

**WORLD CUP 2002
FOOTBALL SPECIAL**

**GOOD LUCK AND BEST
WISHES FROM YOUR
HOME TOWN TO SHAY
AND THE
BOYS IN GREEN
FROM EVERYBODY AT
THE OLD COURTHOUSE
VISITOR CENTRE AND
RESTAURANT
LIFFORD**



Football Special Only €1.00/ 65p stg



Poetry corner

Photographs Of Golden Days

*If we could turn the world around
Live our lives again
See the friend we left behind
Feel their love and pain*

*If we could once again be free
To walk forgotten dreams
Gaze into a timeless sky
Know our love was real*

*If everybody's parents
Could watch their children grow
Give praise to their achievements
Show love before they go*

*If everyone could live as one
In future and in past
Forget the troubles caused by war
Wounds would never last*

*If only we could wander
The portals of our minds
Share again that beauty
That hasn't changed with time*

*But all that's left are photographs
How easy memories lend
Treasures old and new
In a world that never ends.*

By: J.S.W. (The Donegal Poet)

would know that place. That is where the Gartan clay is lifted, and it is now the secret of the leading member of the O' Friel family."

Thanks for the Memories

Geraldine Friel writes to say thank you to the Gateway for the room, Terry Mc Cafferty and Micky-Joe Harte for the music, the staff of the Old Courthouse for the cake and excellent food, and the big fella who came all the way from Belfast to over in Dundalk and he got "Man of the Match" that day. They had a lot of scouts at that game and it took off from there. That was April 1992 and in late June early July that year he shook hands on the deal with Celtic and then he went over on the 1st September to Glasgow



Congratulations Kieran Foy "The Invisible Man"



Inver, Co.Donegal, On his recent engagement to our daughter Maria Antoinette Healy, presently working in Donegal Town, Love and best wishes to them both from, **The Mummy in Tipp!!**

Good Luck Shay!

Mr. & Mrs Given spoke to our sports correspondent Angela Mureany before the Roy Keane fiasco.

As we approach the World Cup, Angela decided to have a little chat with the Given family and found two lovely, down-to-earth local people who are extremely proud of their son's achievements.

Q. How does it affect the family having a famous footballer in the house?

A: It's not too bad now. We've learned to live with it. We're very proud of him and look forward to watching him play and reading about him but there are no big changes about here in the family household. We just go about our normal "duties"! We talk to him on a daily basis. His brothers and sisters are very proud of him too and would talk to him nearly on a daily basis as well. He was brought up just like the rest of them. He got no special treatment and still gets no special treatment when he comes home.

Q: When did he start playing and has it always been a passion?

A: It was a passion from when he was 10 years of age. He didn't always play as a goalkeeper. He played outfield as well. He played

Gaelic but he had a great interest in football. It was a passion. He loved it. We never thought he would make it so big. This is a chance of a lifetime.

Shay played his first senior game for Lifford Celtic in September 1991. That was more or less the start of his career, aged 15 years. That was a great season he had in Lifford Celtic. They went to the semi finals of the All Ireland Junior Cup. They were beat by Neilstown Rangers over in Dundalk and he got "Man of the Match" that day. They had a lot of scouts at that game and it took off from there. That was April 1992 and in late June early July that year he shook hands on the deal with Celtic and then he went over on the 1st September to Glasgow

Q: Who would be his heroes when he was a child?

A: Schmiechel of Man. United. He still idolises him to this day even though Shay got "Goalkeeper of the Year" when Schmiechel was still playing in the Premiership. That's a big achievement in itself especially with Schmiechel being his idol for so long. He even has his autographed jersey and gloves.

Q: Has the lifestyle changed him in any way?

A: Not in the slightest! You should have seen him last night in the hotel in Dublin (before going to Japan) You would have thought he was in a



“Of Boats and Men”
A review by Jerry Drumm.



A very interesting publication of local interest and local origin has been recently penned by Billy Patton. Published by The Old Courthouse this pamphlet gives a concise and readable account of the history of the Finn and the Foyle over the past 2,000 years. Well illustrated with apt drawings and maps of the era there is bound to be something for everyone. Starting in 2AD and continuing through the visits of the Viking longboats over a thousand years ago to the use of the river to transport 1,085 tons of rails for the Finn Valley Railways the publication is a mine of information and anecdote. It is hoped that this will be the first of many publications of local interest, a hope which will be better realised if we give it our full support. If you are interested in a copy of the little booklet “Of Boats and Men” copies are available at the Old Courthouse, Lifford and select outlets for the modest sum of 1 euro.

