



Chambers Photograph Albums

1929 - 1961

GP9/

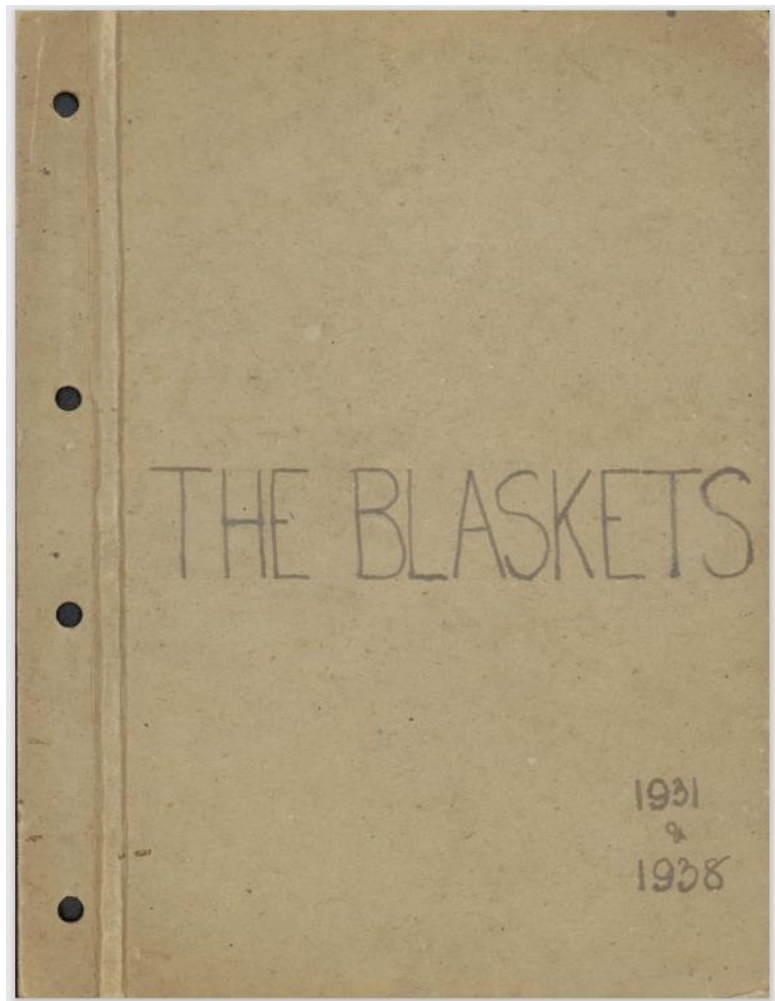
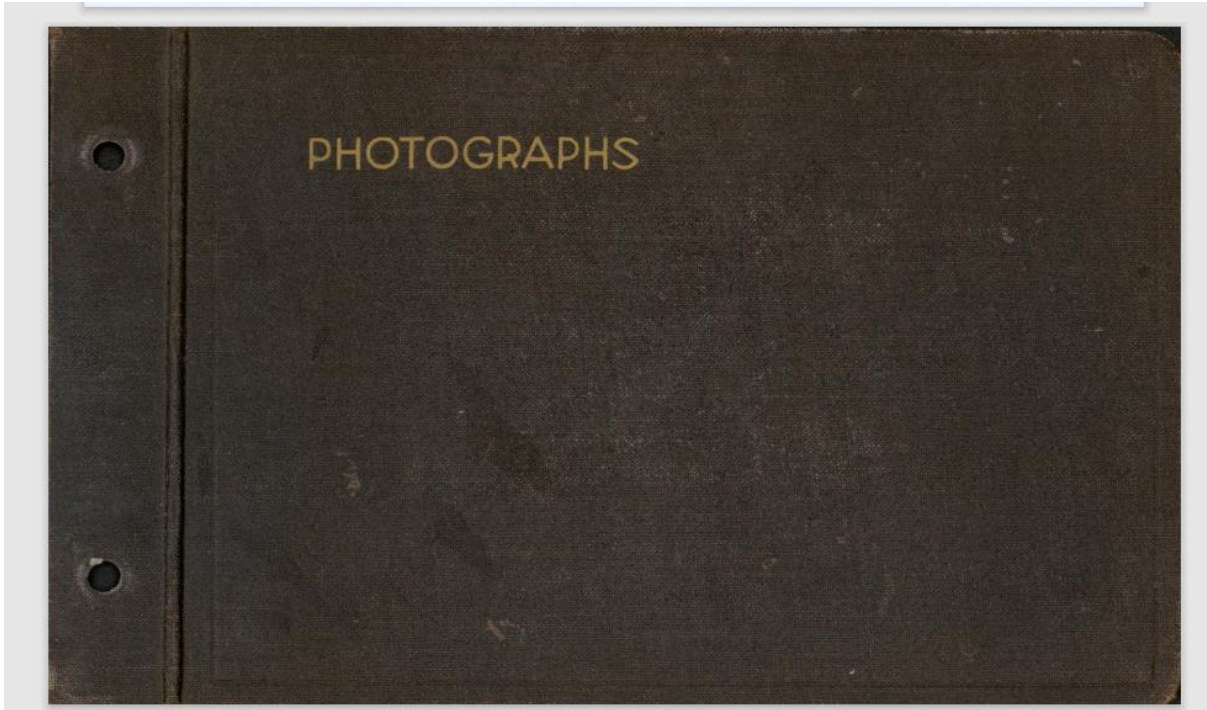


Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council



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Identity Statement

Reference Code:	IE GCCA / GP9
Title:	Chambers Photograph Albums
Dates:	1929-1938, 1961
Level of description	Item
Extent:	6 items

CONTEXT

Creator(s):

When Galway County Council Archives acquired the Chambers collection in 2010 very little was known about George, other than what was ascertained from the book *Letters from the Great Blasket*¹, which simply indicated he was from London.

The eulogy given by Ivan Chambers² at his father's funeral in 1960, the text of which is included in the collection (GP9/6), provides a glimpse of George Chambers, the man, yet it does not reveal much about his career or life. The moving eulogy reveals that George had '*a natural curiosity about things, interesting things over a wide range of subjects*'. He loved poetry, walking, the sea and islands. Ivan includes reference to the Blasket islands, off the coast of Co. Kerry, and the Hebrides, off the north-west coast of Scotland, and indicates that visits to the islands were '*an enrichment of experience not only for him but also for all of us who we were fortunate enough to come within the spell of his enthusiasm*'. The eulogy also reveals that George was of Orkney descent, went to school in Ardingly³, lived in London for over 47 years and was married for nearly 60 years.

Following extensive research Galway County Council Archives has ascertained that George was born on 29th January 1873⁴, to George and Mary Ann Chambers. He died on 19th September 1960, aged 87 years. Investigation of a register⁵ for Ardingly College in West Sussex, census

¹ Ní Shúilleabháin, Eibhlís, 1978, *Letters from the Great Blasket*, Dublin, Mercier Press

² Ivan Chambers (1902 - 1998), bookseller: born Philippopolis, Bulgaria; OBE 1970; married Kathleen Pilsbury in 1943 (one daughter); died Axminster, Devon. [Obituary: Ivan Chambers | The Independent | The Independent](#) See also » [Ivan Chambers – obituary 1998 \(umbrellabooks.com\)](#). Accessed Mar 2022

³ Ardingly College, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6SQ UK

⁴ Birth Cert (8446746-1) Saint Olave, Bermondsey, Southwark Registration District

⁵ The assistance of Andrea King, Archivist, Ardingly College, West Sussex, is gratefully acknowledged

and other records indicate that his father, also George, was a Mast and Block Maker Master, who died when George was just a child. His mother, Mary Ann (nee Jeffery), was a keeper of a lodging-house.

His parents, George and Mary Ann married in the Lewisham district of south-east London, in 1867. Census records show that George and Mary Ann also had a daughter, Alice (born *circa* 1871), and another son, Alexander (born *circa* 1876). George's father died on 29th November 1880. The address at the time of his death was 168 Keeton's Road, Bermondsey, Surrey. Just a short time later, the 1881 census list the family as being in Lewisham, in Kent, at that time. Perhaps they were visiting Mary Ann's family on census night.

