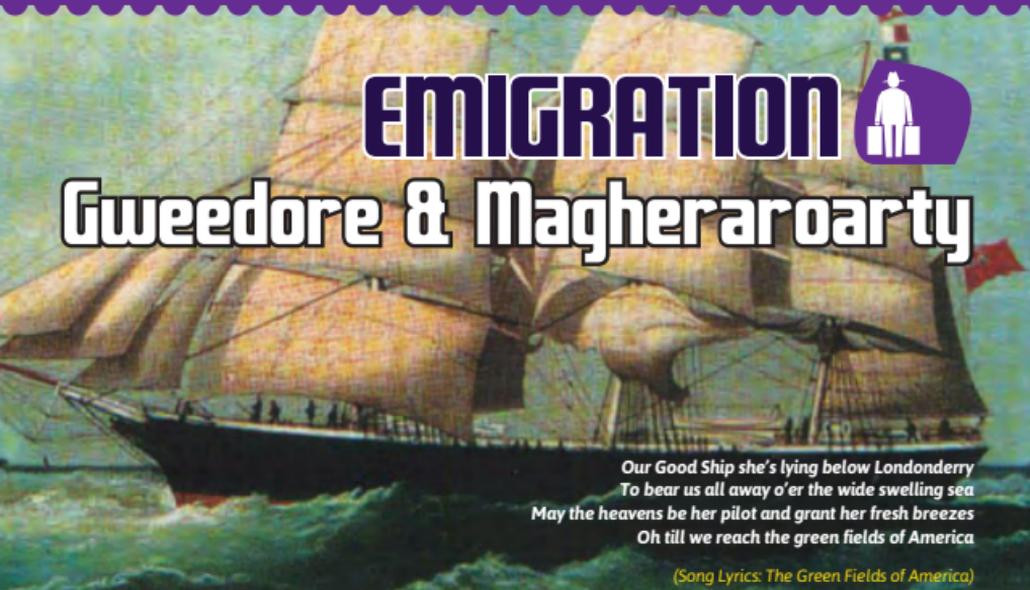


EMIGRATION



Gweedore & Magheraroarty



*Our Good Ship she's lying below Londonderry
To bear us all away o'er the wide swelling sea
May the heavens be her pilot and grant her fresh breezes
Oh till we reach the green fields of America*

(Song Lyrics: *The Green Fields of America*)

The Minnehaha, one of the sailing ships of McCorkell & Co. taking emigrants to America from Derry between 1860 - 1895. Derry City Council Archives

Large numbers of people from Donegal have travelled to find work for over 200 years. From 1815, Donegal people walked to Derry/Londonderry to emigrate on ships. Canada, the USA and Australia were important destinations for emigrants, as well as England and Scotland.

Le dhá chéad bliain thaistil daoine as Dún na nGall ar fud an domhain ag lorg oibre. Ó 1815, shiúl daoine go Doire le dhul ar imirce ar longa go Canada na Stáit Aontaithe, An Austráil chomh maith le hBain agus Sasain.

Letters Home



The Glasgow Boat

"Letters with money would come from Scotland to help out at home. If it wasn't for the money from Scotland in those days, there would have been much hardship in Donegal."
(Maighréad Bn Uí Ghallochóir)



Donegal emigrants Sarah and Robert Tait, Donegal County Archives.

"Prices are very high and some people find it very hard to live. I have enough coming in each month to live and can pay everything, but taxes and everything is going up and up."
(Robert Tait, letter home, 1951 Illinois.)

**Dear Danny
I'm taking the pen in me hand
To tell you we're just out of
sight of the land
In the grand Allan liner I'm
sailing in style
But I'm sailing away
from the Emerald Isle
A strange sort of sigh seemed
to come from us all
As the waves hid the last bit
of auld Donegal
Oh it's well to be you that is
takin' yer tay,
Where they're cuttin' the corn in
Cresslough today**

(Song Lyrics: *The Emigrant's Letter*)

Assisted Passengers

Sometimes Donegal people were 'assisted passengers', and got tickets to travel from the workhouse and other local organisations. For example, a ship called SAPPHIRE landed in Sydney, Australia on 24th May 1859 carrying a large number of assisted emigrants including: the Coyle family from Gweedore – Catherine 35, Mary 12, Catherine 7, Dominick 5 and Hugh 2; the Doogan family from Cloghaneely – Fanny 45, Bartley 18 and Anne 14.

Gheibheadh daoine cuidiú chun ticéidí a cheannacht ó eagraíochtaí áitiúla. Mar chompla shroich longa darbh ainm "An Sapphire" Sydney na hAstráile ar an 24ú Bealtaine 1859 le scaifte mór imircí; Ina measc bhí teaghlach Uí Chóill as Gaoth Dobhair. Cairtriona 35, Máire 12, Cairtriona 7, Domnic 5 agus Aodh 2 agus fosta teaghlach Uí Dhugáin as Cloich-Cheann-Fhaola. Fanny 45, Bartlaí 18 agus Anna 14.