Your Letters



Gartan Clay

Mrs. Edwards would like to thank Tony and Sally Patton of Ballybofey for the Gartan Clay they got for her. On a recent visit to Gartan they managed to trace the Friel family in charge of collecting the clay. Mrs. Friel told them that apart from rats and drowning the clay is also a protection against fire and sudden death. We also managed to trace some of the story behind the clay. The legend is mentioned in Manus O’ Donnell’s book on the life of Colmcille, written c1532, and concerns Eithne, Colmcille’s mother. This account is taken from “Pilgrimage West” by Vera Mc Fadden:

“In this legend Eithne was staying in Gartan and was expecting a child. An angel told her to go to Lake Akibbon, find a flagstone on the lake and have it brought to Rath Cno. With the help of sturdy men from the clan they got the stone, but on the way to Rath Cno Eithne’s pangs of childbirth began. Eithne rested at a certain spot and it was bloodstained. One of the clansmen covered this place with leaves and bracken, and Eithne told him that only himself and his descendants

bar in Lifford. He hasn’t changed one bit. He’s the same Shay. When he comes home he goes around and visits all his friends and they come here to the house.

It hasn’t changed his life but his lifestyle would be changed. He lives in a wealthier bracket now than he would have, had he stayed about here. They’re not allowed to go out drinking and that. They don’t have a social life and their wives and girlfriends have no social life either unless what they make of it themselves. He can’t go out in Newcastle or he’d be swamped by back-slappers. If he goes shopping he has to go to Manchester or London, he can’t go down town. That’s a tough part of it.

“Dad says I remember one day when he was out with me in his early days. We were window-shopping and every time I looked round behind there were these guys going down kissing the ground. I didn’t know what was going on. This was them actually kissing the ground that he walked on. He’s like a god over there. He’s even more popular than Shearer. I’m not being biased when I say that. The papers over there would tell you that. Even when Alan Shearer won the North East “Player of the Year” he said he felt embarrassed accepting it over and above Shay Given. That was his words.”

He looks after himself. He doesn’t drink or smoke and he never has a

late night. There were 5 or 6 of us over there recently and we all went out on the Thursday and Friday night. But he, having a match on Saturday couldn’t go out with us. Come Saturday night when the game was over he decided he would go out with us and it was his first night out since the 10th of August last year.

Then when he does go out he has to have security guards with him. No matter where we went security guards surrounded us. There were 4 of them went with us everywhere. It was very unusual. But he loves it over there. He loves Newcastle and the area and has just signed a new 5 years contract.

Q: How do you think they’ll do in the World Cup?

A: I might be more optimistic than most people but I do feel that they have a very good chance of reaching the semi-finals. The guys are playing with such big hearts and their hearts are on the outside of their shirt. They’re playing so hard for it. These are the 23 that have to do the business for us now. We’re not even near favourites but I think the majority of supporters expect us to get through the group. Once you get out of the group you’re only two games away from the semi-final. When Shay gets out there he’ll do his best and be able to hold his head up with everybody else.

**Morton's Distillery-
Lifford's First
Industry**



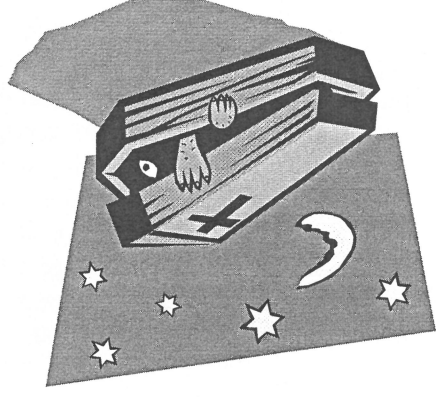
The following numerous account turned up in an undated unsigned newspaper cutting in the County Archives. However, even though the date is uncertain, at least we do know where the Morton Business was because it shared the same site as 'Erne Terrace' which is the pair of two-storey houses next door to the courthouse.

This they did, and for a time, successfully, but then, as now there were lynx-eyed excise officers running round, who ferreted out the game and caught the men at work on the native article. A fine of £800 was imposed for the offence and this ended the first and last industry belonging to Lifford.

"The two houses called Erne Terrace stand on a part of the ground known as 'Morton's Distillery'. For years, the tall old smoke stack that stood in the centre of the yard, behind these houses, was an object of attraction to all passers-by and many were the enquiries made about it.

