

For The Record

The Archives of Galway's Rural District Councils

A GUIDE TO THE COLLECTIONS HELD BY
GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHIVES



2013-2023

Deich mBliana Cuimhneachán Chontae na Gaillimhe
The County of Galway Decade of Commemorations

COUNTY COUNCIL MAP OF GALWAY.



1,792	CLIFDEN
1,641	DUMMORE
1,685	GALWAY RURAL
1,434	GALWAY URBAN
	GLENNAMADDY
2,852	GORT
1,865	HEADFORD
1,850	LETTERMORE
1,018	LOUGHREA
1,550	MILLTOWN
1,972	MOUNT BELLEW
1,832	ORANMORE
1,786	QUIGHTERARD
1,517	PORTUMNA
1,826	ROUNDSTONE
1,785	SPIDDLE
1,245	TUAM

CO-OPTED

GRAND JURY NOMINEES



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Deich mBliana Cuimhneachán Chontae na Gaillimhe
The County of Galway Decade of Commemorations

**Gníomh de chuid Straitéis Deich mBliana na gCuimhneacháin
Chontae na Gaillimhe 2013 - 2023**

**An Action of the County of Galway Decade of
Commemorations Strategy 2013 - 2023**

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Patria McWalter

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Foreword

By
Councillor Liam Carroll, Mayor of the County of Galway

Archives are a wonderful source of information for all the citizens of our county and country. They document the past decisions and actions of our predecessors. Decisions and actions which influence how we live our lives today, and affect the choices we can make for future generations.

Therefore, having access to the records which record how and why these decisions were made is important so that we can understand, appreciate and learn from past experiences. Indeed, access to local authority archives, which is a legal right, should also be regarded as a right of citizenship.

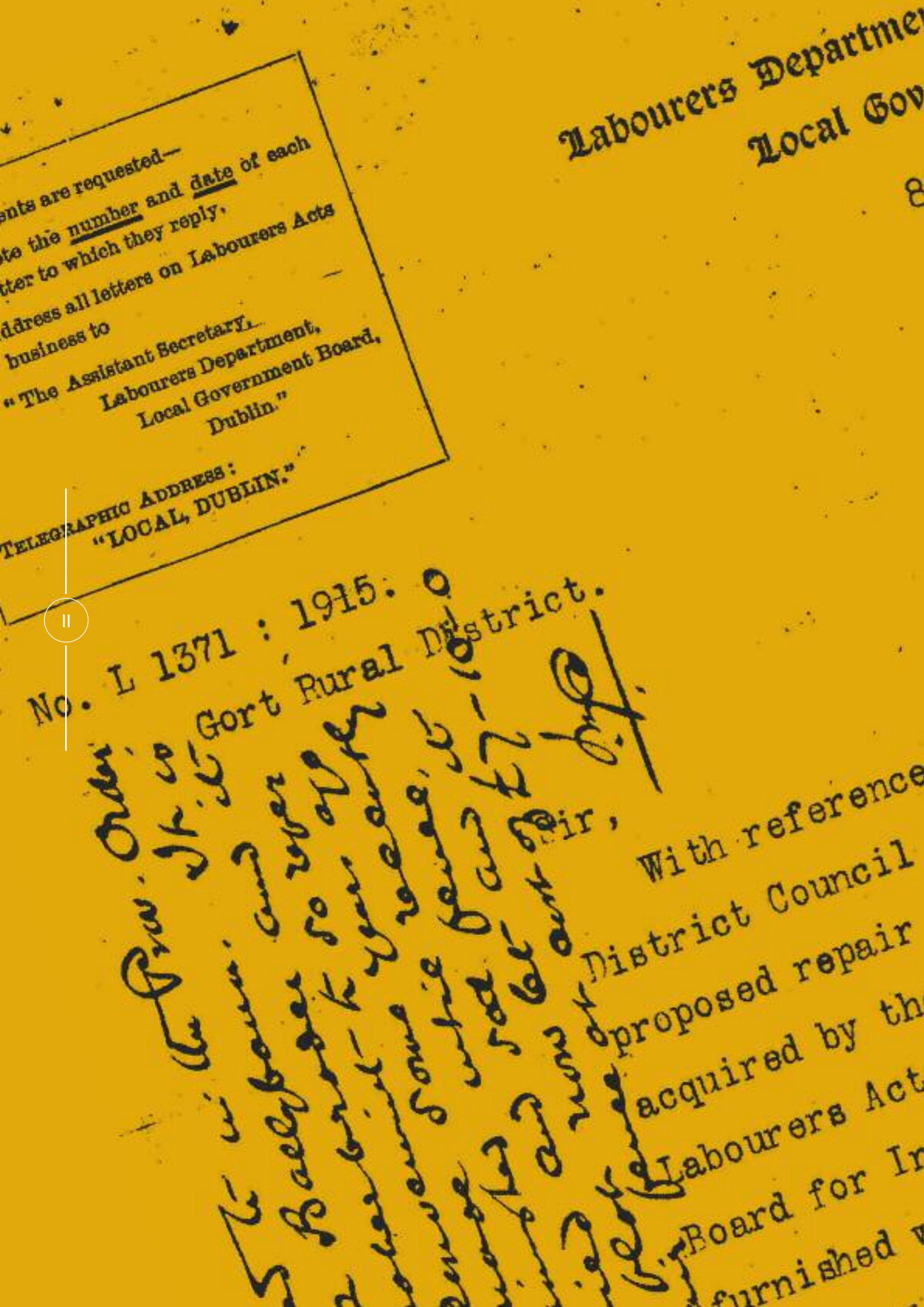
Archives bring to life, in a very real way, the work of our forefathers, where we can see and touch their written words. In the archives, we can study the records they left behind, and through them we can preserve a record of their achievements for the present and future generations. Preserving and managing our archives is an important function of modern day local authorities. It is a significant yet onerous responsibility which requires much care and management, and many resources. It is one which we take on with pride and enthusiasm, and hope that even more resources can be directed to this important local authority function in the years to come.

The archives of the Rural District Councils are valuable resources for those engaging in piecing together our national and, in particular, our local history. They are an important educational tool for young scholars endeavouring to learn how to use primary source material, and gain an understanding of how government administrations worked and how our society has evolved.

It is hoped that this publication will help to illustrate the many functions and achievements of our predecessors in local government, and highlight the value of the Rural District Council archive collections as a primary source for historical research.

2014





Requests are requested—
state the number and date of each
letter to which they reply,
address all letters on Labourers Acts
business to
“The Assistant Secretary,
Labourers Department,
Local Government Board,
Dublin.”
TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS :
“LOCAL, DUBLIN.”

Labourers Department
Local Gov

No. L 1371 : 1915.
Gort Rural District.
Mr. J. J. O'Connell
Gort, Co. Galway
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th inst. in reference to the proposed repair of the water supply system now acquired by the Labourers Act Board for Ireland. The same has been referred to the Board for their consideration and will be furnished to you as soon as possible.

Introduction

By
Ms Martina Moloney, Manager of Galway County Council

It is with great delight and pride that I introduce *For the Record – The Archives of Galway’s Rural District Councils, A Guide to the Collections held by Galway County Council Archives*. The Guide not only reflects the enormous range of work and achievements of the pioneers in local democratic government in Ireland, but it also reflects the present-day work of the Archives Section of Galway County Council.

The Guide includes a very useful introduction to the functions and responsibilities of the Rural District Councils as applied under the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898. It also gives some background information on the Rural District Councils in County Galway, and draws some comparisons between how different Rural District Councils addressed their roles. There follows an individual descriptive list for nine archive collections; each commences with an introduction to the Council and its collection.

Overall, then, the Guide is a comprehensive review of the efforts of an important element of local democratic government in the first quarter of the 20th century and how local government sought to improve the lives and welfare of the people. Given that the period was often unsettled on the national and local political front it is a great credit to the councillors, administrators and local authority workers of the period that so much was achieved.

It is hoped that this publication, produced as an Action of the County of Galway Decade of Commemorations Strategy 2013 – 2023, will help promote an appreciation of the rural district council archive collections and of archives in general, and illustrate just how useful and enjoyable delving into the archives can be from the educational and recreational points of view.

It is fortunate that the records which reflect the Rural District Councils’ accomplishments, failures and attitudes have survived. Our gratitude should first be directed to the County Library and its former Executive Librarian, Ms Mary Kavanagh, and then to Galway County Council Archives, established in 2000, for the care they have taken to manage and preserve these important records. Tribute must be paid to Galway County Council’s Archivist, Ms Patria McWalter, for her work in caring for and preserving the collections, and for compiling this Guide. Thanks are also extended to her colleague, Ms Petrina Mee, for proof-reading and supplying helpful comments.



The Establishment and Functions of Rural District Councils

Rural District Councils were set up under the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898. This Act also established County Councils and Urban District Councils. The primary purpose of the Act was to put county government on a representative basis. The Act streamlined local government, dismantling Grand Juries and establishing County, Urban and Rural District Councils, which were a major advance towards real democracy.

The Councils were an important component of the newly established local authority structures. They were the first democratically elected bodies in Ireland. The franchise was greatly widened to include those with very little property and, for the first time, at any level of election, women (or at least those over thirty) were given the right to vote. As a result of this widened democratic franchise there was a shift from a landlord driven system of governance to a much more representative one. Over 4,000 district elections took place in Ireland on 6th April 1899¹, which resulted in a landslide victory for the nationalist majority, and thus the "...great revolution in Irish local government was accomplished remarkably swiftly and smoothly.²

The Rural District Councils' powers were conferred upon them by Sections 2 to 39 of the Act. They assumed responsibility for road and public works functions of the Grand Juries where the cost had been borne by the district, and the housing and public

health functions of the Boards of Guardians of Poor Law Unions.

Section 22 of the Act stated that 'For every sanitary district there shall be a Rural District Council whose district shall be called a rural district'.³ In most cases, every Poor Law Union district became the area for which a District Council was elected; the electoral divisions of the existing unions were the electoral divisions of the rural districts.

The District Councils were comprised of Councillors, elected triennially, on the same franchise as the members of County Councils. Two members were elected for each electoral division which had one elected Poor Law Union Guardian, with an increased number for electoral divisions or wards which had elected more than one Guardian. The qualifications for candidates for Rural District Councils were set out in Section 23, sub-section 4 of the 1898 Act, which stated 'A person shall not be qualified to be elected, or to be a councillor of the Council of a county district, unless he is a Local Government elector for the district, or has, during the whole of the twelve months preceding the election, resided and continues to reside in the district'.

Under this section a '...son of full age residing with his father, or a lodger whose rooms were not of the requisite value, or any other person having residence, but no right to vote, might be a candidate. This

1. Dowell, R.B., "Administration and the public services 1870-1921" in A New History of Ireland VI: Ireland Under the Union II 1870-1921, Ed. W.E. Vaughan, Oxford University Press, 1996, p593.
2. Lyons, F.S.L., "The Aftermath of Parnell, 1891-1903" in A New History of Ireland VI: Ireland Under the Union II 1870-1921, Ed. W.E. Vaughan, Oxford University Press, 1996, p594.
3. Muldoon, John and M'Sweeney, George, A Guide to Irish Local Government comprising an account of the Law relating to the Local Government of Counties, Cities and Districts, with a Full Explanation of the Act of 1898; together with the Text of the Measure and an Index', Dublin, Eason & Son Ltd., 1898, p16.

provision, therefore, makes a number of persons eligible as candidates who will have no votes themselves, and any such candidates, if elected or co-opted, would, of course, be eligible to be made chairman of a Council, and become a justice of the peace for the district'.⁴

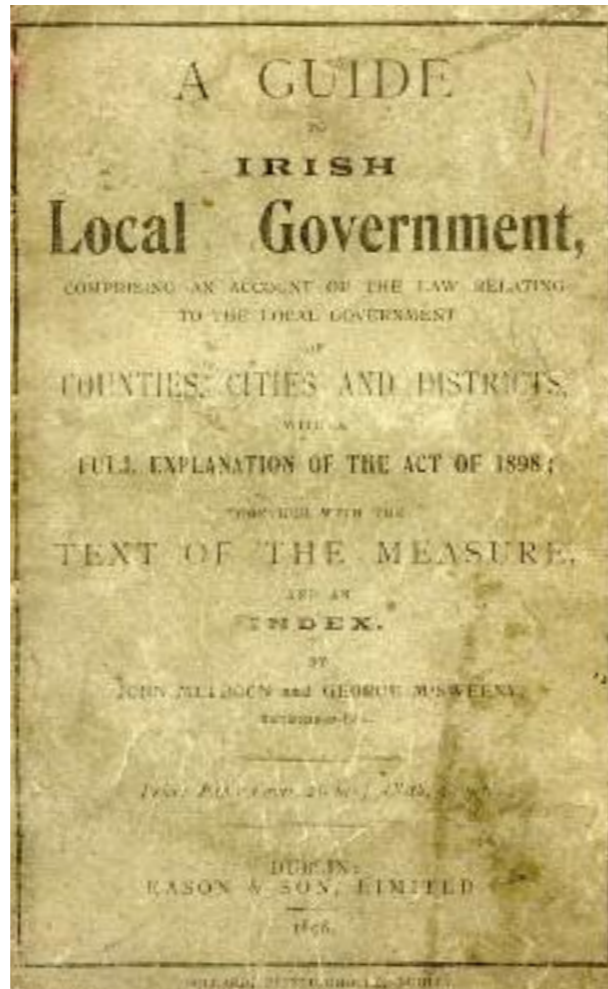
Women could be elected as District Councillors and Guardians, but not as County Councillors.

The District Councillors for each division were also the Guardians for that division, so that the Rural Districts had two distinct bodies consisting of the same individual members, but having separate functions. Neither the District Councillors nor the Guardians had the power to raise or levy rates. This was the function of the County Councils, which provided funding for local purposes.

Councils reported to the Local Government Board, and later to the Department of Local Government. They forwarded copies of their minutes in three '...distinct and separate portions: one of such portions to comprise the proceedings under the Public Health Acts, another the proceedings under the Labourers Acts, and a third the proceedings of the District Council in relation to any other matters dealt with by them at their several meetings'.⁵

The first elections were held at the beginning of April 1899. Most of the Rural District Councils held their inaugural meetings in the week commencing 22nd April. Their first duty was to elect a Chairman and appoint Members to their numerous committees.

Following the elections in Galway *The Tuam Herald* reported that the Councils '...appointed their chairmen and ex-officio representatives by law authorised and so far commenced the first chapter of what promises



to be a new era in the administrative life of this country. For good or ill, for better or for worse...the new bodies are launched upon a hitherto stormy sea of Irish life and it is to be hoped that, from a sense of patriotism if from no other consideration, the Councils now commencing their careers will, by all classes, and at all hands, be accorded a fair trial neither condemned beforehand for inefficiency nor unduly commended for efficiency but given full, unprejudiced and honest trial...'.⁶

4. Muldoon, John and M'Sweeney, George, A Guide to Irish Local Government comprising an account of the Law relating to the Local Government of Counties, Cities and Districts, Dublin, Eason & Son Ltd., 1898, p20.
5. Portumna Rural District Council, Volume of letters from the Local Government Board, G01/3/26, 21 April 1899.
6. *The Tuam Herald*, 22 April 1899.

Meanwhile the *Galway Observer* described the inaugural meeting of the Loughrea Rural District Council, held on 15th April, as follows: 'Never in the history of the board had such an assemblage met before. The spacious boardroom was crowded to excess, the lobbies, landing, and stairs were thronged and the seats for accommodation though amply provided could not be availed of and the Chairman was the only lucky individual indulging in the luxury of a chair. Curiosity apparently brought many to the boardroom that day, who never entered the portals of the workplace before and patiently they waited until the chairman of the District Council was declared elected, then the congregation was somewhat abated but many remained to witness the last act of the new departure. Two lady photographers had all their appliances ready for the 'taking' of the new board and nearly all present faced the camera and within a few days the good, the bad, and the indifferent of the Loughrea District Council will present themselves to the public for them to discern from their facial appearance that they were born administrators of a complex law'.⁷

The Rural District Councils had a wide variety of functions which included public works, acting as the sanitary authority, executors of compulsory vaccination laws, and responsibility for the laws relating to the sanitation of dwellings and public nuisances. They were also responsible for providing water and sewerage schemes, and housing for the labouring class. In addition, they were the repositories of a number of other powers down to the muzzling of dogs and the slaughtering of diseased animals.

Here follows a summary look at how they were obliged to deal with some of their specific functions under the 1898 legislation.

7. *The Galway Observer*, 22 April 1899.
8. Public works included roads, bridges, track-ways, and other public works. Courthouses, however, were under the jurisdiction of the County Councils.
9. Muldoon, John and M'Sweeney, George, A Guide to Irish Local Government comprising an account of the Law relating to the Local Government of Counties, Cities and Districts, Dublin, Eason & Son Ltd., 1898, p74.

Public Works

The County Surveyor was obliged to issue a quarterly report to the Rural District Councils on the condition of the public works⁸ in the district, and the execution of contracts respecting those works, and so on, with a view to maintaining the public works in good condition and repair. The Surveyor made any necessary recommendations to ensure the proper maintenance of the public works in the district.

Rural Sanitary Authority

Under Section 33 of the 1898 Act the duties and responsibilities of the Rural Sanitary Authority were transferred to the Rural District Councils. The Poor Law Union Board of Guardians had previously acted as this Authority. The Authority's powers and duties were extensive.

Under the Public Health Act, 1878, every Medical Officer of a Dispensary District was constituted the Sanitary Officer for such district, or such part of it as was under his charge. 'All sewers, except those made by private persons for profit, by the Crown, or for the improvement of land in the district become vested in the Sanitary Authority'.⁹

Where the Council, acting as a Rural Sanitary Authority, introduced a new system of sewerage, it had the power to close drains in premises where such drains were not adapted to the general system of sewerage in the district, or where they were otherwise objectionable, and such premises then had to be connected to the new drainage system.

The Authority could also make bye-laws with respect to new streets, their width and level, new buildings,

the sites of houses and the sanitary provision to be made for them, and could ask in all such cases that plans and so on of the proposed works be lodged with them in advance. It could also make arrangements for proper scavenging, and provide appropriate containers for the temporary deposit of dust and rubbish.

It also had the power to enforce the regulations required if the country or district was threatened by any formidable epidemic, endemic or infectious disease.

Water

The Sanitary Authority also had the power to provide its district with a supply of water. The contemporary Guide to the new Act stated that the supply should be ‘...proper and sufficient for public and private purposes, and for this purpose may construct and maintain waterworks, take on lease or hire such works, or any construct for a supply of water with any person’.¹⁰

Common Lodging & Other General Functions

The Authority was also charged with keeping a register of common lodging houses, and the number of persons authorised to stay in each lodging house. Such houses had to be inspected and approved by an Officer of the Sanitary Authority, and had to have a good supply of water and be properly ventilated.

In efforts to curb the spread of disease the Authority had the power to enter premises for the purpose of examination as to the existence of nuisances¹¹, and ensure they were abated immediately. With the approval of the Local Government Board the Sanitary

Authority could also provide, if deemed necessary, hospitals or temporary places for the reception of the sick or convalescent. It also had the power to cleanse and disinfect, where necessary, in the interest of public health, and to make bye-laws for the regulation of its proceedings.

Labourers Acts

The Rural Sanitary Authority under the stewardship of the Poor Law Union Board of Guardians had been responsible for the administration of Labourers Acts, 1882 to 1892, which allowed for the provision of cottages for agricultural labourers at fixed rents payable to the Guardians. These functions transferred in 1898 to the Rural District Councils. Following representations from ratepayers requesting housing, and an inquiry by the Local Government Board, if approved, the Council could then borrow the required money for the erection of the cottages from the Board of Works, at fixed rates of years for extensive periods of time, ranging from 35 to 50 years.¹²

The councils were heavily involved in the provision of Labourers cottages, so much so that the numbers increased nationwide from 16,000 in 1900 to 60,000 in 1908, ‘finally sweeping the wretched cabins from the face of the land’.¹³

Disbandment of the Rural District Councils

Twenty-five years after its establishment, the new local government system had achieved much, such as the provision of a comprehensive health services, water, housing, and the tarring of roads and so on. Indeed, local government assumed a key role during the War of Independence (1919-1921) when the

County and Rural District Councils transferred their allegiance from the official administration of the British establishments’ Local Government Board to the alternative Dáil Éireann Local Government Department. This brought Councils directly into the firing line of the Crown government. Many Rural District Council premises were raided by the Royal Irish Constabulary (R.I.C.), and minutes and records of the Republican local government were confiscated.

The disruption of this period and the subsequent Civil War hit councils severely, particularly in their rate collections. It also accelerated abuses such as the allocation of council jobs on a partisan basis.

Following independence the Free State government, which took over the administration of the bodies established under British rule, initially made very few changes to the structure of those bodies. However, it did in 1925 dissolve the Rural District Councils. It wished to impose a more rigid and centralised system of control and so dissolved the Councils under Section 8, Sub-sections (2), (3), and (4) of the Local Government Act of that year. The Act stated

Abolition of rural district councils.

3.—(1) On and after the appointed day all rural district councils shall cease to exist, and upon the appointed day the powers and duties (subject to the provisions of this Act), and the property, debts and liabilities of the council of every rural district within a county, shall be transferred to the council of such county, and the council of such county shall be the successors of the council of such rural district.

Clifden Rural District Council passed a resolution denouncing the proposal to dissolve the Rural District Councils stating ‘...That we believe this action on the

part of the Government to be subversive of democratic government and not in the best interests of the Ratepayers, is tantamount to disfranchising them and giving them no control of their Finances. That we believe those schemes of amalgamation and abolition which tend towards centralisation will leave vast areas of this large county in the hands of a few officials who are too distant and lack knowledge...’.¹⁴

The Rural District Councils’ functions were transferred under the Act to the County Councils. County Councils were, in turn, required to discharge their new sanitary duties through boards of health and public assistance. These boards also had responsibility for the supervision of county homes, hospitals and dispensaries, housing, water and sewerage, home assistance and a number of schemes including those for blind welfare, boarded out children, infectious diseases, tuberculosis and the school medical service.

The Boards of Health and Public Assistance survived until August 1942 when the administration of public assistance and sanitary matters came under the direct control of the County Councils acting through the new County Managers. Medical Health Officers were appointed and were responsible for the effective administration of the legislation for safeguarding public health. However, these functions were later transferred from the County Councils to Health Boards, when they were established in the early 1970s. The Health Boards were reformed in more recent times to Health Service Executives.

10. *ibid.*, p76.

11. Such as farm animals (housed in the home), vermin, and insects which caused the spread of disease, and manure heaps kept in front of cottages.

12. The Archives of the Office of Public Works at the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin contains a substantial quantity of records relating to the various schemes and may be of value to those seeking further information on this topic. See Rena Lohan, Guide to the Archives of the Office of Public Works, The Stationery Office, Dublin 1994, pp256-257.

13. Lee, Joseph, *The Modernisation of Irish Society, 1848-1918*, Gill & Macmillan, Dublin 1973, pp127-128.

14. Clifden Rural District Council, G01/7/14, p268a-b.

from the point in respect of the persons salary will depend
on the propriety of the time which is occupied in
attendance of on the matters of young children
referred to Mrs. Conroy, Hon Secy, the Ladies
Committee

h. P. his letter No 28. 667. Dated 12th Nov. 1917
rewards in mtd. — Forwarding copies of an
Book containing Regulations dated 5th Nov. 1917.
h. P. letter No. 58110. Dated 17th Nov. 1917
Forwarding extracts from the Returns Form 1
received from the Medical Officers relating to the
Ulpan nos 1 & 2. and People Dispensary Districts

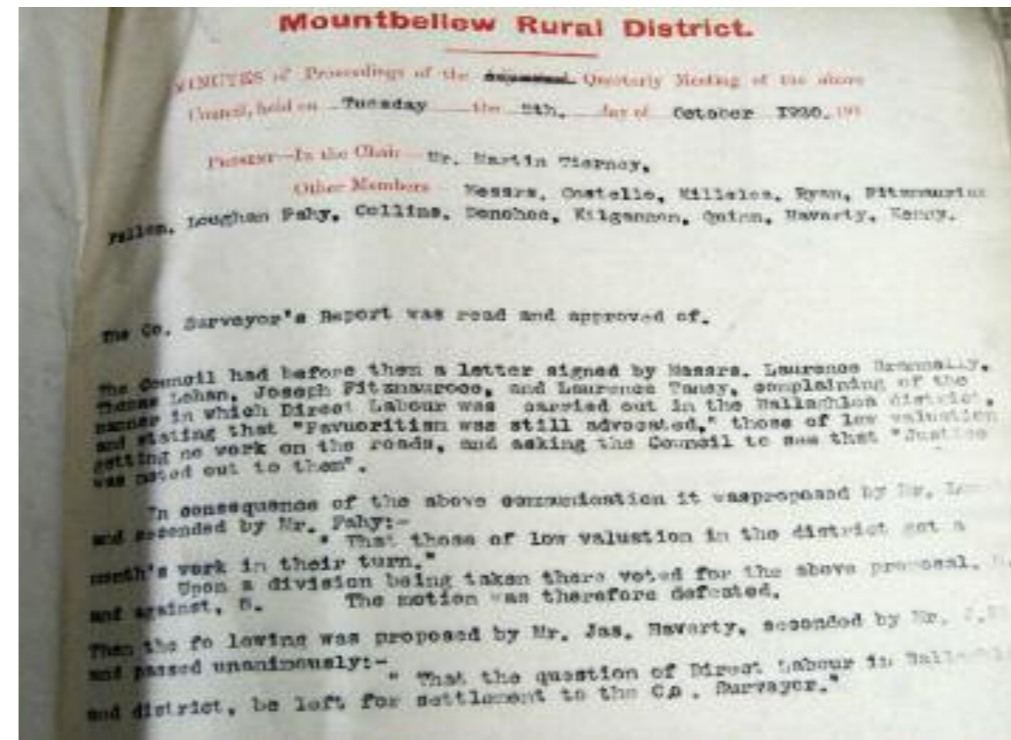
Handwritten Clifden Rural District Council minutes, G01/7/12

County Galway's Rural District Councils and their archive collections

County Galway had ten Rural District Councils. The Ballinasloe district was split between two Councils, the No. 1 and No. 2 councils. The No. 2 Council was under the jurisdiction of Roscommon County Council. There were also councils in Clifden, Galway, *Glennamaddy, Gort, Loughrea, Mountbellew, Oughterard, Portumna and Tuam. Galway County Council Archives holds the surviving archive collections for all of these councils, except Glennamaddy and Oughterard. All the Councils in county Galway were nationalistic in outlook and initially supported Home Rule and John Redmond¹⁵.

Most of the archive collections primarily consist of a full run of minutes. Unfortunately, there are only three volumes for the Ballinasloe No.2 Rural District Council and only two volumes for the Galway Council.

Some collections also include other records, such as letter books or for example the Tuam Rural District Council (G01/11) collection includes a Roads Ledger, Dairy Inspector's Reports and rate demands and receipts.

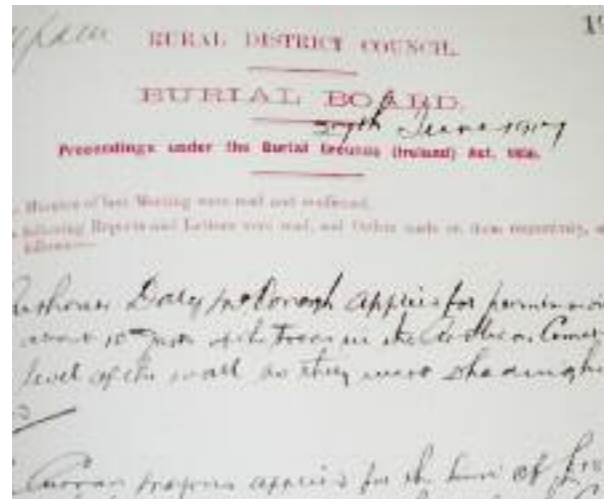


Typed minutes for Mountbellew Rural District Council, G01/6/20

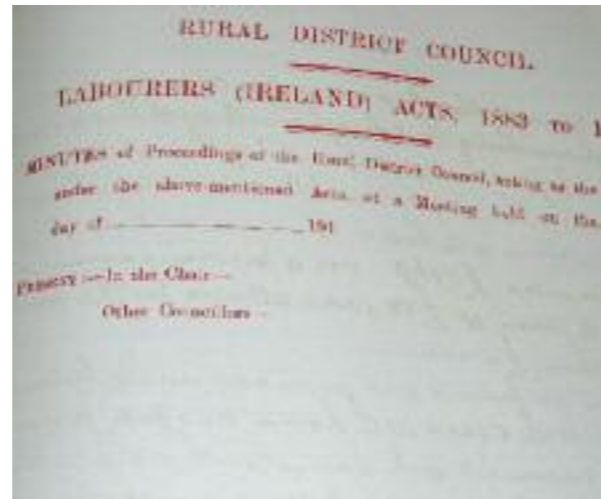
15. John Edward Redmond (1856 - 1918) an Irish nationalist politician, barrister, and leader of the Irish Parliamentary Party from 1900 - 1918.

* Glennamaddy now spelt Glenamaddy.

The records are generally handwritten, though some of the later ones are in typed-script. The eligibility of the handwritten records varies from one collection to another.



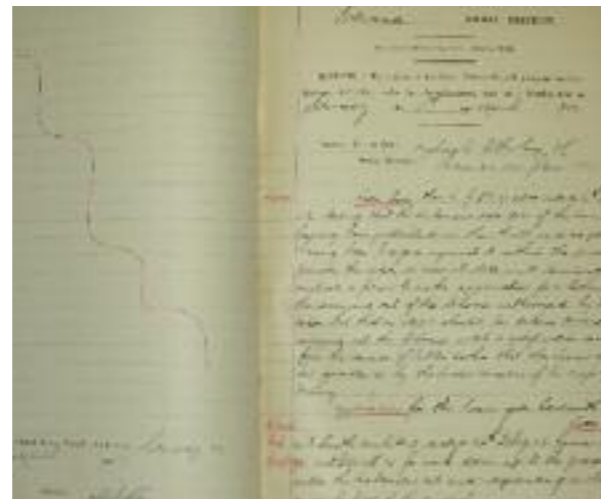
For minutes of proceedings under the Burial Ground (Ireland) Act, 1856.



For Minutes of proceedings under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, 1883 to 1911.



Details of a Council's accounts and expenditure, and statistics relating to the provision of Labourers cottages.



Chairman's signature approving the minutes, and minutes for a meeting held on 15th March 1902 under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts, 1883 and 1896.

The minutes follow a pre-printed format. They commence with a record of attendance, followed by details of the business transacted, under various headings. They end with the Chairman's signature approving the minutes.

The collections should be of value and interest to administrative, economic, social, political, environmental and local historians. The latter in particular should learn much from them about the development of the various districts' infrastructure, together with the provision and growth of public and health related services, such as water and sewerage schemes in all areas around County Galway.

The Councils were an important instrument in establishing democratic local government in Ireland for the first time, and in trying to improve social conditions for the people of the county.

An enormous amount of useful and interesting information may be gleaned from these collections. The attitudes of the Councils are clearly reflected in the minutes. From a political perspective the minutes of the Councils reflect changing attitudes in Ireland to the established government and the shift away from the drive for Home Rule in favour of complete independence.

The collections are a wonderful rich archival source. They illustrate the various aspects of local administration and democratic government during one of the most significant periods in Irish republican history. Commencing with records created when the authorities and country were under British rule and ending with minutes recording the authorities' recognition of Dáil Éireann. At their inaugural meetings most of the Councils passed resolutions welcoming the introduction of the Local Government

Act, while also expressing their desire for and intention to work towards Home Rule. The following gives a good illustration of the wording of many of the resolutions passed on that important day: 'That we the members of Gort District Council, at this our first meeting elected under the extended franchise, declare our unalterable devotion to the cause of National self



government for Ireland, and whilst we intend to utilise the Local Government Act to the best of our ability by no means consider it a substitute for Home Rule and are determined to use every legitimate means in our power to secure that National self government'.¹⁶

However, by 1920 Home Rule was off the agenda and most Rural District Councils, like the Galway Rural District Council, resolved to '...acknowledge the authority of Dáil Éireann as the duly elected Government of the Irish People and undertake to give effect to all decrees duly promulgated by the said Dáil Éireann in so far as same affects this Council...'.¹⁷

16. Gort Poor Law Union minutes, G01/12/86, p624. This volume includes minutes for Gort Rural District Council between 15 April 1899 and 29 July 1899.
17. Galway Rural District Council, G01/9/3, p1,354.

Meanwhile in recognition of the underground Dáil Éireann the Mountbellew Rural District Council ‘...consigned to the waste paper basket...’ a letter received from the Local Government Board.¹⁸

Initially the Councillors were often large landowners and magistrates, and as the democratic system developed the Councils became more reflective of Irish society with small farmers and local businessmen being elected. The Councillors were primarily men, though in the early days some women sat as Councillors; such as in Mountbellew where there were three female Councillors, namely Lady Bellew, Lady Clonbrock and Mrs May Burke.

The Loughrea Minutes also reveal that two female members, Ms Nora Cahill and Ms Gertrude MacNamara, were co-opted to the Council in April 1904, but only served as Councillors for a short period.

Councils such as the Clifden Rural District Council were constantly fighting poverty and the spread of disease, and had little time for or interest in making pronouncements on national political issues, while others, most notably Loughrea passed numerous resolutions regarding the political issues of the time. For instance, Loughrea Rural District Council’s concern and interest in national political issues is illustrated in various resolutions, such as when in 1902 it adopted the motto “No Anti-Nationalist need apply”¹⁹, and declared that all contractors employed by the Council were to be members of the United Irish League. The following year it pledged ‘...moral and material support to the Irish Language Movement...’.²⁰ Concern for land rights after the passing of the Land Bill [1903] prompted the Council to call on the Irish Party to ‘...watch the progress... and not to allow grazing farms to be purchased by the present holders but to leave them over for distribution amongst small agricultural

farmers which will be the only means of stopping the tide of emigration and which will in some measure satisfy the aspirations of our people namely - Ireland for the Irish and the land for the people’.²¹

The Gort Rural District Council, too, was initially quite vocal on political issues. The sentiments it expressed are generally reflective of the other Councils in the County, although at one of its first meetings in 1899 Councillor John Quinn issued a protest at the passing of political resolutions, stating ‘...we meet to do the business of the District and not for entertaining wild political resolutions’.²²

At its meeting on 9 February 1901, the Council passed a resolution of sympathy to the Royal family following the death of Queen Victoria. However, at the meeting of 23rd February Councillor Michael O’Donoghoe gave notice of his intention at the subsequent meeting to call for a resolution rescinding the resolution of sympathy.²³ At that same meeting the Council objected to the phraseology of the Coronation Oath, putting on ‘...record our vehement condemnation of the bigoted and unchristian phraseology in the succession and Royal Coronation Oath, galling as it has been at all times to millions of His Majesty’s subjects it is even now more reprehensible in the full light of the boasted freedom of the 20th century, and we call on the Prime Minister and legislators of England to remove these objectionable and odious expressions from a solemn declaration which we trust is not in its present form congenial to the views and taste of His Majesty Himself.’²⁴

The Mountbellew Rural District Council also protested in the ‘strongest manner, against the form of Oath taken by the King (Edward VII) on the occasion of His Coronation it singled out the Roman Catholic Religion for special insult.

18. Mountbellew Rural District Council, G01/6/20, 10 August 1920.
19. Loughrea Rural District Council, G01/8/3, p342.
20. Ibid., G01/8/3, p483.
21. Ibid., G01/8/3, p502.
22. Gort Rural District Council, G01/10/1, p80.
23. Ibid., G01/10/1, p817.
24. Gort, G01/10/1, p818.

It is deplorable that such a ceremony was made the occasion of reminding millions of Loyal Catholic subjects of penal times, and persecutions which belonged to a barbarous past, and we call on our Government to consign that remnant of past bigotry to the oblivion which it deserves...’.²⁵

In May 1916 Loughrea Rural District Council, like many other Rural District Councils nationwide, condemned the 1916 Easter Rising stating, ‘That, in common with the vast majority of our fellow countrymen, we deplore the occurrences in Dublin and other parts of Ireland during the past fortnight which resulted in the death of many innocent persons and the destruction of much property. We regret that many of our young countrymen were the dupes of German agents and of the enemies of the country, and for those of the rank and file of the insurgents we plead for mercy. We desire to convey to John Redmond and the Irish Party our wholehearted support for the constitutional movement for Home Rule...’

That we earnestly urge upon the Government the desirability, for the future peace of the country, of stopping immediately the carrying out of the capital punishment against those of our countrymen who were members of the rebel forces, and further that martial law should cease in as far as the trials of prisoners is concerned and further trials (if any) should be under the civil law.’²⁶

Following the execution of the leaders of the 1916 Easter Rising, Portumna Rural District Council, which normally refrained from making extensive comment on national political events, issued the following resolution, ‘...we the Members of the Portumna Rural District Council condemn the action of the Authorities in shooting the innocent people without any form of trial during the recent disturbance in Dublin, and we further condemn them for depriving us of the youth

25. Mountbellew Rural District Council, G01/6/3, p150.
26. Loughrea Rural District Council, G01/8/10, p642-623.
27. Portumna Rural District Council, G01/3/18, p60.
28. Loughrea Rural District Council, G01/8/13, p1.
29. Ibid., G01/8/12, p657.
30. Portumna Rural District Council, G01/3/4, p407.

and manhood of Ireland by deportation and whose sympathies were heartily in accord with the wishes of the Government as far as recruiting is concerned. That a Committee of the whole Board be appointed to collect funds for the dependents of those noble Irishmen who were shot during the disturbance’.²⁷

Several years later, in early 1921, following its recognition six months earlier of the authority of Dáil Éireann, the Loughrea Council placed an order for enlarged photographs of several of the leaders of the Rising.²⁸

In September 1920 the Loughrea Rural District Council resolved, ‘That all communication between the Rural District Council and their officers and the British Local Government Board in Dublin be discontinued, that no future Minutes of Meetings, Returns or correspondence of any kind be sent to them, but instead that Minutes and all information required be furnished to the Local Government Department of Dáil Éireann...’.²⁹

Many of the Councils also petitioned the government on the issue of tenant rights. They generally welcomed the various Land Acts passed which provided for the compulsory sale of land to the ‘...down-trodden tenantry of Ireland’.³⁰

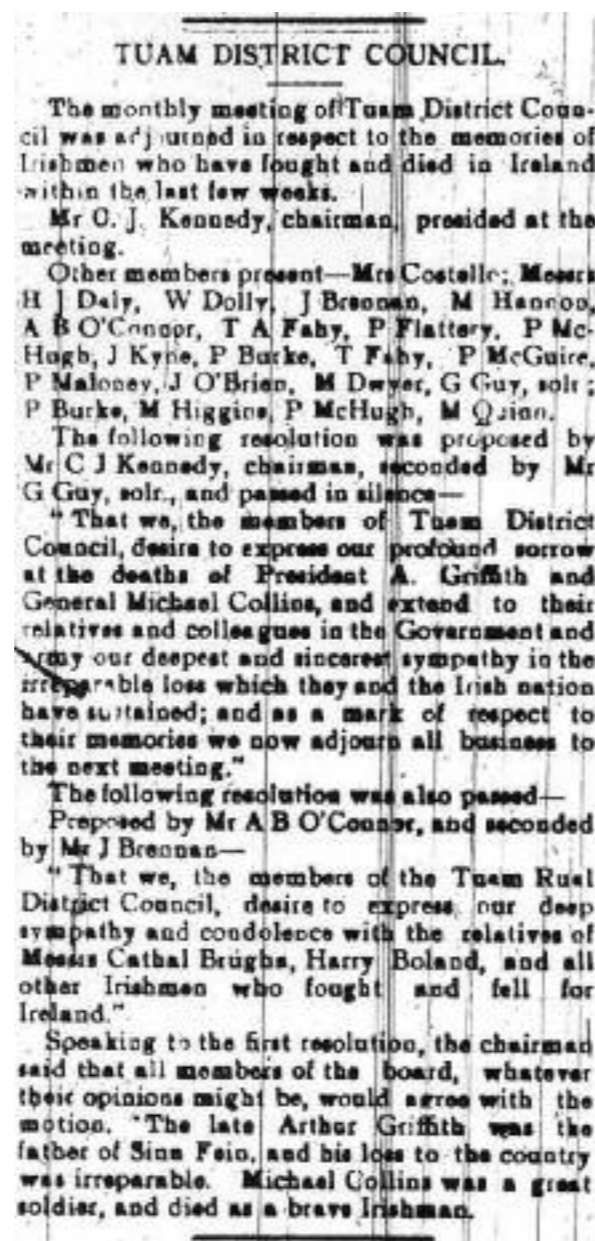
The Portumna Council minutes include the transcript of a letter from James Cosgrave, MP, to the Council stating ‘I beg to acknowledge receipt of your Council’s resolution of confidence in Mr Redmond and the Irish Parliamentary Party’, and stating that the Party had won everything that its programme had set out to achieve, and much more. Cosgrave pointed out that there was evidence of the Party’s power even in the Portumna district when ‘...it defeated the late Lord Clanricarde, one of the most tyrannical landlords in Ireland. To-day thank God that property is in the hands

of the C.D.B.³¹ which was created by the Irish Party, the planters are with a few exceptions removed, and the farms they grabbed are once more in the hands of the evicted tenants – who fought as glorious a battle as any ever fought by Irishmen for the land they loved. All this good work was won under the constitutional movement, which your Council in its wisdom has always approved of...³².

Despite the Land Acts many Rural District Councils still campaigned for better conditions for tenants, and several voiced their displeasure at the administration of the Congested Districts Board. Tuam Council, for example, stated that it deplored ‘...the fact that three fourths of the tenant farmers of this Union are still living in miserable patches of thin wet land and that we earnestly request the C.D. Board and landlords to divide even portions of the farms held by them in the different districts for tillage purposes for the betterment of the Nation...’³³

At about the same time the Loughrea Council called, in 1917, on the Congested Districts Board ‘...to put their compulsory powers in force to purchase the Lewis Estate in this Rural District. There are 160 tenants in the Estate under £10 valuation and of the 60 tenants evicted under the Plan of Campaign³⁴ only 12 have been restored to their holdings and of those some are in possession of non-economic holdings’.³⁵

Living conditions in Ireland at the turn of the 20th century were very poor, and in many instances appalling. There was immense poverty, overcrowding, and an abundance of one roomed cabins which were unfit for human habitation. Many dwellings were also



The Tuam Herald report on a Tuam Rural District Council meeting wherein they express their sorrow at the death of Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins, September 1922

31. The Congested Districts Board was established under the Balfour Land Act of 1891. Its purpose was to develop the West of Ireland. The government appointed a board of commissioners to give aid to designated congested areas. It purchased land for tenants and re-distributed it in economic holdings. It spent a total of £2m on improvements to land, houses, farm buildings, drainage, roads and fences. It encouraged a wide range of cottage industries (such as bee-keeping, spinning, knitting, crochet, lace-work, carpentry, kelp-making), and taught invaluable skills, for example, in domestic economy, poultry and egg production, and horse-breeding. (http://multitext.ucc.ie/d/Ireland_society_economy_1870-1914). The Board was dissolved under the Land Law (Commission) Act of 1923, and its functions were transferred to the Irish Land Commission.

32. Portumna Rural District Council, G01/3/8, pp97-98.

33. Tuam Rural District Council, G01/11/15, p267.

34. The Plan of Campaign was a movement started by William O'Brien (1852-1928) and John Dillon in 1886, to force landlords to reduce exorbitant rents; tenants offered a fair rent, and if this was refused paid nothing.

35. Loughrea Rural District Council, G01/8/11, pp22-23.

used to house farm animals, such as pigs. These conditions of course contributed to the spread of diseases, such as scarlatina, typhoid and typhus.