Later records indicate Mary Anne and Alice were in Bermondsey in 1891. A Register of Electors lists Mary Ann Chambers in that area between 1900 and 1908 but she appears to have moved on a number of occasions. She was a resident in Rotherhith St. in 1899 and Rothsay St. in 1908.

George married Ethel Mary (born in 1878, in Winchelsea, Sussex) in March 1901. They had sons Ivan Philip Martin (1902 - 1998), Geoffrey (1905 -?) and Thomas (1908 -?), and daughters Mary and Veronica⁶ [1909 - 1991].

An obituary for Ivan reveals that George '*was working on the financial side of a silk spinning factory*', in Plovdiv, Bulgaria in 1902 when he was born⁷. The obituary also indicates that Ivan spent many holidays cycling in northern Europe with his father.

The 1921 UK census lists the family as living at 54 Addison Way, Parish of Hendon, Middlesex, just a short distance from Temple Fortune Lane, George's final home. The form indicates George was a Christmas Cracker Sales Manager, working for Mansell, Hunt, Catty & Co. Ltd. in Cressy Road, Hampstead, London.

The 1929 Register of Electors lists Ethel Mary, George-J, Geoffrey, Ivan Philip Martin, Mary and Veronica Chambers as residents of 64 Temple Fortune Lane, Middlesex. George lived

⁶ Veronica published two collections of poetry in the 1970s; *30 Poems*, Castle Cary Press, Somerset, UK N/d, and 1978 *Another 30 Poems*, Castle Cary Press, Somerset. She married Laurence Zabel [1907 - 1974] in Hendon, Middlesex in 1944. Her probate record shows she was resident at Highfield House (a residential care home), Castle Cary, Somerset at the time of her death.

⁷ See » [Ivan Chambers – obituary 1998 \(umbrellabooks.com\)](http://umbrellabooks.com) Accessed May 2022

there for the next 30 years, until his death in 1960. His probate record shows he left £4,865.3.1.

George Chambers travelled extensively and departed for his various summer excursions to Ireland from his residence at Temple Fortune.

The images in the earliest album (GP9/1) indicate he was travelling with a party of at least 8 people (see the photograph taken at Toormore Bay (outside Schull) when he visited West Cork in 1929. A trip which may have also included Glendalough, Co. Wicklow. It seems likely he may have travelled solo on other trips, as captions for photographs in the albums often indicate 'I' or 'my', rather than 'we' or 'our'.

In 1931 he visited the Aran Islands and Galway city, and The Blasket Islands, off the Kerry coast. Photographs for this period are split between two separate albums. The first (GP9/1) includes the 1929 Co. Cork and the 1931 Co. Galway images. The second album (GP9/2) includes images from both the 1931 and 1938 trips to The Blasket Islands. This album also includes several photographs⁸ taken during those intervening years. These are likely to have been sent by Eibhlís to George. The series of images of Eibhlís and her family taken in different years, such as 1933, 1934 and 1935, include for instance the images captioned '*John and Eilish. 1935*', '*THOMAS O'CROHAN. (The Islandman.) Eilish's Father-in-law*⁹', and '*John, Eilish, "The Islandman", "Twenty Years A-growing"*' (Muiris Ó Súilleabháin). These images cannot be attributed to Chambers, but form part of his compilation of images.

The albums indicate that George visited several islands in Co. Donegal including Arranmore (Árainn Mhór) in 1932 (GPL9/3). Some years later he returned to Ireland, when in 1937 he visited Co. Mayo, stopping in Clare Island and Achill Island and also visiting Greystones in Co. Wicklow (GP9/4). The following year, 1938, appears to have been the final trip to Ireland, which involved a return trip to the Great Blasket island. He also visited Valentia Island and the Skellig Islands at that time (GP9/5).

During his first visit to the Great Blasket island (An Blascaod Mór) in 1931, when he stayed in Peat Tom's house at Slinnéan Bán, he met and befriended a young islander, Eibhlís Ní Shúilleabháin¹⁰. George was obviously enchanted by the windswept barefooted Eibhlís,

⁸ Includes for instance Mason images (NLI Ref: M20/29/4), of Tomás Ó Criomhthain, '*The Islandman*' (GP9/2, p40)

⁹ Mason image, NLI Ref: M20/29/4

¹⁰ Ní Shúilleabháin, Eibhlís (1911 - 1978), daughter of Johanna Dunleary, the fourth of six children. Her siblings included brothers, Padraic (Paddy), Michael (Mike) and Séan, and a sister Mary. In circa 1933 Eibhlís married Seán Ó Criomhthain in Ballyferriter, Co. Kerry. They had one daughter, Niamh (1937 - 2019). Eilbhís and Seán are buried at Kilmalkeadar, on the Dingle Peninsula. See also The Great Blasket Centre and Island @ <https://blasket.ie/udair-an-oileain/>



describing her in the foreword for his proposed book, as ‘*one of the most beautiful girls that I had ever seen*’¹¹.

George and Eibhlís subsequently corresponded for approximately 20 years, with Eibhlís’s side of the correspondence later published in *Letters from the Great Blasket*¹².



‘*Himself and Eilish*’, on day trip to Tearacht, off Great Blasket, 1931 (GP9/2), accompanied by Nóra Ní Shéaghdha and Seán Tom Kearney)¹³

¹¹ Foreword, Blasket file, GP9/6

¹² Ní Shúilleabháin, Eibhlís, 1978, *Letters from the Great Blasket*, Dublin, Mercier Press

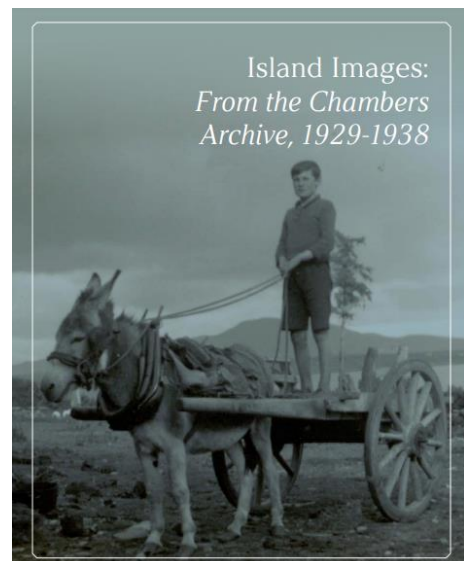
¹³ Detail extracted from file held by The Blasket Centre - Ionad an Bhlascaoid, Dún Chaoin, Dingle, Co. Kerry

The letters, which date from 1931 to 1951, include details of island life, of Eibhlís’s wedding day to Seán¹⁴, the birth of their daughter Niamh¹⁵ in 1937, and the family’s eventual departure from the island to live on the mainland in July 1942. The strong and lasting influence of George on Eibhlís is reflected in her letters. The Chambers Blasket album (GP9/2), with its wide and varied images of island life, allows us to bear witness to that special time in their lives when their strong friendship commenced and blossomed.

The National Folklore Collection¹⁶, held by University College Dublin, and The Blasket Centre¹⁷ in Co. Kerry hold images of Eibhlís, similar to those in the Chambers Blasket photograph album (GP9/2).

All five photograph albums in the Chambers Archive collection are a wonderful testament to the gentle character of a curious English tourist. He has left us with a wonderful treasure of images capturing a special time, a harsh and simpler time certainly, that reflect *‘the last vestiges of the old civilization or culture’*¹⁸, of life in Ireland and its beautiful islands, prior to the onset of World War II.

Galway County Council Archives’ 2022 publication *Island Images: From the Chambers Archives, 1829-1938*, relating to the collection is available online at <https://www.galway.ie/archives/publications/> or from libraries throughout County Galway.