The Morton Family erected it, and all the other buildings required for the distillation of whiskey. For many years they did a fairly good business but poteen making in the district becoming popular, their trade, and consequently this prospect gradually diminished, until they finally took it into their heads to try poteen-making too.

It is said, that their youngest brother, Moses, was so sorry for defrauding the government, that he had a coffin made for himself, and kept it by him to remind him of his transgression of the law. I know that, in removing from Lifford to Strabane, he took it with him and that a carpenter whom he had employed to repair an office house, being short of materials, cut it up and mended a manger in the stable with it, to the grief of Moses, whose one living hope was that he would be buried in the old shell."



Me cup of misery is overflowing,
And it isn't even full yet.

**Vacancies! Vacancies! Vacancies!
Student Summer Job Scheme**

Interested in Donegal history and would like to work in a mid 18th century heritage centre? Then the place for you this summer is the Old Courthouse, Lifford. We have 8 vacancies for tour guides, receptionist, shop assistant and researcher/writer.

For further information and application form, first contact the Social Welfare office in Dublin, tel 01-7043875 then, for job interviews phone Gillian at the Old Courthouse, Lifford, tel. 074-41733.

More Vacancies!

Catering Assistant/ Receptionist/ Tour Guide/Writer-Researcher. If you have been in receipt of Social Welfare Benefit for 3 years or more and are over 35 years of age then we have 1 full-time/ 2 part-time positions for the above vacancies. For details phone Gillian at the Old Courthouse, Lifford on 074-41733.

The Courthouse Restaurant



Friends, Patrons and Customers! Please note that we are changing our Sunday Lunch specials for the duration of the Summer season and converting to a carvery. So come along and choose from our new range of Main courses and desserts... and a little glass of wine, perhaps ? Bon Appetit!!

Fathers Day, June 16th



Mammys have had their go, now it's the oul fella's turn. Sunday, June 16th is your chance to treat the Da. And don't let him use the World Cup football on the telly as an excuse because if he wants to, he can watch the game at the Old Courthouse Restaurant where we are putting on a Father's Day Carvery Special. For details and bookings see our ad.

RECIPES!!!

Simple Chicken Stroganoff

Vary an old traditional favourite with tasty turkey or chicken and Dijon mustard. (serves 4)

Ingredients

1 tbsp. Oil
1 large onion (sliced)
1lb/8oz chicken breast (cut into pieces)
150ml dry white wine
1 small bunch spring onions (sliced)
250ml pot double cream
2 tsp Dijon mustard

Preparation

1. Heat oil in pan, add onion and cook for 3-4 minutes until soft. Add chicken to the pan, cook for 4-5 minutes or until the chicken is golden in colour.

2. Pour in the wine and cook until the liquid has reduced by half.

3. Add the spring onion, cream and mustard to pan. Season well and cook for a further 5 minutes or until chicken is cooked and the sauce has thickened.

Serve stroganoff with potato wedges, steamed rice or sautéed courgettes.

This is the first of a series of recipes which we intend to include in the Courthouse News! This one is kindly supplied by our own courthouse chef, Geraldine, but we would like to feature other recipes

from the locality. So, if you have a favourite you would like to share then please send your recipe to "The Old Courthouse News", Lifford.

Quips and Quotes

Change is inevitable,
Except from a vending machine.

Latest surveys show that
3 out of 4 people make up 75%
of the world's population

"The world is a messy place, and
unfortunately the messier it gets,
the more work we have to do."

Kofi Annan

If you have to work for a fool,
You may as well work for yourself.

"Two quick ways to disaster;

1. Take nobody's advice
2. Take everybody's advice

Ralph Cansier

God grant me the senility
To forget the people I never liked
anyway,
The good fortune to run into the
ones I do,
And the eyesight to tell the
difference.

Seen on a Dallas Billboard;-
"Have you read my no.1 best seller?
There will be a test."

God

Frankenstein

A true story by Mary Egan

We were talking about ghost stories one evening when something that happened to my sister and me about thirty years ago came back to me. We lived in Castlefinn then and the two of us wanted to watch Frankenstein on the telly. After begging to get watching it everyone went to bed and Alice and me settled down to watch the big film.