The Portumna Rural District Council minutes for 1910 include a transcript of a letter from Dr Kennedy, Medical Officer of Health, which gives a very good indication of the living conditions of the time. The letter stated that ‘...I have made an inspection of many of the houses in Portumna within the last few days, and as a result I have come to the conclusion that there is great room for improvement in the manner under which the people conduct their homes at present, and in addition, I am compelled to state that the hygienic conditions existing therein are worthy only of more ancient times. As an example I visited one house () where I found that one of the bedrooms had been converted into a stable. It was full of straw, manure and filth of all description and as an explanation of such an abominable exhibition I was informed that a donkey had been housed there the night before ...on the other hand I do not wish for a moment to lay all the blame at the door of the poor, as I consider that the Landlords in some cases have neglected their duties as to the proper repair and upkeep of their property. I say that the property of Lord Clanricarde – such as I have visited – and also of the late Major Bulles, is at present in a very un-kept state, and the fact is so patent as to lead one to believe that the lack of proper accommodation for the poor is the only excuse there is for living under such circumstances...’³⁶.

Almost ten years later the Council received a letter from a tenant of one of its labourers cottages at Fairyhill and asked the Council to ‘..board up the front

of the shed attached to his cottage in order that his sons can sleep in it. He has been sleeping in the shed from fifteen years and it is most uncomfortable and inhuman. There is no room in the cottage for his family, and when his two sons came home from the front they had to sleep on the kitchen hearth. It could be made a sleeping apartment for a small amount, and trusting the Council will do it for him.’³⁷ The Council refused to board up the place, but allowed the tenant to do so at his own expense.

To combat sub-standard housing and poverty the councils in County Galway were, under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts 1883 (46 & 47 Vic. c.60) and 1885 (48 & 49 Vic. c.77),³⁸ involved in the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages, they campaigned for better conditions for local tenants, and had in this regard many dealings with the Congested Districts Board.

Under the Labourers Acts the Councils first applied to the Local Government Board, giving details of a proposed Improvement Scheme. Upon receipt of an application from a Rural District Council the Local Government Board in turn applied to the Board of Works giving its recommendation that a loan be granted. The Schemes involved an assessment of needs, selection and acquisition of sites, advertising for tenders, design and building of cottages, fixing payments to contractors, letting of cottages, and the collection of rents. Some Councils were far more progressive than others in applying for schemes. They were willing to take out substantial loans to commence extensive building programmes, in particular from 1906 onwards.

36. Portumna, G01/3/12, pp11-12, 16.

37. Portumna Rural District Council, G01/3/19, p413.

38. The Archives of the Office of Public Works at the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin contains a substantial quantity of records relating to the various schemes and may be of value to those seeking further information on this topic. See Guide to the Archives of the Office of Public Works, Rena Lohan, The Stationery Office, Dublin 1994, (pp256-257).

Each Council adopted letting regulations for the letting of cottages and allotments. Generally included in the regulations was a Council's undertaking to keep and maintain the cottages in tenable condition and repair during tenancy, with the tenants obliged not to sub-let the property and to keep the premises in a clean and sanitary state. The Gort Rural District Council regulations specified that the 'Rent for each cottage and plot of one acre of land attached thereto, two shillings per week. Rent of acre plot pending erection of cottage thereon, one shilling per week.'³⁹ However, the Local Government Board was of the opinion that the proposed rents were 'quite excessive'.⁴⁰ Therefore, following further consideration the Council reduced the rent for a cottage with a one-acre plot to 1 shilling 6 pence, and to 9 pence per week for the rent of each acre allotment.⁴¹

Many of the Councils encountered ongoing difficulty in collecting rents. In December 1922 for instance, the Mountbellew Council minutes record that it received a letter from the Ministry for Local Government stating that '...they have observed that at the close of the last half year, there were large rent arrears outstanding in the District. The Ministry are prepared to make allowances for the exceptional period through (which) our Country is passing, but they are confident that if the Collectors are energetic in the pursuit of their duties, the arrears can be reduced...'.⁴²

By the 1920s Galway Rural District Council had provided only 40 cottages, with the majority of these built with the assistance of the Congested Districts Board on the Aran Islands. The Council resolved that it '...would be glad to avail themselves of the Congested Districts Board offer, but they fail to see how a Scheme can be adopted for Aran Islands, without giving the residents of other parts of the Rural District an opportunity of also applying for cottages. The costs

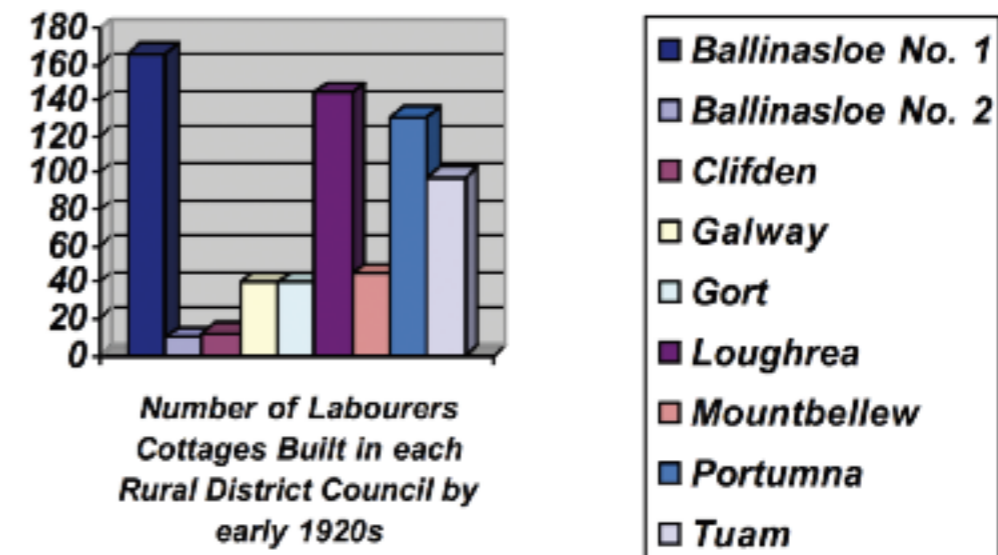
incurred in connection with the last Scheme were so prohibitive that the Council cannot see their way to embark on a second one'.⁴³

Meanwhile, by 1925 Clifden had provided only 12 Labourers cottages in its district. While in relative terms this was a mediocre performance, the scale of poverty in the district hindered a great building drive. It did, however, lobby the Congested Districts Board on several occasions requesting that it give some assistance. In 1913, for example, it resolved 'That we strongly condemn the action of the Congested Districts Board in their carelessness by leaving Connemara in its present condition, now it is as bad as in the worst days of the old landlordism, more shame to the Congested Districts Board having a vast amount of money at their disposal spent on officials that are not competent for their duty.

It is too bad after the Board being so long in existence that fever and other outbreaks of disease are more numerous than before they were created'.⁴⁴

Ballinasloe No.1, Loughrea and Portumna Rural District Councils were the most active in providing cottages, building 166, 145 and 131 respectively. Gort provided 40, Mountbellew 45, Tuam 98, and by 1918 Ballinasloe No. 2 Rural District Council had provided 10.

According to the Portumna Rural District Council minutes of September 1910 the average cost of building a labourer's cottage was £176.13 at that time.⁴⁵ From these minutes we learn too that many building contractors encountered difficulties in procuring materials and staff during World War I, and so schemes were often deferred, with tender prices subsequently altered to accommodate increased costs. Following the various building programmes there were contradictory reports regarding living and sanitary conditions.



In Clifden, for example, Dr Casey, Medical Superintendent Officer of Health had made various reports on the sanitary condition of the Clifden Rural District in 1919 which the Local Government Board summarised as follows, '...Houses in Clifden without water-closets - byreing of cattle in dwellings ; accumulation of rubbish and manure heaps in some of the passages and lanes in Clifden; a few houses unfit for human habitation; keeping of pigs by some persons in Clifden without proper piggeries ...'.⁴⁶

Yet the minutes of Tuam Rural District Council for the same year (May 1919) include details of a report from Thomas B. Costello, Medical Superintendent Officer of Health, wherein he states, 'The Labourers Cottages have been a great success in every way, still many houses are required particularly in the vicinity of the towns. The old single room cabin is fast disappearing but there is much room for improvement in the

housing of the people, particularly in the sleeping accommodation'.⁴⁷

With regard to health and sanitation, conditions were at the turn of the century also very poor. Yet, the period from 1899 to 1920 saw many developments in social and health legislation. For instance the Local Government Board issued a letter in October 1904 to the local authorities, advising them they '...would do well to have a supply of placards and leaflets printed and distributed showing the steps that should be taken to prevent the spread of consumption'.⁴⁸ By 1908 Ireland had the lowest death rate from infectious diseases in the British Isles, with the marked exception of tuberculosis. A Tuberculosis Prevention Act of 1908 gave County Councils power to provide sanatoria and, while schemes for treatment were slow in being brought into operation, between 1916 and 1918, tubercular mortality had been reduced by 25%.

39. Gort Rural District Council, G01/10/6, pp899-900.

40. Ibid., G01/10/6, p107.

41. Ibid., G01/10/6, p1039.

42. Mountbellew Rural District Council, G01/6/20, 12 December 1922, p15.

43. Galway Rural District Council, G01/9/3, pp444-445.

44. Clifden Rural District Council, G01/7/10, p25.

45. In 1944 the average cost of building a house was £474.3.6 (Loughrea Town Commissioners Minutes, LTC1/12, p129).

46. Clifden Rural District Council archive collection, G01/7/13, p191.

47. Tuam Rural District Council, 1919, G01/11/16, p642.

48. Gort Rural District Council, G01/10/4, p265.

The Rural District Councils acted as sanitary authorities and as such they dealt with matters relating to the control of disease (such as scarlatina, typhoid and typhus) and the provision of water. They were engaged in inspecting houses and taking remedial action where necessary. The minutes for the Councils thus record the number of houses, yards, and premises inspected, the number of houses, rooms or premises lime-washed, the number of people using a disinfecting chamber, the number of articles of clothing disinfected, and the clothing and bedding destroyed by order of the sanitary authority.

Despite many improvements conditions were still poor, as recorded for instance in the Clifden Rural District Council Minutes, where its Medical Superintendent Officer's report makes rather depressing reading. It states '...the large number of cases of consumption or tubercular disease the chief cause of which is due to wretched housing, overcrowding, want of ventilation, damp earthen floors with swampy surroundings, byreing of cattle in dwellings, and the absence of isolation of consumptives from the younger members of their own families...'.⁴⁹

The Councils, as the sanitary authority in their areas, endeavoured to combat the spread of disease. This was achieved primarily with the provision of clean water, by the sinking of wells and the erection of water pumps, for instance at Ryehill, Belclare, Kilconly, Milltown, and Monivea in the Tuam Rural district, and also by the provision of sewerage schemes.

In January 1907, for example, the Gort Rural District Council received an estimate of £450 for the provision of a water supply and sewerage works in the town of Gort. In addition, in February 1912, the Council discussed the adoption of a scheme for the supply of water to Ardrahan and the surrounding district,⁵⁰ but it

felt that as there was a well in Caherkelly, approximately two miles from Ardrahan, they could not justify the expenditure.⁵¹

Meanwhile Galway Rural District Council was also involved in the construction and maintenance of water pumps, in particular at Corrandulla and Caherateemore. The Council had by December 1912 secured a Deed of Mortgage of £800 for the sinking of wells.⁵² Though progress in the sinking of the wells was slow, they were nearing completion towards the end of 1913 when the Labour strike of 1913, particularly in Dublin, delayed the procurement of parts to enable the completion of the required work.⁵³ The Corrandulla pump was finally in working order in May 1914.⁵⁴ The Caherateemore well was completed in October 1915.

Likewise Tuam Rural District Council was involved in the provision of wells, pumps and sewers. The provision of a sewerage scheme in Headford involved substantial discussion. Dr Golding, Medical Officer for the district, stated in 1915 that whilst '...it was hopeless to expect any new system of drainage in Headford, the least that should be done is to have the old sewer opened and cleaned and new grates and traps put down in place of the present grates'.⁵⁵ The Council's Engineer, Newell, submitted a detailed report to the Council on Headford Sewerage, and suggested that '...the District Council proceed to put the main sewer between the points mentioned...into proper working order, that at least six cross-drains be formed, to carry the water from the channel on the North side of the town, into the main sewer...'.⁵⁶ The estimated expenditure required to carry out these works was £75.00.

Similarly in Loughrea, one of its Medical Officers, Dr Ryan, campaigned for a main drainage scheme for the town, when in March he advised the Council that

'...the sewerage of the town is bad and defective... the old drains and sewers in the town are bad and roughly built and quite unsuitable for the conveyance of sewage from water closets. The new sewers were very badly constructed, no regard having been paid to leveling and proper connexions (sic)...'.

There is only one remedy which I am loath to recommend on account of the impoverished condition of people generally and that is a system of main drainage of the town.'⁵⁷

The Rural District Councils' work in relation to district roads was generally carried out by contract. Tenders were advertised for and received regularly for the repair and maintenance of specified roads. The successful contractor was then responsible for the repair and maintenance of the road for a specified period of time, generally a number of years.

The County Surveyor periodically inspected their work, and issued regular reports to the Rural District Councils on the quality and quantity of work required and carried out by contractors in their areas. Such reports were often negative. For example the County Surveyor, John Moran, in October 1909 was very critical of road contractors' work, and advised the Loughrea Council that its '...contractors, speaking generally, seem to regard road making as anything but a serious business. When everything else is attended to with due care, a hurried expedition is made by the contractor to the road after the expiration of the quarter, any kind of material is thrown out to do duty for road material, and then the contractor retires to winter quarters satisfied that the County Council money is at hand... Now I would warn your contractors that what is required is work – and my idea of work is road material delivered, well-broken, and well spread...'⁵⁸



49. Clifden Rural District Council, G01/7/12, p191.

50. Gort Rural District Council, G01/10/9, pp282-283.

51. Ibid., G01/10/9, p337.

52. Galway Rural District Council, G01/9/3, p337.

53. Ibid., G01/9/3, p465.

54. Ibid., G01/9/3, p94.

55. Tuam Rural District Council, G01/11/15, p 210.

56. Ibid., G01/11/15, pp282-283.

57. Loughrea Rural District Council, G01/8/7, p435-436.

58. Ibid., G01/8/7, p281-284.



Galway Rural District Council's Quarterly Minutes, which dealt exclusively with roads, record that the total road expenditure for 1904 was £2,281⁵⁹; and that twelve years later (1917) the County Surveyor estimated expenditure at £4,931.0.4, with £3,028.18.0 for the maintenance of the Main Roads and £1,902.2.4 for the District Roads.⁶⁰ In 1921 the estimated expenditure for the ensuing year was £8,125.⁶¹ During the period of the Civil War the County Surveyor reported in January 1922 on the '...deplorable condition of the important roads in the District, no work having been done on many of them during the

past quarter...'.⁶² The following year he advised that he was '...compelled to defer money on a considerable number of your Contractors'⁶³; a shortage of material having prevented the contractors from completing their works to the required specification. The Surveyor also reported that a substantial number of bridges were damaged in the district. By January 1924 the Surveyor reported 'a substantial improvement in the work of the Contractors...'.⁶⁴

From the outset the Gort Rural District Council made several requests to Galway County Council for funding

59. Galway Rural District Council, G01/9/6, p19.

60. Ibid., G01/9/6, p188b.

61. Ibid., G01/9/6, p239.

62. Ibid., G01/9/6, p243.

63. Galway Rural District Council, G01/9/6, p253.

64. Ibid., G01/9/6, p264a.

to improve the pier in Kinvara. In December 1903, for instance, it resolved, 'That we...as the elected representatives of the people of the most important Electoral Divisions in South Galway again call upon the government to at once allocate a grant of £2,200 out of the Marine Works Act to carry out the long delayed and much needed improvement of the Kinvara Harbour...'.⁶⁵

'That we call upon the County Council to co-operate in the matter and to urge again upon the Government the urgency and importance of the work as one of the greatest possible utility...'.⁶⁵

In July 1904 the Council again brought the '...deplorable and very dangerous condition' of the pier to the government's attention. Two years later the Council 'Resolved: 'That we...express our strongest indignation at the action of the Department of Agriculture in withholding so long their promised contribution of £1,100 towards the improvement of Kinvara Harbour. That as the owners of the Sharpe Estate assigned over their interest in the Pier and Harbour as a free gift to the County Council forever, on the distinct understanding that a sum of £3,500 would be expended on the improvement of the Harbour and extension of the Pier we now call upon the Chief Secretary to insist without delay on the Department paying over this contribution to the County Council and allow the work to be started at once'.⁶⁶

The Minutes of Galway County Council reveal that the repair works on the pier were completed by November 1906 at a cost of £1,400, at which time the County

Council enquired from the Local Government Board if the extension of the pier could then be proceeded with.⁶⁷

As Burial Boards the Rural District Councils were involved with the provision and maintenance of graveyards (such as at Kiltartan⁶⁸ and Shanaglish⁶⁹ in the Gort District), and the appointment of caretakers.

In addition to the insight into daily civil administration of a district the archive collections also often contain tit-bits of other interesting information. For example, from the Clifden Rural District Council we learn that its Sanitary Sub-Officer, Mr Prendergast, '...expended a sum of £6.10.0, in connection with the funeral arrangements of the Chief Officer of the *Lusitania*⁷⁰ whose remains had been washed ashore at Inishbofin, for coffin charges, carpenters' fee, disinfectants and stimulants etc...'.⁷¹

Meanwhile in Tuam the Council there had received a report that Mrs Stewart and Mrs Hare of Dublin Road are 'about to have the body of their sister, Miss Hare, who was lost in the *Lusitania* and was interred at Queenstown (Cobh), disinterred there and re-interred at Tuam New Cemetery...'.⁷²

From the Portumna minutes we learn that it adopted a resolution of Dublin County Council "...trusting that [there was] no truth in the report recently published that an English Official was about to be appointed to the Secretary-ship of the Post Office in Ireland and informing the Postmaster General that such an appointment would be strongly resented in Ireland".⁷³

65. Gort Rural District Council, G01/10/3, p323.

66. Ibid., G01/10/5, p129.

67. Galway County Council Minutes, GC01/1 /1, p762.

68. Gort Rural District Council, G01/10/5, p835.

69. Ibid., G01/10/5, p895.

70. The *Lusitania*, built by John Brown & Co. of Clydebank, was the first British four-stacker. She made her maiden voyage from Liverpool to New York on 7 September 1907, and was kept in regular service during the World War I, making monthly sailings between Liverpool and New York. However, on 7 May 1915, while heading east off the Old Head of Kinsale the *Lusitania* was torpedoed without warning by a German U-20 and sank within 18 minutes. Of those on board, 761 were rescued while 1,198 perished.

71. Clifden Rural District Council, G01/7/11, p232.

72. Tuam Rural District Council, G01/11/15, p357.

73. Portumna Rural District Council, G01/3/13, p453.

We also learn from this Council's minutes that the Organising Librarian of the Carnegie Trust (County Galway Carnegie Libraries) advised the Council in 1924 that on '...notification of appointment of a Representative Local Library Committee for the purpose of establishing a branch (other than a school library) in this district he'd be pleased to forward Form of Application'⁷⁴.

When John Millington Synge's (1871-1909) play *The Playboy of the Western World* debuted on January 26, 1907, at the Abbey Theatre in Dublin, riots and protests followed the opening performance. Many people felt it depicted Irish people as heavy drinkers and brawlers, and depicted the rural Irish as simpletons. The Gort Rural District Council condemned the play, stating, 'That we ...protest most emphatically against the libellous comedy "The Playboy of the Western World", that was belched forth during the past week in the

Abbey Theatre, Dublin, under the fostering care of Lady Gregory and Mr Yeats. We congratulate the good people of Dublin in howling down the gross buffoonery and immoral suggestions that are scattered throughout this scandalous performance. It is an extraordinary thing that any Christian, much less an Irishman, should so grossly libel his country, as to suggest that any Irish girl should be found wooing with no trace of modesty a man whose sole claim to affection is that he murdered his father. It is time that we should stop the children of this Union from partaking of the hospitality of Lady Gregory in the future, as a protest against her active participation and co-operation in the libelling of the Irish character.'⁷⁵



74. Portumna Rural District Council, G01/3/24, p421.
75. Gort Rural District Council, G01/10/5, p449.

Arrangement of Collections

Collections are listed in alphabetical order in this Guide. Each individual collection's descriptive list commences with the most numerous series of records: in each case this is the Minutes. Any additional series, if extant, are listed, again, by order of the most numerous or in chronological order. All collections have an individual code (e.g. G01/7 for Clifden), which, together with the item reference number, should be quoted in full when

citing from the records, and each reference cited should be preceded by the initials GCCA (Galway County Council Archives). So for instance, for a reference to a volume of the Mountbellew minutes the following should be used, with the individual volume number inserted in place of the asterisk, GCCA G01/6/*.

Access to the Collections

All the Rural District Council collections are available on microfilm.

Access to the collections is by appointment with the Archivist at Galway County Council Archives at Island House, Cathedral Square, Galway.

The production of microfilm copies has in some instances received support under the Heritage Council Grants Scheme. Grant aid was received for the following, Ballinasloe No. 1 (G00/6), Ballinasloe No. 2 (G00/7), Clifden (G01/7), Gort (G01/10), Loughrea, (G01/8), Mountbellew (G016), and Portumna (G01/3).

Details of Galway County Council Archives' holdings are available online at www.galway.ie/archives

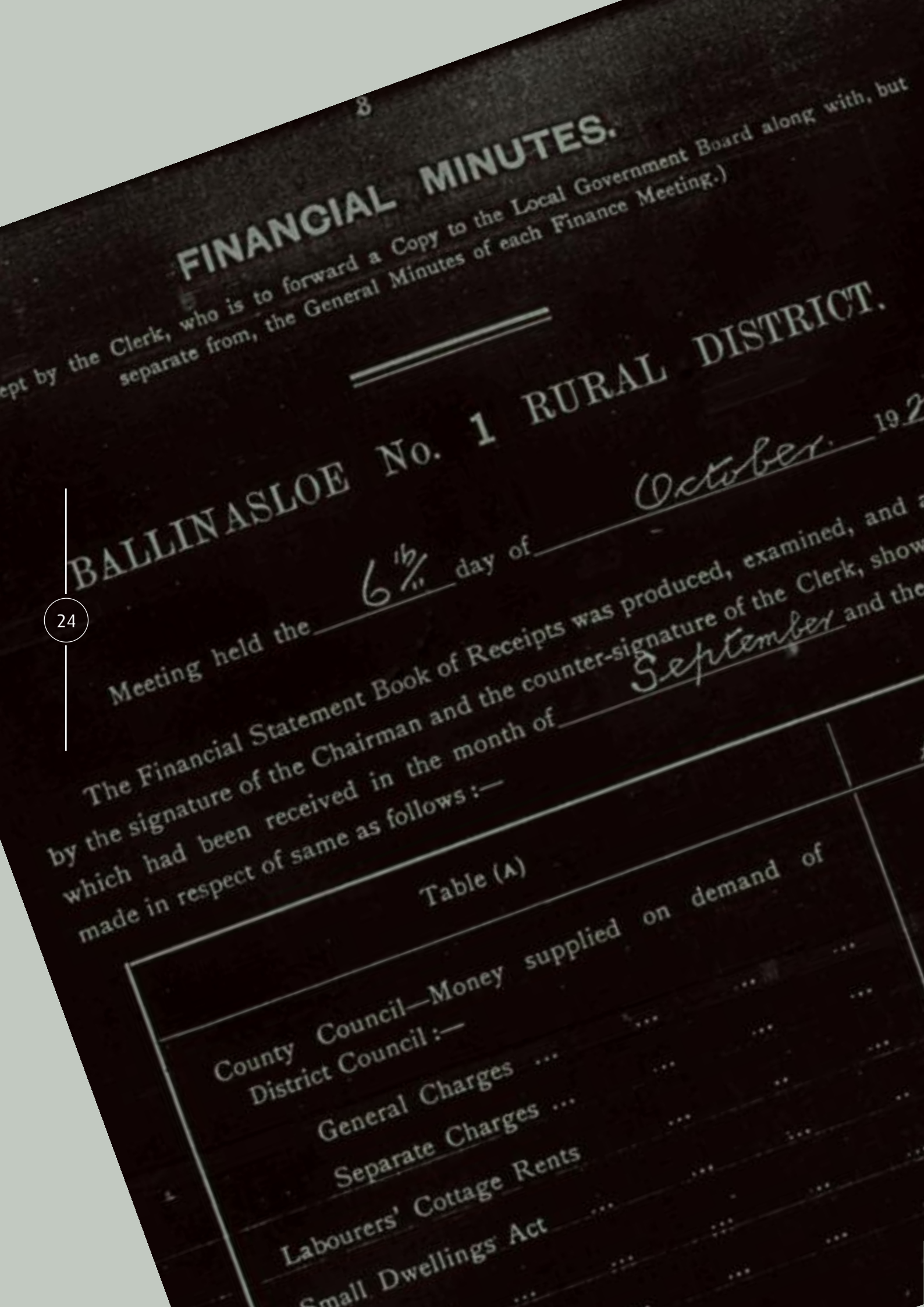


TO
IRISH
Government,
AN ACCOUNT OF THE LAW RELATING
TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT
OF
COUNTIES, CITIES AND DISTRICTS
WITH A
FULL EXPLANATION OF THE ACT OF 1898
TOGETHER WITH THE
TEXT OF THE MEASURES
AND AN
INDEX.
BY
DUNCAN and GEORGE
Solicitors-at-Law.

For The Record The Archives of Galway's Rural District Councils



**Individual Descriptive Lists
for each Rural District
Council Archive Collection**



Ballinasloe No.1 Rural District Council Archive Collection

This incomplete collection of archives from the Ballinasloe No.1 Rural District Council consists of eleven minute books, dating from 1907 to 1925, and one Roads Register for the period 1899 – 1911. The collection code is G00/6.

Two Councils administered the Ballinasloe district. The No.1 Council came under the jurisdiction of Galway County Council, and the No.2 Council came under the jurisdiction of Roscommon County Council. The No.1 Council's geographical area of responsibility measured 121,334 acres, 3 roods⁷⁶ and 26 perches⁷⁷. It included the electoral divisions of Abbeygormacan, Ahasaragh, Auhgrim, Ballinasloe Rural, Ballymacward, Clonfert, Clontuskert, Kellysgrove, Kilconnell, Killaan, Killalaghtan, Killoran, Kiltormer, Killure (aka Kilvore), Kilmacshane, Kylemore, Laurencetown, Lismanny and Oatfield.

The Rural District Council meetings, commonly held in the Board Room of the Union Workhouse, were generally held twice a month and then only if the required quorum of Councillors was in attendance. There were usually 41 elected and/or co-opted members of Council, however from the early 1920s the number dropped to 17. Lists of elected members may be found in various contemporary directories such as Slater's or Pigot's, and they were often listed in contemporary issues of local newspapers.

This fragmented collection consists primarily of minute books recording the proceedings, with gaps due to the loss of volumes, of Council meetings held between

1909 and 1925. The minutes record general and financial business proceedings, together with the proceedings of the Sanitary Authority, and proceedings conducted under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts. The minutes illustrate the range of matters the Council dealt with, and its concern with a variety of issues from contemporary political and social matters, both local and national, to public health and sanitary issues.

For instance the Council's interest in and concern with national political issues is illustrated in several strongly worded resolutions, such as its condemnation of the proposal to introduce conscription in Ireland: '... we, the Ballinasloe District Council deny the right of England to conscript the Irish People and strongly affirm that we are not bound to obey a law passed by the brutal force of Carson's influence on the English Government. That we hereby pledge ourselves to abide by the advice of our Leaders and the Irish Hierarchy to resist by all our efforts the enforcement of this iniquitous blood tax on the Irish Nation' (G00/6/18, p315).

In July 1920 the Council recognised the Irish Republican government and 'Resolved "That the Minutes of all our Meetings be sent to An Dáil Éireann and that we ignore the Local Government Board⁷⁸ in future' (31 July 1920, G00/6/20, p1).

Towards the end of World War I the Council expressed its concern regarding the scarcity of essential food-stuffs and ordered, 'THAT IN VIEW OF THE GREAT NEED OF PRODUCING ALL THE FOOD POSSIBLE IN IRELAND

76. Equal to quarter of an acre, i.e. 10,890 square feet or 1011.7141056m².
 77. Equal to a square rood, i.e. 25.29 m². There are 160 perches to an acre (1 square rood is 0.00625 acres).
 78. The official central governing body for local authorities in Ireland at the time when it was under British rule.

DURING THE COMING SEASON, WE NOW NOTIFY ALL TENANTS OF Labourers COTTAGES IN THE DISTRICT THAT WE WILL REQUIRE THEM TO TILL THE ENTIRE PLOTS IN THEIR POSSESSION THIS YEAR, OR FAILING TO DO SO, THEY WILL BE DISPOSSESSED BY US IN VIRTUE OF THE POWER GIVEN TO US BY THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD' (26 January 1918, G00/6/18, p237).

The Council was responsible for the building, maintenance and repair of local roads, such as the Clonfert New Road, Park Bridge, Killallaghan Road and Oatfield Road. The administration of such works took up much of the Council's time and there was considerable discussion at their meetings regarding the state of the roads in the district and work carried out by the Council's contractors. The County Surveyor deferred, and sometimes even struck off, payments as a result of poor quality work. In January 1910 he wrote to the Council stating that 'With but few exceptions your contractors have done very little during the past three months to remedy the condition of affairs which existed prior to the last quarterly meeting..... As a consequence of this neglect I am sorry that a considerable amount of money is deferred, and as all the inspections for the coming quarter must close at the end of March, I would urge the contractors to go to work at once and spare the unpleasant operation of having to 'strike-of' these deferred amounts at the next April meeting...' (January 1910, G00/6/9, p554). The Council objected to his actions.

As Sanitary Authority the Council was responsible for the erection and maintenance of water pumps, such as those at Eskerboy, Corraneena, Lawrencetown and Cloonigny, Cappa and Abbeyland.

Under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts 1883 (46 & 47 Vict. c.60) and 1885 (48 & 49 Vict. c.77)⁷⁹ the

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FINANCIAL MINUTES.

(To be kept by the Clerk, who is to forward a Copy to the Local Government Board along with, but separate from, the General Minutes of each Finance Meeting.)

BALLINASLOE No. 1 RURAL DISTRICT.

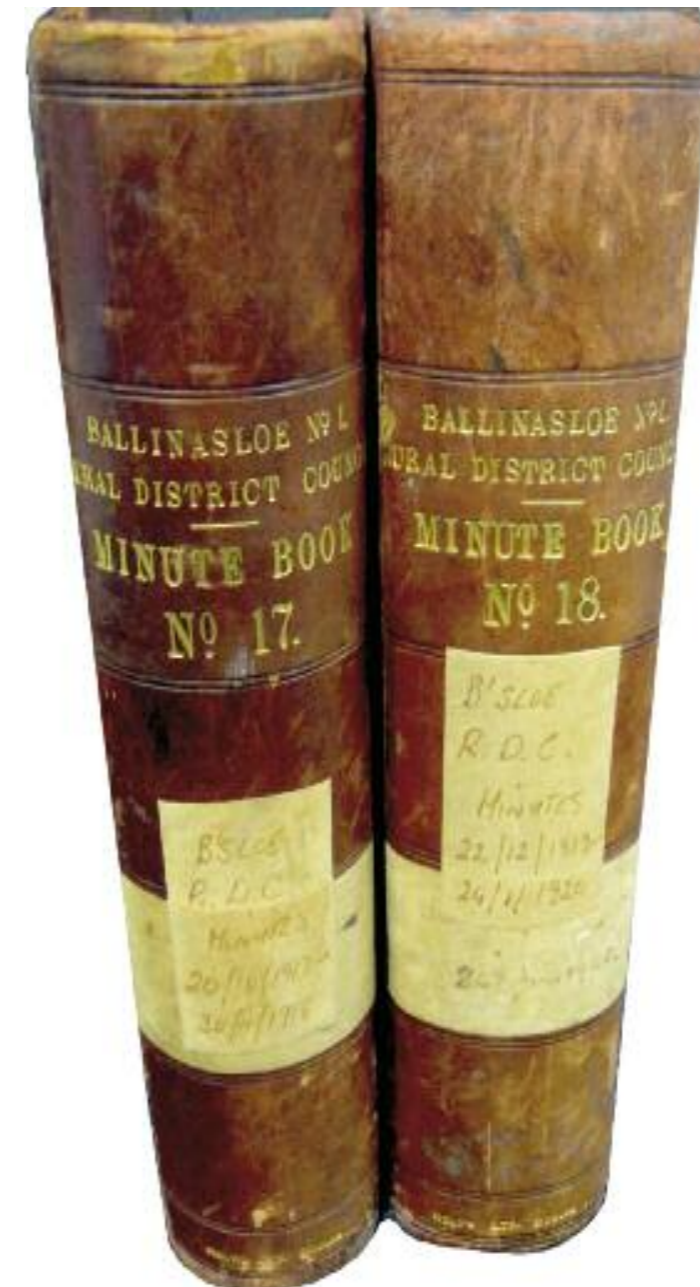
Meeting held the 6th day of October 1923.

The Financial Statement Book of Receipts was produced, examined, and authorized by the signature of the Chairman and the counter-signature of the Clerk, showing the sums which had been received in the month of September and the Ledger entries made in respect of same as follows:—

Table (A)	Amount	
	£	s. d.
County Council—Money supplied on demand of District Council:—		
General Charges	219	4. 6.
Separate Charges		
Labourers' Cottage Rent	38	12. 4.
Small Dwellings Act	9	14. 10.
Baital Fees		
Water Rents		
Other Receipts:—		
General Charges		
Separate Charges		
Interest allowed by Treasurer:—		
On Reserve Account		
On Loans		
TOTAL Revenue Receipts	268	18
Loans received, viz:—		
.....		
.....		
.....		
TOTAL	268	18

Ballinasloe Rural District Council, G00/6/20, Financial Minutes

79. The Archives of the Office of Public Works at the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin contains a substantial quantity of records relating to the various schemes funded under these Acts, and may be of value to those seeking further information on this topic. See Rena Lohan, Guide to the Archives of the Office of Public Works, The Stationery Office, Dublin 1994, (pp256-257).



Council was involved in the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages, and had in this regard many dealings with the Congested Districts Board and campaigned for better conditions for local tenants. Such as '... we, the Ballinasloe No. 1. Rural District

80. Galway County Council Minutes, GC01/1/4, p21.

Council demand a Sworn Inquiry into the working of the Congested Districts Board on the Comyn Estate in the County Galway and their treatment of the unfortunate congests in said estate....' (G00/6/18, p247).

The appointment, or co-opting, of Councillors, chairmen and vice chairmen to the Council is duly recorded in the minutes, as are the postponements of local elections during the war years (1914-18).

In 1923 the Council voiced its objection to the proposed abolition of Rural District Councils. It is recorded in the minutes that 'The Clerk read a resolution from the Ida Rural District Council (County Waterford) emphatically protesting against the action of the Government in proposing to abolish the Rural District Councils in the Free State, and asking the Council to appoint Delegates to represent them on a deputation which is to wait on the Ministry of Local Government for the purpose of pointing out that Rural District Councils are absolutely indispensable and bearing in mind the efficiency with which the functions of those bodies have been carried out in the past. THE COUNCIL APPROVED THE RESOLUTION...' (24th November 1923, G00/6/20, p353).

Nevertheless Rural District Councils were abolished in 1925. In the immediate aftermath Public Works Committees were established to continue their work. The former Clerk to the Council was to act as Clerk to the newly established Committee. However, there being no permanent Clerk in Ballinasloe Mr John J. Hanafin, former Clerk to the Loughrea Council, was appointed Clerk to the Ballinasloe Committee. He was also appointed Clerk to the Gort and Portumna Committees.⁸⁰

Date when each Collector assigned to have his books checked	Number of Cottages			RENT COLLECTION										COLLECTOR'S CASH ACCOUNT				
	Build	Let	Plots	Arrears due by Tenants at close of last Month	Rents accrued during the Month	TOTAL RENT COLLECTION	Collected during the Month	Arrears due by Tenants at the close of this Month	Balance (if any) at close of the last Month	Collected during the Month	TOTAL to be accounted for by Collector	Lodged with Treasurer during the Month	Balance (if any) in hand at close of this Month					
June	164	6	101	8 10	50 10	9 15 19 4	50 10 2	101 9 9		50 10 2	50 10 2							
				<p>1918 on 21st March</p> <p>51. 14 0 13 4 24 65 1 3 3 6 9 6 3 6 9 6</p> <p>Seed Rate Repayment for June.</p> <p>See attached Letter</p> <p>* June rents included in these arrears, though not collectable until July.</p>														
TOTALS																		

Ballinasloe Rural District Council minutes relating to housing, G00/6/18, 29 June 1918

I. Minutes of Ballinasloe No.1 Rural District Council, 1907-1925

G00/6/

Volumes of minutes of the proceedings of Ballinasloe No.1 Rural District Council meetings, recording attendance at meetings, which were generally held twice a month, together with proceedings of Council business conducted under various legislation, covering general, financial, sanitary, and Labourers housing issues. The minutes record motions proposed, adopted and or rejected by the Council. They also include details of correspondence received, generally from the Local Government Board and actions required thereafter.

The proceedings of the Council acting as the Sanitary Authority relate to health and sanitary conditions, such as the prevention of disease, inspection of cow sheds and human living conditions, and the care and management of burial grounds, sewerage systems and water supply. The proceedings under the Labourers Acts relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages and rent collection.

Minutes are generally signed by the Chairman and witnessed by the Secretary. The minutes also usually include an index to main resolution topics.

Average size: 650pp

(1.-7.)

8. 9 November 1907 - January 1909

9. 13 February 1909 - 23 April 1910

Matters and issues discussed include:

- 'Letter from the L.G.B. (Local Government Board) No. L1431/1909 dated 5th February 1909 stating that they observe from the Financial Minutes of the 23rd ultimo that the amount of arrears of rent due at the end of December last by the tenants of the Labourers Cottages reached the sum of £32.19.9 which is much too high and has increased since the previous month which stood at £28.6.2 and requesting the Council to warn the Collector to take immediate steps to bring the collections up to date....' (p32).
- 'Extension of Telegraphs. Letter from the L.G.B. No 26028 dated 20th February 1909 stating that they have before them the Descriptive list giving particulars in relation to the proposed extension of the Postal Telegraphs to Ballymacward and Gorteen together with a copy of the Resolution adopted by the Council

relative to the areas of charge of the cost thereof: and suggesting to the Council that it would be better that the Killoran Dispensary District which contains the several places mentioned in the resolution should be fixed as the areas of charge for the Expenses to be incurred in the matter' (p43).

- 'The Clerk submitted for signature an application to the Land Commission for the issue of £5,000 being the 3rd instalment of the Loan of £20,850 sanctioned for the purposes of the "Ballinasloe No. 1 Rural District Labourers (Unopposed) Order 1907".' (p65)
- Resolved: That in consideration of the charge imposed on Labourers Cottages in the way of rent, and for the purpose of relieving this strain, we, the members of the No.1 Rural District Council hereby pledge ourselves to give to each of these Labourers the making of one mile of the public road in places convenient or adjacent to each Cottages (sic), at prices fixed by the County Surveyor's estimate' (p112).
- 'Letter from the L.G.B. No. L5593/12 stating that they have had before them the entry in the minutes of the 27th ultimo relative to the letting of Labourers Cottages to militia men: and stating that the Board consider that this resolution is ultra vires, as there is no provision in the Labourers Acts disqualifying applicants for the tenancy of Labourers Cottages by reason of their having each year to give temporary service in the Militia or requiring that such persons must obtain a recommendation from at least 8 District Councillors in each case... The Council's resolution following receipt of the letter read 'The following minute was made. The Council will not give a cottage to any man except a man of good character and that the matter be left to the local Councillors', and 'The original applicants for cottages 98 and 123 were not in occupation of condemned dwellings' (p136).
- 'Read a letter from Mr John McLoughlin, Killure, dated 22nd August 1909 drawing attention to the filthy state of the water supply of the locality; there is no proper drinking water for six months of the year at least and there are about 22 families in the village of Killure; and asking the Council to take notice of the water' (p363).
- 'That we, the Ballinasloe No.1 Rural District Council strongly protest against the retention of an extra Police Force in East Galway, and we challenge Dublin Castle Authorities to point out one single incident that has occurred in our District to justify them in imposing a most unjust tax on the people who are already heavily burdened. That we demand the immediate withdrawal of these extra Police on the ground of the crimeless state of our District' (p383).

- 10.** 14 May 1910 – 12 June 1911 Matters and issues discussed include:
- 'That this Council desires to record their appreciation of the able and distinguished manner in which Counsel and Solicitor defended the Craughwell Prisoners at their recent trial in Dublin' (p43, see also p111).
 - 'Clonfert Pump: A report was read from Mr R W Finney D.C. (District Councillor) as to the condition of this pump in which he says it is in a bad state and requires immediate attention' (p60, see also p645).
 - 'Letter from Rev Mother Brigid, the Convent, Ballinasloe dated 11th June 1910 acknowledging the receipt of the Council's resolution of the 28th ultimo and thanking the Council for their kind expression of sympathy with her on the death of her sister, Mrs O'Doherty -"Eva of the Nation"⁸¹ (p111).
 - Letter from the Board of Works dated 9th March, 1911, forwarding for perfection by the Council Three deeds of Mortgage for a Loan of £225 (3 loans of £75 each) for the purpose of providing a water supply for Villages of Ervallah, Ballymanagh and Gorteenaveela....' (p566).
- 11.** 24 June 1911 - 27 July 1912
- 12.** 28 September 1912 – 27 September 1913
- (13.)**
- 14.** 17 October 1914 – 31 July 1915 Includes partial index to items discussed.
- 15.** 28 August 1915 – 26 August 1916 Includes partial index to items discussed.
Also Includes:
- 'A resolution from Portumna Rural District Council condemning the action of the Authorities in shooting innocent people without any trial during the recent disturbance in Dublin; condemning them for deporting the manhood of Ireland and that a Committee of the Whole board be appointed to collect funds for the dependants of those shot during the disturbance, was unanimously adopted' (24 June 1916, p555).
- 16.** 30 October 1916 – 28 September 1917
- (17.)**

81. Pen name for Mary Eva O'Doherty (nee Kelly), 1826-1910, poet from Headford, County Galway, married Kevin Izod O'Doherty (1823-1905) a convicted Young Irelander. She died in Brisbane, Australia in May 1910.

- 18.** 20 October 1917 – 30 November 1918. Includes:
- The County Surveyor, M.J. Kennedy, BA, BE, issued a Quarterly Report stating 'There are twenty-two contracts still remaining in your District for which you will find my rulings in Form 22. If the contractors till persist in shirking their obligations, I shall be compelled to take preliminary proceedings against them at an early date' (p9).
 - Letter from the LGB referring to the Council's Resolution of 27 October 1917 'requesting approval of the carrying out of repairs to cottages provided in the District under the Labourers Acts by the tenants owing to the scarcity of labour at the present time, and pointing out that the Council's proposal is open to several objections, but stating that the Council should take into consideration the propriety of framing a scheme whereby the necessary repairs to the cottages could be executed by Direct Labour under the superintendence of their Engineer...' (p133).
 - County Surveyor's report stating that '...all roads in your District have been substantially repaired where metal has been broken. Very substantial work has been done in the way of patch rolling, over twelve miles of road being done by this means, and the results obtained are very satisfactory. The District is still backward in the way of having material broken, but I have now two stone crushers working in your District and I hope to have all material broken within the current half-year. The estimated cost of roads in your District for the year ending on the 31st March, 1919 is as follows:- Main Roads £2,100, District Roads £1,900 or a total for all roads of £4,000...' (p181).
 - 'That as we understand a Local Committee has been formed in Ballinasloe for the purpose of buying up food stuffs in order to conserve such for the use of the Irish People, and thus avert a repetition of Black '47 we call on all farmers coming into Ballinasloe with feeding stuffs to at least give a preference to such Local Committee, and on all public bodies in the District to use their influence towards this desirable end' (p213).
 - 'That we, the Ballinasloe District Council deny the right of England to conscript the Irish People and strongly affirm that we are not bound to obey a law passed by the brutal force of Carson's influence on the English Government. That we hereby pledge ourselves to abide by the advice of our Leaders and the Irish Hierarchy to resist by all our efforts the enforcement of this iniquitous blood tax on the Irish Nation' (p315).
 - 'ESKERBOY PUMP The Clerk stated that on the 26th May, 1918 he had received a memorial from the inhabitants of Eskerboy protesting against the sinking of a well and erection of a pump in that locality, and that the Local Government Board had forwarded him on the 5th June, 1918 per Letter No. 26,150 a protest signed by Francis Finerty and others against the proposed erection of a pump at Eskerboy, and requesting that the Local Government Board may be furnished with the observations of the Council on the subject...' (p429).
 - County Surveyor's (M.J. Kennedy) Report stating, 'I beg to report that all roads in your District will be maintained by Direct Labour as from the 1st July last, and the expiring contracts are incorporated in the existing proposal. It will not be necessary to advertise roads and works for tender in future.....The Direct Labour staff are now engaged in quarrying materials for next season, and I can record fair progress

notwithstanding the difficulties of obtaining explosives and other facilities. I have arranged for a stone-breaking machine to start work immediately, and later I hope to have a roller employed...' (p451).