¹⁴ Ó Criomhthain, Seán (O’Crohan), (1898? - 1975), son of Tomás (1856 - 1937), author of *An tOileánach* (The Islandman), completed in 1923 and published in 1929. Seán’s own book *Lá Dár Saoil*, was published in 1969 (*A Day in Our Life*, translated by Robin Flower).

¹⁵ Ó Laoithe, Niamh (*nee* Ó Criomhthain) (1937 - 2019) married Tomás Ó Laoithe in Bile an Lochaigh, Co. Kerry. She spent some time in USA prior to marrying. She had five children: Catherine, Siobhán, Bríd, Lís and Tomás. She is buried at Keelmalkeadar New Cemetery, on the Dingle Peninsula

¹⁶ Galway County Council Archives had email correspondence with NFC in 2017 to try to establish copyright of the Chambers images, unfortunately no references appear in their sources. The Director, Dr. Críostóir Mac Cárthaigh, looked to their images and was of the opinion that they are all copy negatives (literally photographs of originals), which the NFC obtained from the Blasket Island Centre. Thus, the NFC think the 40 photographs held by it, listed for George Chambers, have their original copyright as belonging to the Blasket Centre.

¹⁷ The photographs held by the Blasket Centre were given to it by Niamh Criomhthain (the daughter of Eibhlís). While they are similar to many in the Chambers’ Blasket album (GP9/2), they are not exact replicas. Galway County Council Archives is grateful to Muireann and all the staff at the Blasket Centre (<http://blasket.ie/en/scolairi-isteach/>) for their warm welcome and assistance during a research trip to the Centre in early 2018

¹⁸ Blasket File (GP9/6) draft Foreword to *Letters from the Great Blasket*



Himself does the same.

Chambers waves farewell to Eibhlís and the Great Blasket, 1931 (GP9/2)



POLLING DISTRICT G.			PARISH OF HENDON.
(1) No.	(2) Franchise. (a) Parlia- mentary. (b) Local Govt.	(3) Names in full. Surname first.	(4) Residence or Property occupied and abode of non-resident occupier.
58	R O	Chambers, George	54 ADDISON WAY—contd.

Extract from 1921 Register of Electors, 54 Addison Way, Hendon, SPR.Mic.P.336/BL.H.40, British Library
https://search.findmypast.ie/record/browse?id=bl%2fer%2fd24%2ffmp000006626%2f0289_1

3188	Rw	Dw	Chambers, Ethel Mary	64
3189	R	O	Chambers, George—J	64
3190	R	—	Chambers, Geoffrey	64
3191	R	—	Chambers, Ivan Philip Martin	64
3192	Rw	—	Chambers, Mary	64
3193	Rw	—	Chambers, Veronica	64

Extract from 1929 Register of Electors, Temple Fortune Lane, Golders Green, , SPR.Mic.P.336/BL.H.40, British Library
<https://www.findmypast.ie/transcript?id=BL%2FER%2FOCR%2FF43CFA664AC4178F8455E444B2B2E08C>

CHAMBERS George of 64 Temple Fortune Lane Golders Green
London died 19 September 1960 Probate London
2 December to Veronica Theresa Zabel married woman and
Ivan Philip Marten Chambers bookseller.
Effects' £4865 3s. 1d.

England & Wales Government Probate Death Index 1858-2019 via FindMyPast¹⁹

¹⁹ Accessed February 2022.



"Himself and Eilish", on day trip to Tearacht, off Great Blasket, 1931, GP9/2
(accompanied by Nóra Ní Shéaghda and Seán Tom Kearney)²⁰

²⁰ Detail extract from file held by Blasket Centre.

Archival History

The material was deposited with Galway County Council Archives in 2010. It was donated by Desmond Power²¹ following the death of his brother Brian.²² When and how Brian, who was born in China of Irish parentage, acquired the albums is not known, but it is assumed he was acquainted with Chambers. They both shared an interest in Ireland and in particular its islands. Brian Power may have been given the albums by Chamber's family after his death in 1960.

Archivist's Note

Listed by Patria McWalter, Archivist, 2017, edited 2022

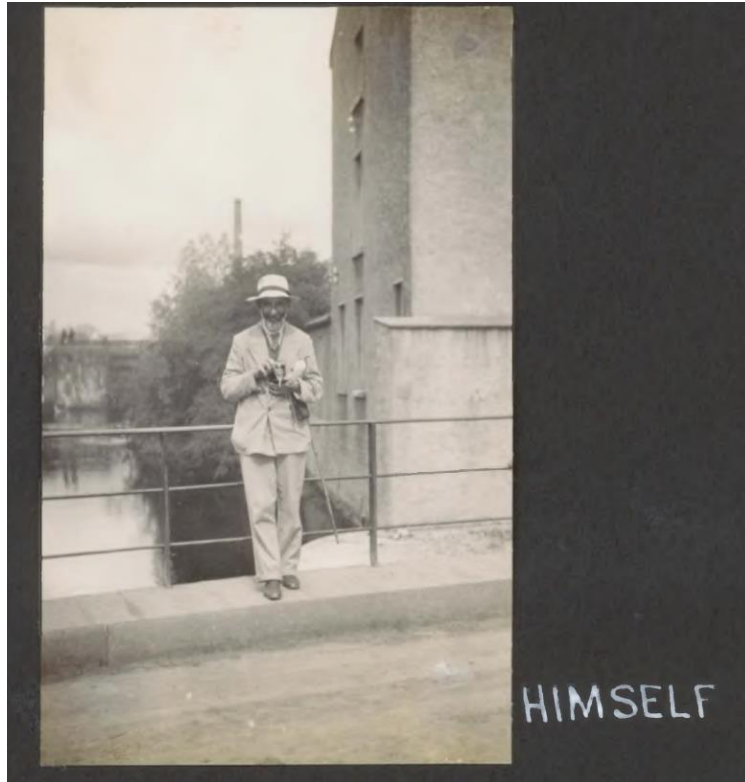
²¹ Power, Desmond, (1923-1918), born in Tianjin (China) left for North America in 1946, and is the author of 'Little Foreign Devil', 1996. Son of Stephen St Quentin Power, an Irishman, and Grace Power.

²² Brian St Quentin, Power (23 Jul 1918- 16 May 2008), author and barrister was born in Tianjin, China. His book '*The Ford of Heaven – The Autobiography of a Western child Raised in Tiestsin*', a memoir recalls life in a pre-communist Chinese port of the British concession of Tianjin, is on academic reading lists at many universities. Studied at King's College London in the 1930s. Married Prunella, Lady David Douglas-Hamilton (nee Stack) in Lewes, Sussex in 1964.

Ann Prunella, who was born in India, was the daughter of Captain Edward Hugh Bagot Stack. She married firstly, S/Ldr. Lord David Douglas-Hamilton (+1944), son of Alfred Douglas Douglas-Hamilton, 13th Duke of Hamilton and Nina Mary Benita Poore, on 15 October 1938. They had two sons Diarmaid Hugh Douglas-Hamilton (1940 - ?) and Iain Douglas-Hamilton (1942). He husband, and RAF squadron leader was killed during WWII. She married secondly, Alfred Gustave Albers, son of N. W. Albers, on 22 July 1950, who died 9 months later, and thirdly, Brian St. Quentin Power, son of Stephen St. Quentin Power, on 15 May 1964. From 15 May 1964, her married name became Power. She lived in 1999 at 14 Gertrude Street, London, England. She converted to Roman Catholicism. The couple bought a croft on the island of Raasay, near Skye, where they wrote, he a memoir of his childhood in China, she poetry and three volumes of autobiography. Prunella was head of the Women's League of Health and Beauty in the 1930s, when she was known as Britain's "Perfect Girl"; she took over the League in 1934, at the age of only 20, after the death of her mother, Mary Bagot Stack, who had founded the organisation four years earlier. (<https://www.geni.com/people/Prunella-Stack-Lady-David-Douglas-Hamilton/6000000010997293699>). She was appointed OBE in 1980.

