

Address in Irish by Dr Éamonn Ó hÓgáin, followed by the English translation

*An Óráid a thug an Dr Éamonn Ó hÓgáin
ar ócáid tiomnaithe Ghairdín Cuimhneacháin na Gráinsí*

A chairde na páirte idir chléir agus tuath

Inniu an ceathrú lá fichead d'Aibreán an dáta céanna agus a ghabh na hÓglaigh Ard-Oifig an Phoist. Nach an-mhaith an lá é atá roghnaithe ag Cumann Áitritheoirí Chroisire na Gráinsí anso againne?

Táimid tagtha le chéile anso inniu chun Cúigear Chathair an Ghiolla Mhóir – mar a thabharfaidh mé orthu – a chomóradh, chun an Gairdín Cuimhneacháin breá seo a bheith mar chuimneachán orthu. Ach preabann an cheist chugam de gheit, cad chuige é an leacht nó an gairdín cuimhneacháin atá anso don Chúigear? Cad chuige é dáiríre?

I mo chás féin agus mé i mo gharsún scoile théinn thar an leacht cuimhneacháin gach maidin agus mé ag triall chun scoil na Gráinsí agus ghabhainn thairis arís thar n-ais tráthnóna ar mo shlí abhaile dom. B'fhéidir go ngabhainn dhá bhabhta eile thairis ar an Satharn agus ar an nDomhnach. Bhí scéal na maruithe an oíche chinniúnach san i gCathair an Ghiolla Mhóir cloiste go minic agam ist oíche ar an dtinteán á eachtraí ag daoine a bhíodh ag bothántaíocht inár dtighne cúpla céad slat suas an bealach ansan amuigh ar shleasa Chnoc na Gráinsí. Ach in ainneoin sin agus uile, níor chorraigh an leacht mé ar aon tslí, is eagal liom. Bhí meas thar na bearta ag na scéalaith ar an gcúigear, mar a bhí agam féin, ach ní raibh sa leacht ach cuimhneachán ar na mairbh, rud ornáideach adhlactha nár bhain leis an saol laethúil.

Fillim, más ea, ar an gceist atá curtha agam i dtús mo chuid cainte – go lom, cad chuige an leacht nó an gairdín cuimhneacháin? Comhartha measa agus cuimhne amháin ar na daoine a maraíodh – gan faic eile? Neamhthuiscint agus neamhshuim sna haidhmeanna a bhí acu don Éire a bhí rompu? Ní healáí dúinn a bheith chomh támh lagspridiúil san agus gan meas gníomhach a bheith againn ar a gcuid aidhmeanna!

Féachaimis ar an gcúigear san dár muintir a maraíodh an oíche úd, 26/27 Nollaig 1920, i gCathair an Ghiolla Mhóir: An Captaen Máirtín Ó Conmhaigh (Baile na gCailleach), An Leifteanant Seán Ó Caoinleáin (An Ghráinseach), An tÓglach Éamonn Ó Maolomhnaigh (Raithean), An tÓglach Dónall Ó Síocháin (An Ghráinseach), An tÓglach Anraí Mac Uaid (Drom Bainte) – áiteanna go léir atá i mbéal an dorais againn, d'fhéadfá a rá, ach amháin Drom Bainte.

Cuirimis an cheist orainn féin cad a spreag iad chun aghaidh a thabhairt ar arm na hImpireachta ba mhó ar domhan an tráth úd? Cad a thug an misneach dóibh dul i gcoimheascar catha seachas a bheith ag bualadh báire go pléisiúrtha ar pháirc na hiomána?

Bhí cuid mhaith sruthanna a tháinig le chéile lena linn a chruaigh iad chun gnímh. Is féidir linne anso ar Chlár Geal Mumhan samhail oiriúnach a tharraingt chugainn féin - dúthaigh álainn shocair atá againn i rith an tsamhraidh – abhainn na Máighe ag gluaiseacht léi go socair maorga chun na Sionna, mionaibhneacha ag sní isteach inti go mall – an Lúbach trí Chill Mocheallóg, an Chamóg faoi Dhroichead Buin Bhriste sa Ghráinsigh, agus an Chamhaoir cois Binnlisín aerach an Bhrogha. Ach le teacht an gheimhridh nó aimsir na trombháistí atfaidh gach abhainn acu ina tuile rua agus atfaidh abhainn na Máighe féin. Is neartmhaire go mór abhainn na Máighe de thoradh tuilte na Lúbaí agus na Camóige agus na Camhaoireach a bheith ag brúchtaíl isteach inti.