The telly was under the stairs and at the bottom of the stairs was the back door. It had a bar on this side of it and an old time latch. To cut a long story short, the film was getting good. Frankenstein was banging on the door in the telly now shouting, with a big bolt in his neck when at that moment our back door let a rattle, then a bang then the latch started going up and down like there was a lunatic behind it. Our Alice looked at me and shouted "Run Mary, quick get Daddy"; well my nerves were gone at that.

I had to pass the back door, sure it was at the bottom of the stairs, and it was fair rattling. So I reached for our Alice and ran past the door, up the stairs and woke him up, "Daddy quick, there is someone trying to get in the back door". It took a bit of convincing as he didn't believe us, but then the banging started again. He jumped out of bed, pulled on the trousers and braces, got on his hands and knees and pulled an axe and a torch from under the bed. "Right!"

he shouted "I have an axe here and if you don't get out of that, I'll cut you in two!" He looked at me and said, "Come on Mary! Hold the torch and on the count of three I'll open the door. You put on the torch and I'll open him!!" He said this loud so whoever was there would hear him.

We were at the door, and still the latch was jumping and the noise at that stage - I'd swear the door was breathing in and out. I knew that when that door would open, I'd faint. Torch and all would go, and we would all be killed. So, "One.. two.. three.. Torch on, Mary!" back door opening and my father shouting about killing yer man on the other side but no one was there!!!

We were standing in the scullery, the outer door was locked. The windows were locked and there was nobody there. My father said it must have been a cat or something, but I knew he didn't believe that himself. The opposite side of the door had marks on it, marks that were not there before. Like someone had been clawing the other side and anyway no cat could lift the latch. Well, no more was said. Off to bed, didn't sleep though- and no more Frankenstein!



my time from greasy cafes to fancy restaurants, but the comfort of a no frill, homely atmosphere with great food, great company and no pressure to move on is priceless.

Even a visit to the bathroom proved what I've always felt, to be true, a nice clean bathroom, means good hygiene all round. So if you're in Donegal Town in the near future or even if you're not, the Delhi Diner is well worth a visit, for excellent food, excellent service and excellent prices too.

Delhi Diner

Sit in and Take Away

Indian and European Dishes

Opening Hours

Mon/Thur 5pm-12am

Fri/Sun 5pm-Late

Main Street,

Donegal Town

073-23939

Delhi Diner in Donegal!!!

Having grown up in the Curry capital in England, I was a bit dubious of the claim I heard that a new curry house in Donegal Town was out of this world. So a couple of friends and I thought we'd give it a try. One friend had spent time in India and is seasoned to spicy food; the other has had a couple of curries in the last year during trips to Birmingham.

We arrived there at 6.30pm and were initially struck by the basic nature of the decor but I now know that the expression 'Don't judge a book by its cover' is definitely the case here. The staff are very welcoming and pleasant. They don't have a license at the 'Delhi Diner' but the off-license across the road had a lovely selection of wines, which we were encouraged to buy by the diner staff, which they poured without a corkage charge. We didn't have to wait long for our food and the display that was presented to us filled the table. One friend had the Jaipuri made with chicken with a thick dry sauce and the other went for spicy vegetable dish. I went for a special Balti Bhuna consisting of lamb, chicken and king prawn. All dishes came with rice and salad, but we had to have a man bread with it to dip in the sauces!! Now I don't know about you all out there but I've been to all sorts of eateries in

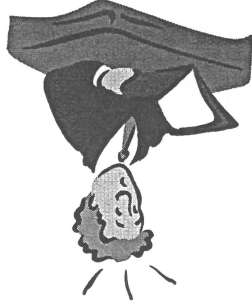
would have been written by people, say, in administration and business. So archives could be minutes of meetings, correspondence or say in Council terms, planning applications and manager's orders. They are totally different from libraries but obviously fairly different information can be gained from either facility.

Q.3: What kind of materials have you got, is there anything you don't have and would like to have?

A: At present we have the Board of Guardians Workhouse records from the 19th century. They are very popular with researchers, historians and academic students who all use the registers, minute books and other documents. That is probably the best collection we have here in Donegal if not one of the best in the country. We also have the Grand Jury and Health Board records, though not an awful lot of those; but we do have the minutes of the Board of Health and Public Assistance and the old Rural District Council. We also have very good County Council and Pre-Council records, such as housing, cottage records, maps, plans and applications dating back nearly a hundred years. But what I'd like to see us develop is privately donated records such as estate papers, business, community and sporting

I asked Niamh Brennan who works in the Donegal County Archives, to call in for a chat as I think she has one of the nicest jobs in Lifford, surrounded in History and tradition.