- 'Resolved /- That We, the Ballinasloe No.1 Rural District Council protest in the strongest possible manner against the treatment of the Irish people by the English Government, and drawing attention to the fact that whilst proclaiming for the past four years that her war aims are for the liberation and freedom of all small Nations, the fact is that Ireland whom she holds by the sword, one of the grandest and oldest small Nations of Europe, is suffering every form of oppression and tyranny at the hands of England, large numbers of her sons and daughters are deported on mock charges without trial to a foreign county, the National games are proscribed and the Nation's language banned, all public opinion stifled, in short hardly any parallel can be found in history for the present treatment of Ireland by the British Military Government...' (27 July 1918, p485).
- 19.** 22 December 1918 – 24 January 1920 Includes:
- 'The Council unanimously adopted a resolution from the Antrim Rural District Council protesting against such matters as Public Health Administration, Hospital Control etc., being centralised under the County Councils or any other new authority which may be established' (p111).
 - 'Read a letter from the Rev. D Coghlan, P.P. Aughrim requesting the Council, now that the War was over, to provide a new cemetery for the people of the parish...' (p123).
 - 'Resolved. That we, the members of Ballinasloe No.1 Rural District Council, having noticed for a long time that the prosperity of the town of Ballinasloe and surrounding districts is seriously handicapped for want of a suitable Sports Ground, strongly call on the Ballinasloe Agricultural and Horse Show Society to take immediate steps to extend, remodel and improve their Show Grounds so as to allow of football matches, hurling matches, sports, and other amusements being held therein. That we also call on all public bodies, irrespective of class, creed or politics, to give their support in this just demand for the improvement, welfare and prosperity of the town and district...' (p385).
 - 'The Council had before them 180 applications for Cottages under the New Housing Scheme, when after a discussion the Clerk was directed to write to the several Committees of the Council and ascertain from them where proposed sites are to be taken..., to summon Committees of the Council as done in the No. 10 Scheme, the Committees to have power to add the Local Clergy to their numbers' (p519).
 - 'Resolved / - That We, the No. 1. Rural District Council place on record our strong condemnation of the Congested Districts Board in the treatment to the Congested Tenants on the Comyn Estate, and we pledge our support to them in their endeavours to secure their lawful rights' (p587, see also p621).

- 20** 31 July 1920 – 27 December 1924, 4 April 1925 Includes:
- 'Resolved /- "That the Minutes of all our Meetings be sent to An Dáil Éireann and that we ignore the Local Government Board in future' (p1).
 - 'Arising out of the reading of a letter from the Local Government Board in relation to the stoppage of grants etc, unless the Council gave an Assurance to work as heretofore, it was on the motion of the Chairman (Mr Flanagan) seconded by Mr L. Garvey "That the Correspondence from the Local Government Board be burned". The letter was then destroyed' (p1).
 - 'Pass unanimously :- "...call on all Traders, Shopkeepers, etc., in Ballinasloe District to cease trading with the Firms in Ulster whose name do not appear on the White List as issued by Dáil Éireann".' (p43)
 - '...the Meeting adjourned without transacting any business as a mark of respect for the Lord Mayor of Cork (Terence McSweeney, Republican, who died on hunger strike), and the other Patriots who laid down their lives for Ireland' (p111).
 - 'The Clerk read correspondence from Mr Browne, Agent to the Pollock Estate with reference to the payment of half the cost of damage done to the Clontuskert Abbey Burial Ground by Mr Pollock's stock, Mr Browne not having given a definite reply to the Council's request for half payment the matter was adjourned to next meeting' (p225).
 - 'Dr Egan, Kilconnell, Medical Officer of Health came before the Council with regard to the Calla Pump, and stated the people in the locality were in a very bad way for water. The Council having the tender before them, rescinded their resolution of 28th July 1923 and opened the Tenders of the Artesian Well Boring Companies, on examination of the Tenders it was found that the lowest was from the Artesian Well Boring Company, Belville, Kilmeedy, but as this Contractor, as well as the other tendered for all pumps advertised, the Clerk was directed to communicate with the Firm and ascertain from them if they were prepared to carry out the work of the Calla Well at the prices set out in their tender, and proceed with the work at once....' (p259).
 - 'Letter from the Ministry of Local Government No. F 15021 /1923 dated the 6th November, 1923 enclosing for the information of the Council a copy of an Order which was made under Sub-Section 2 of Section 1 of the Local Elections (Postponement) Act, 1922 further postponing the statutory elections of Rural Districts, County Councillors and Guardians in Urban Districts, and adding that the Minister intends to introduce legislation to extend the limits of postponement of the 1922 Act so as to admit of those elections being held on a suitable date in 1924' (p329, see also p485 and 20 December 1924).
 - 'The Clerk reported to the Council that the Registration Registers for Births, Deaths & Marriages were handed over to the Secretary of the Loughrea County Home, and requesting the Council to fix a temporary gratuity for him pending final arrangements. The Clerk informed the Council that he was 9 years Superintendent Registrar, and that fees received from his office averaged £30 per year. The Council allowed the Clerk £104 temporary compensation pending the final granting of same by the Central Authority' (p415).

- '...unanimously condemn the Cobh outrage. We firmly believe this horror cannot be committed by the Agents of any Political Party, being so hideously un-Irish, but by some irresponsible Blackguards anxious to tarnish the name of our Country and cause further trouble....' (p487).
- '...congratulate President De Valéra on his release from prison and pledge our fidelity to him to steer the ship of Irish Freedom safe to Port...' (p595).
- 'The Council unanimously adopted the Resolution of the Galway Hospital and Dispensaries Committee viewing with horror the desecration of the dead which the removal of patriot Irishmen from their grave at Tuam entailed' (p609, see also p633).
- 'Resolved /- "That this Council views with extreme concern the hopeless and bankrupt condition into which the interests of the small farming community of the Twenty Six Counties is drifting daily... We consider the Government should in decency either make some attempt to redeem their undertaking to improve the lot of the farmer or candidly confess themselves unable to do so and make room for others....'(p661-663).
- 'Letter from the Secretary Central Hospital Galway stating that the Board of Health took no action on the Council's resolution suggesting to have a District Hospital provided at Ballinasloe' (p671, see also 20 December 1924).

II. Register of Road Maintenance Contracts and Contractors Ledger Account, 1899 – 1911

- 30.** October 1899 – March 1911 Volume recording contractors details and details of project, such as the number of perches of road at a specified location to be maintained and repaired by a specified contractor. Details also include contractor's name and address, period of contract – generally for a number of years - terms of contract, totally yearly contract (in pounds, shillings and pence), together with details of payments made to the contractor for work carried out.

Size: 61pp

Ballinasloe No.2 Rural District Council Archive Collection

This collection of archives from Ballinasloe No. 2 Rural District Council simply consists of three minute books, 1912 - 1919. The collection code is G00/7.

Two Councils administered the Ballinasloe rural area. The No.1 Council came under the jurisdiction of Galway County Council, and the No.2 Council came under the jurisdiction of Roscommon County Council. The Council's geographical area of responsibility measured just over 35,058 acres.

This incomplete collection records the proceedings of Council meetings held between 1912 and 1919. The minutes illustrate the range of topics of concern and interest to the Council, and record, together with general and financial business proceedings, the minutes of the Sanitary Authority, and proceedings conducted under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts. The Council was thus concerned with a variety of issues from contemporary political and social matters, both local and national, to public health and sanitary issues.

Under the provisions of Section 7, Local Government (Ireland) Act 1919 the Rural District of Ballinasloe No. 2 came within the limits of population and rateable value laid down in the section, and as a consequence the Board was amalgamated with the adjoining rural district of Athlone No. 2.

The collection illustrates various aspects of local administration and democratic government during one of the most significant periods in Irish republican history. It should be of interest to administrative, economic, political, social, and local historians. The latter in particular should learn much from the collection about the development of the district's infrastructure - the building and maintenance of the roads and bridges - together with the provision and growth of various public and health related services, such as water and sewerage schemes.

I. Minutes of Ballinasloe No.2 Rural District Council, 1912 - 1919

G00/7

The minutes record attendance at meetings, generally held twice a month, together with the proceedings of Council business conducted under various legislative provisions, covering general, financial, sanitary (for example the management of burial grounds, inspection of cow sheds, and human living conditions, water supply and sewers), and Labourers housing (such as building and maintenance of cottages and rent collection) issues. The minutes record resolutions proposed and resolved or rejected by the Council. They also include details of correspondence received, generally from the Local Government Board and actions required thereafter. The proceedings of the Council acting as the 'Sanitary Authority' relate to health and sanitary conditions, for instance the prevention of disease and the care and management of burial grounds, sewerage systems, and water supply. The proceedings under the 'Labourers Acts' relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages. Average Size: 665pp

(1. - 6.)

7. 18 May 1912 - 7 February 1914

8. 7 March 1914 - 2 October 1915

(9. - 17.)

18. 14 July 1917 - 15 February 1919 Includes an index to main resolution topics. Matters and issues discussed include:

- 'The Clerk submitted the Annual Estimate and Demand on the County Council of Roscommon for the services of the year ending the 31st March, 1919 when after some discussion it was, on the Motion of Mr Claffey, seconded by Mr W P Kelly, resolved that the estimate be reduced by £7. The Demand was signed by the Chairman, and a copy of same is herewith enclosed for the information of the Local Government Board.'(p179).
- 'That we, the Members of the Ballinasloe No. 2 Rural District tender our deepest sympathy to Mrs Redmond on the death of her illustrious husband, Mr John E. Redmond who has so unselfishly devoted his great gifts of Statesmanship to his Country for over a quarter of a century....' (p281).

REPORT OF THE COUNTY SURVEYOR TO THE BALLINASLOE NO 2 . RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL FOR THE QUARTER ENDED THE 30TH. SEPTEMBER '17.

Gentlemen,

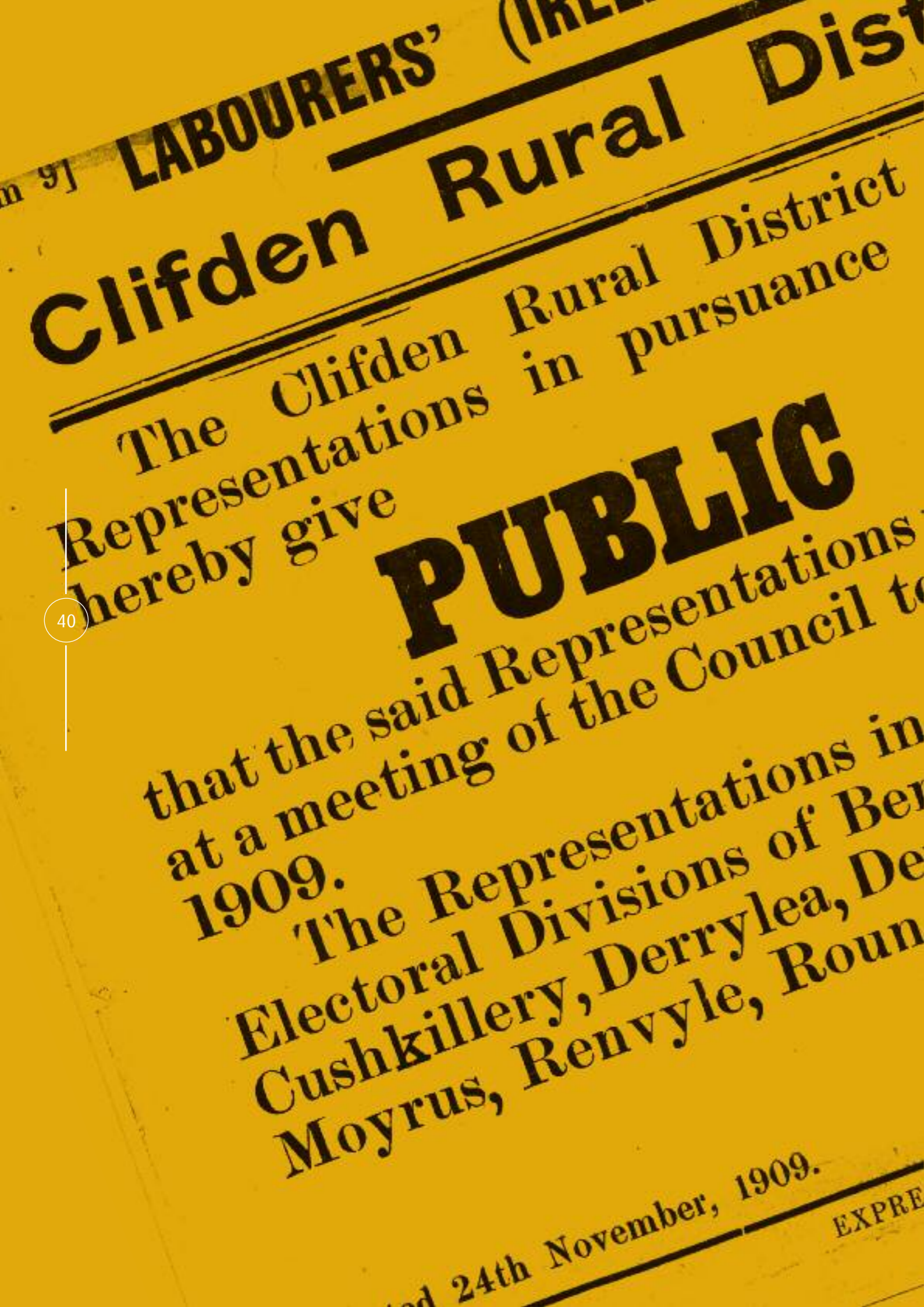
Herewith I return Form 22 in which I have entered my recommendations as to proposals for payments and other decisions which I consider should be made by you in dealing with the quarterly instalments of the Contract amounts.

The condition of the public works contracts in the District is indicated by the recommendations in the Form from which may be seen that out of seven instalments deferred from last meeting, five may now be paid with some deductions and two struck off, and out of sixteen instalments current for the quarter now being dealt with fifteen may be paid in full and one deferred in full.

Two special works instalments may be paid in part and part deferred.

At the time of the recent inspections the condition of the surfaces of the roads was as follows :- of those being maintained by direct labour, two were good and eleven fair, and of those under contract three were good and five middling.

I am now preparing details and estimate for renewal of the Direct Labour Scheme and shall be glad to have your views as regards estimate. I assume you wish to provide for increased rates of wages and cost of materials which... 25%. This increase upon Direct Labour and Contract amounts.



Clifden Rural District Council Archive Collection

This archive collection consists of an incomplete series of Clifden Rural District Council minute books, (1899-1925), one damp-press copy outgoing letter book (1917-1924), and an abstract of accounts (1915). The collection has been assigned the code G01/7.

The Council's geographical area of responsibility measured 193,782 acres, 1 rood and 25 perches. It included the electoral divisions of, Ballynakill, Bencorr, Bunowen, Cleggan, Clifden, Cushkillary, Derrycunlagh, Derrylea, Doonloughan, Errislannon, Illion, Inishbofin, Kilcummin, Knockboy, Moyrus, Oughterard, Owengowla, Rinvyle, Roundstone, Silerna and Skannive.

The Rural District Council's meetings were generally held monthly and then only if the required quorum of Councillors was in attendance. The meetings were initially held in the Courthouse, however following a dispute in 1902 with the Local Government Board and Court authorities Galway County Council resolved '...That we refuse to pay for the maintenance of the Court Houses of Galway, Clifden, and Oughterard on the ground that these Court Houses are at present used as rent offices...'⁸². As a result subsequent meetings were held in the board-room of the Clifden Workhouse. There were originally 41 elected and/or co-opted members of Council; from the early 1920s this number was reduced to 22.

The Council minutes record general and financial business proceedings, together with the proceedings of the Burial Board and Sanitary Authority, and proceedings conducted under the Labourers (Ireland)

Acts. The Council held its inaugural meeting on 22 April 1899.

The Council's main priority in its first ten years of business was the provision of water supply to Clifden town and other areas in the district such as Carna, Roundstone and Letterfrack.

Taking early advantage of the various housing loan schemes available under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts 1883 (46 & 47 Vict. c.60) and 1885 (48 & 49 Vict. c.77) the Council was involved in the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages. Under this legislation the Council applied in the first instance to the Local Government Board, who in turn applied to the Board of Works giving its recommendation that a loan be granted⁸³.

In March 1907 the Council appointed a Committee to select plots of land to be acquired (G01/7/5). A letter from the Local Government Board 'approving of the plans, specifications and estimates adopted by the Clifden Rural District Council for the erection of cottages under the Labourers Acts etc...' was received in July 1908 (G01/7/6, p478). Progress was slow in every respect and ceased altogether for a time during World War I (G01/7/11, p514). By 1925 the Council had provided 12 Labourers cottages in the district. While in relative terms this was a mediocre performance, the scale of poverty in the district hindered a great building drive. While other wealthier Rural District Councils did provide a greater number of cottages, several did not do so on an impressive scale. In particular, for instance, Galway Rural District Council provided only 40 cottages, 31 of which were provided, with the

82. Galway County Council Minutes, GC/1/1, p375.
83. The Archives of the Office of Public Works at the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin contains a substantial quantity of records relating to the various schemes and may be of value to those seeking further information on this topic. See Guide to the Archives of the Office of Public Works, Rena Lohan, The Stationery Office, Dublin 1994, (pp256-257).

assistance of the Congested Districts Board, on the Aran Islands.⁸⁴

The Council regularly expressed concern about the deplorable condition of dwellings in the district and petitioned the Congested Districts Board to address the matter, particularly in 1912 and 1913 when it passed the following resolution, 'Resolved - That we the members of the Clifden Rural District Council strongly condemn the action of those landlords who at the Quarter Session processed their tenants and got decrees against them for rent which we think they are not entitled to on the grounds that, through the disease in cattle (foot & mouth) which has broken out in Ireland, it's impossible for poor tenants to pay a fair rent notwithstanding that the majority of them pay rack rents. We hope the Congested Districts Board will turn their attention to the distress and poverty of Connemara and relieve them from the tyranny of landlordism' (G01/7/9, p421).

Indeed Sir Roger Casement⁸⁵ following a visit to the region said 'I have nowhere seen, even in the most primitive regions, a population housed as many of these people are, or battling for existence with a soil so incapable in itself of supporting human life.' This was, he said, 'the most-miserably situated rural communities that any civilised country holds today.'⁸⁶

By the early 1920s living and sanitary conditions had not improved greatly. Dr Casey, Medical Superintendent Officer of Health, had made various reports on the sanitary condition of the Rural District in 1919 which the Local Government Board summarised as follows '...Houses in Clifden without water-closets - byreing of cattle in dwellings ; accumulation of rubbish and manure heaps in some of the passages and lanes in Clifden ; a few houses unfit for human habitation ; keeping of pigs by some persons in Clifden without proper piggeries ; neglected condition of all the cemeteries except Ardbear ; shortage of milk ; urgent

necessity of carrying out the provisions of the Dairy and Cowshed Order...'(G01/7/13, p191).

The Council was also involved with the provision of local roads, for instance, the road from Carna to Recess (G01/7/11, p82), and bridges such as at Kylemore (G01/7/14, p548). It was also heavily involved in the provision and maintenance of graveyards (G01/7/11). Unlike many other Rural District Councils in the county the Clifden Council did not appear to be particularly political. It expressed and passed few opinions or resolutions relating to national political issues. While many other Rural District Councils in the Galway made some reference to the Easter Rising of 1916 and the subsequent civil unrest, Clifden Rural District Council did not.

However, in June 1920 the Council formally recognised the authority of Dáil Éireann (G01/7/13, p182). Nevertheless it did continue to liaise with the Local Government Board with the result that in September 1921 it received a strongly worded condemnation of its actions from Dáil Éireann: '...that by the Decrees of Dáil Éireann dated 17th September 1920 all local bodies were directed to sever connection with the English Local Government Board but that the Clifden Rural District Council continued intercourse in violation of said Decree and as such have been guilty during the intervening months of treasonable and illegal communication, and as late as the 25th May last they gave directions for submission of their books to audit by English Officials. The Ministry considers the Council's request for sanction to this payment as audacious and the Council must act in this matter on their own responsibility and take whatever consequence which may follow as a result of their action' (G01/7/13, p442).

Later the Council protested against the suggested abolition of Rural District Councils. In October 1923 it passed a resolution denouncing the proposal stating,

84. Galway Rural District Council Collection, G01/9.

85. Casement, Sir Roger David (1864-1916), humanitarian and Irish nationalist, was born 1 September 1864 in Sandycove, near Dublin, youngest child among one daughter and three sons of Roger Casement, retired army officer, and Anne Casement (née Jephson). A British consul by profession, Casement became famous for his reports and activities against human rights abuses in the Congo and Peru. He was the principal organiser of the Howth gun-running, without which the Easter rising might not have taken place. In April 1916 he was captured by the British, following a failed landing aided by the Germans, arrested and tried for treason, sabotage and espionage against the Crown. Casement was hanged in London on 3 August 1916, at the age of 51. (Dictionary of Irish Biography entry for Roger Casement by Michael Laffan).

86. www.rte.ie/centuryireland/articles/roger-casement-says-poverty-in-connemara-is-worst-in-civilized-world, Nov 2013.

'That this Council view with grave suspicion and call the attention of the public to the suggested abolition of Rural District Councils.

That we believe this action on the part of the Government to be subversive of democratic government and not in the best interests of the Ratepayers, is tantamount to disfranchising them and giving them no control of their Finances.

That we believe those schemes of amalgamation and abolition which tend towards centralisation will leave vast areas of this large county in the hands of a few officials who are too distant and lack knowledge.

We further believe that those schemes of amalgamation and abolition of Rural District Councils (if carried out) are not in accordance with the wishes of the Ratepayers who are the individuals who pay and

who consequently should have a voice in this matter - are a direct interference with the liberty of the citizen, are a subversion of Democratic Government and if submitted to the electorate would not receive their assent' (G01/7, 14, p268a-b).

Nevertheless the Council was abolished in 1925. The administration of work under the Sanitary Acts, Labourers Acts, Burial Grounds Acts and so on was transferred to the Board of Health which established a Connemara Committee, comprised of the former Rural Districts of Clifden and Oughterard, to administer its business. It retained a permanent office in Clifden and appointed the Council's former Clerk, Mr F. King, as Clerk to the Committee (GC5/3, p172).⁸⁷

I. Minutes of Clifden Rural District Council, 1899 - 1925

G01/7

Volumes of minutes of proceedings of Council meetings generally held monthly. The minutes record attendance, details of correspondence received, usually from the Local Government Board and actions required thereafter, together with proceedings of Council business conducted under various legislation relating to the administration of the district under a range of headings such as general, financial, sanitary authority and Labourers cottages. The proceedings of the Council acting as the 'Sanitary Authority' relate to health and sanitary conditions, such as the prevention of disease and the care and management of burial grounds, sewerage systems, and water supply. The proceedings under the 'Labourers Acts' relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages.

Minutes are generally signed or initialled by the Chairman. Average size: circa 420pp

1. 13 September 1899 - 27 February 1901 Includes partial index to main topics discussed. Includes:
 - 'Resolved - That we the members of the Clifden Rural District Council place on record our heartfelt sympathy with the "Boers" of the Transvaal Republic in their fight against English aggression and wish them every success in their sturdy fight to maintain their independence (p29)'.
 - The Council '...respectively call the attention of the County Council to the great inconvenience and great irregularity and the great loss to owners of pigs for the want of fixed days for the sale of pigs in the town of Clifden. In the opinion of this Council the most suitable days would be the day before the existing fair days and if a fair day falls on Monday the pig fair be held on the previous Saturday, and we respectfully call upon the County Council to fix those days as a pig fair a resolution of the Council, as we understand the Council has power to do so' (p30).

87. Board of Health and Public Assistance archive collection, GC5/ at Galway County Council Archives.

- Details of proposed extension to Ballyconneely Burial Ground (p93, see also p141, p322).
 - Letter from the Local Government Board noting that they observe in Medical Officers' returns relative to 'Roundstone No. Dispensary District for quarter ended 31st ulto. an entry to the effect '...the people continue to house pigs and cattle in their dwellings' and requesting the subject may receive the attention of the Clifden Rural District Council' (p1907-108).
 - Transcript of a letter from the Medical Officer (McDonnell, J.J.) regarding the supply of water to Letterfrack wherein he states 'I have already twice reported that the supply of pure water was inadequate for the requirements of the villagers and I beg to state it is still inadequate; the few surface wells have been filled by the recent heavy rains but I do not consider the water fit for drinking purposes' (p123).
 - 'Resolved that we hereby call upon the Government of this country to construct a harbour and pier at Dooghbeg near Clifden in order to facilitate the landing of mackerel from the numerous boats engaged in the fishing industry which are at present greatly inconvenienced for want of such accommodation, and we are fully aware that the few boats calling there now would [be] increased fourfold if a suitable pier were erected; that as this harbour would be within a mile of Clifden Railway Station the fish would reach there in far better condition than they do by the present arrangement of conveying them long distances by road....' (p178a, see also p196).
 - Transcript of letter from the Congested Districts Board, Dublin to Council advising that the Board has '...agreed to grant one third of the cost of the waterworks at Roundstone provided their contribution does not exceed £200' (p188, see also p235, p251).
 - Adopted resolution 'Requesting His Most Gracious Majesty King Edward VII to signalise his accession to the Throne by ordering the Release of all the Irish Political Prisoners confined in the Jails of the United Kingdom' (p435).
- 2.** 13 March 1901 - 20 August 1902 Includes partial index to main topics discussed. Includes:
- Letter from the Local Government Board relating to the application, by the Council, for sanction of a loan of £500 for the purpose of providing 'a water supply to Roundstone expressing sanction to the loan in question, repayment to be spread over a period of 30 years and the loan to be issued in two instalments of £400 and £100...' (p71, see also p91, p171, p191, p211, p251, p271).
 - Includes submission signed and dated (4 May 1901) by the residents of Clifden town, to the Council agreeing to the 'Electric lighting scheme as adopted at public meeting held at Clifden Court House....said lighting to consist of five arc lights each representing 1,000 candle power placed in positions agreed upon. The lighting to be for eight months of the year from sunset until 12 o'clock at the cost of £50 per year from 15th August to 15th April in each year....'. Includes stamp of Clifden Poor Law Union (p72. See also p111).
 - 'Resolved - That we as a public body in appreciation of the services of the R. I. (Royal Irish) Constabulary, a force for which we as Irishmen feel bound, ask our Representative in Parliament, William O'Malley, Esq., when the subject of the increase of pay and pensions of the R.I.C. comes on for discussion in the House of Commons to support the measure in every possible way so as to secure justice for them and to put

them on at least an equal footing with the London and other police forces in Great Britain whose pay far exceeds that of the Irish Policemen...' (p92).

- 'Resolved - That in view of the high rates of this Union and the poverty of the district, we cannot see our way at present to adopt the suggestion for a local hospital at Carna; but in view of the desirability of such a house in that remote district to meet emergencies such as has now arisen there (outbreak of Typhoid Fever), we respectfully suggest to the Congested Districts Board the advisability of applying a portion of their funds for the erection of a small hospital at Carna' (p471).
 - 'Resolved - That our best thanks be given to our Medical Officer Dr Gorham for the very efficient steps he took to confine the recent outbreak of Fever that occurred in the Industrial School and the Clifden Fever Hospital in these institutions, and the precautions he adopted to prevent the spread of the disease to the town of Clifden. We have the fullest confidence in Dr Gorham who is the Senior Medical Officer of this large Union and whose kindness, skill, and attention to the sick poor of the Union has been well known to us and we beg to place same on record' (p553-554).
- 3.** 17 September 1902 - 6 July 1904 Includes:
- 'That at this the first meeting since our eviction from the Clifden Court House wherein up to this business of the Council at Quarterly meetings were transacted, we desire to place on record our entire disapproval and dissatisfaction with the reaction of the Sheriff in closing the doors of the Court House against the representatives of the ratepayers who are obliged under penalties to discharge the duties cast upon them under the Local Government Act, and considering the great inconvenience caused to the general public, who are entitled to be present at such meetings, the Board Room wherein the meeting is now being held being barely roomy enough to accommodate the Members of the Council (consequently the public must be excluded) we request the County Council insofar as Clifden is concerned will make no provision in their estimate for the up keep of Clifden Court House till such time as direction is given to the Sheriff that the Court House is at our disposal for the transactions of public meetings' (p83).
 - 'Resolved - Having had before us a copy of the estimate of rates as furnished by the County Council of Galway required to provide for the requirements of the Rural District Council and Guardians for the year ending 31st March 1904 we hereby give notice that it is our intention to appeal in the event of a rate being made based on said estimate inasmuch as proper credits are not given and said estimate is entirely excessive and we direct our Clerk to give notice of this our intention to the Secretary of the County Council and instruct our Solicitor to lodge the necessary appeal' (p103, see also p124).
 - 'Resolved - That in view of His Majesty the King visiting the Congested Districts of the West on his visit and tour through Ireland, we the Clifden Rural District Council and Board of Guardians beg cordially to invite His Majesty to Clifden the capital of Connemara and it is further resolved that an address of Welcome be presented to His Majesty by the Rural District Council and Board of Guardians as the representative of the people of this Congested District ...' (p202).
 - 'Resolved - That we the members of the Clifden District Council request the Congested Districts Board to expend the sum granted under the Marine Works Bill for the improvement of the Harbour at Clifden; employment being much needed at present in the District to prevent the emigration of our young able-bodied people...' (p402).

4. 31 August 1904 – 20 June 1906 Includes:
- ‘Resolved that we request the Local Government Board will allow the approach roads to Burial Grounds and the walls around the Burial Grounds to be repaired under the Relief Works now being opened in the Union and we request the Committee and Guardians will take these works into consideration when formulating schemes under this head’ (p142).
 - Transcript of report from the County Surveyor’s Office to the Rural District Council stating ‘I regret to say that I am compelled on this occasion to have an unusual number of disallowances and strike offs. Many of your roads have been very much neglected, at this inspection your roads ought to have their best possible appearance from every particular point of view, they ought now to show that the metal put on during the winter has been fairly incorporated and they ought (for the most part) to show as if they could do for six months without any further metal, they are very different from this... Hitherto there has been no custom of deferring payments on contracts for maintenance, under the new order it will be made I understand imperative to either allow the payment or strike off the amount; this rule will very much simplify our proceedings but road contractors will require to be extra careful to have their work in good order for each inspection. The amount struck off on this occasion is serious but having in every case personally seen the work I cannot help but rule as I have done’ (p183).
 - ‘Resolved – That as the parents appear of late to have got indifferent in the education of their children, and the children being free to act as they please, generally roam about in idleness in preference to attending school, and feeling that those very fine schools so well equipped and under such able managers should not be allowed to go into disuse, and that the children may not be allowed to grow up in ignorance. We desire to express an emphatic opinion that it would be in the best interests of this district that the Compulsory Clause of the Education Act be put into immediate force in this Clifden Union’ (p323).
 - ‘Resolved – That having heard that the Congested Districts Board have refused to make any grant in aid towards the construction of a pump at Carna, we respectfully request the C.D. Board to reconsider their decision with regard to Carna and hope they will see their way to make a grant towards the improvement of the Carna water supply as they have already done in the case of the Roundstone water works especially as the people of the townland of Carna are tenants of the Congested Districts Board’ (p351).
5. 11 July 1906 – 10 April 1907 Includes:
- ‘Resolved – That in view of the great distress that prevails and the great need for employment that exists we again earnestly impress upon the Authorities the necessity of at once commencing the building of the Clifden Pier, a work so much needed and by successive governments so long and often promised’ (p142).
 - ‘The Galway County Council notified the temporary appointment of Miss Perry as County Surveyor (p162).
 - Letter from the Local Government Board ‘Transmitting draft deed of guarantee entered into between the Clifden Rural District Council and the Postmaster-General in connection with the extension of the postal telegraph service to Inishbofin’ (p222, see also p242).

6. 24 April 1907 – 6 January 1909 Includes:
- ‘Resolved - That we the Clifden Rural District Council beg to request that the Local Government Board Inspector when holding the Sworn Inquiry into the Labourers Cottages Scheme promoted by the Council will give the note taking of the said Inquiry to Mr Jas. A Butler reporter of Galway who has attended these meetings from time to time and who is the nearest reporter, there being no qualified one resident in Clifden. We think from his reports when present that he is a most competent and capable shorthand writer’ (p126).
 - ‘Resolved - That the Letterfrack Fairs will in future be held on the streets of the village of Letterfrack for the following reasons namely: It is the most convenient place to hold same as buyers and sellers can get ample accommodation there viz.: Post Office, Hotel, Licensed premises stabling etc and the Letterfrack traders are entitled to the trade created by the holding of such fairs as there is no accommodation whatever to be had at the place it’s proposed to hold the fair (at the place known as the Old Fair Green) the Council representing the people of the several Districts consider that Letterfrack for all purposes is the proper place to hold the fairs’ (p266).
 - ‘Resolved - That owing to the strictly peaceable condition of this Rural District and the extreme poverty of the great majority of the Ratepayers we consider it a great injustice that we should be called upon to pay any portion of the cost of extra police in other parts of the County which cost we say should be borne by the District necessitating the employment of extra police...’ (p486).
- (7).
8. 26 January 1910 – 23 August 1911 Includes:
- ‘That considering the Congested Condition of all the villages throughout this district of Connemara we express deep disappointment that Connemara has no representative on the Congested Districts Board. Therefore we beg to respectfully request the Chief Secretary for Ireland to give Connemara representation on that Board, and as one whom we are confident would satisfactorily represent the interest of this large district...’ (p2)
 - ‘Resolved – We the Clifden Rural District Council approve of Her Excellency (Isobel) Lady Aberdeen (Vice Regal Lodge, Dublin ; President, Women’s National Health Association of Ireland) in her exertions to procure from the Admiralty Beyleck Coast Guard station for a Sanatorium and trust she may be successful’. (p211)
 - Transcript of a letter from G. R Emerson, Engineer stating ‘I have had the Labourers Cottage at Tully examined and find that there are two slates loose under the chimney shaft. I would suggest having the roof pointed in mastic as the site is a very exposed one. The window on the south east gable is letting in water between the cement sill and sill of frame. This should be stopped with putty and painted over...’ (p373)

9. 27 September 1911 – 9 April 1913 Includes:
- ‘Resolved that this Council having applied for a Certificate of Exception under schedule 1 Part II (b) of the National Insurance Act 1911, hereby undertake to guarantee as a condition of the contract of service with our employees that pensions shall be granted (subject to the various statutes applicable to the Superannuation of Poor Law District Officials) and that such pensions shall be computed at the rate of not less than one-fifteenth of the salary or wages or emoluments at the time of retirement for each completed year of service, with a minimum pension of £13 per annum and a maximum of two-thirds salary or wages and emoluments and further undertake to pay full wages during sickness for a period of not less than six months and to grant a sum equal to the “Capital” sum referred in Section 9(4) of the National Insurance Act to any person leaving our service and becoming a member of an Approved Society’ (p332 ; see also p 547).
 - ‘Resolved - That we the members of the Clifden Rural District Council strongly condemn the action of those landlords who at the Quarter Session processed their tenants and got decrees against them for rent which we think they are not entitled to on the grounds that through the disease in cattle which has broken out in Ireland it’s impossible for poor tenants to pay a fair rent notwithstanding that the majority of them pay rack rents.⁹⁰ We hope the Congested Districts Board will turn their attention to the distress and poverty of Connemara and relieve them from the tyranny of landlordism’ (p421).
 - Transcript of letter from P.C. Gorham, Medical Officer, to the Rural District Council stating ‘With regard to the water supply in Ardbear the want of which I reported to your Council many months ago recommending the main pipe near the Forge be tapped and water supplied to the District. This it appears did not meet with your approval. In my next report I suggested as an alternative that a supply of pure water could be procured from Betty White’s Well. This suggestion was not approved. I don’t know of any other place in the neighbourhood where wholesome water can be. I visited the houses in Ardbear on yesterday and the dwellers in the houses complained to me their difficulty in procuring pure water’ (p541).
 - ‘That we consider the present condition of the roads in this district as scandalous in the extreme, and highly discreditable to Surveyors, to contractors and all concerned’ (p549).
10. 23 April 1913 – 25 November 1914 Includes:
- ‘That we strongly condemn the action of the Congested Districts Board in their carelessness by leaving Connemara in its present condition, now it is as bad as in the worst days of the old landlordism, more shame to the Congested Districts Board having a vast amount of money at their disposal spent on officials that are not competent for their duty. It is too bad after the Board being so long in existence that fever and other outbreaks of disease are more numerous than before they were created.’ (p25)
 - The Council strongly condemned the action ‘and language of Resident Magistrate Hill from Clifden Bench ..., inasmuch as he has publicly given gratuitous and gross insult to the Council by stating that the members

were “Ignorant and still worse they did not know it”. Such language is more in keeping with that of an innate street preacher than that of a man whose position is such as to discharge legal duties only on the Bench for which he was appointed and we now demand from him a public apology’ (p179-180).

- ‘That we condemn in the strongest manner the action of the would-be agent on the Eyre Estate in processing the poor people for one year’s rack rent...’⁸⁸. (p244)
11. 23 December 1914 – 25 October 1916 Includes:
- That we the Clifden District Council and Board of Guardians call on Mr Moran, County Surveyor to give his immediate attention to the employment of all available hands on the Carna-Recess Road in carrying out the operations on a more liberal scale in connection with the stream-rolling...a job like the steam-rolling of the Carna-Recess Road will go a long way to add to the comforts of some hundreds of poor in the thickly populated districts along the road from Recess to Carna if properly and liberally handled...’ (p82).
 - Includes printed list of members and addresses (p161).
 - Letter from Sanitary Sub-Officer Prendergast in which he states ‘that he expended a sum of £6.10.0 in connection with the funeral arrangements of the Chief Officer of the Lusitanian whose remains had been washed ashore at Inishbofin for coffin charges, carpenter’s fee, disinfectants and stimulants etc...’ (p232).
 - ‘...beg to tender to the relations of the late Lieutenant Commander Morris of the “Black Prince” who lost his life in the recent naval engagement in the North Sea and to the relatives of Able Seaman Berry who lost his life in the same engagement an expression of our heartfelt sympathy in this sad bereavement ...’ (p423).
12. 22 November 1916 – 9 July 1919 Includes:
- ‘That we place on record our appreciation of the action of the Government in seeking to have as much of the available grass lands in town and county throughout Ireland brought into cultivation during the coming spring so as to provide an adequate supply of food stuffs during the trying times that lie ahead as a result of the present great war crisis...’ (p55).
 - Report from Dr. Casey, Medical Superintendent Officer of Health, for year ended 31 December 1916 recommending ‘the opening of the two top wards of the fever hospital for isolation of advanced and hopeless cases etc’. On foot of such report it was resolved ‘That the scheme be approved of provided the Sanatorium Committee contribute 13/- per head weekly for each case treated, an estimate for carrying out the necessary repairs and alterations to be made by Mr Emerson (engineer) towards which the Council request the Sanatorium Committee will give a grant’ (p191).

88. Rack-rent has often been a term of protest used to denote an unjustly excessive rent, usually one paid by a tenant farmer. <http://en.wikipedia.org>

- 13.** 27 August 1919 – 18 January 1922 Includes:
- Letter from the Local Government Board to the Council 'Forwarding extracts from the report of Dr Casey, Medical Superintendent Officer of Health on the sanitary condition of the Rural District for the year 1919 viz:- Houses in Clifden without water-closets – byreing of cattle in dwellings ; accumulation of rubbish and manure heaps in some of the passages and lanes in Clifden; a few houses unfit for human habitation; keeping of pigs by some persons in Clifden without proper piggeries; neglected condition of all the cemeteries except Ardbear; shortage of milk; urgent necessity of carrying out the provisions of the Dairy and Cowshed Order; and regretting that up to the present most [of these] matters have not received attention' (p191).
 - 'Read letter from the Secretary of the Galway County Councilstating that in consequence of the stoppage of the Government Grants in aid of local taxation the County Council are unable to pay in full the Demands of the Boards of Guardian and Rural District Councils for the year ended March 1921...' (p302).
 - Includes letter from J. Casey, Medical Officer of Health, advising the Council of a flu epidemic stating that 'the decease may possibly become as dangerous as it was in 1918.⁸⁹ The poorer families as usual have been the greatest sufferers and many cases of great hardship have been caused by want of nursing, nourishment, and isolation which in the past was obtained at the Union Hospital. I have attended over two hundred poor persons at their own homes during the past month - none of whom brought me a ticket from the Relieving Officer - and I presume the functions of Guardians in this respect has ceased... Some of the inmates of the workhouse are still wandering about begging and obtaining shelter in poor tenement houses - where they must very soon become verminous and no amount of home assistance will make those people clean and comfortable as they have been in the past...' (p517).
- 14.** (8 October 1921 - 16 November 1921) Includes printed copy of various Galway County Council 22 February 1922 - 15 April 1925 minutes and the County Hospital, and Home Assistance Committee minutes, together with printed material relating to amalgamation and abolition of Poor Law Unions, and the Scheme for the Administration of Home Assistance. Includes:
- 'That we call upon the Midland Great Western Railway Company to give Clifden better train service. That we strongly protest against the proposed change in the time of arrival of the mail train as we consider the mail train is already too late...' (p157).
 - 'That this Council view with grave suspicion and call the attention of the public to the suggested abolition of Rural District Councils. That we believe this action on the part of the Government to be subversive of democratic government and not in the best interests of the Ratepayers, is tantamount to disfranchising them and giving them no control of their Finances.

89. The 1918-1920 flu pandemic is commonly referred to as the Spanish. It was by far the most destructive pandemic in history. It killed some 50 million to 100 million people worldwide in just 18 months.

That we believe those schemes of amalgamation and abolition which tend towards centralisation will leave vast areas of this large county in the hands of a few officials who are too distant and lack knowledge. We further believe that those schemes of amalgamation and abolition of Rural District Councils (if carried out) are not in accordance with the wishes of the Ratepayers who are the individuals who pay and who consequently should have a voice in this matter – are a direct interference with the liberty of the citizen, are a subversion of Democratic Government and if submitted to the electorate would not receive their assent' (p268a-b).

- 'Resolved - This Council is of unanimous opinion that the attitude of the Government towards the poor people in the Clifden Union based on false prosperity reports in respect of seed potatoes is extremely unfair. Unless the Government heeds the information supplied to them by the Clergy and representatives of the people it is feared that the people, clergy and representatives will look on the Government as a body not having the interests of the people at heart. Starvation in this Union is inevitable and we warn the Government that the guilt of such will be laid on their apathy to the appeals of the people's representatives' (p377).

- 15.** 7 May 1925 – 14 October 1925 Includes:

- 'We earnestly request the Local Government Department to send their Engineer at once to inspect the graveyards of the Union and not to wait for the pipeline of the waterworks to be laid as we are anxious to have the work on the graveyard started before the District Council passes out of existence. No one can know as well as we do the necessity there is to enlarge many of the graveyards and the very great necessity there is for employment the fencing and road making would give' (27 May 1925).

II. Damp Press Copy Outgoing Letter Book, 1917 - 1924

- 16.** 26 January 1917 – 2 April 1924 Letters generally from the Council's Clerk, Festus King, on behalf of the Rural District Council to various institutions and individuals relating to Council business, such as to the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction; Local Government Board ; Galway County Council ; Inspector of Taxes ; Relieving Officers, relating to various issues and business such as the supply of seed, Clifden waterworks, electric lighting, registers of births and deaths, compilation of voters' list, and home assistance.

