The Coolgreany Evictions' (17/2/84)  
*The People, Wexford*, 27/4/84, 'Iron Man of Wexford – reply'

*The People, Wexford*, 20/7/84, 'Franciscan Graveyard, Wexford – reply'  
*The People, Wexford*, 31/8/84, 'Wexford's Islands'  
*The People, Wexford*, 14/9/84, 'Clonattin Cemetery'  
*The People, Wexford*, 19/7/85, 'Courtown Etchingham – reply'  
*New Ross Standard*, 16/1/87, 'Beatty Double Burial Myth' (17/7/87)  
*New Ross Standard*, 14/8/87, 'Beatty Double Burial Myth'  
*The People, Wexford*, 6/10/88, 'Priceless Record'  
*Sligo Champion*, 14/10/88, 'Hazelwood Sculptor pieces'  
*Bray People*, 28/4/89, 'Porters of Laragh – reply'  
*Bray People*, 5/5/89, 'Harsh Words for Urban Council – Good Dog campaign'  
*The Phoenix*, 2/6/89, 'Magazine Price – Sealink'  
*Irish Times*, 11/8/89, 'Landlocked'  
*Irish Times*, -/8/89, 'Second House'  
*Bray People*, 24/11/89, 'Was it a Greyhound or a Wolfhound?'  
*Irish Times*, 4/4/90, 'Senator Sean Doherty'  
*Irish Times*, 24/7/90, 'Flag Query'

### **Miscellaneous**

*The People, Wexford*, 1/6/89, 'Cromwell is buried in Taghmon ... with the local Quakers'  
*Wicklow People*, 25/1/91, 'Knockananna'  
*Leinster Leader*, 25/4/91, 'Kildare Arch. Society celebrates Centenary'

### **Obituaries**

Anon. *Bray People*, 7/2/1992  
 Sean Cloney, *Wexford Historical Society Journal*, 1992  
 Nicky Furlong, *The People, Wexford*, 6/2/1992  
 D. M., *Journal of the Irish Railway Record Society*, June 1992  
 Richard Nairn, *Irish Wildbird Conservancy Newsletter*, Summer 1992  
 Seamas O Saothrai, *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 1992  
 J. N. S. R., *Journal Of the Co. Kildare Archaeological Society*, 1992  
 Julian Walton, *Irish Genealogist*, 1992

### **Authors**

J. J. Buckley, Rev. Claude Chevasse, Rev. Seamas S. DeVal, Pat Doyle (et al Muintir na Tire), Charles Dickson, Nicky Furlong, Rev. William H. Grattan Flood, Canon Thomas B. Gibson, Rev. James Graves, Peter Harbison, Philip H. Hore, Rev. James B. Leslie, Ralph Loeber, Ada K. Longfield (Mrs. H. G. Leask), Geoffrey Marescaux, William H. Maxwell, R. A. S. Macalister, William Magan, Richard Musgrave, Eva O Cathaoir, John O'Donovan, Fergus O'Farrell, Homan Potterton, Liam Price, Pdraig Puirseal, Thomas G. Reynolds, Helen Roe, de Saubruit, Canon George D. Scott, Rev. John F. Shearman, Rev. P. Sheil, John Turpin, C. J. Twomey, and, for Dublin, many parish historians.

### **Journals & Titles**

*Capuchin Annual*, *Diocesan Magazines*, *Foras Taluntais Guide to Johnstown Castle*, *Irish Catholic Directory*, *Irish Trade Journal and Statistical Bulletin*, *The Past*, *Journal of the Association for the Preservation of Memorials of the Dead*, *Journal of the Old*

*Wexford Society, Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland, Old Kilkenny Review, Pigot's 1824 Directory, Sinn Fein Rebellion Handbook Easter - 1916, Lewis' Topographical Dictionary of Ireland*