

Arches in Eyrecourt



Here are some of the major stations in the world. Why are they in our History supplement of the Eyrecourt Examiner?

Long ago, Eyrecourt was a great place because the coaches passed through Eyrecourt from Dublin to go to Galway and Limerick. They stopped here because they had to give the horses a break and repair their carriage and sometimes re-shoe the horse. When we say coaches we mean the carriages on two big wheels and pulled by a horse. Horses were usually cobs with strong legs and hooves. The passengers stopped in Eyrecourt for B&B. The horses rested in Eyrecourt for the night. Eyrecourt was very similar to Heathrow, Munich or Rotterdam until Ballinasloe station was built.

In Eyrecourt there are lots of arches. Arches are very common in Eyrecourt because all the coaches passed through them to go to the stables at the back of the house or hotel. They are a tall, rounded figure. Below there are pictures of arches in the village.



Travelers traveled in barrel tops. Barrel tops are similar to carriages except they have half a barrel shaped roof. Some travelers still use them today.

Last week we went on a walk behind the scenes of Duffy's house. There was a bottle house, an egg house, grain store, distillery, bakery, flour store, wool house and a black smith. There were at least 15 workers there long ago. There were many arches there. Then we went up by Duffy's shop. I think it was a very cool walk.

Eyrecourt had lots of shops, lots of schools, butchers, Theatre, black smiths, lots of storage places and lots of arches.



Try find all the arches in this supplement and then try find where they are in Eyrecourt village! Would you be able to find them?

These pictures show some of the arches in Eyrecourt!

The first two are behind Duffy's and the second two are on main street. The bottom right used to be an arch but people turned it into a door.

We hope we helped you imagine the crazy busy town Eyrecourt was long ago!

Katie Salmon & Ryan Cox



St Brendan's
NS

Eyrecourt Past

March

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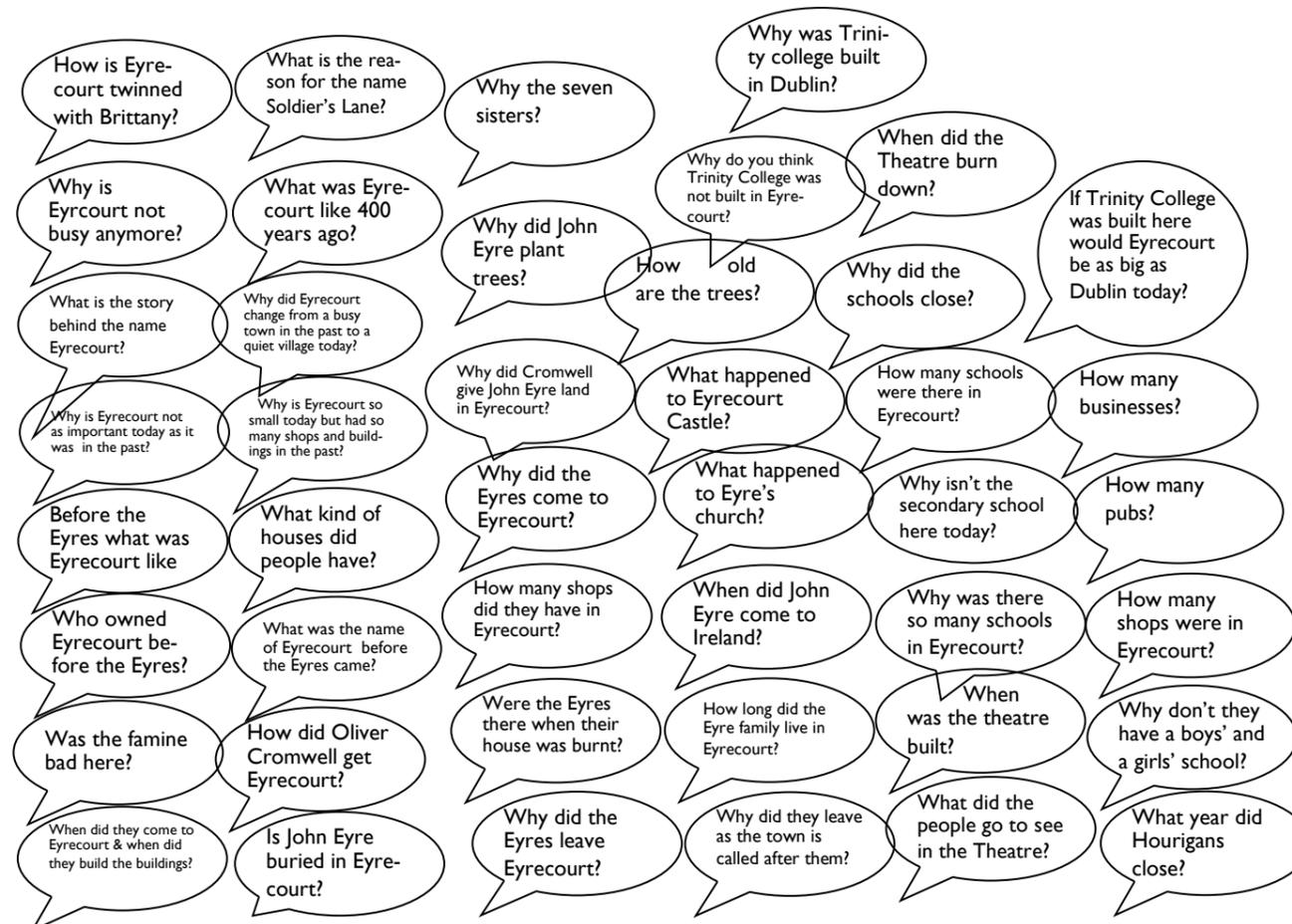
We decided to do this issue because Dr. Anne Dolan who is an lecturer in Mary Immaculate College saw the Eyrecourt Examiner at Mark Larkin's house and she started to wonder how we put this newspaper together. She came to see us working and she asked us if she could work with us on an Eyrecourt Past, Eyrecourt Present and Eyrecourt Future supplement, so we said "Yes".