Also includes letters from the Clerk on behalf of the Clifden Poor Law Union. Size: 999pp

III. Printed Abstract of Accounts and Clerk's Half Yearly Statements, 1915

- 17.** 29 July 1915 For year ended 31 March, 1915, together with Auditor's report. Size: 4pp

Galway Rural District Council Archive Collection

This archive collection consists of an incomplete series of Galway Rural District Council minute books (1904 - 1925), and two contracts for minor road maintenance work (1899-1902). This collection has been assigned the code G01/9.

The Council's geographical area of responsibility measured 193,167 acres, and included the electoral divisions of Annaghdown, Aughtim (Galway), Ballnacourty, Ballintemple, Barna, Belleville, Carnmore, Carrowbrowne, Claregalway, Clarinbridge, Colmanstown, Deerpark, Furbough, Galway Rural, Inishmore, Killannin, Lackaghbeg, Liscananaun, Lisheenavalla, Moycullen, Oranmore, Selerna, Slieverna (Slieveaneena), Spiddle, Stradbally, and Tullokyne.

The Rural District Council meetings, held in the boardroom of the Workhouse, Galway, were generally held monthly and then only if the required quorum of Councillors attended. There were usually 55 elected and/or co-opted members of Council; from about the 1920s this number was reduced to 24.

The Council quarterly minutes which deal specifically with roads and the physical infrastructure of the district are recorded in a separate volume to the minutes of its monthly meetings, which include minutes relating to all other areas of concern. They record general and financial business proceedings, together with the proceedings of the Burial Board and Sanitary Authority, together with proceedings conducted under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts.

The Council devoted a substantial amount of its time to dealing with matters relating to the Aran Islands, such

as the provision of water and latrines at Kilronan Pier. Following an appeal in 1913 from the local parish priest, Rev. Farragher, the Council in co-operation with the Congested Districts Board became involved in the provision of Labourers cottages on the North Island.

In response to a suggestion from Rev. Farragher that the Council avail of an offer from the Congested Districts Board of free sites for, together with a contribution towards the cost of, erecting cottages on the Islands the Council advised that '...they would be glad to avail themselves of the Congested Districts Board offer, but they fail to see how a Scheme can be adopted for Aran Islands, without giving the residents of other parts of the Rural District an opportunity of also applying for cottages. The costs incurred in connection with the last Scheme were so prohibitive, that the Council cannot see their way to embark on a second one' (G01/9/3, p444-5). Prior to that time the Council had, under an Improvement Scheme sanctioned by the Local Government Board in 1908 (G01/9/3, p453), erected only nine Labourers cottages in the district.

However, following communication with and encouragement from the Local Government Board the Council requested further information from Rev. Farragher on the number of cottages required and the likely rent the tenants would be prepared to pay (G01/9/3, p453). The minutes of a special Committee, comprising of Rural District Council and Congested Districts Board members, and Rev. Farragher, convened to discuss the provision of cottages are included in the Rural District Council minutes of February 1914.

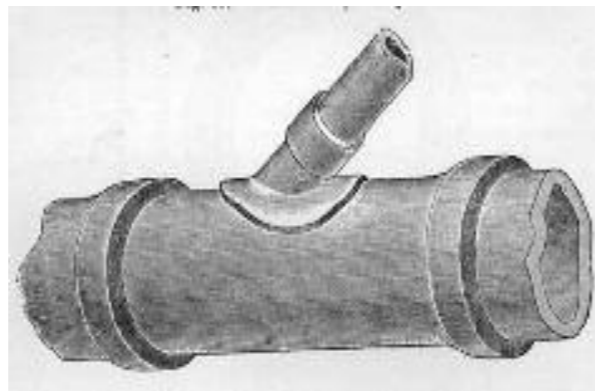
As a result of their discussions and further investigation the Council in June 1914 approved a draft scheme submitted by the Congested Districts Board for the erection of 43 Labourers cottages in the North Island of Aran (Inishmore District Electoral Division) (G01/9/3, p549). In August that year the Council resolved to adopt the Improvement Scheme for the erection of 43 cottages (G01/9/3, p576). By November 21 cottages were ready for letting to labourers at a weekly rent of one shilling for each cottage plot (G01/9/3, p623). The Local Government Board sanctioned a loan of £1,950 for the carrying out of the Scheme (G01/9/1, p645).

In June 1915 the Council advised the Congested Districts Board that 10 additional cottages, rather than the initially anticipated 22, would be required. Following the Board's suggestion the Council requested that the new houses be larger than the first 21 already built on Aran. An additional grant of £100 was required from the Local Government Board to cover the extra cost involved in building the slightly larger cottage (G01/9/3, p712). The additional 10 cottages were completed by December 1915.

Therefore by the early 1920s Galway Rural District Council had provided a total of 40 Labourers cottages under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts 1883 (46 & 47 Vict. C.60) & 1885 (48 & 49 Vict. C.77).

Another project which preoccupied the Council was the construction and maintenance of water pumps, in particular at Corrandulla and Caherateemore. In December 1912, the Council procured a Deed of Mortgage of £800 for the sinking of wells in these townlands in the Barony of Clare, in the Turloughmore Dispensary District (G01/9/3, p337). Though progress in the sinking of the wells was slow, it was nearing completion towards the end of 1913, when the Labour strike of 1913, particularly in Dublin, delayed the procurement of parts to enable the completion of the required work (G01/9/3, p465).

Though the Corrandulla pump was finally in working order in May 1914, in July the supply of water had fallen off (G01/9/3, p560). A report submitted by Mr G. Lee, Engineer, to the Council in September 1914 advised that the pump was defective due to a shortage of lining pipe resulting in unprotected clay falling into the bore-hole. It was reported that several of the Contractor's, Campbell & Sons, workmen had removed the original pipe measuring 8ft, cut away 5½ feet of it and reinserted the remainder (G01/9/3, p588-589) when they learned that another individual, John MacDonald, had acquired the contract for the supply of the pump (G01/09/3, p621). In May 1915, following replacement of the piping, the Engineer reported that the well was in 'a very satisfactory condition, the pump being easily worked, and there was a good supply of clean water...' (G01/9/3, p94).



Meanwhile work on the Caherateemore well was still ongoing in June 1914. By June 1915 only 52ft had been excavated causing the Engineer, Mr Lee, to comment that 'At this rate of progress it is doubtful that the work will be finished within the next 5 years' (G01/9/1, p710). However, in October 1915 the contractor, John Coen, had completed the sinking of the well. As he was not responsible for the placing of the pump he advised the Council he 'is not the cause of the delay' (G01/9/3, p754).

The Rural District Council also provided wells in other townlands in the district, such as at Islandeddy in Oranmore dispensary district, and in Caherlea, and Coolorna [Coolin] in the Turloughmore dispensary district.

The Council acting as the Burial Board was also responsible for the care and maintenance of many graveyards in the district. Thus they were responsible for ensuring the good repair of boundary walls, and the appointment of caretakers and so on.

The Quarterly Minutes (G01/9/6) deal exclusively with roads. They record that the total road expenditure for 1904 was £2,281 (G01/9/6, p19); and that twelve years later (1917) the County Surveyor estimated expenditure at £4,931.0.4, with £3,028.18.0 for the maintenance of the Main Roads and £1,902.2.4 for the District Roads (G01/9/6, p188b). In 1921 the estimated expenditure for the ensuing year was £8,125 (G01/9/6, p239). The Minutes of Galway County Council record that, in February 1904, it called the attention of the Galway Rural District Council to the 'bad state' of the roads in Aran, and that 'Owing to the neglect of the roads in Aran Island a strike against the payment of rates has been threatened and has been partially carried out in the Middle and South Islands. Should the District Council decline to exercise the powers vested in them the County Council must appeal to the Local Government Board under the powers vested in them by the Local Government Board Act 1989'.⁹⁰

During the period of the Civil War the County Surveyor reported (in January 1922) on the 'deplorable condition of the important roads in the District, no work having been done on many of them during the past quarter. ...' (G01/9/6, p243). The following year he advised that he was 'compelled to defer money on a considerable number of your Contractors' (G01/9/6, p253); a shortage of material prevented contractors

from completing their works to the required specification. The Surveyor also reported that a substantial number of bridges were damaged in the district. By January 1924 the Surveyor reported 'a substantial improvement in the work of the Contractors...' (G01/9/6, p264a).

The Council was not overtly outspoken on national political issues, though it did adopt several politically orientated resolutions forwarded to them from other Rural District Councils. One such resolution was that received from the Portumna Rural District Council which condemned the action of the authorities in shooting the leaders of the Easter Rising without any form of trial (G01/9/1, p839). The Galway Rural District Council later, like other local authorities such as Loughrea and Gort, resolved to 'acknowledge the authority of Dáil Éireann as the duly elected Government of the Irish People and undertakes to give effect to all decrees duly promulgated by the said Dáil Éireann in so far as same affects this Council...' (G01/9/3, p1354).

The physical condition of the two volumes in the collection is fair. G01/9/3 is a large bulky leather bound volume that has been slightly damaged by mould. The second volume, G01/9/6, has suffered more severe mould damage with the resultant loss of some text, particularly in the first quarter along the outer vertical edge. However, for preservation and security purposes the collection was microfilmed in 2002, and readers are asked to consult the microfilm rather than the original.

90. Galway County Council Minutes, GC1 /1, p501.

I. Minutes of Galway Rural District Council, 1910-1921

G01/9/

(1.- 2.)

3. 27 August 1910 - 16 April 1921 Volume of minutes of proceedings of the Council's monthly meetings. The handwritten minutes record attendance, details of correspondence received, generally from the Local Government Board and from the early 1920s from the Local Government Department, and actions required thereafter, together with proceedings of Council business conducted under various legislation relating to the administration of the district under a range of headings such as general, financial, sanitary authority and Labourers cottages. The proceedings of the Council acting as the 'Sanitary Authority', or from circa 1920 under the Public Health Acts, relate to health and sanitary conditions, such as the prevention of disease, and the care and management of burial grounds, sewerage systems, and water supply. The proceedings under the 'Labourers Acts' relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages and rent and rates collection. The proceedings often incorporate details of reports from various Officials, such as the County Surveyor, Medical Officers of Health, Sanitary Officers, Rent Collectors, Inspectors of Dairies and so on.

Minutes are generally signed or initialled by the Chairman and witnessed by the Clerk. Size 1,420pp

- 'Orders under the L.G. Board's Seal, determining that the Turloughmore Dispensary District shall be the area of charge on which all expenses incurred or which may be incurred by reason of the extension of the Post Office system of Telegraphs to the Post Offices at Claregalway and Dring office...' (p12).
- 'The pumps in Inishmaan and Inishere are out of order. The Council beg to observe that they sent an Engineer to put these pumps in order but the Islanders would not allow him to land on the Island' (p48, see also p111, p152).
- 'The Engineer reported re. Labourers Cottages, those at Frenchfort and Carrowmoneash are not satisfactory and under the circumstances he has not taken them over from the contractors and he proposes to give them notice under Clause 15 of the Specification....' (p68).
- Special meeting convened for the 'purpose of making final arrangements for opposing the Criminal Injury Claims made by two members of the R.I. Constabulary (Royal Irish) amounting to £1,700 for injuries received at Galway Races' (p156); the case was withdrawn sometime thereafter (p169).
- Letter from the County Surveyor reporting that 'the built drain in the village of Spiddal has become stopped, with the result that the drainage from some houses has been affected, that the drain should be cleaned and put in working order. This is not the work of the road contractor...' (p159).
- 'Orders under the seal of the Local Government Board determining that the Turloughmore Dispensary District shall be the area of charge for the special expenses which may be incurred for the purpose of sinking a well at Corrandulla, and another at Caherateemore South in the Galway Rural District' (p190).

- 'Resolved - That we rejoice at recovery of the National Leader, J.E. Redmond, MP. At such a crisis in our Country's history, his counsel and advice are most essential in the Home Rule Cause. We again place on record our unalterable demand for National Self Government, and declare that nothing short of a full measure of Home Rule will satisfy the aspirations of the Irish people' (p200).
- 'Resolved - That we strongly condemn the action of Lord Killanin in voting against the Home Rule Bill for Ireland in the House of Lords and criticising the action of the Irish People as being incapable of managing their own affairs, that apparently, he has less belief in the abilities of his fellow countrymen than the English Government, and his opinions are directly contrary to those of his [] brethren in foreign lands. That we call upon him to resign his seat on this Council and make way for a man who is in accord with and will voice the opinions of his constituents...' (p362).
- Letter from the Congested Districts Board stating that 'in compliance with the request from the Council, they will contribute towards the execution of road making in the South and Middle Islands of Aran, one-half of the cost - the estimated total cost being £330, providing that the works are carried out by the County authorities in accordance with plans and specifications to be approved by the Board before the works are commenced...' (p394-395, see also p538).
- Details of letter from the Rev. M Farragher, P.P., Aran Island referring to previous correspondence in connection with the erection of cottages in Aran, when he 'suggested that the matter might be kept over pending the purchase of the Islands by the Congested Districts Board [from the Lady Guinness Estate]. The sale is now complete, and the Board are arranging to improve the condition of the inhabitants of the Island. A most important step in this direction is the providing of sanitary dwelling. A Committee of the Congested Districts Board has informed him that they are prepared to give the Council sites for cottages with plots, free, also to give a small contribution towards the cost of erection and act as contractors under the Council for the building of the cottages...' (p445).
- Council adopted resolution forwarded by the Limerick County Council stating that 'owing to the recent political events, and particularly to the attitude of the army in the Ulster Question, we consider that the time has come when every effort should be made to organise the Irish Volunteer Force in every parish in Ireland. We are convinced that such a force, wisely led by men in whom our indomitable leader Mr J. E. Redmond would have confidence, would prove to the world that the manhood of Ireland are ready to do their part in defence of their homes and liberties, and if need be to protect our fellow Nationalists in Ulster from insult and attack' (p523).
- With reference to a letter from the Local Government Board to the Council regarding provision of a water supply in Clonboo, the Council advised that 'As the well in question only supplied few families the Council cannot see their way in spending probably £400 to provide a water supply for their use' (p572).
- Letter from the Congested Districts Board 'stating that they are informed that the larger plan of cottage would be preferred in the case of the remaining cottages to be built in the Aran Islands. The Board will, if so desired, build the remaining 22 cottages at an additional cost of £10 each, although this amount will not nearly meet the additional cost involved...' (p711-712).

- 'Resolved - That we beg to tender to the family of O'Donovan Rossa,⁹¹ sterling patriot and ardent lover of his country all through his life, our deep and sincere sympathy in the affliction that has come upon them though his death in America' (p722).
- 'From the Portumna Rural District Council forwarding a copy of a resolution adopted by them condemning the action of the Authorities in shooting innocent people without any form of trial during the recent disturbance in Dublin. Further, condemning them for depriving the country of the youth and manhood by deportation and whose sympathies were heartily in accord with the wishes of the Government as far as recruiting is concerned. That the whole Council be appointed a Committee to collect funds for the dependents of these noble Irishmen who were shot during the disturbance' (p839).
- 'Resolved: That this Council desires to associate itself with the movement for the complete independence of Ireland, and congratulates the leaders and organisers who are restoring the self respect of the Nation which had been lowered through the treachery of the mis-called Irish Party. That congratulating the members for North Roscommon and South Longford and the electors who won these Irish victories, we look forward to the representation of Galway by men equally faithful to the fighting cause of Ireland. That desiring to honour the brave men now in Lewes Jail who are suffering for Ireland, we must express our detestation of their inhuman treatment and we call upon the English Government to treat these brave soldiers not as criminals but as Prisoners of War' (p973).
- 'Letter from Dr Loftus, Medical Health Officer, Spiddal Dispensary District calling attention to the appearance of 35 cases of influenza, with chest infections, in his District within a few days. Probable source of infection, introduction of the disease by some Teachers who had been visiting in Tuam...' (p1,159).
- 'The Acting Clerk reported having been arrested on 3rd instant, and released on parole on 20th instant (January 1921), pending trial by Field General Court Martial on 25th instant, on the charge of circulating a letter from Dáil Éireann. He was previously arrested on the same charge on 30th September last, and released after 26 days imprisonment, without trial' (p1,405).
- 'Resolved :- That as a mark of respect to our late colleague, Mr John Geoghegan [Acting Clerk], who was taken from his bed during the past week and shot outside his own door, we adjourn this meeting...' (p1,415).

91. Jeremiah O'Donovan Rossa (1831 – 1915), a Fenian leader, was born in county Cork. In 1858 Rossa established the Phoenix Society which would later evolve into the Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB). For his various subversive activities he was jailed numerous times and was finally exiled in 1871. He spent his later years in New York, where he died in 1915. The Irish Republicans then brought his body back to Ireland for burial, where Padraig Pearse made his famous graveside oration, which ended with the lines: "... the fools, the fools, the fools! — They have left us our Fenian dead, and while Ireland holds these graves, Ireland unfree shall never be at peace." <http://en.wikipedia.org>

II. Quarterly Minutes of Galway Rural District Council, 1904-1925

(4.-5.)

6. 16 January 1904 – 10 October 1925
- Volume of minutes of proceedings of Council's quarterly meetings. Recording attendance, details of correspondence, generally from the Local Government Board and from the early 1920s from the Local Government Department, and actions required thereafter, together with proceedings of Council business relating to the construction and maintenance of the physical infrastructure of the district, namely its roads, bridges, piers and harbours. Such business included applying for, reviewing and approving tenders for works. The proceedings usually incorporate printed reports, or details of reports, from the County Surveyor, together with printed schedules of works. The schedules describe the road requiring attention together with details of the period of contract, tons of metals per annum, price per perch per annum, and total or annual cost of maintenance.

Minutes are generally signed or initialled by the Chairman and witnessed by the Clerk. Size: c. 390pp.

- 'Resolved: That we again express our approval of the scheme (a 22 mile stretch of road running from Galway to Costello) on condition that half of the cost be contributed from the Imperial Exchequer Surplus Fund (the Chief Secretary for Ireland having given an assurance that the matter will be favourably considered) one fourth from the County-at-large, and one fourth from the Galway Rural District' (p10).
- 'Resolved : That we the Galway Rural District Council believing that transit facilities are of the utmost importance for opening up and developing the populous, remote, extensive and congested district along the sea-board west of Galway have agreed to contribute a considerable amount of money towards the improvement of the main road in that district from Galway to Costello, but at the same time we beg to bring under the notice of the authorities the hardship it is to ask a district of this sort where rates are so high and nearly all the ratepayers are very small farmers, to undertake such a burden...' (p124).
- 'Special application from the County Surveyor to steam roll the road leading from entrance to Military Camp near Oranmore to the village of Oranmore. Probable cost of the work £600, the Road Board being prepared to contribute £400, the remaining £200 to be raised by way of a loan, the effect on the rates being infinitesimal, whereas a very substantial and useful work will be completed at very little cost to the ratepayers...' (p217).

III. Contracts for Road Maintenance, 1899 – 1902

7. 21 August 1899 - 26 April 1902
- Bond and Contract for the repair and maintenance of roads and footpaths, detailing the area to be maintained in perches, the contractor's name and address, annual cost, period of contract (5 years), specification of work, conditions of contract, signed by Contractor, Sureties, and Witness. Size: 2 items/6pp

1913.
District.

Local Government Board, Dublin,

1st December, 1913.

Sir,
The Local Government Board for Ireland have received the report of their Medical Inspector, Sir A. MacCullagh, relating to the sanitary condition of the Gort Rural District, extracts from which are enclosed; and the Board request that each of the matters therein referred to, may receive the careful consideration of the Rural District Council.

The Board observe that Sir A. MacCullagh again found it necessary to draw attention to insanitary conditions prevailing in the District; and they desire to call attention to the various defects, to previous correspondence on the Council the necessary

Gort Rural District Council Archive Collection

The Gort Rural District Council archive collection consists of minute books (1899-1924), and incoming letters (1912-1917). The collection code is G01/10.

The Council's geographical area of responsibility measured 106,325 acres, 3 roods and 10 perches. It included the electoral divisions of Ardamullivan, Ardahan, Ballycahalan, Beagh, Cahermore, Cappard, Castletaylor, Dorus, Drumacoo, Gort, Kilbeacanty, Killeenavarra, Killinny, Killeely, Kiltartan, Kiltomas, Kinvarra, Rahasane, and Skehanagh.

The Council's first meeting was held in the Boardroom of the Workhouse on 15 April 1899. As the prescribed form of minutes was not yet available the minutes for this first meeting, and those up to 29 July 1899, are recorded in the relevant volume of minutes of the Poor Law Union (G01/12/86). Mr Patrick J Nilan was elected as the Rural District Council's first Chairman.

The Council was initially quite vocal regarding national political issues, despite a protest from Councillor John Quinn, stating 'we meet to do the business of the District and not for entertaining wild political resolutions' (G01/10/1, p80). Nevertheless the Council remained relatively political, particularly in its first few years of existence. For instance in January 1900 the Council resolved to express its 'entire satisfaction at the reunion of the Irish Parliamentary Party and pledge ourselves to support them by every means in our power in their united efforts on behalf of the Irish people.

That we are also glad to learn it is their intention of introducing a Bill into Parliament this Session for improving the condition of Town tenants - a worthy but neglected class - and that in our opinion nothing less than fixity of tenure and fair rents will satisfy their just demands' (G01/10/18, p278).

At its meeting on 9 February 1901, the Council passed a resolution of sympathy to the Royal family following the death of Queen Victoria. However, at the meeting of 23rd February Councillor Michael O'Donoghoe gave notice of his intention at the subsequent meeting to call for a resolution rescinding the resolution of sympathy (G01/10/1, p8170). At that same meeting the Council objected to the phraseology of the Coronation Oath, putting on 'record our vehement condemnation of the bigoted and un-Christian phraseology in the succession and Royal Coronation Oath, galling as it has been at all times to millions of His Majesty's subjects it is even now more reprehensible in the full light of the boasted freedom of the 20th century, and we call on the Prime Minister and legislators of England to remove these objectionable and odious expressions from a solemn declaration which we trust is not in its present form congenial to the views and taste of His Majesty Himself' (G01/10/1, p818).

The Council gave from the outset its backing to the struggle for Home Rule, pledging in 1910 its support for the Irish Parliamentary Party united under John Redmond, and stating that any concessions the Irish people received from an 'alien Government' were only achieved by the action of a united party (G01/10/6, p1049). In April 1912 it expressed its approval of the Home Rule Bill introduced into Parliament by Mr Asquith and welcomed it 'as an earnest effort on the part of the Liberal Party to settle the grievances which have existed since the passing of the Act of Union' (G01/10/9, p362). And at the third passing of the Bill in January 1913 the Council recorded its 'heartily rejoice at the passing of the Home Rule Bill for the third time in the House of Commons and we offer our congratulations to Mr J.E. Redmond and the Irish

Parliamentary Party, and we desire to thank Mr Duffy, M.P. in a special manner for the great help and assistance he gave at all times on its passage' (G01/10/10, p255). In August 1914 the Council endorsed Redmond's House of Commons statement '...offering the services of our Irish National Volunteers to guard our Irish coasts from foreign invasion' (G01/10/12, p291), and the following month it congratulated Redmond and his Party on placing the Home Rule Bill on the statute book (G01/10/12, p344).

No mention, condemnation or otherwise, of the Easter 1916 Rising may be found in the minutes. However in October 1916 the Council protested 'strongly against any attempt by the Government in putting in force in Ireland any form of conscription' and called upon the 'Parliamentary representatives to oppose any such measure' (G01/10/14, p146). However, despite little or no reference to the struggle against the 'alien Government' (G01/10/6, p1049) during the War of Independence the minutes reveal that the Council in June 1920, like most other local authorities in Ireland, acknowledged 'the authority of Dáil Éireann as the duly elected Government of the Irish People, and undertakes to give effect to all decrees duly promulgated by the said Dáil Éireann in so far as same effects this Council' (G01/10/16, p75).

In September 1922 the Council passed a resolution of sympathy 'at the sad deaths of Messrs. Cathal Brugha, Harry Boland, Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins, who gave their lives for Ireland...' (G01/10/17, p146). From November 1923 onwards the names of Rural District Council meeting attendees is recorded in Irish.

The Council was also concerned with the plight of tenants in the district, passing several resolutions calling for relief for the district during periods of hardship, and for land for tenants from the Land Commission or Congested Districts Board. For instance,

in March 1912 it resolved, 'That we...call upon the Congested Districts Board to take immediate steps to relieve the ratepayers of this Rural District of Gort of the heavy burden of tax imposed on them by the persistent refusal and obstinacy of Mr Bagott in failing to come to some reasonable settlement with his miserable congested tenants. We deem it our duty to submit the ratepayers' grievance to the parties responsible for this maladministration and urgently press upon them the necessity of putting the Compulsory Clauses of the Land Act into operation against Mr Bagott, not alone on behalf of those wretched tenants (the bill being passed solely for the likes of them) but on behalf of the already overtaxed ratepayers.

The purchase money of this miserable congested Estate would be approximately about £6,000 and a couple of years hence that sum will be paid by the ratepayers for extra police in patrol between Mr Bagott and his tenants' (G01/10/9, pp326-327).

In February 1913 the Council requested the 'Estate Commissioners to deal simultaneously with the Town holdings on the Lord Gough⁹² Estate, Gort, Co. Galway, as the agricultural holdings, and give accommodation land to the towns people, of which there is an abundant supply adjoining the town.

That inasmuch as Lord Gough is prepared to do everything in his power to complete the sale of the town, we ask the Estates' Commissioners not to shirk their responsibility in this very important matter more especially as Mr Commissioner Bailey promised a deputation some time ago that Gort would be dealt with in conjunction with the lands on the Gough property' (G01/10/10, p290).

In recognition of changing circumstances in March 1922 the Council called for a revision of land valuation, stating that 'The Gort District was one time a wheat growing district with every facility to the Galway market, and other important mills. When the mills

closed down wheat growing became unprofitable, and we were forced to graze our poor sandy land and compete with other parts of the county where the land is naturally fertile, and at a smaller valuation than ours' (G01/10/17, p39).

Despite the national economic and political evolutions and revolutions of the first quarter of the twentieth century the Rural District Council proceeded with its administrative duties. Duties and responsibilities that primarily involved the provision of Labourers cottages, road maintenance, and the monitoring and improvement of public health through the provision of water and sewerage schemes.

To assist the less well off in the district the Council adopted in 1908 and 1913 Improvement Schemes under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts 1883 (46 & 47 Vict. c.60) and 1885 (48 & 49 Vict. c.77) to provide housing. Under this legislation the Council applied in the first instance to the Local Government Board, who in turn applied to the Board of Works giving its recommendation that the loan be granted.⁹³ The first Scheme was adopted when the Council in February 1907 was satisfied a Scheme was necessary 'to remedy the state of things'. A Sites Committee was formed to select plots of land proposed to be acquired for building of Labourers cottages in District (G01/10/5, p477). There was some opposition to the building of cottages on the estates of Viscount Gough, Walter Shaw-Taylor, Miss M. St. George, Miss June Hynes and John H. Lambert (G01/10/5, p1,077).

In early 1908 the estimated cost of the building of each cottage - house plan and design similar to Portumna Rural District Council's No.3 scheme - was £125 inclusive of out-offices (G01/10/5, p757). However by September 1908 when the cost had increased substantially the Local Government Board informed the Council that '£185 per cottage is too high an expenditure to incur in providing house

accommodation and allotment for the needs of an agricultural labourer and his family, and point out that they are not prepared to sanction a greater rate than £170 per cottage...' (G01/10/6, p217). Many of the cottages were in fact erected at a cost of £122 each (G01/10/6, p837).

In April 1908 the Council confirmed its Improvement Scheme to erect 46 cottages with one-acre plots (G01/10/5, p1,097). The Local Government Board sanctioned a loan of £6,830 from the Irish Land Commission for the carrying out of the Scheme (G01/10/8, p57). However, in March 1914 the Board advised the Council that as the erection of 3 cottages had been abandoned the loan was regarded as closed at £6,500 (G01/10/18, 5 March 1914).

The adoption of the second Improvement Scheme was a relatively slow procedure. The Council initially held a special meeting in March 1912 to consider applications for cottages. Though it decided to only accept applications from the Electoral Divisions of Gort, Killeenavara and Kinvarra it resolved to postpone adopting a Scheme for the required 29 cottages until a future date (G01/10/9, p323).

The matter was given further consideration in September 1912 when the Engineer submitted plans of various types of cottages, and the Council adopted the Local Government Board plan "D" for Gort at an estimated cost of £130, and his own plan (as in Portumna in scheme 4) for Kinvarra and Killeenavara electoral divisions at approximately £130. Two large single cottages (Local Government Board Plan "K") with lean to addition to be provided in Gort for about £140 each. (G01/10/10/, p89).

In pursuance of Labourers Order 1913 (Improvement Scheme 2) the Council proposed to build 24 cottages. A copy of the Schedule of the improvement scheme is included in the volume of letters from the Local

92. The estate of the Viscount Gort, which included Lough Cultra Castle, was purchased in the late 1840's by General Sir William Gough, an eminent British General, when Lord Gort became bankrupt as a result of creating famine relief. Gough's grandson, and successor was not a popular landlord, and evicted many tenants, particularly in the early 20th century.

93. The Archives of the Office of Public Works at the National Archives of Ireland, Dublin contains a substantial quantity of records relating to the various schemes and may be of value to those seeking further information on this topic. See Rena Lohan, Guide to the Archives of the Office of Public Works, The Stationery Office, Dublin 1994, (pp256-257).

Government Board (G01/10/18, c. October 1913); which provides details such as listing number of cottages to be erected in various townlands, site number and size (in roods⁹⁴).

As the Council was unable to obtain tenders for the estimated cost it resolved in May 1914, subject to the Local Government Board's approval, to accept a tender from James Nestor, for the erection of 10 cottages at £145 each and 2 (large cottages) at circa £165 each, so long as he would complete the remaining 12 at the same cost (G01/10/12, p197). Nestor's Form of Tender (No.28) is attached to a letter from the Local Government Board to the Council (G01/10/18, 18 May 1914). The Local Government Board sanctioned a loan of £4,250 from the Land Commission for the carrying out of the Scheme (G01/10/18, 1 April 1914).

In September 1914 Mr Nestor reported to the Council that owing to World War I he was having difficulty in procuring staff and materials. The Council at the time therefore agreed to allow an increase of 5% on the tendered price, and agreed that Nestor was to have 5 cottages completed by 1 May 1915, and that he be given a period of 1½ years from that date to complete the remaining cottages (G01/10/12, p341). However, the Local Government Board refused to sanction the increase and stipulated that the agreement reached in May 1914 stand. As a result the Council and Nestor agreed to sign the contracts at the original price but with a specific conditional paragraph added stipulating that if the price or cost of materials varied by 5% from the tender price the schedule of prices would be 'correspondingly increased or reduced and the amount of the contract amended accordingly' (G01/10/12, p359). Again the Local Government Board objected to this proposal, and advised the Council that it would not accept any variation from the original terms, and requested the Council to re-advertise if Nestor protested. (G01/10/12, p377, and also G01/10/18, 30 September 1914); Nestor agreed to sign the contracts as per the original terms.

In August 1915 Nestor again reported to the Council and advised that 'owing to the enormous increase in prices of material it is almost impossible to carry out this work. Timber has gone up 50 per cent. At the beginning of the War timber was £20 per standard. It's now over £30. Galvanized iron has gone up over 100 per cent, while lead is hardly to be got at any price, and glass the same. Under these circumstances I would respectfully ask the Guardians to consider the case as to allowing extra to meet the enormous increase, and would be glad to leave the case to any competent party to decide what increase on material really is. On the other hand if the Guardians do not see their way to consider this proposition, I would ask them to consider the leaving over of completing the contract until the end of the War, and to finish all the cottages already begun, but not to start any more new ones' (G01/10/13, pp287-288). The Local Government Board approved of the cancellation of the contract on buildings not yet commenced and the postponement of the construction of houses until after the termination of the War' (GC01/10/13, p305).

In June 1922 the Council orders its Clerk to point out to the Local Government Department that 9 cottages remain uncompleted owing to 'the shortage of funds, and request him to state if a Loan for completion of these can now be obtained as they are very much required' (G01/10/17, p107). The Council was advised by the Department in September that it was endeavouring to secure the issue of the outstanding loans to ensure the completion of the cottages (G01/10/17, p161). In total the Council provided in excess of 50 Labourers cottages over a period of 25 years.

Two areas which took up much of the Council's time in the early years were the improvement of Kinvarra Pier and the provision of lighting in the town of Gort. With regard to the latter the Council had much discussion and correspondence with the Local Government Board in 1899 regarding the area of charge for the lighting of the town of Gort. The Council

94. Equal to quarter of an acre, i.e. 10,890 square feet or 1011.7141056m²

Correspondents are requested—
1. To quote the number and date of each letter to which they reply.
2. To address all letters on Labourers Acts business to
"The Assistant Secretary,
Labourers Department,
Local Government Board,
Dublin."
TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS:
"LOCAL, DUBLIN."

Labourers Department,
Local Government Board, Dublin.

8th March, 1915.

No. L 1371 : 1915.

This plot is referred to in the P.W. Order of 21 March 1908 as No 12 Caherbroder. It is situated in Townland of Caherbroder and it has been found more convenient to refer to it as original fence since some years ago but as a copy was supplied in the recent plot was uncompleted and set down broken down. Cottage & plot now let and becomes necessary to refer to it as original fence at out of £7-10-0

Gort Rural District Council,
Sir,
With reference to the Minute of the Gort Rural District Council on the 6th ultimo, relative to the proposed repair of the fence around a plot of land acquired by the Council at Caherbroder under the Labourers Acts, I am directed by the Local Government Board for Ireland to request that they may be furnished with further particulars in the matter including (a) the reference number in Provisional Order and date thereof of the plot in question and (b) whether the plot has been let to a tenant.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

M. O'Sullivan
Assistant Secretary.

Letter from the Local Government Board to Gort Rural District Council regarding site acquired for cottage at Caherbroder, G01/10/18

The Clerk,
Rural District Council,
Gort.

resolved in May 1900 'That application be made for a Loan of £600 repayable in 30 years for the purpose of lighting the streets of the Town of Gort. The area of charge for repayment being that defined in the schedule to the Local Government Order of 9th April 1900' (G01/10/1, p412).

In February 1901 the Council received a letter from the Local Government Board requesting a plan of the building proposed to house the gas generating plant, and an ordnance survey sheet map with the site clearly marked (G01/10/1, p805). The Council accepted the tender of The Sunlight Gas Company to light the town of Gort (G01/10/1, p572). In August 1901 the Local Government Board sanctioned a loan of £750 for the '...purpose of lighting the Town of Gort with acetylene Gas' (G01/10/1, p 67). There was some debate between the Rural District Council and the Board of Works regarding the period of the loan. However, in February 1902 the Council received a letter from Viscount Gough stating he had considered the '...request made by (the Chairman) the District Council ..., that I should support their application for an extension, from 10 years to 35 years, of the period of the Board of Works Loan for the Lighting of Gort. On the grounds that the Board may under present circumstances decline to make this concession, and being desirous to give every support in my power to the District Council in their enlightened and assiduous labours for the welfare of the Town of Gort, I shall be happy to pay off half the loan (£400) at once, the remaining half to be paid off in ten years by the Council as required by the Board' (G01/10/1, pp337-38). Lord Gough's offer was gratefully accepted and acknowledged by the Council.

The management of business connected with the lighting of the town was transferred to a Lighting Committee in early 1903.

With regard to Kinvarra Pier the Council made several requests in the early years to Galway County Council for funding to improve the pier. For instance in December 1903 it resolved that that '...as the elected representatives of the people of 19 of the most important Electoral Divisions in South Galway again call

upon the Government to at once allocate a grant of £2,200 out of the Marine Works Act to carry out the long delayed and much needed improvement of the Kinvara Harbour. That the Barley Markets for which Kinvara has been famous for over a quarter of a century, and which meant an annual outlay in the District of about £12,000 were not held this year owing to the want of proper Habour accommodation;... That we call upon the County Council to co-operate in the matter and to urge again upon the Government the urgency and importance of the work as one of the greatest possible utility...' (G01/10/3, p323).

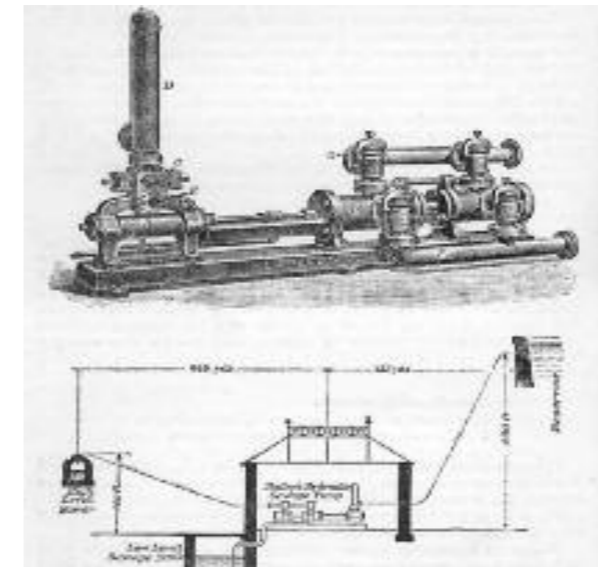
In July 1904 the Council again brought the 'deplorable and very dangerous condition' of the pier to the Government's attention, and called on the Chief Secretary in the 'interest of the lives of the people to take immediate steps to put the Harbour in proper repair and carry out the recommendations of the County Surveyor' (G01/10/4, p133). Two years later (June 1906) the Council 'Resolved: 'That we...express our strongest indignation at the action of the Department of Agriculture in withholding so long their promised contribution of £1,100 towards the improvement of Kinvara Harbour. That as the owners of the Sharpe Estate assigned over their interest in the Pier and Harbour as a free gift to the County Council forever, on the distinct understanding that a sum of £3,500 would be expended on the improvement of the Harbour and extension of the Pier we now call upon the Chief Secretary to insist without delay on the Department paying over this contribution to the County Council and allow the work to be started at once' (G01/10/5, p129).

The Minutes of Galway County Council reveal that the repair works on the pier were completed by November 1906 at a cost of £1,400, at which time the County Council enquired from the Local Government Board if the extension of the pier could then be proceeded with.⁹⁵

In addition the Council petitioned for support for the establishment of an agricultural and technical educational facility in the district from 1900 onwards. The Council advised the Department of Agriculture and Technical Education in December 1900 that it was 'the

first Union in the country to give a grant towards local industry and in spite of all obstacles [they] have succeeded with the help of the Sisters of Mercy in keeping work going and giving much necessary employment with the limited means at their disposal. Linen and woollen weaving are at present carried on under the charge of the Sisters who have spared neither their own time nor trouble to make it a success. We strongly urge on the Department the great necessity which exists for giving help towards the enlarging and developing of this industry which if properly worked will give very large employment... The sea-board portion of the district is some of the poorest in the west of Ireland, the Kinvarra harbour is in a disgraceful condition and the fishing industry is totally neglected with a result that a large portion of the population are in a half starved condition...' (G01/10/1, p729).

With regard to health issues the Council was involved in the control of disease and in the provision of graveyards, and of water and sewerage systems. It monitored reports of diseases, such as scarlatina, typhoid and typhus, and attempted to curtail their



Hydraulic Sewage Pump *

95. Galway County Council Minutes, GC1/1, p762.

* Image taken from Practical Sanitary Engineering Sanitary Engineering: A Practical Manual of Town Drainage and Sewage and Refuse Disposal, Wood, Francis, London, 2nd edn., 1906, p46.

spread; a letter from the Local Government Board in October 1904, advised the Council it '...would do well to have a supply of placards and leaflets printed and distributed showing the steps that should be taken to prevent the spread of consumption' (G01/10/4, p265).

In its capacity as Burial Board the Council was involved with the appointment of caretakers, and the provision and maintenance of graveyards, such as at Kiltartan (G01/10/5, p835) and Shanaglish (G01/10/5, p895).

With reference to the provision of water and sewerage schemes the Council was involved in the provision of wells and pumps and sewers. The provision of the latter at Court Lane, Kinvarra involved substantial discussion in the 1920s. With regard to the provision of water the Council in January 1907, for example, received an estimate of £450 for provision of a water supply and sewerage works in the town of Gort. The Council were prepared to proceed with the work so long as the Local Government Board sanctioned that the cost should be a charge on the town not on the whole Rural District (G01/10/6, p375). The Council also submitted an application to the Local Government Board for a Loan of £370 for sinking a pump well at Caheradine (G01/10/5, p835).

In addition in February 1912 the Council discussed the adoption of a scheme for the supply of water to Ardrahan and the surrounding district at an estimated cost of £200-£260, with the area of charge to be the entire Rural District (G01/10/9, pp282-283). However with the sinking of a well in Caherkelly, (approximately two miles from Ardrahan) there was some debate as to whether or not it was necessary to have a well in Ardrahan also. The Council decided it was not 'prepared to risk the large expenditure involved, particularly when there is a certainty of obtaining an adequate supply at Caherkelly within one statute mile of the village' (G01/10/9, p337).

In November 1912 the Council received a letter from the Local Government Board regarding the provision of a water supply at Caherkelly stating that 'from the information furnished it appears that the surface to the passage of the well in Caherkelly will have a slope towards the Well, and in order to prevent contamination from surface drainage, provision should be made, at intervals, to divert the drainage through the fence wall. The proposals to construct the platform of the pump at a height of 9 feet over the level of the water in the well appears to be objectionable, and would also be inconvenient and expensive. It would be advisable that it should be reduced to 6 ft. or 6 ft 6 inches. Provision should be made in the specification for deductions or extra works, and also for the upkeep of the works for a stated period' (G01/10/10, p156). Thereupon the Council requested their Engineer to have the plans amended. They acquired a loan of £150 for the provision of this well.

By the early 1920s Rural District Councils were viewed as unnecessary. The Irish Free State Government began to consider streamlining local administration

and thus the abolition of the Councils. Following their abolition in 1925 Galway County Council set up Public Works Committees' for the purpose of dealing in the first instance with applications of works and applications for payment, formerly sent to the County Council by the Rural District Councils. The Committees to be known as the Public Works Committees with the addition of the name of the Rural District. Public Works Committees to meet in the towns named and the Clerks of the former District Councils to act as Clerks to the Public Works Committees, pending other arrangements...⁹⁶ There being no permanent Clerk in Gort at that time, Mr John J. Hanafin, former Clerk of Loughrea Rural District Council, was appointed Clerk of the Gort Public Works Committee.⁹⁷

For the most part the collection is in good condition, though pages 261-280 are missing from the 1903 minutes (G01/10/3). However, the volume of letters (G01/10/18) has suffered severe mould damage. The letters, primarily from the Local Government Board, support and refer to many items covered in the minutes.

I. Minutes of Gort Rural District Council, 1899 – 1924

G01/10/

Volumes of handwritten minutes (following pre-printed format) of proceedings of Council meetings generally held twice monthly. The minutes record attendance, details of correspondence, generally from the Local Government Board, and from the early 1920s from the Local Government Department, and actions required thereafter, together with proceedings of Council business conducted under various legislation relating to the administration of the district under a range of headings such as general, financial, sanitary authority and Labourers cottages. The minutes often incorporate details of reports from various Officials, such as the County Surveyor, Medical Officers of Health, Sanitary Officers, Rent Collectors, Inspectors of Dairies and so on.

The proceedings of the Council acting as the 'Sanitary Authority' or from circa 1920 under the Public Health Acts, relate to health and sanitary matters, such as the prevention of disease, the care and management of burial grounds, and the provision and maintenance of sewerage systems and water supply; the latter encompassed reports from the Loughrea Waterworks Committee and the Athenry

96. Galway County Council Minutes, GC1/4, p4.
97. Ibid., GC1/4, p21.

1913.
District.

Local Government Board, Dublin,

1st December, 1913.

Letter from the Local Government Board of Gort Rural District Council regarding several issues, including the unsanitary conditions in the district. G01/10/18

Sir,

The Local Government Board for Ireland have received the report of their Medical Inspector, Sir A. MacCullagh, relating to the sanitary condition of the Gort Rural District, extracts from which are enclosed; and the Board request that each of the matters, therein referred to, may receive the careful consideration of the Rural District Council.