Niamh and the Archives.



Q1. What got you interested in this line of work?

A: I was interested in history and already had a degree and doctorate. I worked for the County Council in Dun Laoghaire and they were looking for local authority archivists to look after the archives and records so I thought it would be a good combination. I had the experience and the qualifications and the interest in History and that's what got me started." Niamh had to do a postgraduate diploma in Archives so she took a year out to do that in U.C.D.

Q.2: What is the difference between archives and a library?
A: "A library is mainly printed material, books, pamphlets and publications whereas Archives would be original documents that

HARTES BAR

LIFFORD (074) 41628

JUNE

1 st	FULLY BOOKED
2 nd	Spirit of Freedom
6 th	The Mad Arabs
7 th	Fresh Vibes
8 th	Philis
9 th	D. Wilder
13 th	The Mad Arabs
14 th	Carisma
15 th	Street Life
16 th	Trisha
21 st	Astro
22 nd	The Fluffy Ducks
23 rd	Stardust Oldies
28 th	Joe Quigley
29 th	Nite Life
30 th	Quicksilver

Promotions

every Thursday Nite
9.30-10.30 Buy one get
one free
10.30-11.30 €100
giveaway

Punters Perks

WEEKDAYS 10.30-5.00
All drinks reduced by
50cents



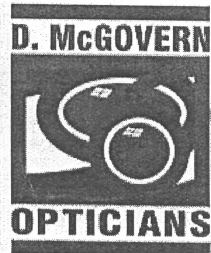
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records - anything that has to do
with Donegal's cultural heritage.

Q.4: How do you track that sort of material down?

A: The county museum and myself
are looking for more material and
artefacts so we are thinking of
putting a joint ad in the local papers.
At the moment I'm collecting old
school Roll Books or records that
they want rid of as a lot are held in
terrible conditions. We could keep
them in good storage conditions and
if they need conservation work we
could do that and people would still
have access if they wanted to
research them.

I also rang the solicitor's in the
county, but got a very poor
response. I was looking for old
estate records or legal documents
they don't need anymore, but only
one or two replied. We'd also like to
get records and correspondence
from old businesses in the county.
All these things take time and it will
be a long process.

Q.5: There was some talk of custom-built premises here in Lifford, what's the latest on that?

A: The council has a cultural
services strategy and it's policy now
to supply premises and we hope to
have a custom built archives in the
next 4-5 years. Funding is a problem
though, because the council itself

hasn't a lot of money at the moment;
but we have the possibility of a site
and we're hoping we might get
outside funding. The site is in a
good spot outside the town with
plenty of room for development and
expansion. In the meantime, we
have a temporary storage facility
here in Lifford and an extension to
that in Letterkenny but the search
room and office will stay here in
Lifford.

Q. 6: What is the oldest document and in your opinion what is the most precious or valuable?

A: Well I'm not sure it's the oldest
document but definitely one of the
best acquisitions we have purchased
is a map dating back to 1801, so it's
over 200 years old now. It wouldn't
be the oldest, there would be some
records from the 18th century, but
this is a Grand Jury map and when
we were getting advice on whether
to buy it or not, because the person
who wanted to sell it was looking
for a fairly high price, I rang
different map experts and other
archivists who would have
experience in the area of maps and
they said they are very rare and that
it would be worth purchasing. Funny
enough nobody has ever come in to
look at it, or examine it since we
bought it! I think the minutes of the
Board of Guardians and Registers
are another important thing. At the
moment we are microfilming them

Lifford/Cionleigh Community Link Group

to make sure they are preserved in every way possible. When we have finished the Ballyshannon ones we will go onto Dunfarnaghy. It will probably take up to 4 years to get them all done, as it's very expensive but a good method of preservation for the future. The only risk is that we have to send them away but the firm we picked are very good with a good reputation. They take about 25 of them at a time and bring them back after a month. They look after them well and we've had no problems and the micro - film so far is very good quality. The other material we want to microfilm is the council minutes and minutes of Lifford county infirmary that date back to the 18th century. Things like that are valuable, you couldn't put a price on them".

Niamh will be having an open day during Heritage week in September. Last year it turned into an open week!! This year it will be set up in the training room in the council building in Lifford where there is more space. So I recommend a day out in Lifford to visit Niamh and all she takes so much care of.

THANKS TO RODNEY PORTER (TOOT) FOR HIS LIFFORD WORLD CUP DECORATIONS. MUCH APPRECIATED!