(https://www.familysearch.org/search/record/results?count=20&query=%2Bgivenname%3A%22Brian%20St%20Quentin%22~%20%2Bsurname%3APower~%20%2Bbirth_year%3A1918-2010~ Jan 2018).

Arrangement
Chronological



George Chambers, Galway, 1931, GP9/1



Himself does the same.

Chambers waves farewell to Eibhlís and the Great Blasket, 1931, GP9/2



Further Reference

- Ferriter, Diarmaid, *On The Edge, Ireland's Offshore Islands: A Modern History*, London, Profile Books, 20118
- Kanigle, Robert *On An Irish Island*, Alfred A Knofy 2021
- Ó Criomhthain, Tomás *Allagar na hInise* (1928); AND *An tOileánach (The Islandman)*, 1929
- Ó Súilleabháin, Muiris, *Fiche Bliain ag Fás (Twenty Years A-Growing)*
- Ní Shúilleabháin, Eibhlís²³ *Letters from the Great Blasket*.
Dublin, Mercier Press [1978]
- Ó Criomhthain, Seán²⁴ *Lá dár Saol* (1969); and *Leoithne Aniar*, (1982)²⁵
- Ní Ghuithín, Máire²⁶ *An tOileán a Bhí* (1978); and *Bean an Oileáin* (1986)

The Photographic Albums of Charles R. Browne (1867 – 1931), Trinity College Dublin²⁷

The Blasket Centre <http://blasket.ie/en/scolairi-isteach/> The Centre holds some of the same image of Eibhlís, as appear in the Blasket album (GP9/2)

Power, Brian St Quentin papers include correspondence and working notes relating to publications including '*The Ford of Heaven*', 1980-2000s, held at London University: School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)

Access Open

Language English

²³ Eibhlís Ní Shúilleabháin (1911-1971), a selection of letters written to George Chambers, between 1931 and 1951.

²⁴ Ó Croimthain (1898-1975), youngest son of Tomás Ó Criomhthain, he married Eibhlís Ní Shúilleabháin in 1933.

²⁵ Published posthumously in 1982.

²⁶Ní Ghuithín, (1909-1988), a granddaughter of the Island King Pádraig Ó Catháin, Máire moved to the mainland after her marriage to Labhras Ó Cíobháin from Dún Chaoin. <http://blasket.ie/en/udair-an-oileain/#>

²⁷ The photographs were filed in a series of albums, six of which survive and are held in the Library of Trinity College Dublin (TCD). The Browne archive is singular in terms of its depiction of life in the west of Ireland in the 1890s.



CERTIFIED COPY OF AN ENTRY OF BIRTH



GIVEN AT THE GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE

Application Number 8446746-1

REGISTRATION DISTRICT	SAINTE OLAVE SOUTHWARK
1873 BIRTH in the Sub-district of Saint James	in the County of Surrey

Columns:-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
No.	When and where born	Name, if any	Sex	Name and surname of father	Name, surname and maiden surname of mother	Occupation of father	Signature, description and residence of informant	When registered	Signature of registrar	Name entered after registration

1873	29th January 1873 Saint Olave Southwark	George	Boy	George Chambers	Mary Ellen Chambers formerly Jeffrey	Master	Mary Ellen Chambers 108 Victoria Road Barnes London W14 8NS	29th January 1873	W. J. Chamberlain	George Chambers
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CERTIFIED to be a true copy of an entry in the certified copy of a Register of Births in the District above mentioned.

Given at the GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE, under the Seal of the said Office, the

26th

day of

July

2017

BXCH 261388

CAUTION: THERE ARE OFFENCES RELATING TO FALSIFYING OR ALTERING A CERTIFICATE AND USING OR POSSESSING A FALSE CERTIFICATE ©CROWN COPYRIGHT
WARNING: A CERTIFICATE IS NOT EVIDENCE OF IDENTITY.



7409523 617903 0417 WJA/ISP

George Chambers birth cert, 29 January 1873
(8446746-1) Saint Olave, Southwark registration District.

4795 Weigall (ma) Picte Fitzpatrick 13 June 1872
 William Bright Surgen (dead)
 Miss Ellen Bright (Stephens)
 Parents at home, West End Kent.

9 Oct 4796. Chambers George 12 Jan 29. 1873
 Mr George Chambers (Builder) deat
 Mrs Chambers Living home Kuper
 2 Prince's Terrace, West End Kent.

NS

Extract from Ardingly College register
(Courtesy Ardingly College, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH17 6SQ)

CHAMBERS George of 64 Temple Fortune Lane Golders Green London died 19 September 1960 Probate London 2 December to Veronica Theresa Zabel married woman and Ivan Philip Marten Chambers bookseller. Effects' £4865 3s. 1d.

Veronica²⁸ (1903-1991) married Laurence Zabel [1907-1974] in Hendon, Middlesex, in 1944.

-- Veronica T. Zabel Hendon 3 a 155h

England & Wales Marriages 1837-2005

(<https://www.findmypast.ie/transcript?id=BMD%2FM%2F1944%2F2%2FAZ%2F000198%2F135>)

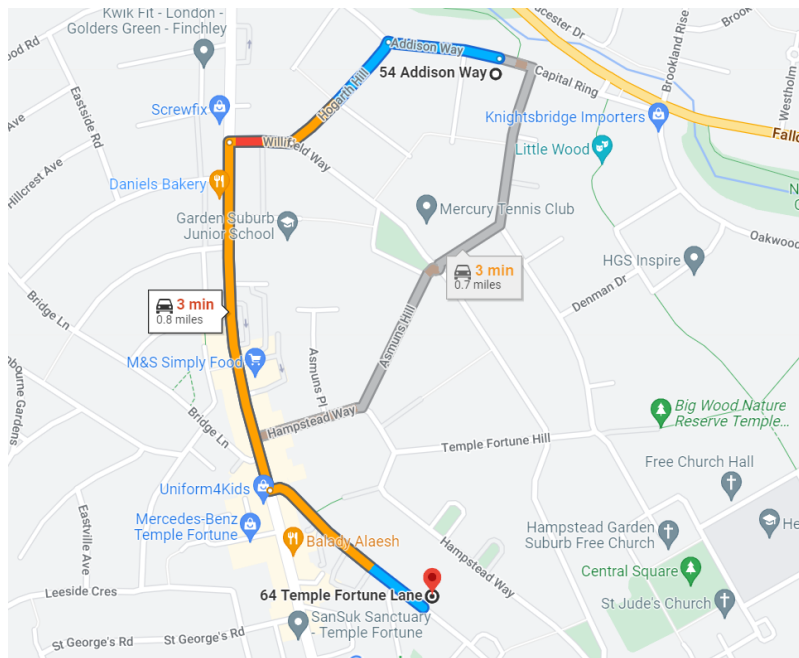
ZABEL, Veronica Theresa of Highfield Hse Castle Cary Som died 29 December, 1991 Probate Bristol 10 February Not exceeding £125000 9251403160G

High Field House is a Residential Care Home

(see also <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/11775050>)

England & Wales Government Probate Death Index 1858-2019

<https://www.findmypast.ie/transcript?id=GBOR%2FGOVPROBATE%2FC%2F1992-1992%2F00236840>



²⁸ Zabel, Veronica, *30 Poems*, Published by Castle Cary Press, Somerset, UK N/d, and *Another 30 Poems*, Published by Castle Cary Press, Somerset, 1978.

Scope and Content

Five photograph albums with sepia and black and white images, believed to have compiled by George Chambers, depicting images from various trips to Ireland, in particular to islands long the west coast of Ireland, between 1929 and 1938. They include scenic images, such as of bogs, hills, the ocean, piers, stone walls, villages and cottages together with others depicting island life, showing islanders at work, such as fishing, mending boats, and harvesting crops or turf and also at leisure. Images of turf, bogs and donkeys are reoccurring themes throughout the albums.