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TEACH MHICÍ MHIC GABHANN

Micí MacGowan's House

Teach Mhicí Mhic Gabhann, Doire Chonaire, Magheraroarty is the home place of Micí Mac Gabhann (1865 -1948). It is one of the few emigrant houses left in the area and still retains its original features from the early nineteenth century. Micí Mac Gabhann's life story was written down by Sean O hEochaidh as part of the Irish Folklore Commission.

"All the houses in the area were thatched. Most of them had three rooms: a kitchen and two bedrooms. Usually the kitchen was in the middle with a room on either side. Our house was like that. Reeds were used to thatch our house and the other houses in the area. They were plentiful down by the sand-banks at Magheraroarty." (Micí MacGowan)

Dion tuí a bhí ar na tithe uilig. Trí sheomra a bhí iontu, dhá sheomra leapa agus cistineach sa lár. Bhí tréan muirínigh le fáil ag fás ar an dumhaigh gainimhe i Machaire Uí Rabhartaigh fá choinne díon a chuir ar na tithe

"The house is over 150 years old. Thomais, Micí's father, built the house. Originally it was one room. There was only a low wall separating the cattle from the kitchen. This wall was built up later. They had a horse up until 1960. Micí's sister lived there until 1964, Kate Thomais. She would try and invite everyone she saw in for tea. Kate slept in the kitchen. I knew them well." Pól Ó Donnchadh

Tá'n teach céad go leith bliain d'aois. Ar dtús seomra amháin a bhí ann agus balla íseall idir an t-eallach agus an chisteanach. Bhí capall acu suas go 1960. Chonai deirfiúr Mhicí ansin go 1964, Kate Thomais. Thugadh sí cuireadh do gach duine isteach fá choinne tae. Chodlaigh sí sa chistineach. Bhí aithne mhaith agam uirthi.



Pól Ó Donnchadh

Roof

Thatch is laid over the roof and held down by a network of ropes fastened to wood or metal thatching pins or stone 'bacán'. Ropes would have originally been made by hand from straw (súgán).

Leagtar an tuí anuas ar an díon agus é ceangailte síos le gréasán súgáin ar bhacáin cloiche. Dheantaí na ropaí nó súgáin as cochán.



Beds

"The 'Cailleach' or bed outshot is a distinctive element of the cottage architecture. The box bed was usually screened off from the rest of the kitchen by means of curtains/blankets."
(Joseph Gallagher & Greg Stevenson, Traditional Cottages of County Donegal)

"Micí's nephew Tom lived in the house with Johnny until 1980. They slept in the back room with the clay floor. That floor was so wet, each of them had a board next to their beds to put their socks and boots on." Pól Ó Donnchadh

Chonai nianna Mhicí, Tam agus Johnny sa teach go dtí 1980. Sa t-seomra cúil a bhí said ina gcodladh agus urlár créafóige a bhí ann. Bhí an t-urlár seo iontach tais agus bhíodh claraí acu ar an urlár le na gcuid bróga agus stocai a chuir air sa doigh go mbeadh siad tirm ar maidin



MICÍ MACGOWAN'S STORIES OF EMIGRATION



1874 – 1879 On the Laggan Aged 9 - 14

“Someone said to me once, that Mici MacGowan’s story is hard to believe; but, it would be hard to contradict!”

Micheal O’Fearraigh



Letterkenny Main Street

“It was May in the year 1874. All the boys from the villages were making for Letterkenny for the hiring fair – one of four similar fairs that were held each year. In those days, the people from the Laggan were looking for boys that would herd and give a bit of service around the house, and for bigger boys that would help with agricultural work. I hadn’t even reached my ninth year by then.”

Mi na Bealtaine 1874 a bhí ann. Bhí na buachaillí uilig ag tarraingt ar Leitir Ceanainn do ‘Aonrach na Rables’, a bhíodh ann ceithre h-uaire sa bhliain. Ins na laetha sin bhí muintir an Lagáin ag cuartú buachaillí le buachailleacht a dhéanamh agus cuidiú le timireacht thart fána tithe. Bheadh na buachaillí móra ag obair sna páirceanna. Chá raibh mise ach naoi mbliana san am seo.

1880 – 1885 In Scotland Aged 15 - 20



Muckish Gap



Bridge of Tears



“By the time I was fifteen, myself and a young relative, made it up between us that we’d both go to Scotland. St Patrick’s Day 1880 I think it was. It looked as if it would be a good dry night and, therefore, a good night for walking. We made out by Cashel Hill and Altatorav and Tullaghobegley until we reached the road to Muckish Gap. On we went. In due course we strolled over to the quay of Derry. We got our tickets. We were put on board among the cattle. We got into Glasgow quay sometime about six o’clock in the morning.”