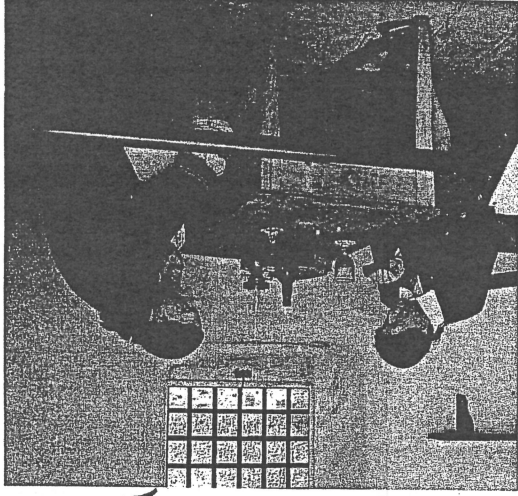
Lifford/Cionleigh Community Link Group is made up of representatives from local community groups and interested individuals. One of the aims of the group is to work towards improving the appearance of Lifford Town and also to organise special events.

Hopefully for Xmas 2002 Lifford will have lights, decorations and a special Xmas celebratory event. The group will be working hard through the coming year and would welcome the support of local people, including local businesses. Naturally, fund-raising is a big part of the group's work and hopefully will be supported and welcomed by the community.

If you would like more information or would like to be part of the group contact Mandi Dolan at Lifford/Cionleigh Resource Centre on 42868.

The Old Courthouse
~ Restaurant Lifford

FATHER'S DAY



barney special
Prices
ADULTS €11.50
CHILDREN €5.75

JUNE 16TH 2002

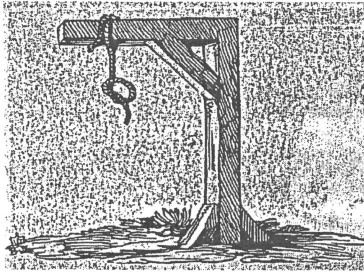
Father's Day barney special!
Sun. 16th 12.30-4pm.

FEED THE OUL FELLA

Napper Tandy and James Stillee enjoy a glass of port and a game of dice after their Fathers Day Feed at the Old Courthouse, June 1801

FEED THE OUL FELLA

FOR BOOKINGS
PHONE GILLIAN
074 41733



The next day the scaffold was erected over the main hall door of the jail in front of a room known as the execution or “drop-room” After this final public execution, the entrance way to the platform was replaced by a small window which can be seen in the photograph. According to one story, the hatchet which James Stewart had used in the murder was kept in the execution room of the jail for many years before being finally thrown in the river.

To witness this final act, 12,000 people packed into Lifford Diamond and surrounding streets. The following extract, from a newspaper of the time, is a gruesome account of the last public hanging in Lifford:

“At 4pm, the door of the fatal drop-room was opened, and the wretched culprits, dressed in whit robes, appeared. Having been placed under the beam, they drew down their caps over their eyes and the drop fell. James died without a struggle- but the rope by which Alexander was suspended, broke: and he was precipitated to the pavement, a distance of 40 feet. He fell with the side of his head on his own coffin, which was broken: and he rebounded off it a few feet. He was instantly carried in by two officers of the Gaol.

The executioner, also dressed in white, with the part that covered his face daubed over in black, soon put another and stronger rope over the block and again raised the drop.