The Board observe that Sir A. MacCullagh has again found it necessary to draw attention to the insanitary conditions prevailing in the Rural District; and they desire to call attention, in this connection, to previous correspondence on the subject, and to urge upon the Council the necessity for taking early action to remedy the various defects in the Rural District, referred to by the Medical Inspector.

As regards the omission of the Council to carry out the registration, etc., of the Common Lodging Houses in the Rural District, the Board wish to point out that the provisions of Sections 87 and 91 of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, on this subject, are mandatory upon local authorities, and should be enforced.

The Board would again urge the Council, in the interests of the public health, to adopt the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889, and the Infectious

Waterworks Committee. The proceedings under the 'Labourers Acts' relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages and rent collection. The quarterly minutes incorporate details of reports from the County Surveyor pertaining to the district's roads, which included the business of applying for, reviewing and approving tenders for maintenance and improvement works.

The minutes are generally signed or initialled by the Chairman and witnessed by the Clerk. Average size: circa 580pp.

(G01/12/86) 15 April 1899 – 29 July 1899⁹⁸

1. 12 August 1899 - 29 June 1901 Includes:

- 'That as the majority of the members of this Council paid no attention to the reading of a Resolution at our last meeting sympathising with the Boers, passed by the Borough Council of the City of Limerick and forwarded to us and signed adopted, I give notice that at our next meeting that the adoption of this resolution be upset, for we meet to do the business of the District and not for entertaining wild political resolutions' (p80).
- Extract from the Medical Officer's Return form stating the 'Sanitary condition of District is not good. The yards are not properly drained, not clean and some of them have no closet accommodation, besides some of them are inhabited by pigs and have deposits of manure, which poison the air with foul smells. Some of the inhabitants for want of such accommodation use street corners, back streets, lanes, passages and other places as closets hereby fouling the air with their various gases and endangering seriously the water supply' (p205).
- 'Resolved:- Having ascertained through the correspondence given to the press on the 23rd ulto. by Edward Martyn Esq. of Tulyra Castle, the true causes which caused him to resign his position as Magistrate and Deputy Lieutenant of our County, we congratulate him on his spirited action, while deeply sensible of the loss which we and the Country at large sustain in being deprived of his enlightened official advocacy of justice to our County and our people...'
That we recognise and appreciate Lord Ashbourne's estimate of Mr Martyn as "the head of an old Catholic family, and now a distinguished literary man" as contrasted with that of Lord Clonbrock who sees in his unwillingness to listen to the strains of "The Absent minded beggar" a violation of the oath of allegiance.
That we offer our sympathy all the more willingly and respectfully to Mr Martyn as one of the few Galway Landlords who has disposed of his extensive property to his tenants under the provisions of the Land Purchase Acts, and on terms satisfactory to his tenants...' (pp350-351).
- 'Resolved:- ...place on record our strongest condemnation of the cowardly and treacherous conduct of the voters of Galway Borough who, while professing nationalist sympathies, proved by their conduct at the late election by handing over the representation of the Borough to an avowed enemy of the National cause, that they were always trading under false pretences, and unworthy of the name of Nationalist' (p620).

98. A volume of Gort Poor Law Union minutes contains the minutes for the Rural District Council between these dates.

- 'Resolved : That the names of the Gort streets be put up in Irish letters subject to the decision of the Local Government Board as to the legality of incurring expenditure for this purpose' (p853, see also p871).
- 'That we ...desire to place on record the great loss the Irish race has sustained by the death of the Fenian Chief – James Stephens⁹⁹ – that we desire to convey our sincere sympathy to his friends...' (p872).

2. 13 July 1901 – 8 June 1903 Includes:

- 'Resolved:- There being no tender for the maintenance of the streets of Gort the Council strongly recommend the County Council to have the work done by means of direct labour and thus afford much needed employment to the local Labourers (p313).
- On the release of Patrick Finnegan from prison the Council resolved its 'heartiest congratulations on his release from Prison after twenty years' incarceration for a crime that we believe he was perfectly innocent of. That we look upon his release as due in a great extent to the untiring zeal and advocacy on his behalf of Mr William Duffy¹⁰⁰, MP and that we are glad to see his efforts crowned with such success' (p548).
- The Engineer reported that 'it is impossible to prevent the flooding of premises at Crow Street by any system of sewerage as the backwater from the River rises higher than the level of the yards. This can only be remedied by deepening the river at the Island, which would be a very costly undertaking' (p824).
- 'That we the members of the Gort District Council extend to Capt. John Shaw-Taylor, the energetic Secretary of the Land Conference Committee, a hearty céad-míle fáilte on his return to Ireland and congratulate him on the great success that attended his mission to America in securing the powerful support of all shades of opinion in favour of the principles embodied in the report of the Land Conference Committee' (p871).
- 'Resolved...beg to draw public attention to the neglected disgraceful and dilapidated condition of Kinvara Pier Harbour which is such a very great danger to the lives of the people, and to the boats



Captain John Shaw-Taylor (Galway County Council Archives, Shaw-Taylor Papers, G01/4/)

99. James Stephens (1825 – 1901) was a Protestant born in Co. Kilkenny. He was a railway engineer, republican nationalist, and founder of the Fenians 1850, known as the Irish Republican Brotherhood from 1858 onwards. In 1856, after spending several years in France, Stephens returned to Ireland travelling extensively around the country planning a secret physical-force movement that would be more durable than the Young Ireland movement. In 1865 Stephens suspended a planned rising, and was arrested shortly afterwards but escaped and fled to Paris and then to New York. 1866 was to be the year of Rising, but Stephens again postponed it and was thus denounced at a Fenian Convention. He spent many of the subsequent years in exile in Paris, New York and Belgium, with short periods in Ireland trying to re-establish himself with Irish revolutionaries. He returned to Ireland in 1891 and spent the remainder of his life in seclusion in Blackrock, Co. Dublin, avoiding politics. <http://multitext.ucc.ie>

100. William John Duffy (1865 – 1945) was an politician, one of the few people to have sat in the British House of Commons and Dáil Éireann. Duffy was MP for the Galway South from 1900 to 1918. In the June 1927 Irish general election, he was elected TD for Galway as a National League Party representative.

moored alongside as well as such a serious loss to the trade of the town and district... That it is from the Congested Districts of Connemara that the people within a radius of fourteen miles of Kinvarra get their turf and seaweed supply, and vice versa it is from Kinvarra the Connemara people get their food supply and seed for sowing their land we call upon the Government to do something at once to make the Pier and Harbour safe for its daily increasing trade...' (pp871-872).

3. 13 June 1903 – 16 April 1904 Includes:
 - 'A letter, signed by several ratepayers in the town of Gort, was submitted asking the support of the District Council in an application to the County Council that suitable provision be made for the accommodation of boys, as well as girls, in the new schools for Technical Instruction which they are about to erect in Gort at a cost of £2,000' (p303).
 - 'The Council approved a resolution expressing the opinion that St. Patrick's Day should be observed as a National Festival' (p463).
4. 14 May 1904 – 7 April 1906 Includes:
 - That we ...have read with surprise and pain the action taken against the Kilmacduagh tenantry by their Land Agent, Mr Frank Shawe-Taylor, and in the face of the negotiations pending for the purchase of these tenants holdings we regard the Agent's action as absolutely unjustifiable...'(p97).
 - 'Resolved - That in view of the almost complete failure of the potato and corn crops in the Gort Rural District wehereby impress upon the Government the absolute necessity of carrying out much needed public works such as road making and the improvement of Kinvarra Harbour during the next few months as a means of alleviating the great distress that is bound to exist' (p277, see also p331, p367).
 - 'Resolved – We therepresentatives of the ratepayers of the District, respectfully request the Estate Commissioners, in the event of their purchasing any estate in this District on which there is untenanted land, to have regard to the distribution of such land to the requirements of evicted tenants, tenants of uneconomic holdings, farmers' sons, and workers skilled or unskilled in the district and to means provided by the Land Act of 1903 for satisfying those requirements without adding to the Rate....' (pp926-7).
5. 31 March 1906 – 18 April 1908 Includes:
 - That the thanks of the Council be conveyed to Viscount Gough for his generosity in giving the site of a graveyard at Ashfield, free of charge...' (p255).
 - 'That in view of the partial failure of the potato crop in the district around Kinvara, and the great dearth of employment amongst the labouring population, we ...call upon the Chief Secretary to introduce a short Bill during the present session of Parliament to overcome the legal technicality that prevent the County Council from carrying out the work at Kinvara Harbour during the winter, and give much needed employment in the locality' (p369).

- 'That we ...protest most emphatically against the libellous comedy "The Playboy of the Western World"¹⁰¹, that was belched forth during the past week in the Abbey Theatre, Dublin, under the fostering care of Lady Gregory¹⁰² and Mr Yeats¹⁰³. We congratulate the good people of Dublin in howling down the gross buffoonery and immoral suggestions that are scattered throughout this scandalous performance. It is an extraordinary thing that any Christian much less an Irishman should so grossly libel his country, as to suggest that any Irish girl should be found wooing with no trace of modesty a man whose sole claim to affection is that he murdered his father. It is time that we should stop the children of this Union from partaking of the hospitality of Lady Gregory in the future, as a protest against her active participation and co-operation in the libelling of the Irish character' (p449).
6. 25 April 1908 – 26 March 1910 Includes:
 - That we the members of the Gort District Council representing a population of upward of 16,000 people, who are largely Irish speaking heartily support the demand of the great body of Irishmen that Irish should be made a compulsory subject of matriculation in the new University; and that we call on the County Council of Galway to support the demand by whatever means they may think advisable and thus secure for their countrymen a truly Irish and National University' (p409).
 7. 5 April 1910 – 10 December 1910 Includes:
 - 'That we... note the contents of the resolution of the Gort Town Tenants League and hereby express our entire willingness to co-operate with Lord Gough in granting him permission to plant trees at Kilmacduagh, and help him to provide a receptacle for broken grass, as well as assist him about the other matter of which he complains provided he acts in the same honest and honourable spirit towards his tenantry. And as great and far reaching questions of integrity and principle are involved in the question of "Game Rights" which is holding back the sale of the Estate, and forcing him to see in sections (a dangerous policy to the peace of the District) and inasmuch as his tenants are fully willing to treat him in an honourable and equitable spirit by permitting him to shoot over their lands during his life-time or any member of his family or any friends of his, foreign or otherwise, and to preserve the game for him as a National asset in an honourable way so that no game keepers may be placed over the tenants, thus maintaining peace and orderliness in his Estate and avoiding friction and unpleasantness, and as our love of progress is measured by the amount of honour and fair play we possess which is undoubtedly one of the finest of human characteristics. We now put the whole question to the test to ascertain if these honourable and equitable feelings are mutual (pp146-47).

101. A three-act play written by playwright, John Millington Synge (1871–1909) and first performed at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin on January 26th, 1907. When *The Playboy* first opened in Dublin, it was the cause of civil disturbances as Catholic protesters voiced their objections to the portrayal of rural Irish morality.

102. Isabella Augusta, Lady Gregory (185–1932), née Isabella Augusta Persse, was an Anglo-Irish dramatist and folklorist. With William Butler Yeats and others, she co-founded the Irish Literary revival and the Abbey Theatre, and wrote numerous short works for both companies. Her home at Coole Park, County Galway served as an important meeting place for the leading Revival figures.

103. William Butler Yeats (1865–1939) was a poet and dramatist, and one of the foremost figures of 20th century literature. He was a driving force behind the Irish Literary Revival, and together with Lady Gregory and Edward Martyn founded the Abbey Theatre, and served as its chief playwright during its early years. He also served as an Irish Senator for two terms. In 1923, he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature.

8. 17 December 1910 – 17 June 1922 Includes:
- 'Read letter from Local Government Board...stating it appears that only 14 Cow keepers have as yet been registered under the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milkshops (Ireland) Order, of 1908 and requesting that Council to proceed to carry out without delay the Provisions of the Order in question in regard to the Registration of all Cowkeepers, Dairymen, and Purveyors of Milk in the Rural District' (p71).
 - 'Submitted final notice of application by Michael Corless, Kinvara for £80 compensation for the malicious burning of three stacks of oats at Kinvara on the 29th January, 1911' (p102).
 - 'Resolved – That we disapprove of the action of the County Council in endeavouring to change the route proposed by the Road Board from Kinvara to Kilcolgan (through Ballinderreen) and having it changed in another direction from Kinvara to Kilcolgan (through Ardrahan) as we believe the former road is through a congested area, and by the sea, would be more frequented by tourists, and would be the better road to have steam rolled as it is the main road between Galway and Clare through Ballyvaughan' (p122).
9. 1 July 1911 – 13 July 1912 Includes:
- 'That we ...having heard of with regret of the demise of Captain Shaw-Taylor do hereby tender to Mr Walter Shaw-Taylor (father of deceased), and the other members of his family, an expression of our sincere sympathy in the great loss they have sustained' (p2).
 - 'Read letter from Viscount Gough stating he would facilitate the Council in every way should they lay pipes from the well at Rindifin into the Town of Gort. He also complains that some malicious persons recently threw down the wall into the well which will entail some expense to the Council, and deposits of rubbish, particularly broken glass, placed on the old road between Railway Station and Kinincha old mill' (p211).
10. 20 July 1912 – 5 April 1913 Includes:
- That we...hereby earnestly request the Department of Agriculture to at once press for the removal of the embargo by which the cattle trade of this country is at present crippled, and secure facilities for the free export of cattle from all unaffected areas Should the present grave and unfortunate condition of affairs be allowed to continue, the result which is sure to follow threatens to be the most disastrous ever experienced by the Irish farmer' (p92).
 - 'That we...desire to express our horror of the harsh and unjust sentence passed on the young Clareman (Arkins), 7 years penal servitude for damage done to 7 yards of stone wall. That we are of opinion that in no other county in the civilized world would such a sentence be awarded for such an offence...' (p236, see also p272).

11. 19 April 1913 – 13 December 1913 Includes:
- That the County Council be requested to borrow such sum as the County Surveyor thinks will be required for the purpose of repairing the sea wall at Aughanish (Co. Clare) in a way likely to be permanent and to ask the Congested Districts Board to contribute half the entire cost' (p20, see also p182).
 - 'Read letter from the Secretary, Co. Galway Agriculture and Technical Instruction Committee, asking the Council to rent a vacant cottage to the Committee, for the use of an Instructor, whom they propose sending to the District for 10 or 12 weeks, to lecture to persons living in Labourers Cottages on Cookery, Laundry and Horticulture' (p236).
12. 13 December 1913 – 12 December 1914 Includes:
- 'Resolved : That we regret to notice the backwardness of the people of Gort with regard to the establishment of a Branch of the National Volunteers, considering the lead that has been given them by the other towns of the county, and the great importance of the Movement' (p110).
 - 'The Clerk reported that Mr James Nestor signed this Bond for the erection of 24 cottages in Gort, on the terms approved by the Local Government Board on the 18th May last.' (p395).
 - 'The Clerk was directed to make the following entry on the Minute Book:-
The Contractor for building Labourers Cottages in Gort appeared before the Council, and stated that 4 months of the time allowed for completion of his contract has now expired, and that during this time he has been unable to do any work, as the Engineer refuses to mark the sites' (p468).
13. 9 January 1915 – 8 April 1916 Includes:
- 'That we urgently ask the County Council owing to the great scarcity of labour and the difficulty farmers find to get labourers to till their farms to postpone direct labour on roads until after the War' (p344).
 - 'That we, the Gort District Council approve of the stand made against conscription in this country by the Irish Parliamentary Party, and we promise them our entire support in opposing any such Act, considering that Ireland has supplied more men according to her population than England or Scotland' (p345).
 - 'Read letter from Local Government Board... forwarding extracts from the report of their Architect Mr Foley, on his recent inspection of certain cottages, in pursuance of the Improvement Scheme of 1908, and stating that the defective manner in which the cottages provided under this scheme have been built reflects grave discredit on both the Council and the Engineer employed by them to supervise the works' (p395).
14. 22 April 1916 – 8 December 1917 Includes:
- "That we ...request our Irish representatives not to have any further dealing with the Liberal Government at the coming Convention until they first get a guarantee that the findings of the majority will immediately be put into operation; and secondly until such time as the Irish Prisoners are released or treated as Prisoners of War' (p327).

- 'Read letter from the Local Government Board...stating they will not raise any objection to the proposed increase of salary of £5 a year to the Clerk of the Council in respect of the additional amount of permanent work devolving upon him in connection with the several Improvement Schemes which the Council have been authorised to carry out under the Labourers Act' (p467).
- 15.** 12 January 1918 - 10 January 1920 Includes:
- 'That we....protest strongly against the application of conscription in this country as we feel from the general opinion of the people that if enforced it will result in bloodshed, and stop the cultivation of the land, as labour already is very scarce' (p56).
 - 'That Lord Gough be asked to contribute a sum towards the upkeep of the streets of Gort from the monies obtained by him from the new Fairs and Markets, also, that he be compelled to give one entrance to the backyards of tenants of his in town who have to remove manure through their dwelling houses to the public streets...' (p93).
- 16.** 14 February 1920 – 14 January 1922 Includes:
- 'The Gort District Council tenders its sympathy to the Mother and relatives of Kevin Barry¹⁰⁴ who was recently executed in Mountjoy Prison, and to the relatives of the late Lord Mayor McSweeney¹⁰⁵ (sic) and his associates in Cork Prison and place on record its appreciation of the great sacrifice these patriots have made in the cause of Irish freedom' (p183).
- 17.** 11 February 1922 – 9 February 1924 Includes:
- 'That we...strongly disapprove of the action of the Executive Committee of County Homes Committee in proposing to borrow a large sum of money for the enlargement of Loughrea Workhouse, which was only selected as the County home for twelve months, whilst there are several other institutions now vacant which can be utilised for any purpose required' (p39).
 - 'Read letter ...from the Local Government Department stating they have received sworn affidavits showing that Mr James Cavanagh was prevented by force from being present at the meeting of 10th ulto. for the election of Clerk. Under the circumstances they will not take any steps to ratify the proceedings, and accordingly the position should be re-advertised making it clear that candidates will first be examined, and that the Council will then choose their Clerk from those who have successfully passed the examination' (p272).

104. Kevin Barry (1902 – 1920), medical student, and revolutionary. Arrested following involvement in an attack on the Crown forces in which six British soldiers were killed. He was court-martialled and hanged in Mountjoy Jail on 1 November 1920.

105. Terence MacSwiney (1879-1920), accountant, poet, playwright and revolutionary. Co-founder of the Cork Celtic Literary Society in 1901 and in 1908 of the Cork Dramatic Society. Also founding member of the Cork Brigade of the Irish Volunteers in 1913, and in 1914 founder of a weekly newspaper, Fianna Fáil. He obeyed Eoin MacNeill's countermanding order on Easter Sunday 1916. Elected to first Dáil Éireann as a Sinn Féin representative for Mid-Cork, and elected as Lord Mayor of Cork in 1920. On 12 August 1920 the military raided Cork City Hall and arrested him and others. The prisoners agreed to go on hunger strike. All but the Lord Mayor were released three days later. He was court-martialled and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. By mid-October his condition worsened, and attempts were made to force-feed him. He died in Brixton Prison on 24 October 1920, 74 days after he started his hunger strike.

II. Incoming Letters, 1912 - 1924

(a) Volume of Letters, 1912 -1917

- 18.** 30 October 1912 – 1 May 1917 Including circular letters, primarily from the Local Government Board to the Council, relating to its administration and that of the district, with the former relating to issues such as the sinking of a well at Caherkelly (10 January 1913), new burial ground at Shanaglish (22 January 1913), Labourers cottages, staffing matters and so on, and circular letters relating to issues such as National Health Insurance, payment of Clerk's salaries, regulations pertaining to the administration of the Labourers Cottages Act, to the registration of motor cars, and co-operation between civil and military sanitary services in Ireland. Includes:
- [copy] letter from John Loughrey, tenant of a labourer's cottage to the Local Government Board complaining about the repair of his cottage. His postscript states 'I hope it won't be out of place to remark that if [this] is the manner that Acts of Parliament concerning the poor are carried out we have no great reason to be enthusiastic about Home Rule' (G01/10/18 14 January 1913).
 - 'Declarations and Schemes formulated by the County Council for the maintenance of Roads in Ballinasloe No.1, Glenamaddy, Loughrea and Mountbellew Rural District (September 1916) Many letters are annotated. Size: c. 600pp.

(b) Letters, 1923-1924

- 19.** 9 June 1923 Covering letter from Brooks, Thomas & Co. Ltd., 4 Sackville Place, Dublin regarding the payment of an account. Size: 1p
- 20.** 16 January 1924 From the County Surveyor, M.J. Kennedy, regarding Gort Roads. Size: 1p

III. Contracts for Road Maintenance, 1899 -1902

- 21.** 30 September 1899 - 26 April 1902 Tenders, Bonds and Contracts for the repair and maintenance of roads and footpaths, detailing the area to be maintained in perches, the contractor's name and address, annual cost, period of contract (annually or 5 years), specification of work, conditions of contract, signed by Contractor, sureties, and Witness. Size: 63 items.



Loughrea Rural District Council Archive Collection

This archive collection includes three categories of records. The principal group, the minutes of proceedings of the Council (1901-1925), have been arranged chronologically. The remaining two categories are comprised of minutes of proceedings of a Public Works Committee (1925) established to continue the work of the abolished Rural District Council, and a volume of outgoing letters from the Clerk to the Council (1900-1922). The Loughrea County Board of Health and Public Assistance subsequently used this latter volume as a register of telephone calls, a scrapbook, and an account book. The collection code is G01/8.

The Council's geographical area of responsibility measured just over 198,927 acres. It included the electoral divisions of Aille, Athenry, Ballynagar, Bracklagh, Bullaun, Cappalusk, Castleboy, Cloonkeen, Colmanstown, Craughwell, Derrylaur, Dumkeary, Grange, Grangeabbey, Greethill, Kilbreekill, Kilchreest, Kilconickny, Kilconierin, Killimore, Killogilleen, Kilmeen, Kiltesskill, Kiltullagh, Lackalea, Leitrim, Loughatorick, Loughrea Rural, Loughrea Urban, Marble Hill, Moyode, Raford, Tiaquin and Woodford.

The Rural District Council meetings were generally held, if the required quorum of Councillors was in attendance, twice a month in the Workhouse, Loughrea. There were originally in the region of 70 elected and/or co-opted members of Council; from the 1920s the number was reduced to 38. The Council held its inaugural meeting on 22 April 1899.

A wealth of information pertaining to the Council itself, and to the physical and social development of the district may be ascertained from the collection. For

example the minutes reveal that two female members, Ms Nora Cahill and Ms Gertrude MacNamara, co-opted to the Council in April 1904 served as Councillors for a short period only.

The Council's concern and interest in national political issues is illustrated by various resolutions, such as when in 1902 it adopted the motto '... "No Anti-Nationalist need apply"...' (G01/8/3, p342) and declared that all contractors employed by the Council were to be members of the United Irish League. The following year it pledged '...moral and material support to the Irish Language Movement...' (G01/8/3, p483).

In May 1916 it condemned the 1916 Easter Rising stating 'That, in common with the vast majority of our fellow countrymen, we deplore the occurrences in Dublin and other parts of Ireland during the past fortnight which resulted in the death of many innocent persons and the destruction of much property. We regret that many of our young countrymen were the dupes of German agents and of the enemies of the country, and for these of the rank and file of the insurgents we plead for mercy. We desire to convey to John Redmond and the Irish Party our wholehearted support for the constitutional movement for Home Rule...

That we earnestly urge upon the Government the desirability, for the future peace of the country, of stopping immediately the carrying out of the capital punishment against those of our countrymen who were members of the rebel forces, and further that martial law should cease in as far as the trials of prisoners is concerned and further trials (if any) should be under the civil law' (G01/8/10, pp642-623).

Several years later, in early 1921, following its recognition six months earlier of the authority of Dáil Éireann, the Council placed an order for enlarged photographs of several of the leaders of the Rising (G01/8/13, p1).

In September 1920 the Council resolved 'That all communication between the Rural District Council and their officers and the British Local Government Board in Dublin be discontinued, that no future Minutes of Meetings, Returns or correspondence of any kind be sent to them, but instead that Minutes and all information required be furnished to the Local Government Department of Dáil Éireann (G01/8/12, p657). In December 1920 the Clerk, who from about this time onwards began to sign his name in Irish, informed the Council that the Acting Master of the Workhouse reported to him that Crown Forces searched the workhouse premises inflicting damage; they 'torn up all records including Account books, Bank Books, Minute books, Correspondence, Cheque Books etc; they daubed the walls and pictures, etc, with ink, and they threw on the floors all books, forms etc found on the shelves or in Presses...

I may add that it is now impossible to carry out an audit of the accounts as the records are mutilated or destroyed' (G01/8/13, p764).

Throughout the duration of the War of Independence the Council called for better conditions for political prisoners and for their release. Indeed in 1921 several of its own members were either in jail or 'on the run' (G01/8/13, p141).

Despite the political turmoil the Rural District Council proceeded to carry out its administrative duties; duties and responsibilities that primarily involved the provision of water and sewerage schemes, roads, and Labourers cottages.

From 1910 onwards the Council became involved in the protracted and cumbersome business of providing water and sewerage schemes for Athenry and a

sewerage scheme for Loughrea. The Loughrea works in particular were hindered by the lack of finance and the scarcity of labour and materials during World War I, and subsequently by the unsettled political climate in Ireland during the War of Independence and the Civil War. The lengthy process from commencement to completion was further complicated in the intervening years by the rising cost of labour and materials, and the consequential need to revise the estimate for the works.

The necessity of providing a main drainage system for the town of Loughrea was called for in March 1910 by Dr Ryan. He advised the Rural District Council that 'the sewerage of the town is bad and defective.

There is only one remedy which I am loath to recommend on account of the impoverished condition of people generally and that is a system of main drainage of the town' (G01/8/7, p435-436). Several months later the Council informed the Local Government Board that it had taken 'steps to remedy the defects in the sewerage of the town of Loughrea by instructing their engineer to prepare plans etc, for an improved system of sewerage...' (G01/8/7, p611).

In January 1911 the Clerk advised the Council that with reference to the Petitions presented to the Local Government Board for Provisional Orders for sewerage and water-works in Athenry and for sewerage works in Loughrea, he had employed a Parliamentary Agent, Messrs. Bircham & Co., 46 Parliament Street, Westminster, S.W. London, to deposit Plans and Books of Reference in the Houses of Parliament (G01/8/8, p39). In February the Local Government Board's Engineering Inspector, Mr A.D. Price, held separate Inquiries on the Council's Petition for Provisional Orders to enable it to acquire lands in connection with these works. The Council's Solicitor, Mr B.M. Toole represented the Council at the Inquiries. Following the Inquiries the Local Government Board granted the Council compulsory powers of acquisition for most of the lands required for the Athenry scheme and suggested that a '...more complete sewerage system

be designed and that, so as to obviate the delay of proceeding for a Provision Order next year, steps be taken, if possible, to arrange for the purchase of the necessary land for outfall works by agreement' (G01/8/8, p103).

The Board was not however prepared to make an order for the compulsory purchase of all the plots required by the Council for the Loughrea Scheme. In addition the Board recommended that a Consulting Engineer 'with large experience in the design and execution of works for sewerage of small towns should be employed...' (G01/8/8, p104). In response to this recommendation the Council appointed, following advertisement, Mr Francis Bergin, B.E., Dublin.

The question of which area(s) should be responsible for the cost of the works resulted in much discussion. However, it was finally decided that '...the area of charge for repayment of the Capital sum of £4,000 proposed to be borrowed for the purposes of the Loughrea Sewerage and Sewage Disposal Scheme be the Loughrea Rural District...' (G01/8/8, p69). It was likewise decided that the area of charge for the repayment of the loan of £3,500 to be borrowed for the purpose of the Athenry water and sewerage scheme would also be the Loughrea Rural District (G01/8/8, p68). Both loans were to be obtained from the Commissioners of Public Works and repaid in 50 years at 3¾% per annum.

In August 1912 the Engineer reported that the estimates for the Athenry Waterworks and Athenry and Loughrea Sewerage and Sewage Disposal schemes were in excess of the expenditure authorised by the Council (in February 1911). As a result the Council approved the plans for the Athenry sewerage scheme at a cost of £2,200 and for the waterworks at Athenry at a cost of £3,100 with the area of charge for these expenses to be the whole Rural District (G01/8/8, p707). Mr J. J. Broderick, Clerk of Works, was employed to supervise connections with the new sewerage system in Athenry.

With reference to the Loughrea sewerage scheme the Council gave exact consideration to the extent of the scheme and the possibility of dispensing with 'unimportant sewers' (G01/8/8, p742). Mr Bergin advised the Council in December 1912 that he proposed to omit two of the percolating filters, and after amending the estimate accordingly he recommended the Council to adopt the Scheme at a cost of £7,235.5.6 (G01/8/8, p807). The Council considered the matter and at its meeting of 11 January 1913 resolved to accept the scheme at the revised estimated cost, with the area of charge for repayment of the loan being the rural district of Loughrea. Following completion of the work maintenance expenses were to be a charge upon the Loughrea Urban District Electoral Division' (G01/8/9, p16).

In September 1923 Mr Bergin advised the Council that the approximate cost of completing the Loughrea Sewerage works would be £15,000 (G01/8/14, 13 September 1923). In December the Council applied to the National Bank Ltd. for a loan of £15,487 for carrying out a general sewerage scheme for the town of Loughrea (G01/8/14, 20 December 1923). Later the following year the Council received a letter from the Local Government Department '...referring to the Loughrea Main Drainage Scheme and stating that the estimate £15,487, is unduly high and compares unfavourably with the estimate for the carrying out of the scheme in 1913 after making due allowance for the difference in cost of materials and labour...' (G01/8/14, 1 May 1924). The Department was of the opinion that the wages being demanded were too high. In November due to the reduction in the wages a revised estimate of £14,031.8.9 was approved by the Council (G01/8/14, 6 November 1924).

Following the dissolution of Rural District Councils the Board of Health under the auspices of the Galway County Council assumed responsibility for sanitary matters and thus for the Loughrea Sewerage works.

The Minutes of the Loughrea Waterworks Committee¹⁰⁶ reveal that the Board appointed ‘...the members of the Loughrea Town Commission as Waterworks and Sewerage Committee’.¹⁰⁷ They further reveal that the problems of completing the works continued until 1928. Patrick Dillon was appointed contractor in 1926 but his contract was terminated in 1927 due to the slow progress of work. However, by the end of 1928 the project had been completed by direct labour, under the supervision of Mr F. V. Murdock, Resident Engineer.¹⁰⁸

In tandem with the two major schemes at Athenry and Loughrea the Council was also involved in the provision of wells at various places throughout the district, such as at Newtown South, Ballywinna, Mulpit, Turloughalanger, Lisnadrisha, and Newtowndaly. However, the sinking of wells was hampered and delayed in the early 1920s due to difficulties in procuring explosives (G01/8/13, p405). Another matter of major importance to the Loughrea Rural District Council was the provision of adequate roads. The Council received regular reports from the County Surveyor on the quality and quantity of work required and carried out by contractors. For the most part the Surveyor felt it necessary to give negative reports on the contractors’ performance.

One such report from the County Surveyor, John Moran, in October 1909 was very critical of the road contractors’ work, advising the Council that its ‘contractors, speaking generally, seem to regard road making as anything but a serious business. When everything else is attended to with due care, a hurried expedition is made by the contractor to the road after the expiration of the quarter, any kind of material is thrown out to do duty for road material, and then the contractor retires to winter quarters satisfied that the County Council money is at hand... Now I would warn

your contractors that what is required is work – and my idea of work is road material delivered, well-broken, and well spread...’ (G01/8/7, pp281-284).

In January 1911 Moran reported again to the Council that ‘in very few cases have the full terms of the Specification been adhered to, and there are the usual number of defaulters who have done practically no work at all...’ (G01/8/8, p23). In April 1912 he reported some improvement in the roads, and in July was able to report that ‘The number of badly maintained roads in your district is, I am glad to say, much on the decrease. There are, however, some bad main roads in the neighbourhood of Loughrea; and a few particularly bad ones leading into the town of Athenry’ (G01/8/8, p659).

In April 1914 Moran reported an improvement in work, stating that ‘Those roads in the hands of the Co. Surveyor have been well worked up during the past quarter. A good supply of material has been spread, and though patching has been necessarily late, the stone has worked into the roads well. As regards roads in contract I almost despair of better methods of maintenance being employed. It is hard to understand why good work is not given as the existing contract prices are good and there is no reason why a contractor could not contract satisfactorily and with profit...’ (G01/8/9, p531).

Finally, in July 1914 the Surveyor was ‘happy’ to report a ‘...decided improvement both in the amount of work done and the methods employed by contractors, for the maintenance of roads in the district’ (G01/8/9, p643). Several years later in April 1920 the Surveyor again issued a positive report, advising that ‘...a considerable amount of work has been done, with excellent results, in repairing the roads of your district...’ (G01/8/12, p505).

For a short period in the early 1920s, due to the economic difficulties resulting from political and civil strife, work on the district roads ceased on two occasions; during the War of Independence and during the Civil War (G01/8/13, p397, and G01/8/14, April 1923).

The third major issue that preoccupied the Council, particularly between 1905 and 1912, was the provision of Labourers cottages. The Council was very pro-active in this regard. It had by the mid-1920s provided in excess of 145 cottages.

From 1905 the Council progressively spent more and more time discussing the subject and dealing with related issues, such as the raising of the necessary loans, selection of sites and the acquisition of plots of land, advertising for tenders, deciding on designs for houses, fixing payments to the various contractors (such as John Martin for 2 cottages, John Forde 1 cottage, John Broderick 6 cottages, and Patrick Hynes 4 cottages (G01/8/8, pp124-125)), the erection of cottages, the collection of rents, and maintenance of the cottages.

In October 1907 the Clerk advised the Council that he had ‘received a Provisional Order authorising the erection of 116 cottages under the Labourers Acts’ (G01/8/15, 12 October 1907). The Council often encountered difficulty in completing its building programme. For instance it had in one case to advertise four times for tenders for the building of the houses in an effort to receive tenders within the amount of their Engineer’s estimate viz £3,916.8.4 (G01/8/6, p941). However, the Council finally accepted the lowest tender, received from Michael Ryan, Main Street, Loughrea, who was granted the contract for 27 houses at Cosmona, at a cost of £4,264 (G01/8/6, p929).

In February 1912 the Clerk advised the Council that its Capital Account in respect of the Labourers Acts Scheme No. 4 was depleted and that an additional

loan of approximately £3,000 was required to complete the scheme (G01/8/8, p482-483). In June the Local Government Board sanctioned a supplemental loan of £1,900 for the completion of the Improvement Scheme under the authority by the “Loughrea Rural District Labourers (Unopposed) Order 1907”, to be borrowed from the National Bank Ltd. (G01/8/8, p639).

Following its extensive programme the Council had, by 1913, undertaken four separate Improvement Schemes and had built just over 130 cottages (G01/8/8, p205). The building programme slowed somewhat after this period. In August 1914 the number of cottages stood at 146 (G01/8/9, p690). Indeed at that time the Council voted ‘that as the requirements of the district generally do not demand that another Improvement Scheme (under the Labourers Acts) should be formulated, no steps be taken in the matter’ (G01/8/9, p703).

Several years later in June 1919 the Council ordered that ‘There were three cottages, under our last Improvement Scheme, remaining un-built and the Council are now anxious to proceed with the building of these cottages. The cost of building will be covered partly by a balance remaining unexpended of a supplemental pre-war loan borrowed from the National Bank and partly by a new loan...’ (G01/8/12, p175).

Also at the same time the Council ordered that a public notice be posted throughout the district declaring it was ‘prepared to receive representations for Labourers Cottages with a view to formulating a new Improvement Scheme under the Labourers Act’ (G01/8/12, p178). In anticipation of the 5th Improvement Scheme site maps and plans were drawn up for 188 cottages (G01/8/12/ p685). However, the Council decided in August 1920 to defer the proposed making of a new Improvement Scheme until Dáil Éireann was in a position to lend the money for building the cottages (G01/8/12, p649).

106. Loughrea Waterworks Committee Collection, GS01/11.

107. *Ibid.*, GS01/11/1, p357.

108. *Ibid.*, GS01/11/2.

LABOURERS' (IRELAND) ACTS.

(46 & 47 Vic., cap. 60, &c.)

COPY OF MINUTES of Proceedings of the Loughrea Rural District Council, acting
the Authority, under the above mentioned Acts, at a ^{special} Meeting held on Saturday
the 22nd day of July, 1911. +90-

PRESENT:—In the Chair,

Patrick Riordan Esq. J.P.

Other Councillors:—

See Miscellaneous Minutes.

The following letters etc., postponed from last Council
meeting, were considered and orders made thereon as follows:—

Read letter from Mr. James Clarke, Kilmeen, stating, in
to the Council's offer, that he is prepared to cure the smoking
chimney of Thomas Daniel's cottage at Caherwalter by building a
chimney funnel, supplying all materials, re-fitting slates, fl
and plastering, for the sum of £5.

The Council agreed to accept Mr. Clarke's offer and the
ting Clerk was directed to inform him accordingly.

Read letter from Patrick Quinn, tenant of No. 1 cottag
smona, stating that the drainage of his house, of which he
mplained about 5 months ago, is still in the same defective
ndition.

Loughrea Rural District Council minutes regarding repairs to labourers cottages, G01/8/8

ORDER:— "ENGINEER TO FURNISH A REPORT ON THIS MATTER.

In its capacity as Burial Board the Council was involved in the appointment of caretakers, and provision and maintenance of graveyards, such as those at Templemoyle, Kiltulla, Cloonkeenkerrill, Garrybreda and Ardnamorane. It gave, for example, instructions in 1902 for the repair of the boundary wall of the Colmanstown graveyard to prevent sheep and cattle from trespassing there (G01/8/3, p177).

By the early 1920s, despite their fine work, Rural District Councils were viewed as unnecessary. The Free State Government began to consider stream-lining local administration and thus the abolition of the Rural Councils. In September 1923 the Loughrea Council adopted the resolution forwarded by the Baltinglass and Wexford Rural District Councils 'protesting against the abolition of Rural Councils...' (G01/8/14, 13 September 1923). In December the Council again objected, stating it was 'opposed to the proposal to abolish Rural District Councils...' (G01/8/14, 20 December 1923). At its meeting in May 1924 it stated that it felt the abolition of Rural District Councils was a 'retrograde step', and would not 'tend to the more

efficient administration and will not effect any saving to the rate' (G01/8/14, 1 May 1924).

Nevertheless Rural District Councils were abolished in 1925. In the immediate aftermath Public Works Committees were established to continue their work. The Loughrea Clerk, John H. Hanafin, submitted a notice received from the Secretary of Galway County Council stating it had 'appointed Committees in each Rural District to be known as Public Works Committees to carry on the business in connection with all public works which has hitherto been done by the Rural District Council; the Clerks of the former Rural District Councils to act as Clerks to these new Committees' (G01/8/14, 23 July 1925). Similarly the County Board of Health appointed (from July to October 1925) members of the Public Works Committee for each Rural District to also discharge the duties heretofore performed by the Rural District Councils under the Sanitary and Labourers Acts. There being no permanent Clerk for the former Councils at Ballinasloe, Gort, and Portumna, Hanafin was appointed to also act as Clerk for the Committees for these districts.¹⁰⁹

109. Galway County Council Minutes, GC1/4, p21.

I. Minutes of Loughrea Rural District Council, 1901 - 1925

G01/8/

Volumes of handwritten minutes of proceedings of Council meetings generally held twice monthly. The minutes record attendance, details of correspondence, generally from the Local Government Board, and from the early 1920s from the Local Government Department, and actions required thereafter, together with proceedings of Council business conducted under various legislation relating to the administration of the district under a range of headings such as general, financial, sanitary authority and Labourers cottages. The minutes often incorporate details of reports from various Officials, such as the County Surveyor, Medical Officers of Health, Sanitary Officers, Rent Collectors, Inspectors of Dairies and so on.

The proceedings of the Council acting as the 'Sanitary Authority' or from circa 1920 under the Public Health Acts, relate to health and sanitary matters, such as the prevention of disease, the care and management of burial grounds, and the provision and maintenance of sewerage systems and water supply; the latter encompassed reports from the Loughrea Waterworks Committee and the Athenry Waterworks Committee. The proceedings under the Labourers Acts relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages and rent collection. The quarterly minutes incorporate details of reports from the County Surveyor pertaining to the district's roads, which included the business of applying for, reviewing and approving tenders for works.

The minutes are generally signed or initialled by the Chairman and witnessed by the Clerk.
Average size: circa 580pp.

(1.)

2. 12 January 1901 - 22 February 1902 Includes index to main topics discussed.
Includes:
 - 'That we ask the Local Government Board to sanction the payment of the cost of the erection of the Athenry pump out of the loan account of the District Council as there is a sum of £100 at present to the credit of the account which sum was borrowed by the old Board of Guardians for the purpose of erecting this pump' (p91).
 - 'Read resolution from the Kanturk Rural District Council requesting his most Gracious Majesty the King to order the release of all the Irish political prisoners confined in the jails of the United Kingdom. Order: "Adopted".' (p101).
 - 'Read report from Dr Ryan, Medical Officer of Health of Loughrea District, stating that the inhabitants of the cottages at the west end of Galway Road take water from the Lake at a point at which the water is very likely to be polluted. Here the town manure is heaped just adjoining the lake, cattle and horses are watered and sheep and clothes are washed. The drinking of the water at this point is dangerous to health. He recommends that the main pipe of the waterworks be extended on and a fountain erected at such a point as will make it more convenient for those people to take water from the fountain than from the Lake....' (p214).

- 'That we condemn the action of Lord Ashtown, Woodlawn, in evicting his Catholic herds and workmen and replacing them by Orange Scotchmen, as arbitrary and tyrannical and calculated to disturb the peace of the locality, as his Lordship can find no fault to his employees except their religion...' (p421).

- 'That we, the members of the Loughrea Rural District Council being of the opinion that any attempted solution of the Land Question in Connaught will be futile which does not make provision for the increase of small holdings by the distribution of the grazing lands among the smaller tenants; and seeing that the present state of the law allows and even encourages the purchasing of large tracts of land by eleven [months] graziers, call upon the Irish Parliamentary Party to insist upon such an immediate change in law...' (pp462-463).

3. 8 March 1902 - 8 June 1903

Includes:

- 'Read letter from _____, tenant of a labourer's cottage in No. 2 District, asking the Council to allow him some-time to pay up the arrears of rent due by him, and stating that if he is evicted he has no place to go to with his family except into the Workhouse. Order - Refused' (p13, see also p14, p33, p273, p314).
- 'That while we hail the proclamation of our county under the Jubilee Coercion Act as a proof of the growing force of the United Irish League in Galway, we emphatically denounce as a foul and baseless calumny the assertion that it was "necessary for the detection and punishment of crime" in a country that has been practically a crimeless country for years past, and pledge ourselves to resist, by every constitutional means within our power, this puny effort of terrorism on the part of the Dublin Castle Gang whose object is to prevent us carrying out our determination to rid the country of the incubus of landlordism and Grazierism and establish once more a Parliament of our own in College Green (Dublin)' (p242).
- 'Resolved; Whereas a resolution has been unanimously adopted by the South Galway Divisional Executive calling upon the Loughrea Rural District Council and Union to give preference of all contracts to persons who are members of the U.I.L (United Irish League), we now resolve to have that resolution strictly put in force in future, and in order to have it efficiently carried out we would request each member of the Council to keep a sharp look out for contractors coming from their respective districts as our motto will be - "No Anti-nationalists need apply".' (p342).
- 'Resolved:- We...protest against the unfair action of the Government in detaining Mr M. Finnerty, D.C. and Mr John Lohan C.C. in prison for a justifiable action which commands our respect and was in strict accordance with our principles as a national body...' (p443).