Ba é an dálda céanna é ag na sruthanna fuinnimh agus brí agus eile a chuaigh i bhfeidhm ar an gcúigear Óglach a maraíodh i gCathair an Ghiolla Mhóir an oíche chinniúnach úd – agus a chuaigh i bhfeidhm ar fhearaibh agus ar mhná ar fud na hÉireann uile:

Sruth fuinnimh lucht na Parlaiminte agus a n-eagrúchán agus ná fuair ach geallúintí ó Shasana.

Sruth na staire, go minic sna scéalta ag baile cois na tine – scéalta faoi na Fíníní a thug faoin mbeairic i gCill Mocheallóg sa bhliain 1867, scéalta faoi chogadh na talún agus faoi dhaoine a cuireadh as seilbh le fórsa brúidiúil.

Sruth as tuiscintí nua agus braistintí nua ar chultúr na hÉireann agus ar a teanga á scaipeadh ag Conradh na Gaeilge agus scríbhneoirí Gaeilge agus scríbhneoirí Béarla, spiorad nua múscaite ag Cumann Lúithchleas Gael.

Sruth na stailce móire i 1913 agus eagrú lucht oibre.

Sruth cheannairc arm Shasana sa Churrach in aghaidh a rialtais féin.

Sruth a tháinig as íobairt fola na Cásca, as caithréim an phobail dá thoradh.

Sruth as bua Shinn Féin sa bhliain 1918 agus bunú Dháil Éireann.

Sruth de thoradh ar an ollsmacht neamhthuisceanach a thosnaigh ar bhail tofa Dháil Éireann a fhógairt ina meirlich agus a chur i bpríosún.

Sruth na cogáíochta a mhol Seán Réamann agus ceannairí polaitíochta eile chun dul ag troid sa Chéad Chogadh Mór, ag troid ar son shaoirse náisiúin bhig na Beilge. Mhúnláigh spreagadh an Réamannaigh meon na gcéadta míle Éireannach chun glacadh leis an gcogáíocht mar uirlis pholaitíochta. Ghlac roinnt mhaith daoine lena theagasc ach ba léir ó thorthaí thoghchán 1918 gurbh é troid ar son shaoirse na hÉireann rogha fhorhmór na tíre feasta.

Mhair cúigear Chathair an Ghiolla Mhóir tríd an ré shuaite sin agus níl a fhios againn go baileach cé mhéad de na sruthanna úd a ghabh lastuas d'aon duine ar leith dóibh. Ach tá a fhios againn gur mar Óglaigh na hÉireann a throideadar agus a thiteadar i ngleic le harm a naimhde. Bhíodar dílis do pholasaí na saoirse a bhí fógartha ag an bPíarsach os comhair Ard-Oifig an Phoist Luan Cásca 1916, polasaí a bhí mar bhonn ag Rialtas na Chéad Dálach i 1919. Thugadar a mbeatha mar shaighdiúirí ag seirbhís go deonach in arm an Rialtais sin. Is iad a d'adhain an tine beo - is é sin, cuireadar an bheocht i dtine na saoirse. Agus is sa cháilíocht sin atáimid á gcomóradh anso inniu.

Chuireas ceist i dtús mo chuid cainte - cad chuige é an leacht nó an gairdín cuimhneacháin atá anso don Chúigear? Cad chuige é dáiríre seachas mar chomhartha comórtha?

Ní saoirse pholaitíochta do thír na hÉireann amháin atá i gceist i bhForógra na Cásca, ach saoirse dá cuid saoránach laistigh den dtír a bheadh bunaithe ar chomhionannas cearta, saoirse chun caoi ar dhea-shaol ábhartha a chaitheamh, saoirse chun ár dteanga agus ár gcultúr a fhorbairt, saoirse chun a bheith bródúil asainn féin gan dochar d'aon náisiún eile. Tá cuid de na nithe sin bainte amach againn. Ach tá sé riachtanach go mbeimis i gcónaí gníomhach chun na lochtanna nó na laigí a aithint agus a leasú go síochánta daonlathach. Agus is é inár bpobal beag áitiúil féin is mó a d'fhéadfadh ár bhformhór feidhmiú ó lá go lá. Sampla maith gur féidir leis an bpobal seo againne gnó casta a phleanáil agus a thabhairt i gcrích é leabhar breá na Gráinsí a foilsíodh le déanaí.