There is generally one photograph per page, occasionally two, all with handwritten captions identifying the location and titling the image. Occasionally the caption may identify individuals depicted. The albums also generally include interleaving tissue paper-pages. Most of the images appear to have been taken during summer, as trees are in full bloom, and people are generally dressed in simple light clothing.

Also includes a file on the Great Blaskets, primarily consisting of a typed proof of text of the book, *Letters from the Great Blasket*.

The areas covered by the albums include:

- Aran Islands, Co. Galway, (1931) (also includes images at Glendalough Co. Wicklow, Glengariff, (Co. Cork) (1929) Bantry Bay, Co. Cork, and in Galway city
- Blasket Islands, Co. Kerry, 1931 and 1938
- Arranmore / Árainn Mhór, and other islands in Co. Donegal, 1932
- Clare Island and Achill Island, Co. Mayo, 1937, also includes Greystones, Co. Wicklow.
- Valentia & the Skelligs 1938

Also includes a 'Great Blasket File' [1961], primarily comprised of a typescript proof of the publication '*Letters From the Great Blasket*²⁹, and text of eulogy '*Spoken at the Funeral of George Chambers by his son, Ivan*' which commences with two poems, the first being *Homeward Bound* by Sir Henry Newbolt.

Spellings are as they appear in the albums.

²⁹ An Blascaod Mór.

GP9/1

The Aran Islands³⁰ (1931) [Co. Galway], Glendalough [Co. Wicklow], Glengriff (1929) [Co. Cork], 1929, 1931

Also includes images taken in Bantry Bay, Co. Cork and in Galway city.

Some interleaving pages include typewritten prose³¹ and poems³², such as two by Donn Byrne³³ and one by Emily Lawless³⁴. Includes:-

- 'Shipping Cattle', Inishmaan/ Inis Meáin
- 'Animals' – of sheep³⁵ and a donkey on a grassy area close to what appears to be a beach
- 'Drinking trough'.
- 'The Well of the Holy Ghost'.
- 'St Columkille's Well', with a small group, one male adult and 7 female children kneeling praying at the well. Some of the children are wearing coats, and some are bare foot. The [cross] shaped, crudely carved rock is adorned with flowers and garlands.
- Images of Dun Aengus / Dún Aonghasa.
- 'Paul Mullen³⁶ gathering Sea-Weed' depicting the side profile a tall middle-aged man, facing seaward, wearing boots, trousers and jumper, lifting seaweed from shallow water with a fork or shovel. Also includes a loose press cutting³⁷ with a photograph of Pat sitting on a stone wall with a stick in one hand, for a newspaper article relating to his novel '*Hero's Breed*.'
- 'Pigs to Market – Michael Herson' showing Michael, wearing a waistcoat over a jumper and a cap, with a stick in hand driving three pigs along a gravel road bordered on each side with a high stone wall.
- 'Bridget Mannin & Friends' depicting 4 young people standing in a row along a roadway, bordered with stone wall, posing for the camera. The three girls [aged 12-16] are wearing ankle boots, below the knee dresses/ skirts and shawls. One girl has her shawl covering her head. The young boy [10 yrs] is wearing a peaked cap, jumper, full length trousers and boots. A lidded tin can in on the road adjacent to the boy.
- 'Agnes Costello goes a-milking' showing a lady wearing a coat with her back to the camera, milking a horned cow in a meadow with wild-flowers [daisies], and a gable end of a house visible in the background together with many stone walls.

³⁰ Inis Mór, Inis Meáin, and Inis Oírr.

³¹ Includes an extract from Mary Frances McHugh's *Thalassa, A Childhood by the Western Wave*, London, Macmillan and Co., Limited, 1931. A review of the novel in *The Saturday Review of Literature* described it as '...a little book, but of a charm so delicate (if evanescent) that it should be commended without reserve to lovers of childhood and of wood writing', Issue 26, 30 Jan 1932, p491. <http://www.unz.org/Pub/SaturdayRev-1932jan30-00491a02>. Accessed Jul 2017

³² Includes *The Gobban Soar* by Thomas D'arcy McGee (1825–1868), an Irish-Canadian politician, Catholic spokesman, journalist, poet, and a Father of Canadian Confederation; also *By That Lake Whose Gloomy Shore* by Thomas Moore (1779-1852), an Irish poet, singer, songwriter, best remembered for the lyrics of *The Minstrel Boy* and *The Last Rose of Summer*.

³³ Donn Byrne (born Brian Oswald Patrick Donn-Byrne) (1889–1928) was an Irish novelist and poet.

³⁴ The Hon Emily Lawless (1845-1913) was an Irish novelist and poet from Co. Kildare. She spent part of her childhood with the Kirwans of Castle Hackett, Co. Galway, her mother's family, and drew on West of Ireland themes for many of her works. She occasionally wrote under the pen name "Edith Lytton". https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emily_Lawless. Jul 2017.

³⁵ The sheep may be an old Cladoir or Cladaig breed. There are no longer any purebreds. It is believed the original sheep were small, white faced, with no horns or very light horns and with fine wool.

³⁶ Pat Mullen (1885-1972) native Aran Islander and author; *Man of Aran*, London, Faber, 1934, *Hero's Breed*, 1936, *Irish Tales*, 1938, and *Come Another Day*, 1940. He emigrated to Boston, Massachusetts in 1904. His daughter, the actress Barbara Mullen Taylor (1914–1979), was born in Boston. He returned to Inishmore in time to participate in Robert Flaherty's awarding winning 1934 classic documentary film *Man of Aran*. Mullen not only acted in the film but was also credited as assistant director. He lived in Wales for 20 years prior to his death in September 1972 but returned to Aran each year. He is buried on Inishmore (*Connacht Tribune*, Sept 22, 1972; p18). *Galway Authors*, Helen Maher, Galway 1976, p83.

³⁷ Similar image also appears in the *Irish Press*, 2 October 1937; p3.



- 'Market Day, Kilronan' showing groups of men casually sitting on barrels or standing adjacent to them along a high wall. One seated man has a pig on lead tied to its lower hind leg, while it sniffs the ground. Most men are wearing waist coats and hats or caps. Some young children are in the background.
- 'Thomas O'Rourke & Friend' seated on a ledge surrounding the High Cross in Kilronan, with a dog sitting between the two men.
- 'Penelope & Katrina' Galway, depicting two ladies standing beside bicycles on the [swing-bridge] bridge at Dominick Street, Galway. Two motor cars are parked on the street in the background, with a small number of pedestrians also visible.
- 'Himself' Galway, showing a bearded man, wearing a suit and tie, and straw hat, leaning against the iron railing of [O'Brien's Bridge], possibly adjacent to the Bridget Mills, Galway. He has a walking stick and appears to be holding something [perhaps a medal] in his hand showing it to the camera.
- Also includes several postcards of images of sites around Galway, many of them contemporary images, such as The Spanish Arch (taken from the Valentine Collection JV 208304 NAI), Lynch Memorial (also from the Valentine collection, 42708 JV³⁸), Menlo Castle (prior to the fire in 1910), Delphi Connemara, and The Harbour and Sugarloaf Mountain, Glengarrif, Co. Cork,
- Various scenic images taken at Inaculin (Garinish Island) Cork.
- 'Eccle's Hotel' Glenagariff.
- 'Nellie Brooks, The Lace Maker', Glenagariff.
- Group photographs of 'Ourselves' on the beach at Toormore Bay, Co. Cork.
- Scenic Images of Goughan Barra (west Cork), including one of the 'Shrine of St Finber' and 'The Stations'.
- Images of the 'Road to Light-House' Mizen Head, Co. Cork.
- Postcards of Bantry Bay.
- Glenalough (Co. Wicklow) images including 'Ferry to St Kevin's Bed', 'Temple-na-Skellig' and 'St Kevin's Kitchen'.
- Also some general images of Ireland, such as 'The Turf Carriers' (3 young children and a donkey with side baskets of turf); 'A Donkey Cart' (a woman sitting on a cart holding the reins of her donkey); 'A Wayside Bargain', and 'A Mountain Farm'; and 'The Black-thorn Seller'.