4. 13 June 1903 – 1 October 1904 Includes:
- ‘Read letter from Dr Quinn, Medical Officer of Health of the Athenry District, reporting the occurrence of four cases of Scarlet Fever of a mild type in one family in Dunsandle, and stating that he has isolated the cases and does not apprehend the spread of the disease. He further recommended the distribution of a small quantity of lime amongst the poor people in Athenry for the purpose of lime washing their houses’ (p91).
 - ‘That whereas the Government have remitted the charges for the extra police force in this county as in other counties in Ireland, we the Loughrea Rural District Council call upon the Galway County Council to make a refund to each and every ratepayer in the Rural District of Loughrea upon whom the said tax for extra police has been levied and paid, and further that the proposal of the Galway County Council to place to the credit of the entire county the money which has been paid by the ratepayers of this District Council is one which does not meet with our approval and that we consider that those who paid this tax are the persons entitled to the benefits derived from the Government Grant to the County Council’ (p243).
 - ‘Read Report from Dr Ryan, Loughrea drawing attention to the choked condition of the eye of Mountpleasant Bridge which causes the houses further down to be flooded in wet weather’ (p331).
 - ‘That we regard with regret and alarm the instructions recently issued to their Inspectors by the Secretaries of the Board of Irish National Education re Irish as an “extra subject” in the schools, and that we appeal to managers, teachers and to every other Irishman interested in the national language to protest before the world against the monstrous outrage of attempting to proscribe our native language in our own schools, which though with grim mockery are still called “National”’ (p342).
 - ‘Resolved: That considering the central position of Athenry and the fact of 2,000 acres being recently purchased by the Congested Districts Board in the vicinity of the town and the great Railway accommodation we consider that it would be a proper place for an Agricultural college as no more suitable position could be found in the County of Galway for an agricultural college’ (p542).
5. 15 October 1904 – 19 August 1905 Includes:
- ‘Read letter from Dr Ryan, Medical Officer of Health of Loughrea Dispensary District forwarding plans for treatment of sewage for boys’ schools, which he received from Mr Scott, Architect’ (p131).
 - Letter from the Local Government Board ‘forwarding instructions with reference to the adoption of the Public Libraries Act in Rural Districts’ (p141).
 - ‘An Improvement Scheme for 21 cottages and plots was made and signed by the Chairman’ (p173).
 - ‘On the proposition of Mr R.P. Nolan it was ordered that Patrick Doherty of Athenry be re-appointed caretaker of the Athenry Sewerage system at a salary of £3 per annum’ (p311).

- ‘Read letter from Mr N. Rice, caretaker of the Woodford pump stating that the Woodford pump is out of order and if the Council would give him the fittings that he would repair the pump without further expense...’ (p432).
 - ‘Read letter from Mr T.W. Roseingrave, B.E. and enclosing (1) plan (2) Specification (3) Estimate (4) Answers to L.G. Board’s letter and copy of specification for the Portumna cottages in connection with the Labourers Cottages about to be built in the Rural District...’ (p433).
6. 2 September 1905 – 19 December 1908 Includes:
- Dr Geraghty, Medical Officer of Health, Bullaun District, submitted reports (a) suggesting that as the water in the well at Bullaun has been condemned by Sir. Chas. A Cameron, the Council provide a supply of pure drinking water for the inhabitants of the village and have the present well closed...’(p106).
 - A meeting was specially summoned at the request of the Loughrea Labourers Cottages Committee to consider a report regarding terms of purchase of the 15 plots from the Marquis of Clanricarde, which the Council propose to take for the purposes of the ‘Loughrea Rural District Labourers Order 1906’ (p357).
 - ‘Read report from Mr T.W. Roseingrave B.E. regarding the repairs necessary to the Woodford Sewerage works, recommending that 2 men be employed for two days to cut a drain from the mouth of the pipe through the filter-beds so as to relieve the pressure at the outfall’ (p507).
 - ‘That we the members of the Council having learned of the arrest of our Chairman, Mr Kelly, for an alleged public utterance take this opportunity of protesting against his arrest as we consider such action on the part of the government unreasonable and not calculated to tend to the peace of the district’ (p539).
7. 2 January 1909 – 17 December 1910 Includes:
- Report from Dr Quinlan, Athenry District advising of the ‘insanitary condition of Athenry generally. As a result of that condition I have to report the prevalence of Typhoid Fever in the Town, several cases of which I have sent into the Fever Hospital recently...’ (p32).
 - ‘Resolved : That the South and East Galway Executives of the U.I.L. (United Irish League) be asked to call upon the Branches of the League within their districts to make a collection in aid of the Parnell¹¹⁰ Monument in Dublin as this Council believe this to be a work deserving of the support of Nationalist Ireland’ (p39).

110. Charles Stewart Parnell (1846-1891), political leader. As M.P. for Meath in 1875 he joined the Home Rule party led by Isaac Butt. When Michael Davitt founded the National Land League in 1879 he invited Parnell to become its first President. He was arrested in 1881 during the Land War. Gladstone (Britain’s Liberal Prime Minister) come to terms with Parnell in March 1882 with the so-called ‘Kilmainham treaty’, under which the prisoners were released, the agitation was discontinued and the policy of land reform initiated with the Land Act of 1881 was continued. Parnell set about strengthening the Irish party in preparation for the general election of 1885, and fought for Home Rule. Gladstone supported Home Rule and several Bills were passed in the coming years, but each was defeated in the House of Lords. In 1890 Parnell was involved in a political scandal when a former Home Rule party member, Captain William O’Shea, filed for divorce from his wife, Kitty O’Shea, naming Parnell as the co-respondent. He was no longer seen as a fit person to lead the Irish party, and Gladstone was forced to demand that he should retire, but Parnell refused to step down. This caused a bitter split in the party, with the majority coming against him. He continued to fight for the leadership until his sudden death in October 1891. Henry Boylan, A Dictionary of Irish Biography, Gill and Macmillan, Dublin, 2nd ed., 1988, pp320-322.

- 'Resolved: That the Loughrea Rural District Council request the Postmaster General to extend telephone communication to Gurteen from the station at present being erected at Ballymacward, the Council having already agreed to give the usual guarantee. The Ballymacward and Menlough Telephone Stations are, respectively, 5 and 6 miles distant from Gurteen and would therefore be of no convenience to the people of that district, who are 12 miles from a medical doctor and 28 miles from the nearest veterinary surgeon' (p163).
 - County Surveyor's (John Moran) report stating '...You have 80,564 perches of District roads, and 35,006 perches of Main roads dealt with in Form 22 to-day. In arriving at the quantities of materials required for the maintenance of these roads, your former County Surveyor followed roughly the simple rule:- allow a ton for every ten perches of District roads, and a similar quantity for every five perches of Main roads, and on this rule the specified quantity for each individual road is generally based....As you are doubtless aware, nearly all your roads are hollow and ill-shaped: crust has disappeared, leaving the sole exposed; and where this is not altogether the case, the neglect of surface renewal is surely bringing about a like result and why? The why is plain. The men to whom you have given the care of your roads are absolutely starving them; not only are they not making any serious effort at maintenance, but by their neglect are allowing a steady, constant deterioration of that structure which perhaps you handed to them in a fair healthy condition...' (p281-284).
 - Letter from the LGB advising the RDC that it has received a letter from the ratepayers of Athenry complaining under Section 15 of the Public Health (Ireland) Act 1896 that the Council have 'made default in providing a proper water supply and sewerage system for the town of Athenry'. The Council advised the LGB that the 'contamination of the water supply is caused by the fairs and markets being held on the streets close to the pumps, the Council desire the Board to inform them whether they possess powers under the Public Health or other Acts to prevent fairs being held on the streets and to compel those responsible to provide a proper "Fair Green"'. The Council would regard it as most unjust that any extra expenses for sewerage or water supply should be levied off the whole rural district as Athenry is on the outskirts of the District and large portions of Galway and Tuam Rural Districts are served by Athenry...' (p290, see also p317).
8. 7 January 1911 – 21 December 1912 Includes:
- 'Read report from Dr Geraghty, Medical Officer of Health of Bullaun District, stating that there are two sources of water supply for fourteen families in the village of Raheen, one of which is a surface well polluted by cattle and fowl and the other a river supply that is nothing more than a foul sewer. He recommended the Council to provide a pump in some central place in the district' (p84, see also p189).
 - Loughrea Cottages' Committee elected with its functions 'confined to selecting tenants for vacant cottages or transacting any other business which may be referred to them by the Council but that their decisions be subject to confirmation by the Council before becoming effective' (p183).
 - Letter from the Sisters of Mercy, Loughrea 'complaining of a shortage in the water supply during the past week...' (p225).

- 'The Clerk submitted a report, plans, specification and estimate from Mr T.W. Roseingrave B.E. for a sewerage system for Loughrea based on the recommendations of Mr Francis Bergin, B.E., Consulting Engineer, and the Committee ordered that these documents be forwarded to Mr Bergin for examination into details and a report...' (p379).
 - Circular letter from the National Health Insurance Commissioners for Ireland 'informing the Council that they are now prepared to send lecturers to the different districts in Ireland to explain the objects and provisions of the National Insurance Act, that the services of the lecturers will be given gratis...' (p469).
 - Read and adopted resolution from the Castlerea Rural District Council 'condemning the recent attacks upon Catholic and Nationalist workers in the Belfast Shipyards' (p697).
9. 14 December 1912 - 19 December 1914 Includes:
- Report of Medical Officer of Health of the Athenry Dispensary District, Dr Quinlan, describing the condition of the streets of Athenry as 'disgraceful' and stating that while the cattle and sheep fair was in progress the streets were 'simply in an appalling condition of filth and dirt - there was at least 6 inches of mud and dirt all over them...When the streets commenced to dry the stench from them was truly awful. While these fairs are held on the streets it is no wonder that Typhoid fever will be prevalent in the town, the whole place was in a most insanitary condition...' (p14, see also p129, p147).
 - Resolved 'That the Local Government Board be informed that on the date named by Cusack (tenant of cottage at Cosmona) his wife was murdered by being shot through the window of the cottage, that on some day prior to the murder the windows of the cottage were broken by, it is alleged, the man who murdered Mrs Cusack, and that under the circumstances the Council consider it would be unjust to require Cusack to repair the windows. That the Local Government Board be requested to give their consent to the carrying out of the repairs by the Council' (p32, see also p89).
 - Resolved 'That with a view to the carrying out of the agreement arrived at between Mr Frank Shawe-Taylor and a local deputation of the people of Athenry concerning the sale of 250 acres of the Shawe-Taylor property in Castle Lambert, and as this County is scheduled as a "Congested Districts County" under the Irish Land Act, 1909, we request the Congested Districts Board to permit the Estates Commissioners to purchase this property and deal with the division of it between the small landholders and others in that locality in the manner agreed upon between Mr Shaw-Taylor and the local deputation' (p122, see also p59-60, p480, p511, p524, p555).
 - 'Resolved : That we call upon the Parliamentary Representatives to [ensure] that in the promised Land Bill to be introduced into Parliament provision will be made for giving land to the young men of the county who are at present without any land. We are of opinion that the Congested Districts Board's operations in this County should not be further extended as it results in depriving young men of the land unless they are at present holders of land under £10 valuation' (p102).

- 'Read letter from the Town Clerk, Dublin Corporation, inviting the Council to appoint representatives to attend the celebration of the nine hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Clontarf' (p537).
- 'Resolved: That the Loughrea Rural District Council, representing 20,000 people, congratulate Mr Redmond and the Irish Party upon the firm stand taken by them with regard to the passage of the Home Rule Bill through the House of Commons and we urge upon them the strong desire of the Irish people not to agree to the granting of any further concessions to the Ulster minority and, if not accepted in its present form by them, that the Bill as originally passed through the House of Commons be enacted without delay' (p556).
- 'Read letter....from the Secretary, Galway County Council, drawing the attention of the Rural District Council to the very large amount of irrecoverable arrears of poor rates (£91.14.8) returned by Rates Collector E. Corbett, Loughrea, the greater portion of which represents rates on Labourers cottages and plots, and pointing out that as these arrears are a charge upon the Rural District of Loughrea they must, if uncollected, be re-levied upon the rate payers who discharge their liabilities and consequently it is a matter for the consideration of the Rural District Council to devise a means by which the difficulty could be overcome by the County Council' (p507-508, p545, p571).

10. 9 January 1915 – 23 December 1916 Includes:

- 'Read report from Dr Geraghty....Bullaun Dispensary District, stating that the water supply of the village of Bellayarha is contaminated by sewage flowing from the adjacent yards into the well, that three cases of typhoid fever have originated in the village within the past six months, and recommending the Council to close this well and to erect a pump for the supply of pure drinking water for the village' (p17).
- Letter from Dr Quinlan, Medical Officer of Health, Athenry with his opinion on making connections with the main sewer of the new Sewerage System, stating that 'it is absolute rot not to make all the householders in Athenry make proper connections with the new Sewerage System. The connections should have been made 3 years ago and if they have to pay more for now doing so they have only themselves to blame. I protest in the strongest manner against the old sewerage beds being further used, they have been condemned...' (p882).

11. 13 January 1917 – 21 December 1918 Includes:

- Letter from the Local Government Board stating that the 'Government have decided to afford facilities for the supply of seed potatoes, seed oats, and artificial manure to tenants of Labourers cottages and occupiers of small holdings under £10 valuation; that the duty of distributing the seeds will devolve upon the Rural District Council; that if the Council decide upon providing seeds for small holders in their district it will be necessary for them to prepare lists of persons to whom seeds are to be supplied and forward a return showing the quantity of seeds and manure required to the Department of Agriculture ...' (p19, see also p44, p63, p67, p107).

- The Council 'regret to observe that, notwithstanding the national need for additional tillage, the Congested Districts Board appears to us not to be favourable to breaking up the only available land near the town of Loughrea namely the farm at Tulla Hill now in possession of the Congested Districts Board. The conditions laid down by the Board will preclude any person in the Town taking con-acre there, and in our opinion, the condition requiring that 33 tons of farm-yard manure to the Irish acre be given by the tiller is most unreasonable being excessive, and that the rent of £4 per Irish acre for con-acre not supplied with farm yard manure is prohibitive and greatly in excess of the normal rent for such purpose...' (p22, see also p49).
- 'That we call on the Congested Districts Board to put their compulsory powers in force to purchase the Lewis Estate in this Rural District. There are 160 tenants in the Estate under £10 valuation and of the 60 tenants evicted under the Plan of Campaign only 12 have been restored to their holdings and of those some are in possession of non-economic holdings' (pp22-23).
- 'That we protest in the strongest manner possible against the unjust and cruel treatment which is being meted out to the Countess de Markievicz¹¹¹ in Aylesbury Convict jail, and we respectfully, but firmly, demand that until her release she receive the same privileges as the other Irish prisoners now in Lewes Jail, namely isolation from ordinary criminals and daily intercourse with one another, or failing this, a daily visit from an outside friend' (p152).
- 'Sealed Order fixing the townlands of Athenry, Caherroyne, Cullairbaun, Knockaunglass, Prospect and Raheen as the area of charge for special expenses amounting to £397.3.9. already incurred in connection with the Athenry water and sewerage schemes, together with any other sums which may hereafter be disbursed in respect of works of construction completed but not yet certified by the engineer' (p157).
- 'That, in the opinion of this Council, as the Government have now taken over control of all Irish Railways and have lately increased by 50 per cent all passenger fares, it is only equitable that they should pay, in full, the guaranteed dividends to shareholders in the Loughrea and Attymon Railway Company and relieve the rates of the charges in this respect' (p662).

111. Countess Constance Markievicz, nee Gore-Booth (1868-1927), revolutionary and politician. Born in London, and educated by a governess at Lissadell, Co. Sligo. She studied art in London and Paris. In Paris she met a Polish Count, Count Casimir Dunin-Markievicz, a Catholic six years her junior, and married him in London in 1900. When they returned to Ireland in 1903 the Countess became involved with the Gaelic League and Abbey Theatre. She was co-founder of the United Arts Club in 1907. In 1908 she entered nationalist politics, joining Sinn Féin. In 1909 she founded Na Fianna, an organisation for boys, who were taught drill and the use of arms. In the 1916 Rising she served at the College of Surgeons under Michael Mallin and was condemned to death. Her sentence was commuted to penal servitude for life and she was imprisoned in Aylesbury jail, but released under the general amnesty of June 1917. In the general election of 1918 she was returned for St Patrick's division in Dublin, the first woman ever to be elected to the British Parliament. She was a member of the first Dáil Éireann, which met on 21 January 1919, and was appointed Minister for Labour. She spent two further periods in jail. She opposed the Anglo-Irish Treaty of 1921. She was defeated in the general election of 1922, she won Dublin Borough South in August 1923 when the Civil War had ended. She joined Fianna Fáil when it was founded in 1926, and was re-elected in 1927. She died in July 1927. Henry Boylan, A Dictionary of Irish Biography, Gill and Macmillan Ltd., Dublin, 2nd, 1988, pp241-242

- 12.** 11 January 1919 - 30 December 1920 Includes:
- 'Read resolution from the Galway County Council declaring all roads in the Rural Districts of Ballinasloe, Glenamaddy, Loughrea and Mountbellew as suitable to be maintained by direct labour under the charge of the County Surveyor, for three years from the 1st July, 1919, and directing that the necessary steps be taken to put the scheme into operation' (p41).
 - 'Mr Martin Greene, Inspector under the Dairies etc Order, reported that he inspected 41 Cowsheds and Milk shops in his district during the month of January and found them in good condition' (p57).
 - Adopted 'That the annual allowance of £1.0.0 paid to Caretakers of Burial Grounds in the Rural District be increased to £2.0.0 on condition that the boundary wall or fence be kept in proper repair and that all weeds and long grass be cut short as often as may be necessary' (p503).
 - 'That this Council of elected representatives of the Loughrea Rural District at a duly convened meeting hereby acknowledges the authority of Dáil Éireann as the duly elected Government of the Irish People, and undertakes to give effect to all decrees duly promulgated by the said Dáil Éireann in so far as same affects this Council...' (p564).
 - 'That the resolution passed by the Rural District Council on the 23rd September, 1920 declining to increase the limit of road expenditure in this district be rescinded, and instead that we approve of the proposal of the County Council to increase the limit from £9,000 to £11,200' (p713).
- 13.** 13 January 1921 - 7 December 1922 Includes:
- 'The Clerk reported that the (Remington) machine was seized by the Police on the 14th April last and delivered to the Military at Renmore Barracks, Galway, by them on that date, and that it was returned to him on the 22nd July. He states that the machine was in perfect order when seized but was broken when returned and that there was evidence that it had been extensively used while in possession of the Military...' (p201).
 - 'That we call on the Ministry of Dáil Éireann to cease all further negotiations with the British Government until all prisoners are released. We demand this as an Act of justice not mercy' (p256).
 - 'That we, the Loughrea Rural District Council request, the County Council to notify their Surveyors (County and Assistant) not to appoint in future Road Gangers other than labourers solely depending on their labour as presently there are employed on the roads farmers and their sons with holdings of 30 acres and upwards and we hereby apply to have such men removed immediately...' (p340).
 - 'Home Assistances Officers Flannery, Cahill and Fahy submitted their reports for the month of May on the children boarded-out in their respective districts' (p441).

- 'Order:- That Rural District Council again desire to point out that they are not the successor of the Loughrea Board of Guardians and do not accept any of their liabilities, neither have they received the unused funds of the Guardians as those were transferred to the County Council...' (p461).
- 14.** 4 January 1923 – 18 June 1925 Includes:
- 'The Clerk reported that the following sums are due to the Loughrea Union Fund by Boards of Guardians in the County in respect of the Maintenance of their inmates in the Loughrea Workhouse prior to the coming into operation of the Amalgamation Scheme, viz., Ballinasloe £82.4.6, Clifden £23.17.6, Galway £116.16.0, Glenamaddy £12.7.4, Mountbellew £24.11.6, Oughterard £26.10.8, Portumna £26.8.8....' (p2).
 - 'Submitted circular from the Secretary, National I.R.A, Members' Association, asking public bodies to support their call for a truce in order that they might negotiate peace. On the proposition of Mr Gannon seconded by Mr Burke the proposals contained in the circular were unanimously adopted' (22 February 1923, p3).
 - 'Submitted circular from the County Homes and Home Assistance Committee calling attention to the alarming increase in home assistance expenditure in the County, requesting the Council to revise the Assistance Lists for their area, notifying them as to the new limits of expenditure imposed by the Board of Health as from 1st April next and stating that Assistance may now be given in Money as well as in kind...' (8 January 1925).



II. Minutes of Public Works Committee Acting for the County Galway Board of Health, 1925

[14.] 23 July 1925 – 22 October 1925

Volume of minutes of proceedings of Committee meetings generally held monthly. The minutes record attendance, details of correspondence, generally from Galway County Council and actions ordered thereafter, together with proceedings of Committee business conducted (previously by the Rural District Council) under various legislation relating to the administration of the district under a range of headings such as general, financial, sanitary authority and Labourers cottages. The proceedings under Public Health Acts relate to items such as the provision and maintenance of sewerage and water works. The proceedings under the 'Labourers Acts' relate to the maintenance of Labourers cottages and collection of rents. Minutes are generally signed or initialled by the Clerk of the Public Works Committee (the former Rural District Council Clerk).

Examples of minutes include the following extracts:

- 'Letter from Mr Thomas Tully, Tomanay, requesting that the public well at Newtown South be put in a sanitary condition and stating that a sum of £2 was allowed for this work some years ago but the work was not done owing to the trouble in the country at the time' (23 July 1925).
- '... an ex-soldier of the National Army, applied for employment on the Loughrea Sewerage Works and stated that he was refused employment by the Contractor...' (24 September 1925).
- Report from the County Surveyor stating 'Contractors endeavouring by every means in their power to avoid doing the work they are bound to do under the terms of their contracts. Many Contractors have got the idea that they can get off with the material left over from last year. But I want these Contractors to understand that this will not be tolerated and that the sooner they realise their duties to their employers the better for all concerned' (22 October 1925).

Size: 66pp

III. Letters from the Clerk to the Council, 1900 – 1922

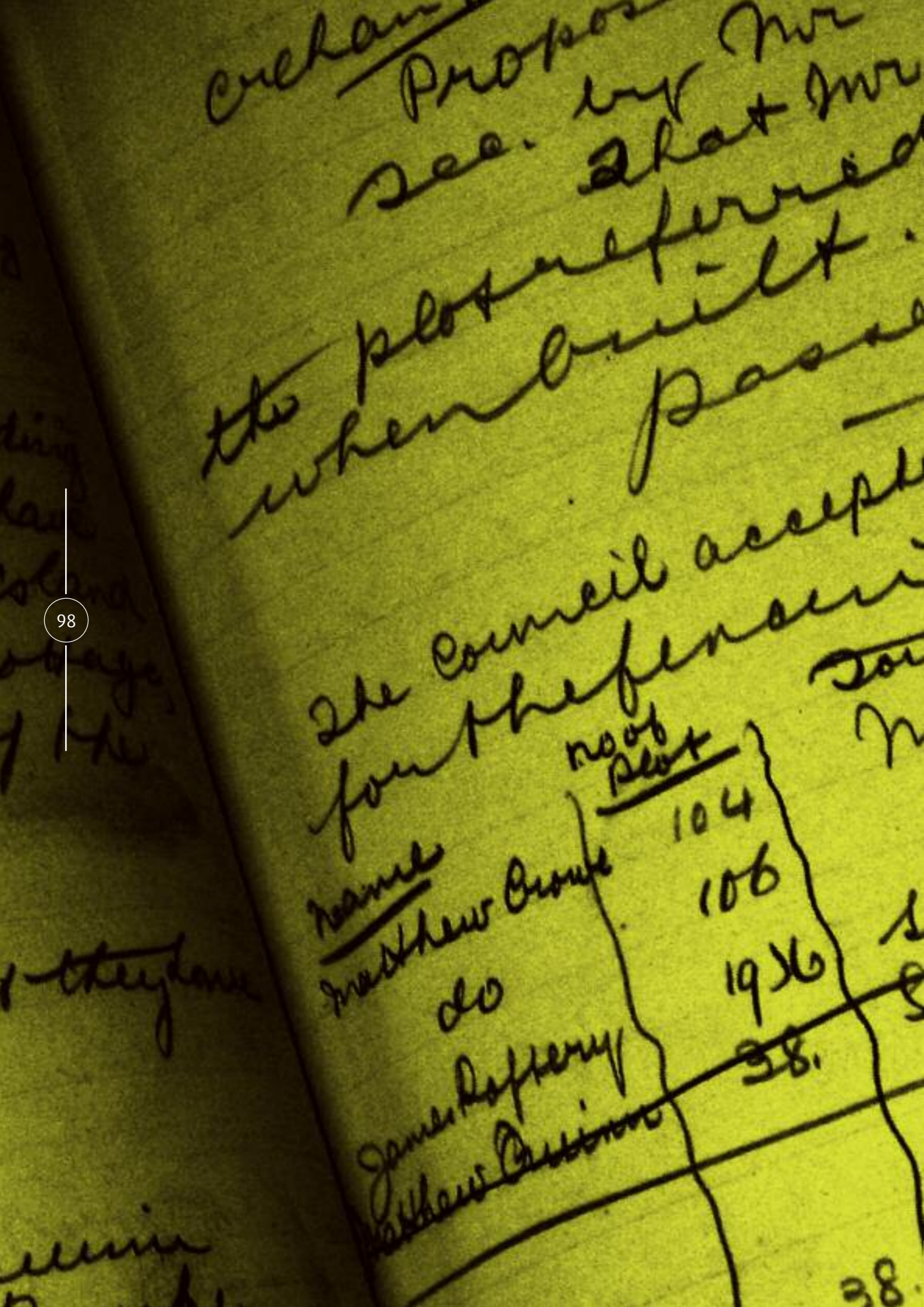
15. 1 December 1900 – 5 October 1922

Volume of letters reporting on Council business, and various issues and developments, annotated in the margin with the Council's subsequent instructions and orders, initialled by the Chairman. Includes entries such as:

- 'As directed by you at last meeting I have procured for your information, copies of the Libraries Acts 1855 to 1902, and now beg to submit them. Under sub. Sec. 1 of Sect. 1 of the Libraries Act 1894 a month's notice of intention to put the Act in force in the District must be given to each member of the Council' (7th February 1903).
- 'I beg to draw your attention to the unsatisfactory state of the Water Rent Collection. Out of a total warrant of £155 for the year ended 31st March 1905, only £20 has been collected...' (3 February 1906); 'Notwithstanding my repeated requests to him, the tenant of the Labourer's cottage at Gurteen (No.2 District) has not since paid any rent. I recommend that proceedings be taken against his surety for the recovery of the amount due' (29 February 1908).
- 'I beg to draw your attention to the fact that a balance of £522.2.6 remains due to the Bank on foot of Loan account for Labourers Acts Scheme No. 3. The whole amount of the loan sanctioned in connection with this Scheme has been received. It will be necessary for you to give directions as to the manner in which the supplemental loans should be raised' (17 June 1911).
- Annotation by Council 'Ask Military authorities to pay for this man's maintenance in Hospital, as he served for several years in late war. Inform them the Council refuse to send any more of this class of patient to Hospital, and they consider that the Military alone are liable for their treatment' (11 August 1921).

The volume was later used by the County Board of Health and Public Assistance as a register of telephone calls (1941-1945), and accounts book (1945-1951).

Size: c. 150pp



Mountbellew Rural District Council Archive Collection

This archive collection consists of an incomplete series of Mountbellew Rural District Council minute books (1899-1923), together with one rough minute book, and one Roads Ledger. The collection is generally in good condition. It has been assigned the code G01/6.

Mountbellew's Rural District Council meetings, commonly held in the Boardroom of the Workhouse, were generally held twice a month and then only if the required quorum of Councillors was in attendance. There were usually 34 elected and/or co-opted members of Council; from circa 1920 the number was reduced to 17. It appears the Council may have been quite progressive in its early years as it had three female Councillors, namely, Lady Bellew, Lady Clonbrock and Mrs May Burke.

The Council's geographical area of responsibility comprised of 102,403 acres, 3 roods and 7 perches. It included the electoral divisions of Annagh, Ballinakill, Caltra, Castleblakeney, Clonbrock, Cooloo, Derryglassaun, Killeroran, Killian, Mountbellew, Mount Hazel, and Taughboy.

The minutes illustrate the range of topics of concern and interest to the Council, and record, together with general and financial business proceedings, the minutes of the Sanitary Authority and proceedings conducted under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts. The Council was thus concerned with a variety of issues from contemporary political and social matters to public health and sanitary issues.

The Council held its inaugural meeting on 15 April 1899. Mr Andrew Kenny was elected the Council's first Chairman.

The Council resolved at one of its early meetings, in November 1899, that the bust of Daniel O'Connell would form the seal of the Rural District Council (G01/6/1, p148). However, due to the estimated cost of the Seal the issue caused some debate. A notice of motion proposed that the 'Order for procuring a Seal with the Bust of Daniel O'Connell be rescinded and that a perfectly plain Seal be procured as £7 or £8 pounds is quite too much to spend on a Seal while one can be procured for about 10/- (shillings)' (G01/06/1, p196). Nevertheless at its meeting the following month the Council resolved to accept a tender for a brass Seal with the bust of O'Connell for 37/6 (G01/06/1, p246).

The provision of water pumps and the provision of sewerage schemes, in particular those in Mountbellew and Ballygar, plagued the Council for many years, especially during its first 10 years. At one of its early meetings the minutes record, 'That the District Council having carefully considered the question of pumps at a previous meeting unanimously resolved to defer the undertaking of new works until the end of the first year. This question being such an important one that they consider it wiser to first see where they are most necessary' (G01/6/1, p48).

However, the procrastination over the construction of sewers and the resultant unsanitary conditions in Mountbellew and its environs caused the Local Government Board to rebuke the Rural District Council for its lack of action to remedy the situation. In July 1901 the Board, referring to previous correspondence, stated that 'respecting the various sanitary works which require to be executed in the Mount Bellew Rural District, i.e. the improvement of the sewerage of Mount Bellew, and of the water supplies of

Mullaghmore, Graigue, Ballinruan, and Lower Ballagh, the Local Government Board for Ireland desire to point out the grave responsibility of the Council incur in neglecting to remedy the Sanitary defects which have been frequently brought under their notice by the Medical Officer of Health, and by the Boards Medical Inspector, especially in view of the serious outbreak of fever which has recently occurred in the District. The Board trust that the Council will immediately take the necessary steps to improve the sanitation of the portion of the Rural District referred to.' (G01/6/3, p299)

The Board, departing from normal practice, allowed that the area of charge for the expenses to be incurred in connection with these works be restricted to the Dispensary District concerned (G01/6/3, p299). However, the issue was not solved at that point. The Rural District Council still objected to the system of rating, and passed a lengthy resolution on the issue concluding with the statement that 'We therefore consider that principle of Rural District rating for Sanitary works is not only false economy for ratepayers, but is depriving townlands in need of these works of any chance whatever of having their wants supplied. And we therefore have that the old system of charging the area benefiting by such work be again adopted...' (G01/6/3, pp353-364).

A loan of £870 was sanctioned by the Local Government Board for the erection of pumps in the District (G01/6/4, p59).

In October 1907 the sanitary conditions in Mountbellew were still poor. A report from the Medical Officer, Dr Monaghan, stated that the 'streets of Mount Bellew and the roads in the immediate vicinity are in a filthy and unsanitary condition and a danger to the public health' G01/6/8, p428a). He recommended that they be 'cleaned up and the street or road scrapings be not allowed to accumulate on the public thoroughfare as their decomposition gives off

an offensive and dangerous odour' (G01/6/8, p428a). However, due to a gap in the Minutes when or how the issue was finally resolved is not recorded.

Under the Labourers Acts the Council was involved in the provision and maintenance of labourers cottages, taking advantage of the various housing loan schemes available under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts 1883 (46 & 47 Vict. C.60) and 1885 (48 & 49 Vict. C.77). Under this legislation the Council applied in the first instance to the Local Government Board, who in turn applied to the Board of Works giving its recommendation that the loan be granted. By 1923 a total of 45 Labourers cottages had been completed.

In addition to the provision of housing the Council was responsible for the building, maintenance and repair of local roads.

During the turbulent War of Independence years the Council recognised Dáil Éireann in place of the British administration, and 'consigned to the waste paper basket' a letter received from the Local Government Board (G01/6/20, 10 August 1920).

Following the abolition of Rural District Councils in September 1925 the County Galway Board of Health adopted a Scheme, and established various committees, for the administration of the works transferred to it under the Sanitary Acts, Labourers Acts, Burial Ground Acts and so on. The East Galway Committee comprised the rural districts of Mountbellew and Ballinasloe, with the permanent office in Mountbellew, and Mr R. Halvey, Mountbellew Rural District Council Clerk was appointed Clerk to the Committee¹¹² (GC5/3, pp171-172).

I. Minutes of Mountbellew Rural District Council, 1899 – 1923

G01/6

Volumes of minutes of proceedings of Council meetings, which were generally held twice monthly. The minutes record attendance at the meetings, together with proceedings of Council business conducted under various legal provisions to the administration of the district under various headings such as general, financial, sanitary and Labourers cottages. The proceedings of the Council acting as the 'Sanitary Authority' relate to health and sanitary conditions, such as the prevention of disease and the care and management of burial grounds, sewerage systems, and water supply. The proceedings under the 'Labourers Acts' relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages. The minutes record resolutions proposed and adopted or rejected by the Council. They also include details of correspondence received, generally from the Local Government Board and actions required thereafter. Minutes are generally signed by the Chairman and witnessed by the Secretary.

Average size: circa 420pp.

1. 14 August 1899 – 26 March 1900 Includes:
 - Transcript of report from Dr O'Kelly, Medical Officer regarding the sewerage of Mountbellew town wherein he states 'That the sewerage of Mountbellew is very bad, the smell from the sewers at the corner of the village, particularly near the Hotel is sufficient to cause some dangerous epidemic. I have frequently brought this matter under your notice and no action has been taken. Take care will it be done when too late. I therefore respectfully urge you to adopt immediate measures to remedy the existing state of the sewers and the general unsanitary condition of the town' (p32).
 - 'Resolved:- That we the Mount Bellew District Council protest against the extra levy of a farthing in the £ struck by the Board of Management of Galway Hospital, and that we request the County Council of Galway not to sanction it, as we consider that such extra levy would not be required if the Institution was properly managed' (p407).
 - 'Circular from the Local Government Board stating that their attention has been recently drawn to the diversity of practice which exists in different parts of Ireland in regard to the closing of schools with a view to prevent the spread of infectious disease; and the Board therefore think it desirable to address the Sanitary Authority on the subject. The provisions of the Public Health Acts bearing on the subject are section 144 and 146 of the Public Health (Ireland) Act 1878 ...' (p413).
 - Letter from the Local Government Board advised the Council that 'The prices of Labourers Cottages vary in different Districts according to the design selected and the facilities for obtaining building materials. The cost where an inexpensive plan of house is adopted, including the purchase of land and the legal and other incidental expenses varies from £100 to £120 each' (p458).

112. County Galway Board of Health & Public Assistance Collection, GC5/3, pp171-172.

2. 2 April 1900 – 13 November 1900

Includes:

- Report from the Medical Officer, Joseph O'Kelly, advising that at 'Ballagh, Ballinruane, Derryglassaun and the Sunhill there is a great want of pure water. I reported this matter on 31 July 1899 and it has since been strongly advocated by Members of the Council and sites selected, I am informed, by your Engineer. The Parish Priest has also come before you on two or three occasions and spoke of the great importance of supplying the inhabitants of those villages with water. When the moment the question of pumps arises, opposing crowds of people from other localities appear at your board and in obedience to their clamour the subject is dropped. It is plainly to be seen that no pumps will be put down by the Council unless commanded by the Local Government Board and I trust that measure will be taken. A deputation of women from the Village of Ballinruane appeared before the Board on Monday 16th instant imploring to be supplied with pure water' (p334, see also p374, p413).
- '...Read report from Mr O' Kelly, Medical Officer of Health, stating that he visited the Police Barracks at Menlough on two occasions, and on consideration he believes that if the Police had the privy frequently cleaned out, it would probably remedy the complaint. He also states that there is a way at the back of closet, to remove the collection of nuisance etc' (p475).

3. 27 November 1900 – 3 September 1901

Includes:

- 'Resolved – That we the District Council of Mount Bellew express entire approval of the Bill promoted by the Great Southern and Western Railway Company, this Session, to obtain running powers from Athenry to Athlone on the M.G.W. Railway system and we have no doubt but that it would be for the benefit of this District by assisting to develop trade and agriculture and afford a much needed efficient Railway Service and we recommend it to the favourable consideration of all the Irish Members of Parliament in particular the Members of this County whom we respectfully urge the (sic) to strenuously support the measure' (p348, see also p118).
- Proposal to 'borrow the sum of £600, repayment to be extended over the period of 15 years, for the purpose of making 1,208 perches of a road from Cloonrilagh to Annaghmore, in the townlands of Springlawn and Annaghmore...' was unanimously adopted by Council (p79).
- 'Read report from Dr O'Kelly, Medical Officer of Health, stating that he finds the people of Mount Bellew the slowest in cleaning their houses etc, and some of them are loudest in talking and laying down the law. I recommend that prompt measures be (taken) to make the people to observe even common decency. There are very few privies, and the demesne around Mount Bellew is a network of human excrement' (p285).

(4.)

7
1/10/00 Read letter from the Congested D's Board with reference to the
1/10/00 Council's communication of the 20th ultimo, stating I am
directed by the Congested District's Board to state for the
information of the R. D. Council that at their recent
meeting they decided to make a contribution towards
the construction of 212 perches of a road in the townland
of Lissarrogg of a third the cost provided such
contribution does not exceed £25 and that the work
is carried out by the county authorities, in accordance
with plans which should be submitted to and approved
by the Board before the work is commenced.

The Board's previous grant of the 29th April is
hereby withdrawn.

Adjourned to next quarterly meeting.

1/10/02 Read notification from Treasurer of the transfer from the
County funds of the County Council of a sum of £50. which
has been placed to the credit of the Council's Ordinary account.

Mountbellew Rural District Council regarding the Congested District Board's contribution
towards the construction of 212 perches of a road, G01/6/5

The Council had before them a resolution passed by the
Yuan Dist Council, requesting the Mt. Bellew R. D. Co.
to expunge Lord Clabrock's name from the
Technical Instruction Committee.

5. 2 December 1902 – 8 June 1904 Includes:
- ‘Resolved, That we the Members of the Mount Bellew Rural District Council, representing as we do the opinions and aspirations of the people of this District heartily approve of and rejoice at the successful efforts of the Tenants’ and Landlords’ representatives at the recent Land Conference by unanimously formulating the basis of a Scheme for the final settlement of the Land Question. That the discontinuance of dual ownership, the creation of [sole] ownership, the enlargement of small holdings, and the re-distribution of the land, is the only solution of the Irish Land problem, which would bring peace, prosperity, and contentment to our people of all creeds and classesand we call upon the Government to have the report of the Land Conference embodied in an Act of Parliament next Session with such amendments as may be essential for the successful operation of the Act’ (pp39-40).
 - ‘Resolved – Being of opinion that the proposals contained in the Land Bill now before Parliament for relief of Congested Districts and the enlargement of small holdings and for the general acquirement of grass lands for cultivation are altogether insufficient, and falls far short of being a final settlement of the Land Question. We urge upon the Government, the desirability and absolute necessity of conferring compulsory powers on the Congested Districts Board, and on the Estate Commissioners who will be appointed under the Bill, to purchase these vast grazing tracts for the purposes set forth in their resolution, thus putting the people back upon the land and stemming the tide of emigration’ (pp93-94).
 - The Council expresses its regret on learning that William O’Brien resigned his seat in Parliament, his membership of the Directory of the United Irish League, and the withdrawal of the Irish People newspaper, and appealed to him ‘to re-consider it and withdraw his resignation, for the sake of the county he loves so well, and has worked for with such unselfish devotion, and not paralyse the organisation of which he is the founder and champion, an organisation which by his genius, energy and patriotism, has brought the Irish cause to the very threshold of a complete and final victory...’ (p295).
 - ‘Ordered That the Local Government Board be requested to sanction a combined loan of £200 for sinking wells and erecting pumps at Kilmore and Rushestown, and the necessary maps, specifications etc, relative to the Rushestown pump be forwarded to the L.G. Board. Similar documents in relation to Kilmore well being at present in the L.G. Board office’ (p315, see also p396).
6. 14 June 1904 – 21 February 1905 Includes:
- ‘Resolved – That we the Mount Bellew Rural District Council desire to give expression of our strong disapproval of the action of the Co. Council for having passed a resolution under Clause 13 of Local Government Act ‘98, taxing 3d in the £ for the purpose of giving Outdoor Relief, in the Unions of Clifden and Oughterard. We consider it’s unfair and unjust to tax the whole county for the benefit of two or more Unions and we furthermore say that it’s the duty of the Imperial Government to come to the aid of distressed Unions by opening up Relief Works which will be of a permanent benefit to the districts...’ (pp167-168).

(7.)

8. 18 September 1906 - 15 October 1907 Includes:
- Letter from the Local Government Board calling attention to the ‘grave danger to the health of the inhabitants of the district which arises from the objectionable control of allowing accumulations of manure to remain in proximity to dwelling houses and they trust that the Council will adopt prompt measures for the abatement of this form of nuisance’ (p121).
 - Report of the Local Government Board’s Inspector, Mr Fitzpatrick, on the progress of work pertaining to the Rushestown well and pump and the Kilmore Pump. With reference to the latter he states, ‘This is progressing very slowly and pressure ought to be brought to bear on the contractor to oblige him to complete his contract without any further delay. I understand that the contractor commenced work on this well 3 years ago last July. The well has been sunk to a depth of 67 ft and is now full of water, the Contractor has the stones on the ground for dry lining, but has done nothing further for some time’ (p143).
 - Letter from Lord Clonbrock stating that ‘after the meeting of the Council on February 19th I received a notice from you that a Sites Committee for the Clonbrock Dispensary District had been appointed consisting of the Priests, the Councillors and Medical Officers of the district with Mr Lyons as Chairman and that the Chairman had been requested to arrange meeting with Councillors and Engineer. I therefore expected to receive notice from the Chairman of the meeting of the Committee. I however received no such notice, and I hear that the Committee did meet and select sites for Labourers Cottages in various parts of the district without my being informed that they were about to do so. But I am also informed that no notice was sent to the occupiers of the land on which it was proposed to erect the cottages. It is laid down in the order of the Local Government Board that such notice should be given before any scheme is adopted by the Council and I would therefore submit to the Council that they should instruct the Committee to communicate with all occupiers concerned before they draw up their report to the Council, as otherwise the proceedings will be illegal’ (p231, p233).
 - Report from A.C. Callaghan, Medical Officer, regarding the in-sanitary conditions in Caltra (p428).
9. 3 December 1907 – 29 December 1908 Includes:
- Report from Dr Ffrench, Medical Officer of the Killeroran Dispensary District stating that ‘there is an outbreak of Enteric Fever in Ballygar due to water in one of the pumps getting polluted. I recommend that the wells be cleaned out and the pumps secured from any further pollution. I consider it absolutely necessary that a new well be sunk and a pump provided in a central and secure position in Ballygar...’ (p468).
 - ‘Resolved – That we the District Council in meeting assembled protest and condemn in the strongest possible manner the action of the Government in retaining an extra force of police in various constabulary districts throughout the county. We consider it not alone a direct insult to the peaceful and law-abiding inhabitants therein but also an incumbrance on the already overburdened ratepayer, as the presence of such a large force is unnecessary. We call upon the Authorities responsible for their immediate removal’ (p218, see also p344).
 - ‘Letter from the Local Government Board relating to the area of charge for expenses in connection with the proposed sewerage works for Mount Bellew and Ballygar and pointing out that the Council do not

appear to have considered the effect of confining the charge for the works in question to a restricted area as indicated by the Board in their letter of 9th ulto.' (p247).

- 'Letter from Local Government Board sanctioning the Loan of £5,950 applied for by the District Council under the Labourers Acts' (p249).

(10-11.)