We started with a brainstorming session. Soon the whiteboard was full of amazing stories and enquiry questions.

We drew a streetscape of Main Street Eyrecourt so we knew where each house is in the town. We also went on walks to spot different arches. We visited Duffy's backyard and learned all about the activities there hundreds of years ago.

We worked as Geographers and Historians. We examined evidence from books, photographs and journals. We took photos with the schools camera and Dr. Anne also had her own camera.

Here are our Enquiry Questions. We managed to answer a lot of them but there is still loads of History to unearth in Eyrecourt!



The Eyrecourt Theatre

The Eyrecourt Theatre is situated in the Square, Eyrecourt. It was one of the buildings John Eyre built in the 1600's. The building was used first as a court-house then in later years it was used as a Theatre. The building was used from the late 1600's to the 1940's. In the 1940s the building caught fire and the damage was so bad it had to be closed for good. My late Grandfather and Grandmother went to see a play in the theatre 60 years ago. The Eyrecourt Theatre is now a derelict building and is a protected building by the Irish Heritage act of 1995. Unfortunately it looks like it will naturally fall soon. It is sad to see such an old fascinating building go this way.



Mark Larkin



John Eyre of Eyrecourt

Eyrecourt might surprise you. It may seem like a quiet little village now, but when John Eyre was here it was a very busy village. There were over 15 different shops in the village. John Eyre had a beautiful castle called Eyre Castle. Charles the 2nd gave John Eyre

patent for his property. When his Castle was built, he made a road beside it so when people came from places like Dublin they would have to drive by and admire his mansion!

Everybody who had a shop would have to bring him weekly supplies and he would pay them but not much. He built a church and a graveyard in Eyrecourt.

John Eyre was one of Oliver Cromwell's generals in the taking over of Ireland. When England had taken over Ireland he gave all of his general's land. John Eyre received land in Dún an Uachta and renamed it Eyrecourt.

In the 1800's there were over 2000 people in Eyrecourt and now roughly there are only 400 living in the area.