Album: 22 x 13 cm

106 images; average size 10.55 x 5 cm

³⁸ See also TARA Trinity's Access to Research Archive, www.tara.tcd.ie/handle/2262/14543





SHIPPING CATTLE INISHMAAN

ARAN IS

THE
MOWER



GP9/2

See also GP9/6³⁹

The Blaskets, Co. Kerry / An Blascaod Mór, Ciarraí, (1929), 1931 and 1938

With captions⁴⁰ on facing pages. Includes for instance:-

- 'The Road around Sleah Head (Dingle-Dunquin)'.
- 'My Curragh comes to Dunquin for me', image of three men rowing a Curragh a short distance from a coastline.
- 'Visitors arriving. Children watching from Cliffs' as a Curragh with 6 people [5 men and 1 woman] approach at a slip way in a rocky cove, with two bare footed young children in short trousers watching. A group of about twenty people also watch the arrival from a distance cliff top.
- 'Various views of the Village'.
- Series of photographs taken of the process, involving up to 12 men, of loading a cow onto a curragh, such as 'A Cow has to be taken to the Mainland to be stocked. Getting the boat ready' which depicts a group of men, some in a Curragh working on it ropes and fixings and others on a pier assisting. A second curragh with one man is in the water along-side.
- 'Eilish's⁴¹ Father with load of Heather (for fuel)'.
- 'Interior of a Cabin' – with a woman working at a spinning wheel beside an open fire, and younger man seated the other side on a low timber stool.
- 'The O'Sullivan Family (Maurice O'Sullivan's Cabin – now empty)'.
- 'One of the Five Government Concrete House (sic). (The Kearneys, were I stayed in 1931)'.
- 'We start for the Tearacht. Nora O'Shea (standing) and Eilish in Bows' and a series of photographs taken on their day out to Inishvickillane⁴², including its Lighthouse and its Keepers, and some Islanders.
- 'The School in 1931, when there were 35 scholars. There were 3 in 1939'.
- Series of images of Eibhlís and her family taken in different years, such as 1933, 1934 and 1935⁴³; includes 'John⁴⁴, Eilish, "The Islandman", "Twenty Years A-growing', image of John, Eibhlís, her father-in-law and Muiris Ó Súilleabháin.

Album: 26.5 x 20 cm

143 images; various dimensions, e.g. 15 x 10.5 cm; & 8 x 5.5 cm

26pp plus interleaving tissue pages, with typed captions.

Back of volume has had some water damage. Cardboard end board stained and slightly warped, and likewise last couple of pages.

³⁹ Type script of chapter from book? 'On the Edge of the Old World' where *Chambers recounts his first trip to the Blasket*.

⁴⁰ Images similar to those of Eibhlís (Ní Shuilleabháin) Uí Chriomhthain in this album are held in the National Folklore Collection, UCD, and Blasket Centre in Co. Kerry.

⁴¹ Eibhlís Ní Shuilleabháin (1911-1971), native Islander. Her letters to George Chambers were later published as '*Letters From the Great Blasket*', Eibhlís Ní Shuilleabháin in 1978.

⁴² One of the Blasket Islands referred to by Blasket islanders as "The Inis". It was intermittently inhabited during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, by one or more families. A house was built in the 1970s by the former Taoiseach Charles Haughey, who owned the island and used it as a holiday home.

⁴³ Possibly sent by Eibhlís to Chambers over the years.

⁴⁴ [Eibhlís's brother].



The path to the village, Great Blasket, 1931, GP9/2



View of the village, Great Blasket, 1931, GP9/2



Old style turf collector, Great Blasket, 1931, GP9/2/



One of the Five Government Concrete House.
(The Kearneys, where I stayed in 1931.)



The School in 1931, when there were 35 scholars.
There were 3 in 1939.

GP9/2



Eibhlís' Mother, Great Blasket, [1931], GP9/2



Eibhlís & Niamh, 1938, GP9/2

GP9/3

Aran Mór, Inishfree Island, Inishinny Island, Green Island, Carrick-Finn Island and others in Co. Donegal, July 1932

The opening tissue page has Chamber's London address, and the verso has a tracing of a 4 mile to inch map of the Donegal coastline indicating various islands, such as Aran More⁴⁵, Owey Island and Gola Island (off the coast of Gweedore). Most photographs are black & white.

Includes:-

- 'View of Aran more, from Boat'.
- 'View from my Window'.
- 'The Lighthouse'⁴⁶ (from below)'.
- 'A Glacial Boulder (Aran Mór)' depicting a clean shaven short haired man wearing a short-sleeved shirt and tie, and [knitted] sleeveless jumper and possibly wearing a ring on his little finger, casually posing for the camera while sitting on top of a large rock, with one leg stretched out in front of him and the other bend at the knee with arm resting on it.
- 'Getting Ready for Sea' depicting four men standing on a quay/ slipway standing [unravelling] ropes attached to a lobster /crab pot. An array of simple rowing boats evident in the background, and nets thrown on top of a 4ft wall are to the fore on the left had side. The men are wearing caps or hats, wellington boots or boots, and long-sleeved jumpers.
- Group photograph of 'The Slaughterer and the Angel-Child', with three middle-aged men and a woman standing facing the camera, beside a shed. The woman has her arms linked with the men either side. A small child [girl, c.3 yrs] is facing in front of them. A horned ram is standing behind the man on the right, facing in the opposite direction looking out to sea.
- 'A Poor Man's Home', depicting a small family group standing outside a humble thatch cottage. A young bare foot boy is on the back of a donkey which has side baskets, and a man and woman are standing at the doorway of the cottage with two young girls standing between them. A bank of turf stands at the gable end of the dwelling, with the ocean in the background, and land in the horizon.
- 'Bridget Boyle Washing' showing a young woman wearing a floral house coat and head scarf standing on a grassy mound in front of a rocky shallow pool of water, with a washing board, basin, bucket and pile of clothes on either side of her. Several houses are visible in the distant background, then the sea, and beyond that more land and mountains.
- 'The Island Priest', wearing a dark suit and collar, casually sitting on the bench of a [small] sail boat surrounded with ropes as it appears to be approaching the island, with several one storey houses, and fields with stone boundaries on a gentle sloping hill, in the background.

⁴⁵ Árainn Mhór / Arranmore, Co. Donegal

⁴⁶ The first lighthouse on Aranmore was completed in 1798 by Thomas Rogers on behalf of the Barrack Board. In 1810 the Lighthouse came under the control of the Ballast Board and considerable improvements were made to the light during the period 1817-24. When the Lighthouse on Tory Island was established in 1832, the light on Aranmore was discontinued, despite protests from mariners using those waters. It is re-instated some years late, when a new 23m tower was designed by Mr G. Halpin and constructed by Messrs Daniel Crowe and Sons of Dublin. Masonry from the old tower and dwellings was partly used in the construction of the new station. The light was established on the 1st February 1865 with a character of one flash every minute, with a red sector. The range of the light was 18 miles. Two single story semi-detached dwellings for the two keepers and their families were also constructed. Various improvements and changes occurred over the years.