12. 22 August 1911 – 15 July 1913 Includes:

- Report of the Clerk of Works regarding building of 45 Labourers cottages stating that 'Some of the Cottages appear to have been built by men who had little or no knowledge of building, construction, or materials, and in a few cases the entire work is very bad. The Joinery in connection with Design A, appears to have been beyond the Contractor, and generally the joinery is bad, a remark which applies also to the concreting and plastering in a good many cases...' (August 1911, p22).
- 'Letter from the Local Government Board stating they observe an entry in the Minutes of Council's proceedings on 14th inst., of the Board's letter of the 30th ulto. pointing out the necessity of providing proper system of sewerage for Mount Bellew and Ballygar, and with reference to the order made by the Council thereon, the Board state that in the event of a formal complaint being addressed to them as to the default on the part of the Sanitary Authority in providing these portions of the District with sewers etc., the Board will be obliged to take action in the matter under Section 15 of the Public Health Act (Ireland) 1896' (19 December 1911).

(13-19.)

20. 15 June 1920 – 13 November 1923 Includes:

- Extract from the report of the Medical Officer of Health stating, '...there are no systems of sewerage in the Rural District, but merely drains for the conveyance of surface water. The existing drain in Ballygar, which is situated at the rear of houses on the Chapel side of the town, was in a very bad state on the occasion of my inspection, and surface water contaminated with fluid manure, was lying stagnant in this locality. It would be necessary to extend this drain and put it in proper working order, as at present its condition constitutes a dangerous and unsightly nuisance' (13 July, 1920, p13).
- '...It was ordered that Pat Killilea of Bohill, who was wounded by gun-fire, be removed to a Dublin Hospital, as recommended by Dr Callaghan' (14 December 1920, p11).
- 'Read letter from Dáil Éireann, dated 13th Dec. 1920, relative to the absolute necessity for all Public Bodies to safeguard their financial interests against "inequitable seizure" and suggesting that if each member of Council set himself to secure the lodging of say £50 to a dozen or twenty people, the sums so lodged to be deemed collateral security against an overdraft to the Council's Representatives while each individual acting in this way as security would have as his security against loss the rates of the County' (11 January 1921, p1).

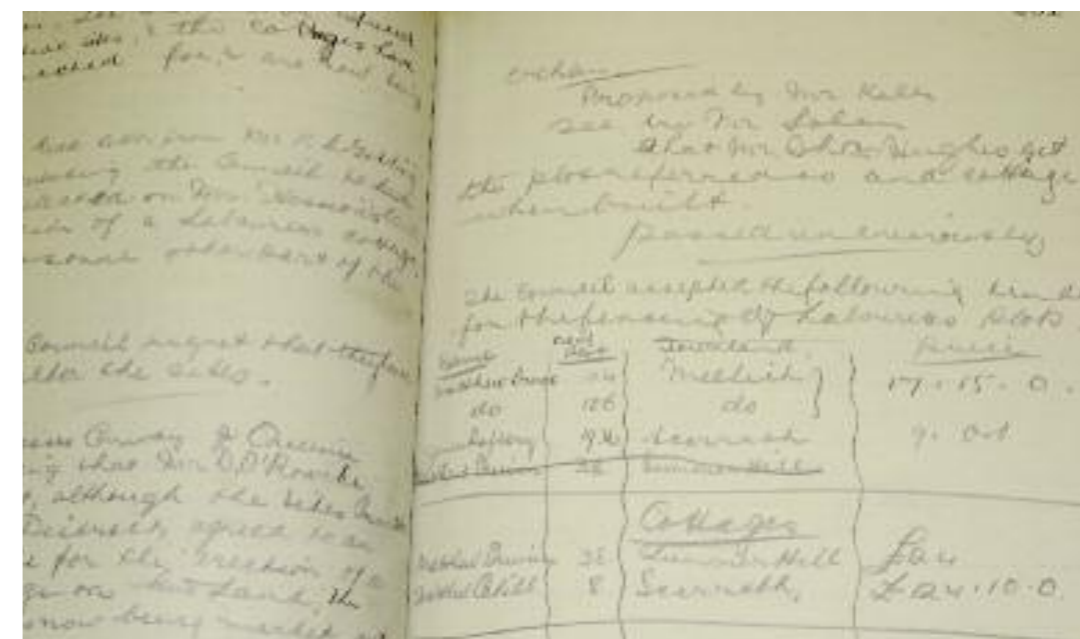
- 'We the members of the Mountbellew R.D. Council extend our heartiest welcome to our colleague Mr Thos. Collins, on his release after prolonged internment & we take this opportunity to thank himself and the other internees from this district for the noble service they have rendered to Ireland's cause' (17 January 1922, p1).

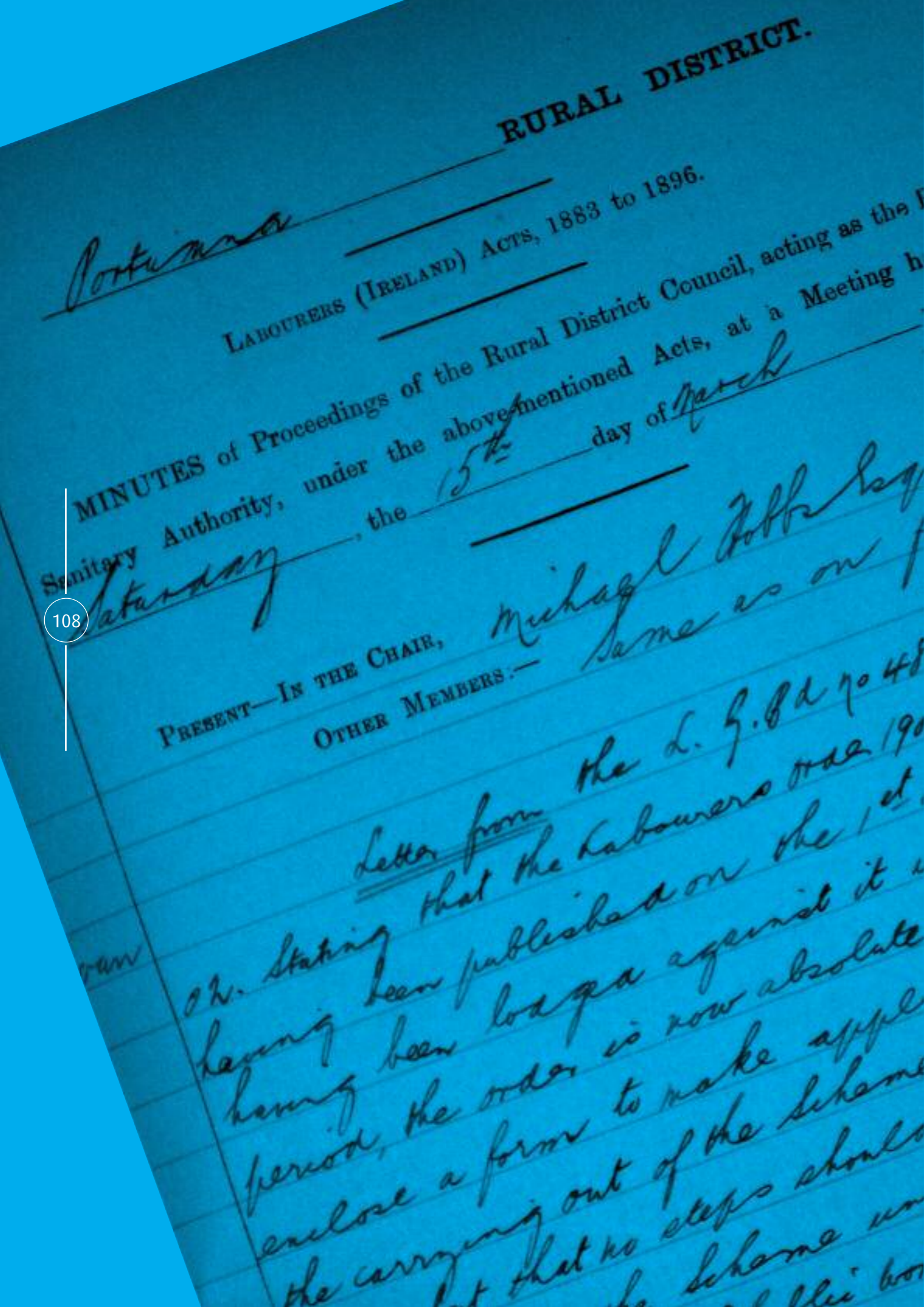
II. Draft Minutes, 1908 – 1910

21. 8 September 1908 – 10 June 1910 Volume of draft minutes of proceedings of the Council meetings, set out in rough form, details of business conducted under various legislation relating to the administration of the district under various headings such as general, financial, sanitary authority business and Labourers cottages. The minutes primarily record resolutions proposed and resolved or details of letters received and read. Size: 507pp

III. Roads Ledger, 1914-1916

22. 17 July 1914 –14 July 1916 Volume recording expenditure on roads under headings such as road, amount available, ganger's name, date certified, amount for labour, materials, tools and so on, and gross total of pay sheet. Size: 47ff





Portumna Rural District Council Archive Collection

This archive collection consists of an incomplete series of Portumna Rural District Council minute books (1900-1925), together with one minute book of the Public Works Committee established to take over the Rural District Council's administrative duties immediately after its dissolution in 1925, and one incoming letter book (1899). Its collection code is G01/3.

The Council's geographical area of responsibility measured 77,263 acres, 3 roods and 26 perches. It included the electoral divisions of Abbeygormican, Abbeyville, Ballyglass, Coos, Derrew, Drummin, Eyrecourt, Killimore, Kilmalinogue, Kilquain, Meelick, Moat, Pallas, Portumna, Tiranascragh, and Woodford. The Rural District Council meetings, commonly held in the Boardroom of the Workhouse but on some occasions in the Courthouse at Portumna, were generally held twice a month if the required quorum of Councillors was in attendance. There were usually 35 elected and/or co-opted members of Council.

The minutes illustrate the range of topics of concern and interest to the Council, and record together with general and financial business proceedings, the minutes of the Sanitary Authority, and proceedings conducted under the Labourers (Ireland) Acts. The appointment, or co-opting, of Councillors and chairmen and vice chairmen to the Council is duly recorded in the minutes, as are the postponements of local elections during the war years (1914-18).

The Council held its inaugural meeting on 22 April 1899.

The proceedings of the minutes recorded under the Labourers Acts are extensive and detailed. They relate to the acquisition of sites, design and building of the cottages, their letting, and the collecting of rents. By the early 1920s the Council had provided 131 cottages.

For a substantial period, between circa 1911 and 1920, the Council was in dispute with its Engineer, William Roseingrave, who demanded additional compensation for the extra work involved in inspecting cottages prior to the issue of Certificates of Completion where a builder had failed to meet the specified completion date. In a transcript of a report to Council Roseingrave is quoted as having stated '...That the Council may rest assured he would fulfil his engagements to superintend the erection of any cottages for which they had entered into an agreement to have the work done in six months from the date of signing bonds in the first instance ; but of course the Council can understand he was not bounded to superintend in the case of any revived contracts, or where the Council made a second contract for the same cottage after the expiration of the time limit of six months set out in the first bond. Accordingly from this date he declined to issue Certificates for defaulting contractors unless he was paid by the Council for their extra service' (G01/3/14, p16-17). A further letter from Roseingrave advised that 'I have already notified the R.D.C. of Portumna that I will not issue any more Certificates for contracts where the time limit for completion has expired unless the Council compensate me for my service...' (G01/3/14, p115).

The Council often encountered difficulty in collecting rents from the tenants of Labourers cottages, and at various times come under pressure from the Local Government Board to reduce the outstanding arrears. For instance in April 1916 the Board wished to know what '...steps if any are being taken by the Council to reduce the large amount of arrears of rent due in respect of the cottages provided in the District under the Acts (Labourers Acts), a sum of £117.5.2 or over three months rental of all the cottages being due at the end of January last....'(G01/03, p13-14). When the Council was disbanded in 1925 the arrears had, following an extensive collection campaign, been substantially reduced.

In addition to the provision of housing the Council was responsible for the building, maintenance and repair of local roads, and as Sanitary Authority it was responsible for the erection and maintenance of water pumps.

When the Council was dissolved in 1925 the administration of its duties was resumed by the County Board of Health which appointed three County Councillors to act as the Public Works Committee for the district '...to also discharge the duties heretofore performed by the Rural District Council, under the Sanitary, Labourers and Burial Grounds Acts...' (G01/3/26, p117). There being no permanent Clerk to the Portumna Council Mr John J. Hanafin, former Clerk to the Loughrea Council, was appointed to act as Clerk to the newly established Portumna Works Committee. Hanafin was also appointed Clerk to the Gort and Ballinasloe Committees.¹¹³

113. Galway County Council Minutes, GC1/4, p21.

I. Minutes of Portumna Rural District Council (1900 – 1925)

G01/3

Volumes of minutes of proceedings of Council meetings generally held twice monthly. The minutes record attendance at the meetings, together with proceedings of Council business conducted under various legislation relating to the administration of the district under various headings such as general, financial, sanitary and Labourers acts. The proceedings of the Council acting as the 'Sanitary Authority' relate to health and sanitary conditions, such as the prevention of disease and the care and management of burial grounds, sewerage systems and water supply. The proceedings under the Labourers Acts relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages. The minutes record resolutions proposed and adopted or rejected by the Council. They also include details of correspondence received, generally from the Local Government Board and actions required thereafter.

Minutes are generally signed by the Chairman and witnessed by the Secretary.
Average size: circa 420pp.

(1.-2.)

3. 13 July 1900 – 14 September 1901 Includes:
- 'Resolution of the Nenagh Rural District Council to the effect that as the prosperity and welfare of the Country depends to a great extent, on the Tenant Farmers becoming owners of the soil and with the view of promoting this laudable object that the Council communicate with the various owners of property in that Rural District and request them to state whether they would be willing to sell to their tenants under the Land Purchase Acts and if so on what terms...' (p87).
 - Report from County Surveyor, J Smith, stating that 'There are several roads in the District that have not been kept in good order during the past quarter, and I have therefore recommended some payments to be struck off and a good many to be deferred - the prosecutions against defaulting contractors will be heard during the ensuing Quarter Sessions' (p95).
 - 'Resolution of the Gort Rural District Council desiring to place on record its strongest condemnation of the cowardly and treacherous conduct of the voters of Galway Borough who, while professing Nationalist sympathies, proved by their conduct at the late election by handing over the Representation of the Borough to an avowed enemy of the National cause, and who were always trading under false pretences, are unworthy of the name of Nationalist. Having been read its adoption was proposed by Mr Morrissey, seconded by Mr Hogan and carried...' (pp191-120).
 - 'Letter from Mr Smith Architect, Ballinasloe dated 9th January 1901 desiring to forward original drawing, specification and Estimate for Labourers Cottages, also new plan and specification approved of by the L.G. Board as per their letter of 18th ult., copy of which he enclosed and stating that it will be observed that he has followed as far as possible the remarks and pencil alterations, shown on original drawing, at the same time incorporating the requirements of the L.G. Board, as stated in their letter of 26th last. He also enclosed two new plans, specifications and Estimates' (p189).

Portumna RURAL DISTRICT.

LABOURERS (IRELAND) ACTS, 1883 to 1896.

MINUTES of Proceedings of the Rural District Council, acting as the Rural Sanitary Authority, under the above-mentioned Acts, at a Meeting held on *Saturday* the *5th* day of *March* *1902*

PRESENT—IN THE CHAIR, *Michael Robb Esq. V.C.*
OTHER MEMBERS:— *Same as on folio 145.*

Portumna Rural District Council, minutes regarding labourers cottages, G01/3/4

Letter from the L.G.B.D. no 4800 dated 6th March 1902. Stating that the Labourers Order 1902 of the Council having been published on the 1st ult and no petition having been lodged against it within the prescribed period, the order is now absolute and desiring to enclose a form to make application for a loan for carrying out of the scheme authorised by the order but that no steps should be taken towards carrying out the scheme until a notification is received from the Comms of Public Works that the loan will be granted by the Lords Comms. of his Majesty's Treasury.

- Report from Sanitary Officer stating that '...some of the lodging house Keepers in Portumna and Eyrecourt have not their houses registered, nor the proper notice Boards exhibited, as required by the Public Health Act, and some of them keep lodgers in their houses which are totally unfit for the purpose...' (p299).
- 4. 28 September 1901 - 3 January 1903 Includes:
 - 'Circular letter from the L.G. B. no. 127 dated 16th September 1901 subject "Tuberculosis" and sending copy of poster and leaflet containing suggestions as to precautions to be taken to guard against this infectious disease and suggestion that copies thereof would be printed, posted and circulated through the district' (p11).
 - Letter from the Local Government Board entitled "Temporary Regulations", Notification of Cases of Plague with reference to the appearance of Bubonic Plague 'in Glasgow, and Liverpool and stating that the Sanitary Authority should forthwith cause notice to be given by advertisement in one or more newspapers circulating in their districts and by handbills and otherwise as the Sanitary Authority think sufficient notice thereof be given to all persons who have or may have duties under the Regulations, and that it shall be the duty of every Medical Officer of Health to forthwith report to them any cause of Plague which may come to their notice' (p43).
 - 'Resolution of the Roscommon District Council stating, that having learned with pleasure of the intention of the Government to introduce into the coming session of Parliament a Land Bill, which should provide for the compulsory sale of land to tenant farmers of this Country - condemnatory of the 11 months grazing system - that not more than 100 acres of land should be sold to any individual and no sale of land made to graziers and condemning the recent action of the Land Courts selling large tracts of land to graziers, to the exclusion of poor tenant farmers anxious to give current prices for such portions of these lands, was unanimously approved of' (p71).
 - 'Resolution of the Louth Rural District Council to the effect that they consider the proposed Land Bill of no practical value save in the removal of difficulties to Landlords in making title, and they deem it destructive of a tenant's right to have a fair rent fixed every fifteen years, and so objectionable in its encouragement of companies of speculative land jobbers to purchase Estates and charge premiums on resale of same to tenants ... and furthermore they consider compulsory purchase of the landlord's interest at a price not exceeding 15 years' purchase of 2nd term rents the only real solution of the Irish Land Question, was unanimously approved of' (p199).
 - 'Resolved that this Council heartily approve of the action of the Irish Parliamentary Party led by Mr John E. Redmond relative to the English Education Bill in whose wisdom in the matter this Council places the utmost reliance and confidence and strongly condemn the Irish Daily Independent, Mr J. M. Healy and his Hacks; in their action in this matter by striving to get up the apple of discord against our United Irish Party...' (p375).

5. 15 January 1903 – 27 February 1904 Includes:
- 'Letter from Mr John Claffey, Portumna dated 27th March 1903 stating that during the recent rainfall all the houses in part of the town as well as the yards were flooded owing to want of a proper outlet...' (p107).
 - 'Resolved that the Labourers get possession of their Cottage plots for the purpose of enabling them to put down a crop without further delay, and who will be required to sign a caretaker's agreement therefore at 1d per week and until the cottages are built and without waiting for the agreements to be received from Mr Golding, the Council's Solicitor, who is to be again applied to for them...' (p125).
 - 'Resolved that We the Members of the Portumna Rural District Council desire to bring under the notice of Galway County Council the scarcity of labour in and around the towns of this District and with a view of improving the unhappy lot of the labourers of these towns, we wish to point out that there is no employment whatever, and now desiring to bring the matter before the County Council, we earnestly request them to consider the matter as other Co. Councils have done, viz. to give direct labour on roads within 1 mile of the towns in the District as they fall out of contract as this would materially reduce the burden on the rates by out-door relief and the shelter of the Workhouse' (pp161-162).
 - 'Circular letter from the L.G. Board No. 116 dated 6th October 1903 subject "Tuberculosis" (consumption) and stating that in view of the high death rate from this disease, they desire to re-issue their circular letter of 16th September 1901, on the subject which they forward together with further copies of posters and leaflets etc...' (p331).

6. 12 March 1904 – 7 July 1905 Includes:
- 'Resolution of the South Dublin Rural District Council to the effect that Co. Councils having regard to the fact that under the provision of the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Acts 1891 and 1896, the Local Government (Ireland) Act of 1898 and the Irish Land Act of 1903 the position and liabilities of the rate payers of the County at large may be seriously affected through non payment of instalments by tenants making improvident bargains in the purchase of their holdings and desire to impress upon the tenants the necessity in the interests of themselves and their fellow rate-payers to postpone buying their holdings unless they obtain reasonable reduction...' (p132).
 - Report of Mr J. Smith, County Surveyor was read stating 'The Roads of this Rural District have not been kept in proper order and have not been maintained up to their recently good condition during the past quarter and I am unable to certify payments to the extent that I could desire in the interest of the travelling public, Contractors should now understand that any monies deferred this quarter for neglect of their duties will not be again deferred nor will any monies be deferred at the next quarterly meeting as the new Public Bodies Order distinctly stipulates that monies for road maintenance contracts must be either paid in full or struck off. Under these circumstances it is to be hoped Contractors whose names are now deferred will embrace every suitable opportunity of putting their roads into proper and sufficient repair before the next quarterly meeting....' (p300E-F).

(7.)

8. 22 September 1906 – 22 June 1907 Includes:
- 'Ordered to be informed that from the many changes and alterations in the selection of sites before the holding of the Local Inquiry and other delays in carrying into execution that scheme, taking a period of seven years to do so, and notably owing to the change of site of the Boleynanollóg cottage after the Provisional Order had been issued, throwing a great amount of extra labour on the hands of the Clerk and his Assistant, as well as the taking up of possession of plots and then given to the labourers as caretakers over a scattered area, and drawing agreements therefor subsequently giving possession of the plots to the building contractors, taking possession of the cottages from them and giving them to the labourers and drawing agreements therefor, and drawing subsequent agreements therefore on a reduction being made in their rents and under these circumstances, the District Council are of opinion, that the Clerk and Assistant Clerk are entitled to the sums granted them unanimously by the Council who pray for the Local Government Board's sanction under all the circumstances to the payments of the amounts' (pp29-30).
 - 'Resolved:- That we the members of the Portumna District Council desire to call the attention of the Estate Commissioners to the present condition of the Evicted Tenants in this District, and desire to point out that an Inspector from their Department visited the locality a short time ago to enquire into the condition of the evicted, but did not interview several of the evicted tenants who had to approach him, and they were informed by him their names were not supplied him. The Council are of opinion from information to their knowledge, that the names of all the Evicted Tenants were supplied to the Estate Commissioners, and they hope the matter will receive the attention of that body' (p131).

(9.)

10. 18 July 1908 -10 July 1909 Includes:
- 'The Clerk reported that in accordance with the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk-shops order he got posters circulated, and also advertisements inserted in the local press, calling on cow-keepers etc. to be registered, and that only one person was registered up to the present' (p83).
 - Letter from the Local Government Board No. L20 835/176 stating that 'they have sanctioned a loan of £11,300 for the purpose of carrying out part 1 of the Schedule to the unopposed order of 1905, the first instalment of the loan to be £3,000 and that they will make the necessary recommendation to the Irish Land Commission that this loan is at the rate of £170 per cottage and also includes a sum of £250.10 for the acquisition and securing of the five allotments of land, included in this portion of the Order...' (p247).
 - 'Ordered that the Local Government Board be informed that the Council have repeatedly advertised for Contractors for building the Labourers Cottages and cannot get tenders with very few exceptions at the Engineers Estimate, all being over it with the exception of Messrs. Mullins tender from who the Council cannot get a bond or guarantee that they would erect the cottages, and that the Local Government Board be asked to allow the Council to alter the present plan so as to get tenders at a price not exceeding the present estimate £122.10.0' (p446).

(11.)

- 12.** 17 September 1910 - 7 October 1911 Includes:
- Transcript of letter from Tynagh rate-payers, Athletic Clubs etc. regarding the proposed recreation ground at Spring Garden, Tynagh stating '...As already intimated to you an excellent opportunity now presents itself to provide a recreation ground owing to the sale of the Spring Garden Estate which adjoins the town of Tynagh. The site on which we seek to secure a recreation ground is within about 200 yards of the town and adjoins the public road and which has heretofore afforded us the necessary facility for recreation, sports and other pastimes...The want of such grounds would be keenly felt by the Athletic Clubs and Athletes existing in the locality, and by the inhabitants in general, and if provided it would be a venue for important matches, between other teams or clubs for which Tynagh would be central and also the encouragement of the many other recreative, and health-giving pastimes which the facility would offer...' (pp119-120).
 - 'Letters from Mr Roseingrave, Engineer were read, 22nd December 1910...As you have decided by resolution that all cottages to be built in No. 4 Scheme in future shall be single cottages I don't think it would be in order to act on Mr Martin's suggestion in uniting two single cottages and thereby form a double cottage. The result would be a double cottage of a design not yet approved by the L.G. Board, and the sanction of the Board is necessary. The L.G. Board have approved of a special design of mine for a double cottage in Scariff (County Clare) R.D. giving the same living accommodation, but not as much out-office accommodation as my town single cottages. The design of this cottage is being built in Scariff R.D. for £216. Your town single cottages will cost £260, less the cost of one gable say £15...' (p124).
- 13.** 21 October 1911 – 19 October 1912 Includes:
- 'Resolved – That we learn with surprise of the action of the Secretary of the Galway County Council in suggesting an increase of 4d in the £ in the District rate for this Union for the ensuing year, in the absence of our representative (Mr J. Cosgrave) who took it for granted that the Estimate (a copy of which he was supplied with) would be adopted, more especially when he wrote approving of said Estimate, and if the Co. Council persist in levying this increased rate we authorise that a chartered accountant be employed to inquire into the accounts of the County Council with reference to the Portumna District...' (p165).
 - 'Resolved – That we the members of the Portumna Rural District Council condemn in the strongest manner the recent outrage perpetrated on the property of Mr James Cosgrave, Co. Co. (County Councillor) Portumna, when his cow was shot. We desire to assure him of our entire confidence as our Representative on the County Council and we hope that the parties who committed this crime will be brought to justice' (p346).
 - Clerk of the Council confirmed that Certificates of Completion of Works (Form No. 34) dated the 8th August, 1912 were issued as follows, cottage No. 147 completed 18th July 1912 ; cottage no. 148 completed 4th July 1912 ; cottage 149 completed 18th July 1912; and cottage no. 59 completed on 4th July 1912 (p377).

- 14.** 16 November 1912 -18 October 1913 Includes:
- 'That we the members of the Council of the Portumna Rural District request the Galway County Council to repair by steam rolling the roads Nos. 44, 50 & 50A (which include the streets of Portumna and are presently being made by the County Surveyor) and we hereby consent to the borrowing of the sum of £900 for carrying out the said work, the amount to be repaid within a period of seven years' (p21).
 - 'Submitted notification from Mr P.S. Golding, Solicitor, Ballinasloe, that an application will be made by or on behalf of the Rt. Hon. Earl of Westmeath to the County Court at the Session to be held on the 2nd January 1913, at Loughrea, for compensation amounting to £409, for the loss sustained by the said Rt. Hon. Earl of Westmeath by reason of the malicious burning of a hay shed and about 51 tons of prime hay, a smaller shed, a cattle float, a quantity of manufactured timber and four sheep troughs, his property' (pp40-41).
 - Report of Mr S. P. Burke, Inspector of Dairies and Cowsheds, stating 'That he had ordered all registered Cow-Keepers to have their cowsheds lime-washed during the month before housing their cows for the winter months and also to make a general cleaning of adjoining yards' (p106).
 - Includes letter from Thomas William Roseingrave...to Thomas Rodgers, Eyrecourt, dated 6 January 1913 advising that 'I have already notified the R.D.C. of Portumna that I will not issue any more Certificates for contracts where the time limit for completion has expired unless the Council compensate me for my service. The Council and the Contractors must arrange between themselves that I be paid £6.6.0 for each and every future inspection I make to the Portumna R.D. Council on behalf of defaulting Contractors or in the case of revived contracts' (p115, see also p145).
 - 'That we the members of the Portumna Rural District Council join with the National Bodies throughout the country in congratulating Mr Hogg in his victory over the Union candidate at the recent Derry Election, which shows clearly that Ulster is not opposed to Home Rule, as has been represented by the Unionist Press' (p155).
 - 'Letter from Mr Patrick Hogan, Portumna dated the 5th April 1913, reporting that he had completed the contract for the erection of 14 cottages in the field adjacent to the Workhouse and requesting that he be paid for same together with retention money on ten of the cottages which were certified as fit for occupation on the 21st December last, not later than next Finance meeting' (p226, see also p244 & p317).

(15.-17.)

- 18.** 1 April 1916 – 8 December 1917 Includes:
- 'Letter from the Local Government Board...requesting to be informed what steps if any are being taken by the Council to reduce the large amount of arrears of rent due in respect of the cottages provided in the District under the Acts, a sum of £117.5.2 or over three months rental of all the cottages being due at the end of January last referred to in Financial Minutes of 4th inst. Ordered to be informed that Notices to Quit have been served on a good many tenants, and two tenants have been summoned for possession of cottages, and the above arrears includes a sum of £35 or about one month's rent which was surcharged against the late Rent Collector against whom proceedings have been instituted for recovery; the case to be heard at Ballinasloe Quarter Sessions on 6th inst' (p13-14).
 - Details of circular from the Local Government Board was read drawing attention to the resolution of the House of Commons in favour of the Daylight Saving Scheme passed on 8th May and to the Summer Time Bill which received Royal Assent (p117, see also p192, and p249).
 - Resolved that the Council 'most humbly beg to offer to His Most Gracious Majesty King George the fifth our best and devoted loyalty and we sincerely supplicate clemency for Mr Roger Casement, now condemned to death, we believe that now is a time at which the exercise of His Majesty's Royal prerogative would do much to accentuate the friendship and devotedness of our native land to the Throne' (p118, see also p156 4A).
 - 'Resolved - That the council advertise for a competent tradesman to supervise repairs to all cottages in the District. That the appointment be for one year only and that the salary be at the rate of £20 (twenty pounds) per annum, and that the following be the duties to be discharged...' (pp150-151, see also p172).
 - 'Circular from the Acting Secretary Co. Council... calling attention to the great injury which is being done to Irish Agricultural interests by the unfair restrictions imposed in regard to shipping trade via the Port of Dublin etc.' (p154).
 - 'Letter from Mr Kearns, Solicitor, stating that he advised the Clerk (of Council, T. Hynes) to produce the necessary books and documents in the case of King v Curley (District Councillor, charged with being an alien), and that he attended and gave evidence at Petty Sessions on 4th inst. (September) when the case was dismissed without prejudice...' (pp173-174, see also p191, p210, p212, p305, p384B, & p421).
 - Resolution of the Nenagh (County Tipperary) Urban District Council was adopted '...congratulating the Irish Party on the political sagacity they displayed in dealing with the recent proposals for the settlement of the Irish Question etc.' (pp249-250).
 - Resolution from the Carrickfergus Urban District Council was adopted '...on the subject of conserving grain and sugar by the prohibition of the manufacture and sale of drinks during the war' (p403).

- 19.** 22 December 1917 – 21 June 1919 Includes
- '...The Clerk further stated that the Labourers Cottages Scheme No. 4 was anything but in a satisfactory state. That 43 or 44 cottage sites were not registered and that the wrong areas were registered in some cases as far as the Clerk can ascertain they have no title for some plots, the Land Registry have sent tracings through Mr Kearns, Solicitor, which requires to be compared etc with the Council maps for the purpose of ascertaining where the discrepancy is, and for which purpose an Engineer will be required' (p204, see also p223).
 - 'Letter from the Local Government Board ...stating they have had before them the application of the Galway County Council for an extension of the limit of expenditure on roads in the District and they have given instructions for the preparation of an order assenting to an extension of the limit of expenditure on roads in the Rural District to £4,375 for each of the three years ending 31st March 1920, 1921, 1922' (p353).
 - Letter from the Local Government Board 'stating they have received the Descriptive List containing particulars in relation to the proposed area of charge for expenses in connection with the works which the Council propose to carry out with a view to improving the water supply at Portumna, and in reference thereto they will be glad to learn whether the pump when provided will be available for use by the general public, as well as the inhabitants of the Labourers Cottages in the vicinity... Order to be informed that the pump when provided will be available for use by the general public as well as the tenants of cottages, and that when the estimate is received from Mr Felle (overseer of repairs to cottages) the estimated cost will be inserted in the list and returned to the Local Government Board' (p372).

(20.-23.)

- 24.** 9 April 1923 - 20 December 1924 Includes:
- Transcript of letter from the Sisters of Charity, Blind Asylum, Merrion, Dublin requesting that 'If you come across or know of any blind or defective sighted children, especially between the ages of 3 & 7 would you kindly use your influence to send them to our school which is the only one for Catholics in this Country. Only those who have had experience with the blind can have any idea of the advantage of early training to these children and on the other hand the great difficulty of developing mentally and physically - older children...' (pp97-98).
 - 'That owing to the heavy duties and small salaries of the Home Assistance Officers, Council as District Home Assistance Committee request the County Board of Health to again bring forward the adjourned application of 18 December 1922, and grant them a living wage' (p98).
 - 'Circular letter from the Secretary, County Council Galway,...requesting to be sent immediately a statement of any expenditure actually incurred to the late Board of Guardians of Portumna Union as a result of the occupation of the Workhouse or other Union property by the British Authorities... The Clerk stated he informed the Secretary... that Buildings here were not at any time occupied by the English Army but owing to their occupation of Ballinasloe Workhouse the Inmates from there were

transferred here (Portumna) for twelve months and a debt of £470.7.10 for their care, clothing etc still remains due by Ballinasloe; and also the further sum of £11.15.0 "Augmentation Grant" paid (as was the custom) to Mrs Tully, the then Union Teacher - by the Guardians and which should have been refunded by the English Local Government Board' (p174, see also p191, p287).

- Dr Kelly, Medical Officer of Health, reported that '...some tinkers on the last Fair Day let lose an old Stallion on the Commonage, Portumna, where the animal got drowned in a drain. The carcass now lies in the Commonage - decomposed, and the stench there from is a danger to Public Health. I recommend that it be covered with Quicklime on Monday and buried a few days after. As the place has become a dumping ground for Nuisances etc I also recommend that a Notice be put up threatening prosecution to all future offenders; and that the Civic Guards be asked to be on the look-out for such offenders with a view to prosecution' (p182).
- 'Circular letter from the Ministry ...with copy of the President's Circular... regarding the employment and settlement of Demobilised Officers and men from the Army; and trusting that the Local Authorities without exception will re-instate those men who left their employment to join the Army; and asking that as vacancies arise preference will be given to such men' (p230).
- 'Letter from Ministry...requesting that all Books, Minutes, Records and Documents relating to the business of the late Board of Guardians should be forwarded to the Secretary County Board of Health, Galway to be retained by him in the offices of that Board for future reference. And that any Title Deeds and Leases be sent to the Secretary of the Co. Council, to be kept there in safe custody' (p306, see also pp344-345).
- Letter from Ministry dated 12 May 1924 Ref. No. P21226/1924, stating, with reference to Clerk's letter of the 8th inst. that under the circumstances stated therein, the Ministry directed that the Minute Books of the late Board of Guardians of Portumna Union containing records relating to Public Health matters may be retained in the Rural District Office for the present' (p345).
- 'Letter from Ministry dated 11th October 1924 Ref. No. P45408/1924, Galway County as under "A Chara, With reference to your letter of 2nd inst. relative to the question of payment in respect of provisions etc supplied to the I.R.A. while in occupation of Portumna Workhouse in 1921-1922 I am directed by the Minister of Local Government and Public Health to state that a copy of your communication is being sent to the Auditor as the Minister desires that the matter be enquired into before he considers exercising any powers under the Local Authorities (Indemnity) Act, 1928...." The Clerk stated he requested Ministry's sanction to the Expenditure incurred by the I.R.A. while in occupation in Workhouse 1921-22. As the Auditor (Miss Browner) notified him it was necessary to have Ministry's sanction for the Expenditure before conclusion of her Audit' (p439, see also p459).
- 'We the members of Portumna Rural District Council request the Dáil to re-establish a small hospital in Portumna as now after 12 months' experience of amalgamation we are convinced of the absolute necessity of one for the sick poor whose nearest hospital is 40 Irish miles distant' (p460).

PORTUMNA RURAL DISTRICT.

The COUNCIL of the above District will, at their
Adjourned Quarterly Meeting to be held at the
Court-House, PORTUMNA,

At Twelve o'clock, noon,

On SATURDAY, the 10th MAY, 1902,

Open and consider

TENDER S

For the following Works, namely—

- 1 To maintain 658 perches of district road, for 5 years, on the road from Killinure to Woodford, but from Nalgrail cross roads and the three roads at Hollytree, cost not to exceed 60 per perch annum.
- 2 To maintain 488 perches of district road, for 5 years, on the road from Portumna to Kylesnack, between the corner of Fallow and cross roads at Dunry, cost not to exceed 70 per perch per annum.
- 3 To maintain 576 perches of district road, for 5 years, on the road from Woodford to Lough Derg, between the three roads at Kilmore and the road of Kilmore, cost not to exceed 60 per perch per annum.
- 4 To maintain 642 perches of district road, for 5 years, on the road from Portumna to Kylesnack, between the corner of Fallow and cross roads at Dunry, cost not to exceed 70 per perch per annum.
- 5 To maintain 642 perches of district road, for 5 years, on the road from Portumna to Kylesnack, between the corner of Fallow and cross roads at Dunry, cost not to exceed 70 per perch per annum.
- 6 To maintain 520 perches of district road, for 5 years, on the road from Woodford to Lough Derg, between the three roads at Kilmore and the road of Kilmore, cost not to exceed 60 per perch per annum.
- 7 To maintain 1011 perches of district road, for 5 years, on the road from Kilmore to Woodford, but from Nalgrail cross roads and the three roads at Hollytree, cost not to exceed 60 per perch per annum.

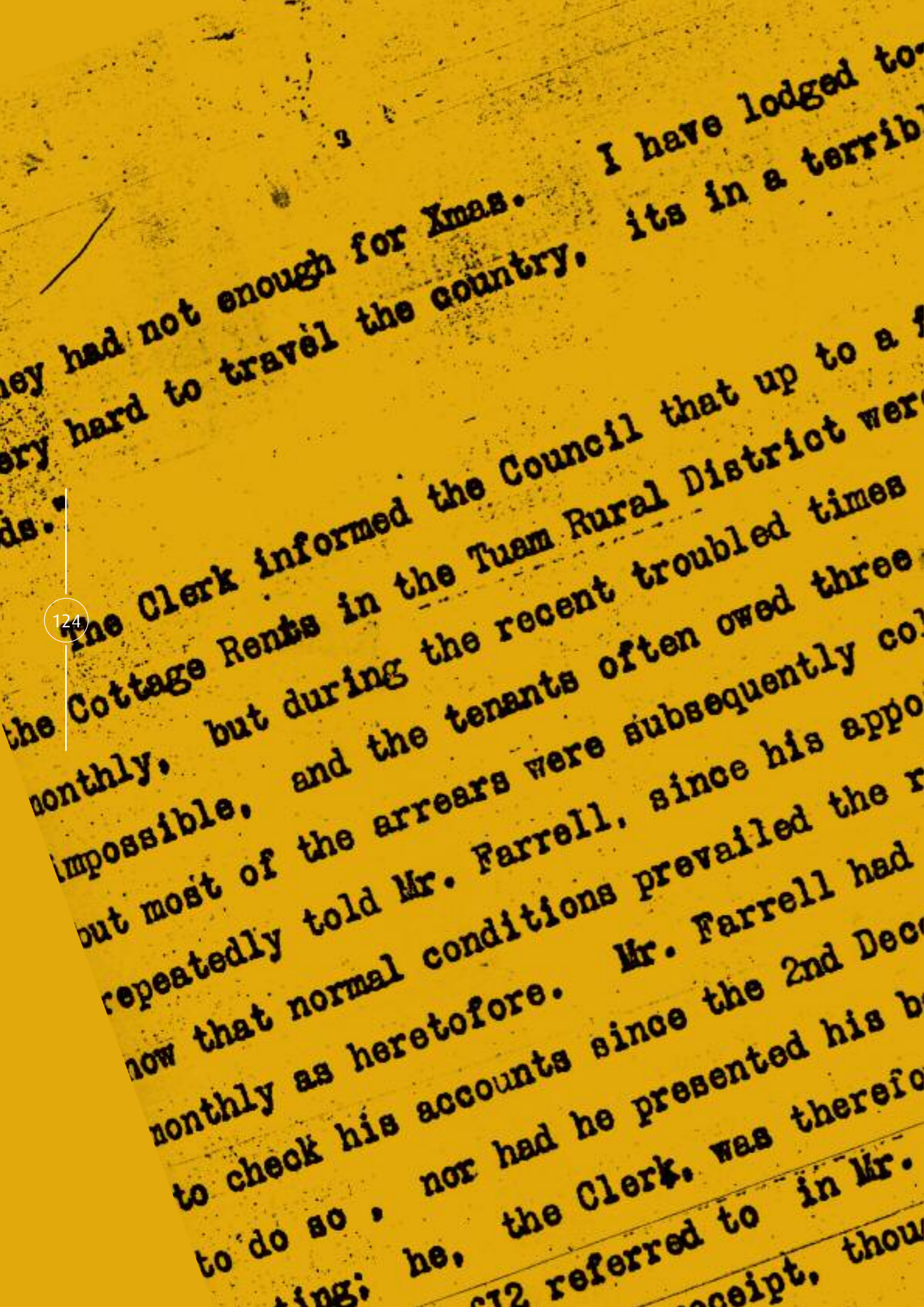
- 25.** 24 January 1925 – 20 June 1925 Includes:
- Transcript of letter from the Cashier's Office, Army Finance Department, Ministry of Defence, Portobello Barracks, Dublin to the Rural District Council stating 'With reference to your claim in respect of goods supplied to the Irish Volunteers from 21-11-21 to 11-3-22 (21 November 1921 to 11 March 1922) I have to inform you that the relevant papers held in this office have been forwarded to the Compensation Section, Ministry of Finance, Room 7, College of Science, Dublin, for disposal...' (p3).
 - Circular letter from the Ministry regarding the Local Government Act, 1925 're... Transfer of business from Rural District Councils, drawing attention to the provisions of Section 8, Sub-sections (2), (3), and (4) of the Local Government Act, 1925, where it is [stated that] the present Rural District Council will cease to function on 23rd proximo, and their powers and duties thereafter administered by the County Boards of Health, pending arrangements to be made by the County Councils, after the appointed day (1st October next) when Rural Councils finally cease to exist.
As a matter of administrative convenience the Minister considers that the existing Rural District Councils may arrange for the payment of full salaries of Officials due for the period ending the 20th June 1925 at their Financial meetings in this month, subject to the Paying Orders being dated 1st of July 1925' (p97).

II. Minutes of Galway County Board of Health Acting for Portumna Rural District Council / Public Works Committee, 1925

- [25.]** 20 June 1925 - 14 December 1925 Proceedings of Galway County Board of Health acting for Portumna Rural District Council and from August 1925 minutes of the Public Works Committee meetings, both of which deal with the various duties and responsibilities inherited from the disbanded Rural District Council. The minutes record attendance at the meetings, together with proceedings of business conducted under various legal provisions covering general, financial, and Labourers housing issues. Includes:
- Circular letter from the Local Government Department stating that '...the Financial Minutes of the Council shows that no serious attempt has been made by the Rent Collectors to collect current rents regularly or to reduce the outstanding arrears. While there is little doubt that at one period the accumulation of arrears in many districts could properly be attributed to the difficulty then found in collecting the rents regularly, this excuse cannot be advanced as a reason for the failure during the past 12 months of Rent Collectors to recover outstanding arrears (standing at £177.18)...' (p109).
 - 'Letter from the Secretary, County Board of Health, Galway...stating his Board at their meeting held on the 15th inst. decided to appoint the members (3) of the County Council, already selected to act as Public Works Committee for the Rural District (Portumna) to also discharge the duties heretofore performed by the Rural District Council, under the Sanitary, Labourers and Burial Grounds Acts until the appointed day,' (p117).
Size: 108pp

III. Incoming Letter Book, 1899

- 26.** April 1899 – December 1899 Circular letters, letters and Orders from the Local Government Board to the Rural District Council on a variety of matters and issues relating to the administration of the Council, such as procedures relating to road maintenance, repairs to Labourers cottages, and administration of Dairies, Cow-sheds and Milk-shop Orders and Acts. Includes:
- Circular letter advising 'The powers of Rural District Councils are conferred upon them by Sections 27 to 39 of the Act (Local Government (Ireland) Act 1898), and their procedure is governed by the Orders in Council of 22nd December, 1898, and 30th January, 1899. The Board do not think it necessary to refer at any length to the duties under the Sanitary Acts and Labourers Acts transferred to the District Council, as you are already familiar with the provisions of these Statutes...' (11 April 1899).
Size: c. 100pp.