Agus cuimhnímís ar ár dteanga féin, an Ghaeilge, atá riamh againn gan bhriseadh ó chéadleag na Gaeil a gcosa ar thalamh na hÉireann os cionn dhá mhíle cúig chéad bliain ó shin. Is orainne atá neamhspleách anois a thiteann sé chun í a thabhairt chun cinn mar theanga bheo arís inár bparóiste féin.

Cuimhnímís ar Níoclás Ó hAodha, fear léinn Gaeilge, feirmeoir, file, ó Raithean, nó Cathair an Ghiolla Mhóir, mar a scríobhadh sé féin, nuair a labhair sé go mórtasach ar na laochra Gael a bhí imithe roimis:

Gach saoi glan seasamhach seanga-choirp sásta séimh
de phríomhshliocht seabhac do leagfadh a námhaid le faobhar
guím chum an Phearsa fuair peannaid is páis is péin
ina ríbhrog go nglaca sé anam gan spás gach laoch

Díreach ansan istigh sa reilig in aice linn atá Nioclás curtha ag fanacht leis an aiséirí.

Críochnóidh mé le dán beag atá leath is leath i nGaeilge agus i mBéarla a foilsíodh san iris *Combar* na míosa seo – Louis de Paor an file, Corcaíoch:

Sinne Éire, sine sinn ná Cúchulainn is an Chailleach Bhéarra,
Ná na flatha fá raibh ár sean roimh éag do Chríost.
Sinne Éire, óige sinn ná an Píarsach is Ó Conghaile,
Ná Childers, a chroith láimh leosan a scaoil é.
We are those who went away and those who remained,
Those who came and stayed,
The sons and daughters of all the dreamers.
Our dreams may yet become us.

*Address delivered by Dr Éamonn Ó bÓgáin
on the occasion of the dedication of the Grange Garden of Remembrance*

[English translation by Brid Uí Ógáin]

Ladies and gentlemen

To-day the 24th of April is the same date on which the Volunteers seized the General Post Office in Dublin. Has not the day been well chosen by our Grange Cross Residents Association?

We have come together to-day to commemorate the Caherguillamore Five – to open this beautiful commemorative garden in their memory. But, questions come to me – do we need such a commemorative garden and monument, what is its purpose?

As a school boy I passed by the Monument to the Five every morning on my way to Grange school and again on my way home. I usually passed it by also on Saturdays and Sundays. I had often heard the stories of those who had died at Caherguillamore on the tragic night. These stories had been told by neighbours in my own home which was only a few hundred yards up the avenue on the slopes of the Hill of Grange. However, I fear that the Monument did not emotionally effect me. The story-tellers and we their audience had great admiration for the Five who died but we looked on the Monument simply as an ornamental gravestone to the dead.

I return to the question I already asked what is our purpose in having a Commemorative Garden and Monuments? Are they only meant to be marks of respect and as memorials of the dead? Do we forget or misunderstand the aims they had for their country? It does not become us to be apathetic and lacking in spirit and showing a lack of appreciation of their aims.

Let me first of all name that Five of our people who were killed that night of the 26/27 December 1920 in Caherguillamore: Captain Martin Conway (Holy Cross), Lieutenant John Quinlan (Grange), Volunteer Edmond Maloney (Rahin), Volunteer Daniel Sheehan (Grange), Volunteer Harry Wade (Drombanna) - all these places except Drombanna are quite near here.

Let us ask ourselves what encouraged them to fight against the biggest empire in the world at that time. What gave them courage to take up arms instead of enjoying themselves on the hurling fields?

Many strands came together at that time which hardened their resolve for action. Here in the Golden Vale we can consider some natural scenarios which may help us to visualise the power of varied forces when they combine. During the summer we have a beautiful peaceful landscape – the Maigue river flows gently towards the Shannon, tributaries flow slowly into the Maigue, the Lúbach through Kilmallock, the Camóg under Droichead Buin Bhriste (Sixmilebridge) at Grange and the Morning Star beside the delightful Binnlisín of Bruff. But, with the arrival of winter and heavy rain each river is in flood. The Maigue becomes much more powerful and an unstoppable torrent due to the waters from other rivers.