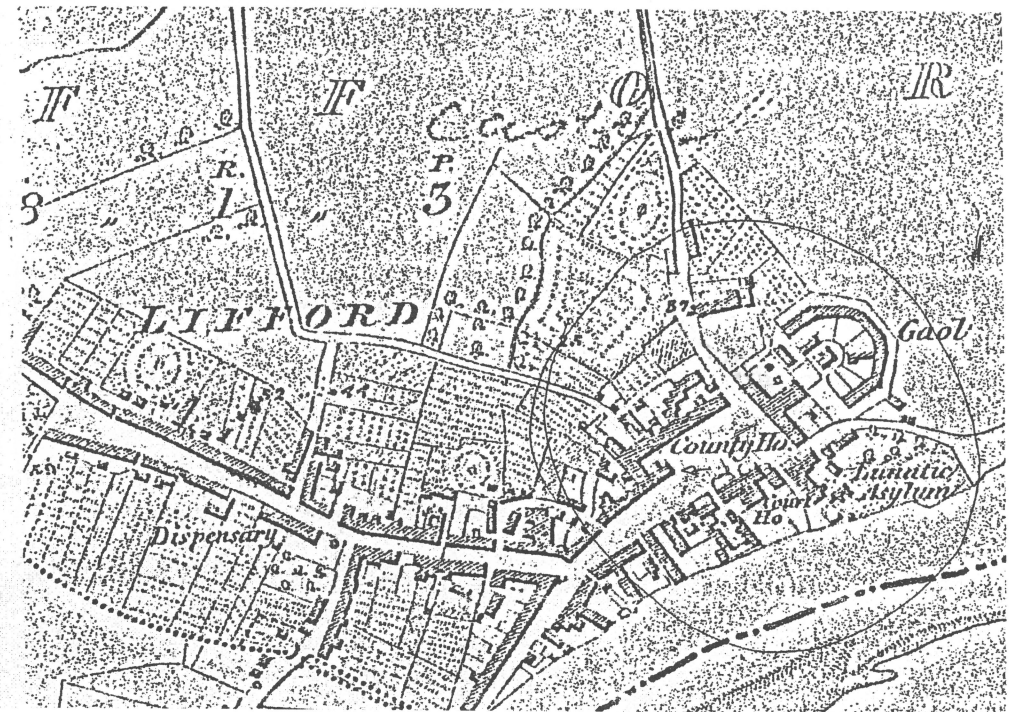
In about 20 minutes from the time he fell, to the astonishment of the assembled multitude, Alexander again appeared, and walked out on the drop, more firmly than before. He took his place- and the signal being given, the drop was again dropped, but it rested on the shoulder of James, who was pushed aside and Alexander was launched into eternity-but not immediately.

The board slowly moved down, sliding along James’s body. The knot of the rope had shifted round the chin of Alexander and he suffered dreadfully for several minutes. His whole body was convulsed; during the strangulation, he several times put his feet to the wall, and pushed himself from it with great force-his clothes burst open so that his naked breast was seen-and the cap, not being altogether over his face, blood was seen flowing from the wound which he had received on the cheek, in the fall. At length his hands fell-his body was seen to stretch – and he hung motionless alongside his brother. After hanging for the usual time, they were cut down, and the bodies handed over for dissection.”

The New Gaol and the last public hanging in Lifford.

P.G. Anyone under 15 years who wants to read this article must be accompanied by an adult.

“A new building is expected to be finished in the early part of 1825. It will be a spacious, semi-circular edifice and will add much to the beauty of the town.” This entry in Pigot’s Directory of 1824 brings us to the final construction phase of Lifford jail. Whether or not a jail can add to the beauty of a town is a matter of opinion but it certainly was an edifice. Erected behind the existing “T” shaped building of 1793, this three-story semi-circular jail gave the overall complex a distinctive “D” shape. (see map of 1838).