In 1683 a bridge was to be built over the Liffey, in Dublin. All the members of the House of Commons gave from £10 to £20 each, John Eyre gave £500 which was a very considerable sum in those days, and hence he was called "Proud Eyre".

Oisín Neylon & Patrick Duffy

Prospect House

In 1856, *Joseph Cowan* was leasing a property at Prospect, in the parish of Meelick, barony of Longford, from *Francis Usher*. In 1837 *Lewis* recorded Prospect as the seat of *C.A O' Malley*. *Slater* refers to it as the seat of *John Smith* in 1846. In 1906 Prospect was the property of *Ernest Kenny* and valued at £12. In 1778 and 1786, this property was the residence of the *French* family. Prospect house still exists and is currently occupied by my family.

Prospect house is very big. It towers tall on 4 floors. It has 52 windows, 6 bedrooms, 1 large kitchen, 1 Dining room, 1 ballroom (used for balls long ago), 1 large sitting room, 2 attics, 1 back-kitchen, 1 dairy, a coal room, 3 toilets and a Breakfast room!

Long ago Prospect was also a farm! It had cattle, sheep, pigs and lots of horses for ploughing and tilling. There used to be a lady there, farming her own pigs. She reared baby piglets. There were about 12 workers.

There are more than 200 trees in Prospect. Our house is also twinned with *Con Hagney's* house as both houses were built at the same time by two brothers. Down in the Mall there is a lane called *Soldiers Lane*, 2 of the brothers left the war and built 2 houses at the same time. One beside *Morris' wood* and one just outside Eyrecourt (my house). The two houses are built in the way that they face each other, making Prospect house look backward to the road! The two brothers had two eagle statues on the roof of their house turned looking at each other symbolising the roots of their family. Years ago the parish priest asked the two families (*Hagney's* and *Salmons*) to donate the two statues to the church. To this day the two eagles stand proud in front of *Michael Clarke's* house, which belonged to the church long ago.

Katie Salmon

Laharts' shop

On the 7th of March Oisín and I interviewed Miss Lahart on the old shop her father Nicholas owned. Miss Lahart's father bought the shop in 1946. The shop was mostly a hardware shop but they sold groceries as well. Before the Laharts bought the shop it was called "Quirk's".



Miss Lahart used to work in the shop as well; she marked the prices on goods, served customers and swept the floors. She also put items outside to advertise.



Nicholas Lahart's shop was busy because the farmers came in to buy gates, wire, nuts and bolts etc. While it was a hardware shop it did sell sweets and biscuits. They also sold the Sunday papers. Ms Lahart said you'd make enough money to survive!

The family lived just behind the shop, because the house was attached to it. All of the Laharts worked in the shop. Now it is a black and white house. *Emily Salmon & Oisín Neylon*

The Neylons Shop

I interviewed my father about what his family's old shop was like. He said his mom owned a shop, a bar, and a room where the visiting bank did its' business. Incidentally the bank clerk was none other than Eddie Jordan of Formula 1! In the shop they sold groceries, farm supplies and light hardware. On Saturdays dad, his brothers and sisters had work to do in the shop. My dad's job was to weigh the tea and the sugar. I was surprised to hear that tea came in tea chests and sugar came in large bags. Every night the farmers would come in and talk about the price of pigs, cattle, sheep and the news around the area. My dad also told me this is where he learned to play a card game called 25. The fair day happened once every month. This was the busiest day for the bar and shop. Everybody had to help. The fair day meant no school but lots of work in the shop and bar. *Oisín Neylon*

Eyrecourt Library

St John the Baptist School, is where the Eyrecourt library is located today. It was previously a Church of Ireland National School, but due to declining numbers of pupils it was closed in 1997, when its' numbers had fallen to 7 pupils .

Records show that when the school first opened on 1st July 1915 there were 15 Pupils registered. It was a one room school with just one teacher responsible for all classes. The building would also have been used in the past by the Church of Ireland as a parish hall.