It was likewise in the case of the currents and energy of purpose which influenced the five Volunteers who died that night at Caherguillamore and also of course influenced men and women throughout the country at that time.

- the energy of the Parliamentary party and their organisations which only received promises from England.
- the pulsating current of history, in the stories heard by the fireside, accounts of the Fenians who attacked the barracks in Kilmallock in 1867, stories of the land war and of the families who were brutally evicted.
- the current of deeper understanding and feeling towards Irish culture and towards the Irish language. Conradh na Gaeilge was active in spreading this knowledge and perception as were writers in Irish and English and a new spirit had been awakened by Cumann Lúithcleas Gael.
- the current of the great strike in 1913 and the organization of labour.

- the stark sense of reality caused by the Curragh mutiny when the British army refused to take orders from its own government.
- influence of the 1916 Easter rising and awakening of people as its result.
- the reverberations of a Sinn Féin victory in 1918 and the establishment of Dáil Éireann.
- the anger resulting from the harsh treatment given to elected members of Dáil Éireann who were often denounced as felons and sent to prison.
- the effect of the call to fight in the first World War made by John Redmond and others – a call to fight for the right of a small nation, Belgium. Redmond influenced hundreds of thousands to regard war as a means towards a political end. Many young men followed his call but the 1918 election results showed that in future they would concentrate on getting independence for Ireland.
- the Caherguillamore Five lived through these troubled times and we are not sure how many of the various currents influenced any particular one of them. But we know they fought as Irish Volunteers and died under enemy fire. They were loyal to the proclamation made by Pádraig Mac Piarais in front of the GPO on Easter Monday 1916, a policy that laid the foundation for the first Dáil in 1918. They gave their lives as voluntary soldiers of that Dáil. They kindled the fire for freedom. Because of that we are commemorating them here to-day.

At the beginning to-day I posed the question – why do we have in Grange a monument and a memorial garden? Are they here merely to recall the past?

The Easter Proclamation was not only about political freedom for the country but for equal rights for all citizens, freedom to live with sufficient means, freedom to develop our language and culture, freedom to be a proud and independent nation without damaging any other nation.

We have achieved some of these aims. But we must recognise work still to be done and strive in a peaceful democratic way to achieve the high aims set by those before us. It is within our own local communities that most of us strive to act from day to day. The fine book on Grange which was published recently is a wonderful example of local planning and initiative.

Let us think also about the Irish language which has been spoken without a break since our ancestors first set foot on the land of Ireland over two thousand five hundred years ago. It depends on us now who are independent to see that it is a living language in our communities.

Let us remember Nioclás Ó hAodha [Nioclas Hayes] an Irish scholar, farmer, and poet from Raithean or Cathair an Ghiolla Mhóir as he wrote in the native classical Irish of Grange when he referred proudly to the heroes who had gone before him:

*Gach saoi glan seasambach seanga-choirp sásta séimb
de phríomshliocht seabbac do leagfadh a námbaid le faobhar
guím chum an Phearsa fuair peannaid is páis is péin
ina ríbbrog go nglaca sé anam gan spás gach laoch*

[The following prose translation lacks the musical cadence of the vowels of the Irish metre.]

[Every fine steadfast fellow, slim in body, pleasant, refined
of the noble line of warriors who would lay low their enemy with the sword
I pray to the One who suffered torment passion and anguish
that He will receive into His royal palace the soul without delay of each hero.]

Nioclás awaits the resurrection in a grave in front of the chapel door in our cemetery.

I will finish with a short poem half and half in Irish and English written by the Cork poet Louis de Paor and published in this month's magazine *Comhar*:

*Sinne Éire, sine sinn ná Cúchulainn is an Chailleach Bhéarra,
Ná na flatha fá raibh ár sean roimh éag do Chríost.
Sinne Éire, óige sinn ná an Piarsach is Ó Conghaile,*

Ná Childers, a chroith lámh leosan a scaoil é.

We are those who went away and those who remained,
Those who came and stayed,
The sons and daughters of all the dreamers.
Our dreams may yet become us.

[We are Ireland, older than Cúchulainn and the Hag of Beare,
Than the princes under whom our ancestors served before the death of Christ
We are Ireland, younger than Pearse and Connolly,
Than of Childers who shook hands with those who shot him.]