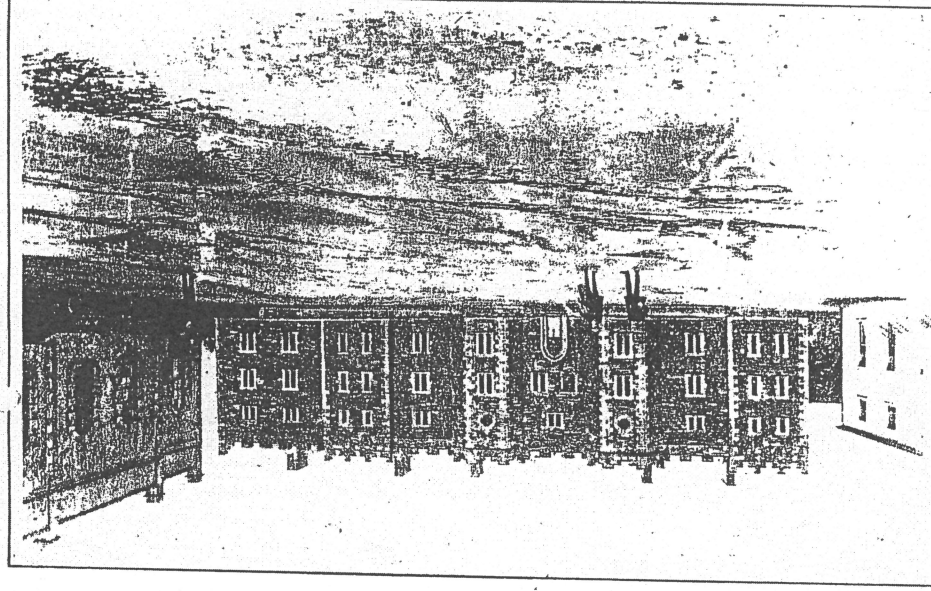
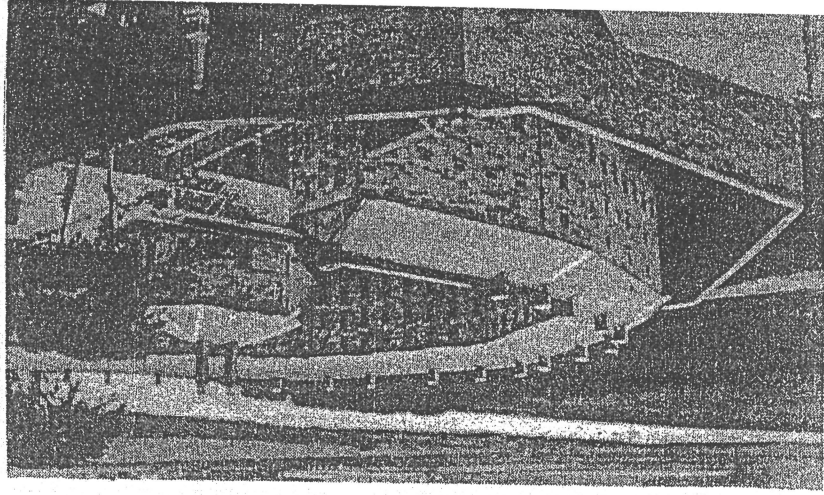
Built partly by a Government loan of £6000 it was divided into 6 wards and consisted of 85 cells, 11 day rooms, 6 workrooms, 4 solitary confinement cells for males and females, debtors apartments, storerooms and general kitchen. A schoolroom, a hospital, a chapel, separate apartments for each of the six turnkeys, matron, assistant matron and schoolteacher plus offices and the Governor’s house. It had a capacity for 124 prisoners and was connected to the courthouse by

It was from this prison that the two Stewart brothers, James (25) and Alexander (22) were led to be "launched into eternity" in April 1831. Sentenced to death by hanging for the murder of Martha and John Lytle on September 5th 1830, this was to be the last public execution to be held in Lifford. These dates proved very important to the present research team at the Old Courthouse because they coincide with the only remaining document relating to the daily running of the prison (The Turnkeys Report 1829-1831).

Using the contents of this document we have a rare opportunity of not only relating named prisoners to a date, an offence, a trial and a final sentence but also the behaviour and treatment of these men in their final days. From the time they were arrested along with their father and brother Patrick (later acquitted) they were constantly in trouble with the prison authorities. Unfortunately, the Turnkey's Report ends a month before their trial and execution but from September 1830 until February 1831 their names appear on over 30 occasions. Most of their misdemeanours were trivial e.g. not making their beds properly or idling from work and roasting spuds on the day-room fire. Their namesake and prison doctor also got them into bother when the turnkey, James Sharkey "heard James Stewart saying that Doctor Stewart was a quare doctor" Other offences were more serious such as theft and threatening behaviour. James even turned informer once and reported two men for speaking Irish. When one of them was heard calling him "a rascal" he had his milk ration stopped for an extra two days. Perhaps the most significant entry in the Turnkeys Report happened on November 3rd 1830 when it was claimed they were planning an escape. Although there was no evidence, nevertheless, their milk ration was stopped as punishment. This is how the Governor of Lifford jail put it "The milk of James Stewart and Alexander Stewart to be stopped for three days for denying and withholding from the Governor when questioned, a conversation which took place between them and Patrick Mc Ginty, respecting the breaking of the Prison".

There seems little doubt as to the guilt of the two brothers. After they had killed the Lytles with a hatchet while they lay in bed they set fire to the house. As a result, neighbours including a local policeman were quickly on the scene where they found the Stewarts still there. They also had to rescue a boyservant who had just hired with the Lytles that same day and who turned out to be a crucial eye-witness in the case. Even so, James was convinced he had not received justice and in a chilling climax to the trial he declared: "If Almighty God, before whom I will soon be judged, ever permitted man to have revenge, I will have it after my death" Then pointing in turn to the judge and jury said "I will visit you, and you, and you, after my death".

an underground security tunnel. As can be seen from the map and photographs it would have dominated the town.



Lifford Jail—Built 1823 to 1825