In the late 1960s ESB mains electricity became available on Aranmore in the late 1960s and a mains supply was completed to the Lighthouse in 1970. Conversion of the Lighthouse to automatic operation took place in 1976 and the Keepers were withdrawn on 1st August 1976. Extract from Commissioners of Irish Lights [Aranmore \(irishlights.ie\)](http://irishlights.ie) Accessed 2020



- ‘A Wayside Well’ showing a young woman sitting on a low rock, facing the camera as she pours water from a tin can into a tin bucket. The woman, with shoulder length hair, is wearing a sleeveless dress, dark stockings, and boots. Behind her is what appears to be a painted stone wall with a small [concert] arch over a [concert] lined shallow well.
- ‘Youth (loading peat)’ barefoot young girl, standing on a rough pathway putting turf into a side basket on a donkey.
- ‘Age (A load of Peat)’, showing a bare foot bedraggled looking middle-aged woman, with shoulder length hair partially covering her face, walking alongside a donkey carrying side baskets full of turf.
- ‘Travelling Tinkers’ shows two men sitting leaning against the front of a thatched cottage, on [cushions] on the ground, with their legs stretched in front to them, bend working on shaping tin cans. Various tools lay close by. Two young child, *circa*. 1-2 years old, are sitting at their feet looking at the camera. A woman is watching the men peering from the doorway of the dwelling.
- ‘Confirmation (The Schoolmaster’s Children)’, depicting two young girls in simple white dresses and veils, a younger girl stands slightly to the side and behind one, wearing a light coat and bonnet.
- ‘An English Memory, Glen House⁴⁷’ image of a two-storey house with a small portico, two Georgian style windows on either side of the entrance, and four on the upper level, with two open. A small light coloured one storey structure [extension or caravan] in at one gable end, an informal garden consisting of with a few bushes, with a horse is also grazing on shrubbery on the left-hand side.
- Full length image of ‘Anna Boyle & John (Philip) of the Glen House’ with Anna dressed in a [stained] ankle length short-sleeved dress/ house coat and simple flat shoes, with an arm on the shoulder of John, a boy of c. 7 yrs dressed in a three-piece suit with short pants, knee socks and shoes.
- ‘The Theft of the Fairies’, two young bare foot smiling boys standing either side basket on a donkey, with a Garda, in full uniform and cap, holding the donkey’s head. A group of young children are visible in the background, possibly sitting on a wall surrounding a [school].
- Group photograph of ‘School Children’, with approx. 50 children arranged in about 5 rows with the children in the front sitting on the sandy ground with their legs crossed in front of them, followed by rows of children kneeling, with the last row, all boys, sitting on a capped wall. A sloping hill is in the background, and dwellings dotted around.
- ‘On Owey’ showing an old woman at the doorway of her windowless thatch cottage with a jug in one hand. Some pots, a bucket and a shovel are adjacent to the dwelling’s wall. Several other similar styled dwellings are in the background, possibly built in semi-circle.
- ‘Coracle⁴⁸’ in calm water close to the pier at Gola Island, with a man with a small child on his lap at the rear of the vessel, and another man, wearing a hat, at the front paddling away from the pier. A slipway and docked row boat are in the background.

⁴⁷ Now a hotel, Glen House, was built in the mid 1800s. It was originally the home of a landlord John Stoupe Charley. In 1922 Jack Boyle (+1964), a native of the Island bought the building and later converted it into a hotel, according to guest book records it was up and running by 1928. In the 1930s major extensions were carried out, with four new bedrooms added to the building. In 1933 "The Mango" came ashore on the west side of the island. The ladder of the boat was taken to the hotel and used as a fire escape and is still in use here. The old bar was constructed from the cabin of the ship "The Forest Monarch" that came ashore in 1846. Jack and his wife Hannah (+1983) had one son Phillie, who married Mary Gallagher. In 1954/55 Jack retired, and Phillie and Mary took over the running of the business. Phillie continued to run the hotel until 1989 when he retired when his son, Phillip Boyle succeeded him. In 1994 Phillip married Annemarie, and together they run the hotel to the present day. The Glen Hotel, <http://theglenhotel.weebly.com/history-of-the-glen-hotel.html> Accessed July 2017.

⁴⁸ Especially in Wales and Ireland, a small round boat made of wickerwork covered with a watertight material, propelled with a paddle.



- Full length group photograph of ‘The Diver Family’⁴⁹, comprised of a thin middle-aged woman and three young adults, two female and one male, and a teenage boy and girl, standing on the road-side of a stone wall with a slatted one storey house in the back ground.
- Postcard of ‘The Poisoned Glen Dunlewy, Co. Donegal’⁵⁰.
- ‘The Barracks Burtonport (An English Memory)’, ruins of a substantial two storey roofless building.

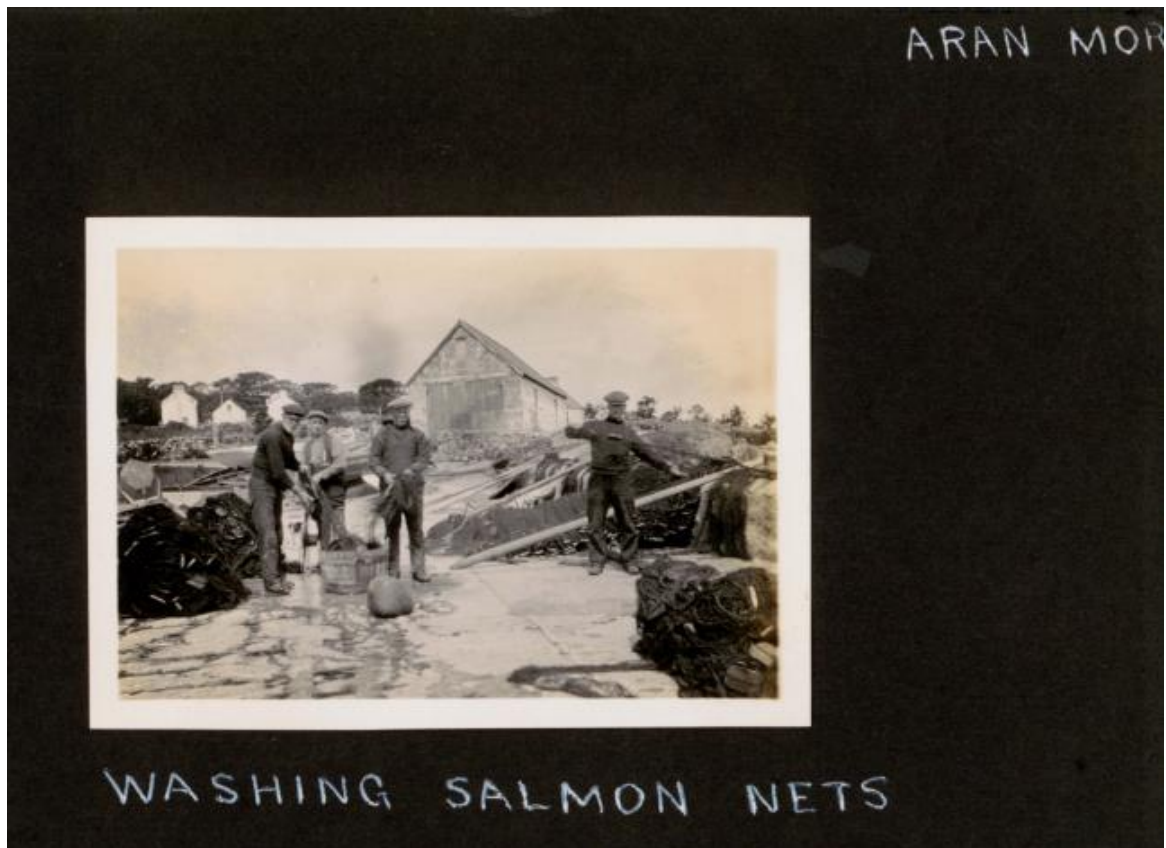
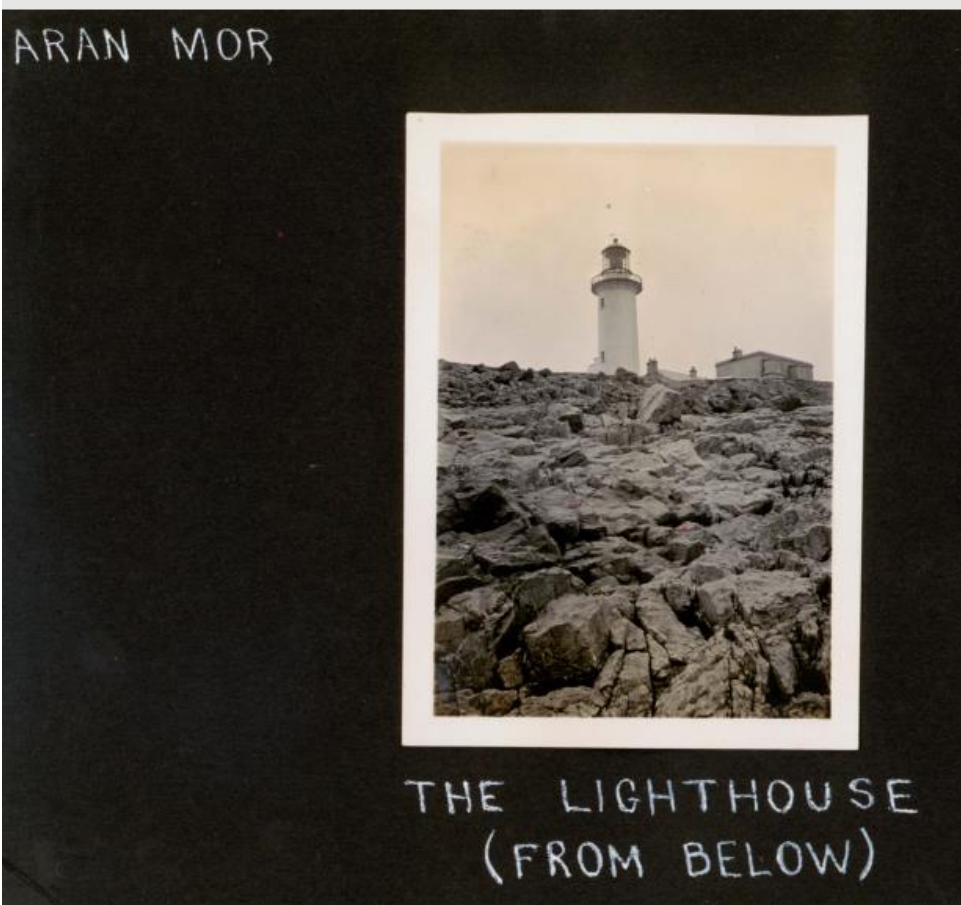
Album: 22 x 13 cm