Tuam Rural District Council Archive Collection

The Tuam Rural District Council archive collection is incomplete, consisting of minute books (1915-1925), quarterly minute books (1907-1920), and roads ledgers (1917-1920), together with material relating to labourers cottages, rates and sanitary work. This collection has been assigned the code G01/11.

The arrangement of the collection reflects the importance of the material, commencing with the most significant set of minutes, followed, in diminishing order, by the more numerous and significant material, and where possible in chronological order. The later (general) minutes (G01/11/20) and the financial minutes (G01/11/31) are incomplete sets of loose sheets.

Apart from the minute books the collection is by-and-large in good condition. Several volumes of minutes have suffered some mould damage, and consequently the paper is weak. The Quarterly Minutes for the period 1907-1913 originally formed one bound volume however they were at some point (post-1977) rebound by Galway County Libraries to form two separate volumes, G01/11/26 and G01/11/27. Indeed, most of the collection has been rebound and is now covered in blue buckram. The original binding would likely, however, have comprised dark green or dark blue/navy buckram with leather or suede spine covers and leather or suede corner covers. The collection has been in the custody of Galway County Libraries since 1977.

Initially there were 75 Councillors. The Council's geographical area of responsibility, measured 191, 263 acres, 2 roods and 31 perches. It included the electoral divisions of Abbey (Abbeyknockmoy) East, Abbey

West, Addergoole, Annaghdown, Ballinderry, Ballinduff, Ballynapark, Beaghmore, Belclare, Carrowrevagh, ClareTuam, Clonbern, Cumber, Doonbally, Donaghpatrick, Dunmore, Foxhall, Headford, Hillsbrook, Kilbennan, Kilcoona, Killeany, Killeen, Killererin, Killoower, Killursa, Kilmoylan, Kilshanny, Levally, Milltown, Monivea, Moyne, Ryehill, Tuam Rural and Tuam Urban.

Tuam Rural District Council generally held its meetings in the Boardroom of the Workhouse. Its inaugural meeting was held on 22nd April, 1899, when John Nolan was elected its first Chairman.

A contemporary newspaper reporting on the first meeting stated that the Councillors '...met on the occasion as befitted men conscious of their real duty and determined to do it. They indulged in no flights of rhetorical fancy or no parade of power but with a quiet self-respecting and manly dignity met and set about their task fully alive to the responsibilities of their trust but fully determined with unswerving fidelity to do it according to the best of their skill and judgement'.¹¹⁷

The surviving minutes of the Council reveal that it kept a watchful eye on national political developments during a period of great change and strife in Ireland, and expressed its opinion on many. For example, resolving in July 1915 'That we declare we will not have conscription' (G01/11/15, p146), and in February 1916, following a deputation from interested parties, it resolved 'That the members of this Council form themselves into a Committee to further the interests of voluntary recruiting by every means in their power' (G01/11/15, p314).

¹¹⁷. *Tuam Herald*, 22 April 1899.

In June 1916 the Council read the resolution passed by the Portumna Rural District Council '...condemning the action of the authorities in shooting the innocent people without any form of trial during the recent disturbance in Dublin and further for depriving them of the youth and manhood of Ireland by deportation, and whose sympathies were heartily in accordance with the wishes of the Government as far as recruiting is concerned...' (G01/11/15, pp411-412).

In October that year the Council resolved to place on record its '...unabated confidence in the Irish Parliamentary Party under the leadership of Mr John Redmond, M.P., which has achieved so much beneficial legislation for the people of Ireland by the National movement organisation; and we call upon the people of Ireland to remain faithful to the constitutional movement as directed by the Irish Party and to remember that Unity is strength. We protest most strongly against the insidious attempts made by certain newspapers and people who have never supported the National organisation to cause disunion in Ireland' (G01/11/15, p508).

In January 1919 in a strongly worded resolution it called for the liberation of the imprisoned Irish political leaders and further stated that '...should the united demand of a people prove futile we shall consider in the near future either the expediency and practicability of abstaining from office til the united demand be conceded, or the expediency of our discontinuing to administer the law, in our representative capacity under such an unjust Government by a formal resignation from office in a body as a practical protest against such an injustice and thereby refuse to become the props and outposts of an alien legislature' (G01/11/16, p531).

Following a letter from Martin J. Nohilly, Honorary Secretary of Tuam MacHale Sinn Féin, regarding the 'hellish' conditions endured by political prisoners, the Rural District Council resolved that '...we strongly condemn the action of the Prison Authorities in their harsh treatment of the Political prisoners' (G01/11/16, p648).

In July 1920 the Local Government Board wrote to the Council stating it was aware that resolutions had been passed by certain Local Authorities repudiating the authority of the Imperial Parliament and declaring 'their intention to place every obstacle in the way of the existing administration of His Majesty's Government'. The Board advised that unless it had 'definite' assurances from local authorities that they would submit their accounts to audit and be prepared to conform to the rules and orders of the Local Government Board it would not be in a position to extend loans or grants from public funds for any purpose (G01/11/18, pp194-195). Tuam Rural District Council informed the Board that they 'had no objection to submitting their accounts to audit' (G01/11/18, p195). However, the minutes of 28th August, 1920 record the receipt of a letter from Dáil Éireann acknowledging the Resolution adopted by the Council 'acknowledging the Republic established by the will and vote of the Irish People as the only legitimate government of Ireland' (G01/11/18, p244). And at its meeting of 18th December, 1920, the Council resolved 'to sever all relations with the Local Government Board, Custom House, Dublin, and have no further communication with that Board' (G01/11/18, p314).

In addition to monitoring and adjusting to political changes the Council continued with its legislative and administrative duties which primarily involved the provision of Labourers cottages, supervising and improving public health through the provision of water and sewerage schemes, together with road maintenance.

The Council undertook an extensive programme of providing Labourers cottages under various Improvement Schemes. In 1908 the Local Government Board sanctioned a loan of £5,600 for the purposes of the Improvement Scheme authorised by the Tuam Rural District Labourers Unopposed and Opposed Orders for the erection of cottages. However, not all cottages scheduled for erection were completed prior to the onset of World War I when building work ceased (G01/11/15, p180). Nevertheless by the end of 1916 the Council had erected 98 Labourers cottages.

Tuam Rural District Council.

BURIAL BOARD.

Proceedings under the Burial Grounds (Ireland) Act, 1856.

The Minutes of last Meeting were read and confirmed.

The following Reports and Letters were read, and Orders made on them respectively, as follows:—

Report from Mr. Michael Dwyer, D. C., pointing out certain repairs required to be carried out at Tuam Old Cemetery, and recommending that Patrick Flaherty, who has been looking after the Cemetery since his mother's death, be appointed Caretaker.

O R D E R.

Referred to Tuam Old Cemetery Committee for a report.

Mr. Luke Forde, Caretaker, Tuam New Cemetery, reported that the walks in the Cemetery required to be gravelled very badly, as they have not been done for ten years.

O R D E R.

The Clerk to issue an advertisement, inviting tenders for 80 to 100 carts of gravel, delivered at the Cemetery, tenders to be considered at next Meeting on 31st instant.

Tuam Rural District Council, minutes of its Burial Board, G01/11/20

Letter from Mr. Patrick Lawless, resigning his position as Caretaker of the Cloughanower Burial Ground, owing to change of residence.

In late 1919 details of a report from the Local Government Board Inspector, H.M. Murphy, on housing conditions in the town of Tuam were related to the Rural Council by the Housing Department of the Board, wherein he advised that '...the number of houses available for labourers has been decreasing whilst in many cases the occupied houses have been allowed to fall into disrepair. It is therefore clear to the Board that the housing of the working classes on whom as much of the prosperity of the town and the neighbouring countryside depends should receive early and adequate attention. It appears that there are at least 126 houses which are not reasonably fit for human habitation and at least 60 houses should be erected in the town. While the Board are of opinion that the Town Commissioners are primarily responsible for dealing with this problem of housing under the Housing (Ireland) Act, 1919, they are quite willing to consent to the Rural District Council, if the resources of the Commissioners are inadequate, building some of the houses under the Labourers Acts. The Board are glad to note from the Inspector's report that the Council have already manifested their willingness to take action under the latter code, not only as regards Tuam but with respect to other small towns in the Rural District...' (G01/11/18, p37).

Following on from this report the Council set up a Committee to consider the best 'means of improving the Housing conditions in the town and also in the Rural District' (G01/11/18, p86), and requested the Board to issue details of loans that could be procured for that purpose.

As regards to sanitary works the Council was involved in the provision of wells, pumps and sewers. The provision of a sewerage scheme in Headford, in particular, involved substantial discussion, when in 1915 the Medical Officer and later the town residents complained about the unsanitary conditions of the town caused by the defective sewerage system (G01/11/15, p210). Dr Golding, Medical Officer for the district, concurred and stated that whilst '...it was hopeless to expect any new system of drainage in Headford, the least that should be done is to have the old sewer opened and cleaned and new grates and

traps put down in place of the present grates' (G01/11/15, p 210).

The Council's Engineer, Newell, submitted a report to the Council on Headford Sewerage in October 1915, wherein he stated that the '...present sewerage system here, consists of a stone drain which starts at the top of the town in front of Mr O'Connor's Meat Hall and runs along the edge of the footpath on the south side of the Street, beneath the paved channel to Donohoe's gateway where it enters a pipe drain which continues on the same side of the town, until it discharges into the Rivers a distance of 550 yards, and having in that space, a fall of over 30 feet.

On the North side of the town, there is neither sewer nor drain. A paved channel runs along the edge of the footpath from the Market Cross to the Square, a distance of 340 yards... These are not sufficient, and there should be at least six, and hence in wet weather, the over-flow from the channel floods the streets which is most objectionable...

I would therefore respectfully suggest that the District Council proceed to put the main sewer between the points mentioned...into proper working order, that at least six cross-drains be formed, to carry the water from the channel on the North side of the town, into the main sewer...' (G01/11/15, pp282-283). The estimated expenditure required to carry out these works was £75.00.

In early 1920 following a request for estimates Professor Rishworth, Engineer, advised the Council that the estimated cost of improving the Tuam water supply would be £1,200. He further advised that if the Council considered the estimate too high he 'could cast out some of the less essential works but he strongly advised the Council to do it all if possible' (G01/11/18, p90). The Water Committee considered the matter and recommended that the Council proceed with the improvement scheme (G01/11/18, p115).

The Council was also active in providing water pumps and sewerage systems in other parts of the district, erecting pumps for instance at Ryehill, Pollnamall, Belclare, Kilconly, Milltown and Monivea, and in ensuring their maintenance and repair.

Plans for Tuam sewerage were prepared in 1912 (G01/11/15, p331), but had not been proceeded with by 1916.

With regard to health issues the Council was also involved in the control of disease and in the provision of graveyards. Sanitary and living conditions in the district are reflected in the various reports from the Health Officers wherein they reported many instances of nuisances such as asses and donkeys in dwellings, and the prevalence of disease.

In late 1918, for instance, Dr T B Costello, Medical Superintendent Officer of Health, submitted a report on an influenza epidemic advising the Council that it was at 'its height at the end of the month (October) and the beginning of November. It is still epidemic in the country parts of the District. Up to the present 112 cases have been treated in the Hospital suffering from Influenza, most with Pulmonary complications, some of the cases proved fatal. As in every epidemic influenza which has been recorded for centuries past

the people principally affected were those in the prime of life and this caused great inconvenience and disruption of business and work of every kind and increased the difficulties of attending and nursing the sick. It is only right to record the good work done in this way by the Sisters of Mercy here who worked day and night attending the sick and relieving their wants both in the Town and country...' (G01/11/67, p499).

In its capacity as Burial Board the Council was involved with the appointment of caretakers, and the provision and maintenance of graveyards, such as at Abbey, Tuam Old Cemetery, Creevaghbaun, Kilconly, Abbett, Cloonfush, Dunmore, and Kilmoylan.

By the early 1920s Rural District Councils were viewed as unnecessary. They were disbanded by the Free State government in 1925. Their duties were taken over by the County Councils which set up public works committees to deal with most of their work and responsibilities.

I. Minutes of Tuam Rural District Council, 1915 - 1925

G01/11

Volumes of minutes of proceedings of Council meetings generally held twice monthly. The minutes record attendance, details of correspondence, generally from the Local Government Board, and from the early 1920s from the Local Government Department, and details of actions required thereafter, together with proceedings of Council business conducted under various legislative provisions to the administration of the district under a range of headings such as general, financial, sanitary authority and Labourers cottages. The minutes often incorporate details of reports from the Tuam Waterworks and Sanitary Committee and from various officials, such as the County Surveyor, Medical Officers of Health, Sanitary Officers, Rent Collectors, Inspectors of Dairies and so on.

The proceedings of the Council acting as the 'Sanitary Authority' or from circa 1920 under the Public Health Acts, relate to health and sanitary matters, such as the prevention of disease, the care and management of burial grounds, and the provision and maintenance of sewerage systems and water supply; the latter encompassed reports from the Tuam Waterworks Committee. The proceedings under the 'Labourers Acts' relate to the provision and maintenance of Labourers cottages and rent collection.

Tuam Rural District *Great figures*

General Warrant to collect on every Water Rates in the Tuam Urban Division

To Mr Michael L. Shine, Collector of the Domestic Water Rate for Tuam Urban Division in the Rural District of Tuam and County of Galway.

You are hereby authorised and directed to levy the several Domestic Water Rates set forth in the annexed Collecting Book of Receipts and Demand Notes from the several persons liable to pay the same as long as the same remain due and payable by all such ways and means as by Law you are empowered to use in the levying of the said Rates.

The amount to be collected under this Warrant in respect of the Domestic Water Rates made for the period of the year ending the 31st March 1923 is £358 - 2 - 10.

The total you are hereby authorised to collect in the half-year ending the 30th September 1922 is the sum of £179 - 0 - 11 being half the sum of £358 - 2 - 10 in respect of the Domestic Water Rates for the year aforesaid. The total amount you are required to collect in the said year is the sum of £358 - 2 - 10.

Sealed with the Common Seal of the Tuam Rural District Council in the County of Galway and in execution behalf of the Tuam

thousand nine hundred and twenty two
Chairman
E. Costello
Peter Holroyd
W. W. Donohue
Two other members of the Council present at the meeting
Clerk of the Rural District Council of Tuam

Tuam Rural District Council regarding water levy, G01/11/51

The minutes are generally signed or initialled by the Chairman and witnessed by the Clerk.
Average size: circa 580pp.

(1.-14.)

- 15. 26 June 1915 - 31 March 1917 (pages 1 - 99 are missing) Includes:
 - 'Letter from Mr Newell, Engineer, stating that the Headford Pump well appears to be a marvel of success. The supply of clear spring water which it has yielded daily during the past fortnight is surprisingly great...' (p115).
 - 'Read - "Resolution passed by the Limerick County Borough Council stating that in their opinion the action of the Government in ordering the banishment of Irishmen from their native country for no reason assigned, constitutes a grave encroachment upon the civil rights of the people, and that it is the duty of the public representatives to protest against any unwarranted exercise of despotic powers and unjust differentiation against Ireland". Adopted' (p171).
 - 'Report from Dr T. B. Costello...' 'I beg to report that during the month six cases of enteric Fever occurred in the town of Headford. The outbreak is attributable to the contamination of milk by sewerage... The Main sewer in Bishop Street, Tuam which was choked with solid accumulations is being cleaned and manholes are being put in so that it will not cost so much to clean in future...' (p185).
 - 'Read Resolution passed by the Tuam Branch of the United Irish League approving of the Government's action in urging the cultivation of more land but desiring to call the attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that thousands of acres of land are held by the graziers and Congested Districts Board for grazing purposes which should be distributed amongst small farmers and not perpetuate the grazing system, the Congested Districts Board being established for the object of relieving congestion and providing holdings for small farmers. Also protesting at the erection of Police Barracks at Abbey and Killereerin...' (pp194-195).
- 16. 31 March 1917 - 28 June 1919 Includes:
 - Letter from Local Government Board regarding the '...disposal of wastepaper, etc. and stating for the information of the Council that in their opinion the following books and records should not be disposed of, but should be carefully preserved viz. :- minute Books, Register of Mortgages, Register of Labourers Cottages, Fin. Statement Books of receipt and expenditure for ten years; Registers and Ledgers for ten years; Rate books and general estimates covering the last six financial years; Security bonds for existing officers, as well as forms, audit vouchers and other documents covering a period of the last two financial years ending 31st March 1917' (p26).
 - 'That the Government be called upon to immediately release all political prisoners, as, in the opinion of this Council, no useful end can be gained by sending men to prison (in some cases) on the most trivial charges, and if this course is intended to maintain the peace of the Country, it is not contributing towards

that end, but having quite the opposite effect. The indignation of the people to the treatment of political prisoners (recently exposed) indicates that it is time that such practice be discontinued' (p146).

- Auditor's (Arthur C. Ellis) Report stating 'I am pleased to be in a position to report that both the Cottage Rent Collector and Water Rent Collector have no arrears in this collection and they certainly discharge their duties in a most efficient manner' (p291).
- Medical Officer's, Thomas B. Costello, report for 1917 stating that '122 Reports were made by the Sanitary Officers and 105 notices to abate nuisances etc served, and six prosecutions took place for non-compliance with the notices...
The improvement in the Housing of the people continues and many new houses were built by the Congested Districts Board and in spite of many difficulties, and some more unsanitary houses were demolished and the people transferred to better houses. The old single room cabin is rapidly disappearing....' (p329-330).

(17.)

18. 29 November 1919 – 22 July 1922

Includes:

- '...resolved that the Council tender their heartiest congratulations to Mr Michael Dwyer on his co-option as a member of Galway County Council especially as he has only recently come out of His Majesty's prison'(p19).
- 'That we the Tuam Rural District Council condemn in the strongest manner the action of irresponsible persons in maliciously damaging property throughout the county, and thereby increasing by an enormous amount the taxes which have to be borne by the already overtaxed and innocent ratepayers and we call upon the people to use every means in their power to put an end to this wanton and meaningless practice' (p75).
- Extract from report of Dr Clinch, Medical Officer, on the District advised that the 'sewerage is defective in the town of Tuam; it consists of merely built up sewers, which discharge directly into the river without any intercepting tank or purification of any kind. A new system appears to be badly needed' (p114).
- 'That a new pump be erected at Monivea at a probable cost of £30 to be levied off the existing area of charge, the Abbey Dispensary District' (p161).
- 'That we protest against the harsh sentence imposed on Jim Larkin and demand his release and return to Ireland' (p190).
- 'That we the Tuam Rural District Council cannot find words to condemn the atrocious and savage conduct of members of the R.I. Constabulary, who on the early hours of Tuesday morning 20th inst. caused such havoc and the destruction of several houses in the town, that many lives were not lost and the whole town laid in ruins was not their fault, by their maniacal acts of incendiarism.
That we demand of the British Government, as has already been done by His Grace, The Most Revd. Dr Gilmartin, a sworn public investigation into the barbarous conduct of these men and further we demand

full compensation from the British Government for all the losses entailed by the destruction and looting of the property of the people of Tuam ; to whom we tender our sincerest sympathy' (p212).

- 'Letter from the Galway County Council ...informing the District Council that the County Surveyor has reported that the limit of expenditure on roads in Tuam Rural District should be raised from £9,375 to £11,178.15.10 per annum on account of the increased wages to road labourers in the district and requesting to be informed if the District Council approve of same....'(p243).
- The Clerk reports that he was informed that the English Military would be evacuating the Workhouse 'at an early hour on Monday morning next, and request the Council would appoint someone to take over the building. It would also be necessary to appoint a temporary Caretaker, as there is a considerable amount of the Guardians' property still on the premises which must be looked after until disposed of'. He also requests permission 'to occupy the Board Room and office for District Council business, until such time as other arrangements are made for the workhouse buildings' (p530).

(19.)

20. 1 November 1924 – 13 June 1925

Loose pages. Includes:

- The Clerk informed the Council that up to a few years ago the Cottage Rents in the Rural District were always collected monthly, but during the recent troubled times this was found impossible, and the tenants often owed three months rent or more, but most of the arrears were subsequently collected...' (3 January 1924, p3).
- 'That we the Tuam District Council protest strongly against the new Penal Law passed by the Free State Government, making it an offence punishable by death penalty to work for the Independence of Ireland. It shows clearly how misguided were those who believed the Treaty to be a stepping stone to Independence - the men who appealed for support on the stepping stone plea, now make it punishable by death or penal servitude to practise what they preached...' (28 March 1925, p3).

II. Quarterly Minutes, 1907 – 1920

Volumes of minutes of proceedings of Council's quarterly meetings. The minutes record attendance, details of correspondence generally from the Local Government Board and from the early 1920s from the Local Government Department and actions required thereafter, together with proceedings of Council business relating to the construction and maintenance of the physical infrastructure of the district, namely its roads, bridges, piers and harbours. Such business included applying for, reviewing and approving tenders for works. The proceedings usually incorporate reports or details of reports, from the County Surveyor, together with schedules of works. The schedules describe each road requiring attention together with details of the period of contract, tonnes of metals per annum, price per perch per annum, and total or annual cost of maintenance.

Minutes are generally signed or initialled by the Chairman and witnessed by the Clerk. Size: c. 200pp.

(21.-25.)

26. 6 July 1907 – 6 May 1911 Includes:
- County Surveyor's report stating 'I have dealt too leniently with defaulting contractors, I strongly advise contractors to have their roads at all times in good order - for at any time I pass over a road and find it defective I will nil it whether during the period of inspection or otherwise' (p2).
 - County Surveyor's, P.J. Prendergast, Report stating 'I am happy to report the roads in your district are in fair order for the last quarter, but some very important roads have been neglected and contractors are therefore Struck Off, generally for want of sufficient material...' (p52).
 - County Surveyor's report stating '...The work of making a crossing in Tuam near the Protestant Cathedral has not yet been started although the contract for same was taken out in February 1908, however, I am taking steps to have this work commenced at once...' (p62).
 - 'That the interests of Ireland, as well as of Great Britain and the Colonies, demand the establishment of the best possible transit connection between the mother countries and Canada, Newfoundland, Australia, and New Zealand, and that a suitable Scheme for this purpose deserves such financial assistance as may be necessary from the Governments of all these countries.
That the shortest and safest connection and, therefore, the cheapest and best, lies through Ireland.
That Galway is the most suitable Irish Port to connect with Halifax as terminus' (p155).

G01/11/20(18)

but they had not enough for Imas. I have lodged to-day £12. its very hard to travel the country, its in a terrible state with floods."

The Clerk informed the Council that up to a few years ago the Cottage Rents in the Tuam Rural District were always collected monthly, but during the recent troubled times this was found impossible, and the tenants often owed three months rent or more, but most of the arrears were subsequently collected. He had repeatedly told Mr. Farrell, since his appointment last April, that now that normal conditions prevailed the rents must be collected monthly as heretofore. Mr. Farrell had not attended his Office to check his accounts since the 2nd December though called upon to do so, nor had he presented his books for the Council's Meeting; he, the Clerk, was therefore not in a position to say by whom the £12 referred to in Mr. Farrell's report was paid, nor had he seen the Bank receipt, though no doubt Mr. Farrell had lodged the money stated.

Tuam Rural District Council, minutes regarding rent collection. G01/11/20

27. 12 June 1911 – 1 February 1913 Includes:
- County Surveyor's report stating 'The amount of work done on your roads during the quarter has not been altogether satisfactory. In most cases sufficient material has not been supplied, and in consequence part or the whole of the available money has been deferred...' (p177).
 - 'Read - Letter from Mr Devlin, MP requesting the Council to submit the names of Delegates to the Home Rule Convention to be held in Dublin on 23rd instant....' (pp199-200). Size: 74pp

(28.-29.)

30. 12 May 1917 – 24 April 1920 Includes:
- 'That we...protest in the strongest manner against the proposed action of the Government in forcing conscription on Ireland. And we warn them that if they persist in this policy against the wishes of the Irish People that they will find it is the worst course they could adopt to gain recruits for the British Army in Ireland, as the measure will be resisted by every possible means that is considered necessary' (p45).
 - 'That this Council protest most strongly against the action of the Government in arresting Irishmen and women and keeping them in prison without trial and that we call upon the Government to either release these prisoners or give them an immediate trial in Ireland' (p57).

III. Financial Minutes, 1923-1925

31. 29 September 1923 – 28 March 1925 Incomplete sets of minutes with summary details of receipts, expenditure and payments, together with a Summary and Reconciliation of Treasurer's Account, and an abstract of rent collection and cash account. Size: 69pp

**IV. Labourers' Cottages
(a) Register of Applications for Cottages, 1906 – 1907**

32. November 1906 – June 1907 Loose sheets taken from volume of representations (applications) received by Council for cottages, and of the action taken thereon. Recorded details include date on which representation was made, name and address of applicant, name of occupier on whose lands proposed site is to be acquired, name of townland, grounds on which application is made (such as, additional houses and insanitary dwelling), date of receipt of Medical Officer's report, date of nature of Council's decision, and if rejected, reasons for declining to take action, such as 'Has a house and land already and not approved of', and 'Not a suitable applicant'.
Size: 3ff

(b) Rent Collection, 1910 – 1920

- 33.** 31 December 1910 – 25 May 1918 Volume of Rent Collector's, Patrick Burke monthly reports submitted to the Finance Meeting of the Rural District Council. The reports record details under the specific headings of State of the Rent Collection, Individual tenants in Arrears, Cottages requiring Repairs, Cottages not Tenanted, Cottages occupied by Tenants not Agricultural Labourers, and Particulars of Legal Proceedings Against Tenants. Details include the total rents accrued up to and including the last day of the preceding month, total to be collected, amount collected during the month and the total arrears, also includes a list of tenants who owed four week's rent and upwards, listing the townland (such as Milltown, Cartron, Kilgarraff North, Beaghmore, Headford, and Halfstraddle), the amount of rent arrears and details of Orders of District Council. Details relating to legal proceedings include 'To be summoned for leaving door of cottage open and house exposed to the weather' (f2), and 'For possession' (f81). Size: 89ff
- 34.** 3 February 1911 – 29 September 1920 Volume of counter folio Office Rent Notices issued by Clerk of Council on behalf of Patrick Burke, Rent Collector, to tenants requesting payment of outstanding rent due to the Rural District Council. Size: 100pp

V. Roads Ledgers, 1917 – 1924

Volumes with summary details of the certified cost of work and material expended on various road works, recording details such as road number, amount available (£.s.d.), ganger's name, date when certified, amount (in £.s.d.) for labour, materials, tools and so on, the gross total of pay sheet, the total expenditure to end of fortnight, balance available for future payments, tonnage of material supplied during fortnight and observations. The latter includes items such as '1 day included for Fitzpatrick for day and half deducted fortnight ended 2/6/17, ½ still due to Fitzpatrick' (G01/11/ 41, f29), and '40t stones @ 4d per ton' (G01/11/41, f52). Includes index to road numbers. Average Size: 130ff

(35.-40.)

- 41.** 6 August 1917 – 17 July 1919
- 42.** 14 July 1919 – 10 July 1920
- (43.)
- 44.** 18 August 1922 – 20 February 1924

VI. Public Notice on Applications for New Road Works, 1924

- 45.** 27 September 1924 Public notice of list of applications made by the County Surveyor or Notices of Motion for new works (roads) or involving new contracts, such as 'Notice of Motion by Mr Henry J. Daly, D.C., to putting in repair about 500 perches of the road leading from Ryehill Road to the Abbert Road, by Pat Concannon's house, Abbert, at a probable cost of £300'. Size: 1p.

VII. Dairy Inspector's Reports, 1915 – 1917

- 46.** 27 February 1915 – 28 April 1917 Volume of monthly reports submitted by the Dairy Inspector, Patrick Burke, for the R.D.C.'s attention. It records the name and address (such as Galway Road and High Street and in Tuam, Foster Street in Dunmore), of proprietors of dairies inspected, state of cows, sheds and yards, the state of dairy utensils, and the number of cows. The Reports are generally initialled, [by Chairman of Council] presumably indicating them as read and approved. Includes several covering letters from Burke to the R.D.C. submitting his monthly reports. Size: 119pp.

VIII. Records of Sanitary Work Performed, 1919 – 1924

- 47.** 18 April 1919 – 31 December 1924 Volume recording, on a weekly basis, summary details of sanitary work performed by Sanitary Sub. Officer [L. Forde] in the district of Tuam. Details include amount of fines imposed by orders of Justices, the number of houses or rooms [ordered to be] lime-washed, number of dwellings disinfected, and the number of prosecutions for neglect of Orders or Notices served. Size: 173pp.
- 48.** 20 December 1919 – 28 April 1923 Volume recording, on a weekly basis summary details of sanitary work performed by Sanitary Sub. Officer, John Glynn, in the district of Milltown. Details include amount of fines imposed by orders of Justices, the number of houses or rooms [ordered to be] lime-washed, number of dwellings disinfected, and the number of prosecutions for neglect of Orders or Notices served. Size: 176pp.

IX. Water Analysis Report, 1915

- 49.** 8 July 1915 From Sir Charles A. Cameron, Medical Officer of Health for Dublin, Public Analyst (City Laboratory Chatham Row, Dublin) to Clerk of Council with the results of analysis of water at Toberadosh well. Includes comment 'This is a very good water'. Size: 1p.

X. File of Paying Orders, 1921

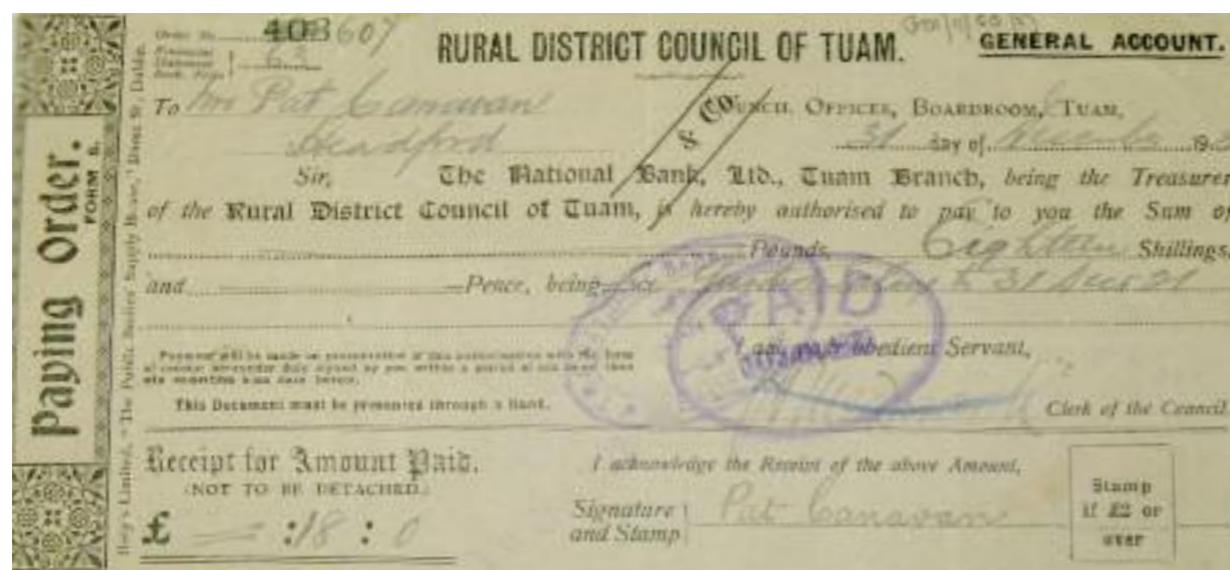
50. 14 November 1921 – 31 December 1921 With two corresponding invoices, from the Council to creditors for services or goods received, such as ‘...for manhole cover and frame supplied’ (26 November 1921). Size: 8pp

XI. General Warrant Appointing Water Rate Collector, 1922

51. 29 April 1922 Signed and sealed by the Council, authorising Michael Shine to collect water rates in the Tuam Urban Division. Size: 1p.

XII. Rates Demand Notes and Receipts, [1922]

52. [1922] From Council in respect of two residents of Bishop Street, Tuam. Size: 2 items.



Tuam Rural District Council, Paying Order, G01/11/50

Sources

Rural District Council Archive Collections (Galway County Council Archives)

- Ballinasloe No.1 Rural District Council (G00/6)
- Ballinasloe No.2 Rural District Council (G00/7)
- Clifden Rural District Council (G01/7)
- Galway Rural District Council (G01/9)
- Gort Rural District Council (G01/10)
- Loughrea Rural District Council (G01/8)
- Mountbellew Rural District Council (G01/6)
- Portumna Rural District Council (G01/3)
- Tuam Rural District Council (G01/11)

Related Archive Collections

Held by Galway County Council Archives

- Ballinasloe Poor Law Union, (1842-1931), G00/5/
- Clifden Poor Law Union, (1849-1921), GPL3/
- Galway County Board of Health & Public Assistance, GC5/
- Galway County Council Minutes, 1899 (in continuation), GC1/
- Galway Poor Law Union, (1839-1937)
- Glenamaddy Poor Law Union, (1886-1914), GPL1/
- Gort Poor Law Union Minutes, (1844-1921), G01/12
- Loughrea Poor Law Union, (1839-1922)
- Loughrea Town Commissioners Minutes (LTC1/)
- Loughrea Water Works and Sewerage Committee, (1903-1933), GS01/11
- Mountbellew Poor Law Union, (1850-1921)
- Shaw-Taylor Papers, (1890-1909), G01/4
- Tuam Poor Law Union, (1839-1926), GPL5/

Held at the National Archives of Ireland

- Office of Public Works (NAI OPW)

Held at the National Library of Ireland

- Bellew Papers, of Mountbellew c.1750-1860

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The Tuam Herald
The Connacht Tribune

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Electoral Divisions covered in various Rural Districts

Electoral Divisions in Ballinasloe

No.1 Rural District

Abbeygormacan, Ahascragh, Aughrim, Ballinasloe Rural, Ballymacward, Clonfert, Clontuskert, Kellysgrove, Kilconnell, Killaan, Killalaghtan, Killoran, Killtormer, Killure (aka Killvore), Kilmacshane, Kylemore, Laurencetown, Lismanny and Oatfield.

Electoral Divisions in Ballinasloe

No.2 Rural District

Creagh, ?

Electoral Divisions in Clifden Rural District

Ballynakill, Bencorr, Bunowen, Cleggan, Clifden, Cushkillery, Derrycunlagh, Derrylea, Doonloughan, Errislannon, Illion, Inishbofin, Killcummin, Knockboy, Moyrus, Oughterard, Owengowla, Renvyle, Roundstone, Silerna and Skannive.

Electoral Divisions in Galway Rural District

Annaghdown, Aughrim (Galway), Ballinacountry, Ballintemple, Barna, Belleville, Carnmore, Carrowbrowne, Claregalway, Clarinbridge, Colmanstown, Deerpark, Furbough, Galway Rural, Inishmore, Killanin, Lackaghbeg, Liscananaun, Lisheenavalla, Moycullen, Oranmore, Selerna, Slieverna, Spiddle, Stradbally and Tullokyne.

Electoral Divisions in Gort Rural District

Adamullivan, Ardahan, Ballycahalan, Beagh, Cahermore, Cappard, Castletaylor, Doorus, Drumacoo, Gort, Kilbeacanty, Killeenavarra, Kilinny, Killeely, Kiltartan, Kiltomas, Kinvarra, Skehanagh and Rahasane.

Electoral Divisions in Loughrea Rural District

Aille, Athenry, Ballynagar, Bracklagh, Bullaun, Cappalus, Castleboy, Cloonkeen, Colmanstown, Craughwell, Derrylaur, Dumkeary, Grange, Grangeabbey, Greethill, Kilreekill, Kilchreest, Kilconickny, Kilconierin, Killimore, Killogilleen, Kilmeen, Kiltesskill, Kiltullagh, Lackalea, Leitrim, Loughatorick, Loughrea Rural, Loughrea Urban, Marble Hill, Moyode, Raford, Tiaquin and Woodford.

Electoral Divisions in Mountbellew Rural District

Annagh, Ballynakill, Caltra, Castleblakeney, Castlefrench, Clonbrock, Cloonkeen, Cooloo, Derryglassun, Killeroran, Killian, Mountbellew (aka Mount Bellew), Mount Hazel and Taghboy.

Electoral Divisions in Portumna Rural District

Abbeygormacan, Abbeyville, Ballyglass, Ballynagar, Coos, Derrew, Drumkeary, Drummin, Eyrecourt, Kilimore, Kilmalinogne, Kilquain, Marblehill, Meelick, Moat, Pallas, Portumna and Tiranascragh

Electoral Divisions in Tuam Rural District

Abbey (Abbeyknockmoy) East, Abbey West, Addergoole, Annaghdown, Ballinderry, Ballinduff, Ballynapark, Beaghmore, Belclare, Carrowevagh, ClareTuam, Clonbern, Cummer, Doonbally, Donaghpatrick, Dunmore, Foxhall, Headford, Hillsbrook, Kilbennan, Kilcoona, Killeany, Killeen, Killererin, Killower, Killursa, Kilmoylan, Kilshanny, Levally, Milltown, Monivea, Moyne, Ryehill, Tuam Rural and Tuam Urban.

Appendix 2: Disclosure Requirement

As much of the information in the Rural District Council collections clearly identifies families and individuals researchers are requested, in order to prevent possible distress or embarrassment to near descendants, to sign a disclosure form prior to consulting the records verifying a willingness not to cite specific names in research work.

GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL ARCHIVES SERVICE

Disclosure Form

As a condition of being given access to

I hereby undertake that I will not publish or communicate to any other person the names or other particulars of persons named in these records in respect of any matter of a private or personally sensitive nature, with particular regard to mental illness, disease, boarded out children, or any allegation or suggestion concerning offences of any description.

Nor will I use any photographic reproductions in any publications, and shall only retain any such photographs for personal research reference purposes, and undertake to destroy same as soon as possible following completion of research.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Appendix 3: Local Election Years

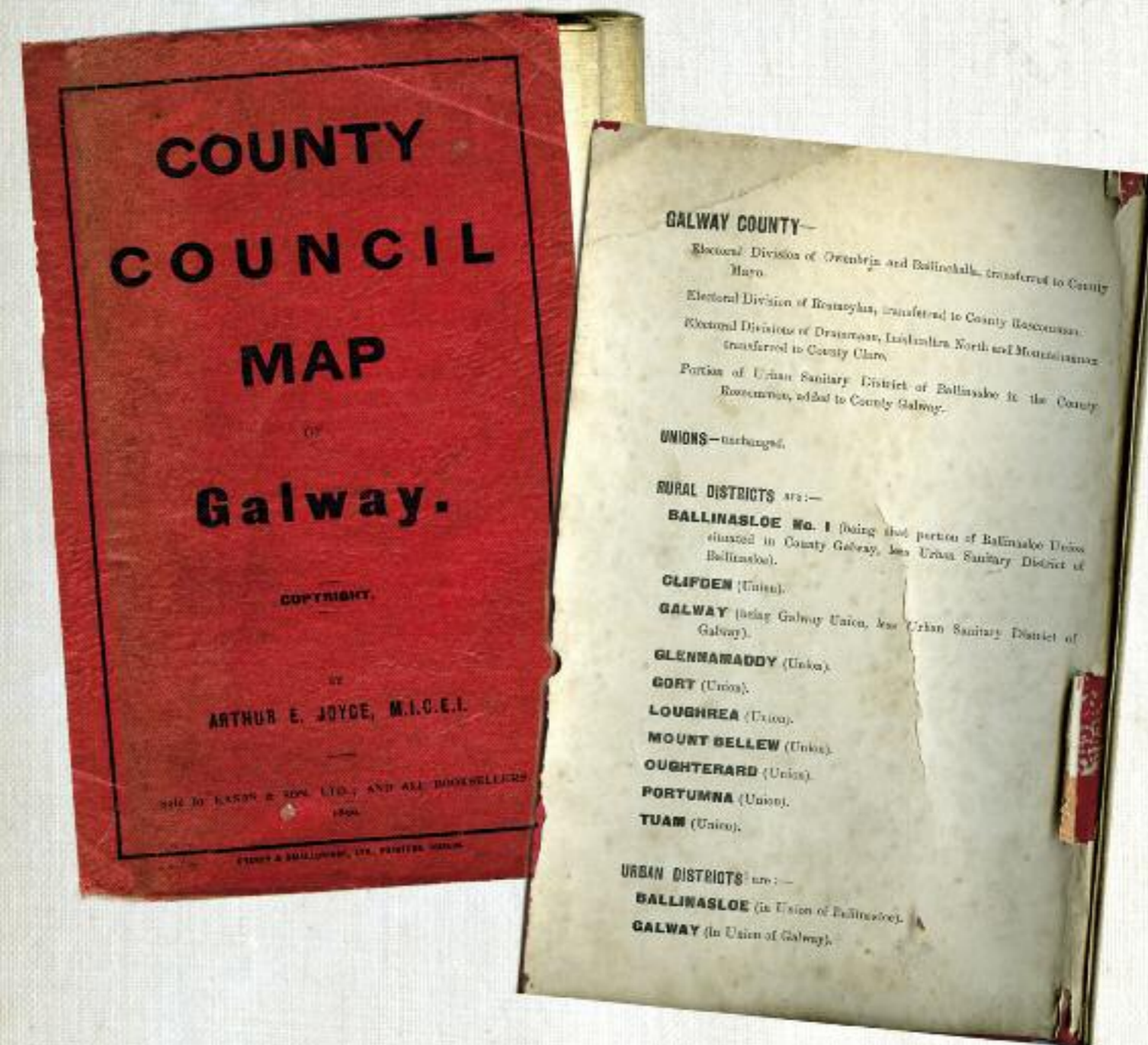
Local elections were generally held every three years, though they were postponed in 1923:

• 1899	• 1911
• 1902	• 1914
• 1905	• 1920
• 1908	• 1925

Appendix 4: Abbreviations

C.C.	County Councillor
Co.Co.	County Council / County Councillor
C.D.B.	Congested Districts Board
D.C.	District Councillor
E.D.	Electoral Division
Fin.	Financial
I.R.A	Irish Republican Army
J.P.	Justice of the Peace
L.G.B.	Local Government Board
L.G. Board	Local Government Board
L.G.D.	Local Government Department
M.P.	Member of Parliament
R.D.C.	Rural District Council
R.D. Council	Rural District Council
R.I.C.	Royal Irish Constabulary
U.I.L.	United Irish League

1899 Map of County Galway Rural Districts



COUNTY COUNCIL MAP OF GALWAY.

—REFERENCE—

- County Electoral Divisions
Are Coloured separately situated in Red
- District Electoral Divisions
Have names in Black
- The Boundary of every Electoral Division
Is shown thus
- Rural District and Union boundaries
Are shown with a full Red line
- Urban Districts
Are marked thus

No. of Electors	County Electoral Divisions.	Names of Councillors
1,715	ANASCRAGH	
1,833	ATHENRY	
1,787	BALLINASLOE	
1,841	CLIFDEN	
1,885	DUNMORE	
1,434	GALWAY RURAL	
	GALWAY URRAN	
2,652	GLENNAMADDY	
1,005	GORT	
1,850	HEADFORD	
1,066	LETTERMORE	
1,550	LOUGHREA	
1,072	MILLTOWN	
1,832	MOUNT BELLEW	
1,781	ORANMORE	
1,517	OUCHTERARD	
1,874	PORTUMNA	
1,785	ROUNDSTONE	
1,245	SPIDDLE	
1,200	TUAM	

CO-OPTED
GRAND JURY NOMINEES



Urban Districts

- BALLINASLOE
- GALWAY

PART OF
ARAN GALWAY
Islands

Rural Districts.

- Names of Chairmen.
- BALLINASLOE No 1
 - CLIFDEN
 - GALWAY
 - GLENNAMADDY
 - GORT
 - LOUGHREA
 - MOUNT BELLEW
 - OUCHTERARD
 - PORTUMNA
 - TUAM

Scale, 1 inch to 4 miles

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