The building was leased to Galway County Council Library Service and Eyrecourt Public Library was opened on June 21st 2002 by Mr Michael Regan the Mayor of Galway County. My mother Laura Flynn is currently the Librarian. *Tomás Flynn*



Businesses in Eyrecourt

Long ago in Eyrecourt there were lots of businesses:

Daly/Neylon	pub/grocery	Kenny	Cycles/grocery/taxi/ battery charging for radios
Duffys	Pub/grocery/ hardware/clothing	O'Brien	Bakery (later Larkin seamstress)
Hayes	butcher	Higgins	Sweets/taxi
Hourigan/Doran	Sweets/dairy	Kelly/Hogan	Garage
Cosgrove/Clarke	Pub/grocery	Mannion	Grocery
O'Meara/Donnell an	6 day pub/grocery/ hardware	Larkin	Painters
Clarke/Horan	Pub/grocery	Boucher	Blacksmith
Lahart	Hardware/grocery	Hogan	Builder/carpenter
Keon	Clothing/drapery	Casey	Shoemaker/repairer
Curran	Post-office	Halloran	Barber
Campbell	Sweets/fruit	Dermody	Petrol
Burns	Butcher/grocery/ undertaker		

Look closely the next time you walk through the village and see can you find some evidence of our once bustling town!

Eyrecourt Castle

In 1662 John Eyre was granted 800 acres of Eyrecourt land as a reward for his role in Cromwell's Irish campaign. He built the house in the 1660s or early 1670s. John was an MP for Galway and High Sheriff of County Galway from 1681. On his death in 1685 the



property passed to his eldest son John (known as Proud Eyre). From him it passed to John's son George (High Sheriff in 1706 but who died young in 1710), then to George's brother, John (High Sheriff in 1724) and then to a third brother, Giles. From Giles it passed to Giles' son John.

The house, however, was inherited by his nephew Lieutenant Giles Eyre (High Sheriff in 1798), who spent a lot of money on unsuccessful electioneering. He left it to

his own eldest son, John (1794-1856). John was killed whilst hunting and the estate was passed to his son, yet another John (1820-1890). On his death in 1890 it passed to William Henry Gregory Eyre.



In 1883 the estate was offered for sale. By the 1920s the house was a ruin and around 1950 the staircase was purchased by William Randolph Hearst. Since then the house has been left to fall although the staircase still exists in storage at the Detroit Institute of Arts.

The most striking features of the house were its wood-carvings, massive door cases and a famous staircase, one of the first grand staircases in Ireland. The house had a



motto over the door to the main hall saying, "Welcome to the house of liberty". It also had its own small chapel, built in 1677. Local tradition says the grounds were used as an overnight camp by Ginkell's Williamite army after the Battle of Aughrim in 1691.

Michael Kelly

EYRECOURT PAST

Duffy's Shop

Now Duffy's is just your typical local news agent but back nearly 100 years ago it was more than just a shop. It had several facilities that are not there anymore such as a blacksmiths that is now a hay shed. The man who worked in there was called Yank (Mick Larkin) because when he was running it back during the Irish civil war he was shot at by the Black and Tans under the suspicion of working for the IRA. He then fled to America and remained there for 50 years and



came back to Eyrecourt for his retirement in the 70s. The old yard is still fully intact and my Dad has been known to call them by their original names such as the bake house which still has evidence of the oven and windows. The flour store which had a connection with the bake house because you do need flour to make bread. The egg house where the farmers sold their eggs mostly in exchange for groceries from the shop. The wool house is where the local farmers sold their wool and it was kept there and later sold. There was also a petrol pump and an oil shed where people bought oil for lamps before electricity. The brand of petrol in those times was *Pratts*. As well as that there was a bottle house for bottling the Guinness out of the casks that came from St James Gate in Dublin. The grain loft is still there which stored all the grain for the flour house, the remains of the grain shoot are still in the flour house today.

Patrick Duffy

Paradise Hospital

In our back land there are ruins of a hospital that we believe was called *Paradise*. The lane it was on was called *Paradise Lane* now known as *Coats Lane*. During the time of the famine many poor Irish people went to the hospital seeking help. If any readers have further information on Paradise Hospital, please email the newspaper.

Aideen Lyons