84 images; average size 8.5 x 6 cm



⁴⁹ 2023-03 a relation of the family identified the individuals, with local names in parentheses, *Left to Right*. John Diver (John Éamoinn Tharlaigh), Fanny Diver (Fanny Éamoinn Tharlaigh), Maggie Diver (Maggie John Bhilly Óig), Biddy Mc Ginley (Biddy Tom), Mary Mc Ginley (Mary Tom), Charlie Diver (Charlie Éamoinn Tharlaigh).

⁵⁰ Possibly from the [Cardall Photographic Collection](#) at NLI.





ARAN MOR



A POOR MAN'S HOME

ARAN MOR



YOUTH
(LOADING PEAT)



ARAN MOR



WORK AND SPORT.

GP9/4

Achill & Clare Island, Co. Mayo and Greystones, Co. Wicklow, June 1937

Includes for instance:-

the 'coal-train' (three horses with side baskets) on its way to the Lighthouse,
'Achill Islanders arrive for Sports',

images of a sailing match, and group of spectators, some seated on the grass others standing facing the sea, away from the camera 'Watching the Race',

a man seated on rocks beside the quay tending to 'Lobster & Crayfish pots',

The postmen, delivering mail on horse-back.

'An island porter', image of a young boy wearing a jumper and short pants in his bare feet holding a donkey laden with suitcases, on a pebble beach, with the remains of rotting Curragh in the background.

'The election Officials',

Greystone, Co. Wicklow photograph titled 'A Galway Curragh (used in 'Islandman' Film)⁵¹, showing two well-dressed men, with moustaches, standing behind a Curragh on a pebble beach, with a lobster pot resting beside it, and a [concrete] wall behind and a slopped grassy sand bank in the background.

The Achill Island photographs include images of Keel Strand, The Cathedral Rocks, and Dooagh Village.

Also includes an image of the tree lined river walk in Westport.

Album: 22 x 13 cm

70 images: average size 10.55.5 cm



Clare Island, GP9/4, 1937

⁵¹ Chambers corresponded with a native, Eilish (1911-1971), (*Letters From the Great Blasket* [Eibhlis Ni Shuilleabhain](#) (Author). Her subsequent letters to him include details of her marriage to Séan, son of [Tomás Ó Criomhthain](#), author of *An tOileánach* (The Islandman).



CLARE Is



LOBSTER & CRAYFISH POTS

GREYSTONES
Co WICKLOW



A GALWAY CURRACH
(USED IN 'ISLANDMAN' FILM)

GP9/5

Valentia and The Skelligs, Co. Kerry, 1938

Includes for instance:-

- 'Cahirceeven and our Boat on Left. This is the last town on the mainland of Kerry'.
- View 'From the heights of Valentia, showing Beginniss Island'.
- Distant view taken from the water of 'Lynch's house (where I stayed and his boat-building shed'.
- 'My Host. John Lynch' image of man in overalls, with a cigarette in his mouth, applying [tar] to a [Curragh] boat of a boat which is resting on a waist high frame/support.
- 'The Lynch Children do their home-work', depicts two children [12-14 yrs] with heads bent writing on copies resting on their knees. They are seated in a Curragh, surrounded with ropes and nets, and a school bag on a seat in front of them. The boat appears to be on a dock beside a rough building. Clothes sway gently on a line in the background.
- 'The Shrine of the Island Saint. St Derera. (Note the votive images)'
- A series of images of Skelligs (Na Scealaga) taken from the boat as it approached the island, its pathway, and 'Where the "Path of the Saints" ends outside the Monastery', "The Bishop's Cell' and 'The Cell of Penance, outside the Monastery enclosure'.
- 'Passing the Lighthouse on our way to the Blaskets'.

Album: 26.5 x 20 cm

55 images; various dimensions, e.g., 8.5 x 6 cm and; 13 x 7.5 cm

13pp plus interleaving tissue pages.



Pat Lynch takes the donkey-cart to Knight's Town.
(The tree is not growing in the cart!)

GP9/5



A Valentia Stile and the entrance to the Domain
of the Knight of Kerry.



Our Expedition starts for the Skelligs.
The Long-boat going out to the Launch.



Inside the Monastery Garden, showing the Bee-hive Cells



The Bishop's Cell.

Skellig Michael, 1938, GP9/5



GP9/6

Great Blasket File, [1961]

File of material relating to the Blaskets, primarily comprised of a typescript proof of the publication '*Letters From the Great Blasket*⁵², Eibhlís Ni Shuilleabhain. Includes a chapter entitled 'Bláheén (sic) Laid Low referring to Robin

Flower⁵³, his death and subsequent scattering of his ashes on the island, includes an English translation of *Death of Bláheén Bás*, and also rough transcript of the Irish version, *Bás Bhláithín*, by Seán O Riogh (1946). Another chapter, 'The Lone Wolf', which tells the story of Mitchell, includes a short introductory paragraph by Chambers providing background information on the '*amiable but rather feckless individual*'.

Also includes one loose page, perhaps taken from a copybook, with the text of a four verse poem, 'Song of the Island Girl' [by Eibhlís] and ink drawings of rocks, birds and waves, and other poems such as 'Poets' by Robin Flower, and 'Men of Islands' by Padraic Colum. Also the verse 'The Seal'⁵⁴.

Also includes text of eulogy '*Spoken at the Funeral of George Chambers by his son, Ivan*' which commences with two poems, the first being *Homeward Bound* by Sir Henry Newbolt⁵⁵.

⁵² An Blascaod Mór.

⁵³ Flower, Robin Ernest William (1881–1946), an English poet and scholar, a celticist, Anglo-Saxonist and translator from the Irish language. He is commonly known in Ireland as "Bláithín" (Little Flower).

⁵⁴ A Blasket folktale re-told by Flower, *Emerald Green: An Ecocritical Study of Irish Literature*, Tim Wenzell, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, c.2009, p104.

⁵⁵ Newbolt, Sir Henry John, CH (Order of the Companions of Honour) (1862 –1938), English Poet, novelist and historian.