Nuair a bhí mé cúig bliana déag shocraigh mé fhéin agus fear óg eile a bhí gaolta liom dhul go hAlbain. Silim gur Lá Fhéile Pádraig a bhí ann. Bhí oíche bhreá thirm ann, oíche mhaith siúil. Suas linn Cnoc A’ Chaisil go Tullach a’ Beiglí agus amach Máim na Mucaoise. Ar aghaidh linn gur shroich muid Doire. Fuair muid ár gcuid ticéidí agus cuireadh ar bord muid istigh leis an eallach. Shroich muid céidh Ghlasgow i dtrátha sé a chlog ar maidin.

“Some of our people worked for years at a place they called Bonnington Farm. I think Young was the name of the man that owned it. ‘Well’, he said, ‘You’re in luck. My turnips are ready for thinning any day now.’...There was an old bed up in the corner of the hut with a few fistfuls of hay and a bit of rough sacking thrown on it...At six o’clock the following morning while we were still asleep, there was a loud knocking on the window and someone outside calling that it was time to be moving.” *Bhí cuid de mhuintir an bhaile ag obair le blianta ar Bonnington Farm. Silim gur Young a bhí ar an fhear ar leis an fheirm. ‘Tá an t-ádh oraibh’, arsa seisean. ‘Tá mo chuid turnaipí réidh le tanú’. Bhí leabaí thuas i gcoirneál an bhotaí agus grainín féir agus sean mhalai caite uirthi. Ar a sé a chlog ar maidin fuair muid an scairt a bheith inár sui.*

MICÍ MACGOWAN'S STORIES OF EMIGRATION



1886 To America

Aged 21

"Walking was the only means of travelling then and those going to America had to foot-slog it as far as Derry. It's about thirty miles from our place to Letterkenny through Muckish Gap and twenty miles further to Derry. We had to cover those fifty miles by evening in order to make the boat."

"Cha raibh athrach gléas taistil san am sin ach an choisíocht, agus an mhuintir a bhíodh ag dul go Meiriceá nó in áit ar bith eile chaithfeadh siad siúl go Doire. Tá sé suas le deich míle is fiche ón áit s'againne go Leitricéanainn, fríd Mhám na Muaise, agus ta sé fiche míle eile ó sin go Doire. Chaithfimis an leithchéad míle sin a shiúl roimh an tráthnóna le breith ar an bhád"



Passengers at the Anchor Line Office in Derry. Derry City Council Archives



A transatlantic liner. Greencastle Maritime Museum.

1896 Looking for Gold



"We made ready – seven of us – at the beginning of the summer; each of us had a large pack with provisions of all kinds including flour, bacon, coffee and sugar. We also had mining gear and various other tools with us: pick-axes, shovels, crowbars and such-like. We moved east, west and south in our search for gold."

I dtús an tSamhraidh rinne an seachtar againn réidh, paca mór earraí le gach fear – plúr, muicfheoil, caifé agus siúcra. Bhí uirlisi mianadóireachta linn fosta, piccoidí, sluaiste, cróirrainn agus a leithid. Ar aghaidh linn, soir, siar agus ó dheas ag lorg an óir.

1897 - 1900 Hiking in the Arctic Circle

"One night we were pushing ahead as usual when the snow started falling heavily again. The wind was so penetrating that it was taking us all our time to breathe, even. In we went to the Indians, at all events, and a fine long wide cabin they had, I may say."

Oíche amháin agus muid ag dul ar aghaidh linn thosaigh an plúchadh sneachta arís. Bhí an ghaoth ghéar ag dul frinn agus is beag go raibh muid abálta ár n-anál a tharraingt. Isteach linn chuig na hIndiaigh agus bhí sin acu, cabán breá te tolaí.

"I made for a place called All Gold Creek. From the gravel, we got fine gold or gold dust but rough gold or nuggets could be found in the cracks between the rocks. We spent three or four years all told working in the Klondike. We had plenty of gold."



Klondike goldrush map Panning for Gold

1900 Home



Micí and Family

"As soon as we put our feet down on the quay at Derry, we saw that there had been big changes since we had left home. We were delighted to have our feet on Irish ground again. In the end we got to the station at Cashelnagor. Shortly after I came home, Johnston's house at Cashel near Gortahork was put up for sale. I bought the place for £1,000."

Chomh luath is a leag muid cos ar chéid Dhoire thug muid faidear go raibh athraiocha móra ar rudaí ó d'fhag muid an baile. Bhí lúcháir orainn a bheith arais in Éirinn. Sa deireadh shroich muid Staisiún Chaiseal na gCorr. Gan mhoill i ndaidh dmh theacht na bhaile cuireadh teach Johnston ar an Chaiseal in aice Ghort A'Choirce ar an mhargadh. Cheannaigh mé é ar £1,000.

