

Kilferagh & Sheestown Graveyards

Townland:	Kilferagh
Parish:	Kilferagh (Civil), St. Patricks (R.C.)
Ownership:	Church of Ireland
Rothe House No:	TG07a
BG No:	260
RMP No:	20-50-02
Geolocation:	E 654449, N 652320 (ITM) 52.619392, -7.195883 (WGS 84)
Recorded by:	Mrs Margaret M. Phelan and Mrs Madge Buggy
Survey Date:	Nov. 1970

Foreword:

Sheestown Church was the parish church of Kilferagh and probably successor to an older church some distance north near Fiachra's Churchyard or Kilferagh Castle. It overlooks the River Nore to the South-East of Kilkenny City. The patron saint is St. Fiachra of Meaux in France (Carrigan, Vol III, p 219). It is now in ruins and consists of a Nave and Chancel that probably date back to around 1100 A.D. It contains monuments to Robert Fforstal (1540), Lord of Kilferagh and his family. Also a slab showing the coat of arms of Sir Richard Shee (1578) is to be found inserted in the south wall and portion of a slab serving as a lintel of a door and containing reference to Richard, son of Marcus Shee. These were removed to Rothe House for preservation.

At the north end of the nave a broken floriated cross lies on the ground and outside near the west wall lies the top of another floriated cross. Here and there inside the church some stone corbals are to be seen. The oldest legible tombs in the Church date to the 1500s and belong to the Fforstals, one a floor slab fixed into the left wall of the Chancel, the other a large altar tomb with a beautiful interlaced cross.

Feechra's Churchyard as it was called by the people of the locality is small, on a hilly slope, to the south of Sheestown Church, it has no enclosing wall and contains only three inscribed monuments. One of these, Kenny Purcell's, enclosed by a small wall and railing, is an altar tomb which occupies the site of the cell of St Feechra. There are two monuments to the Power family. Some rough stones are to be seen but without inscriptions. Here too is a crudely carved limestone statue of an ecclesiastic arrayed in priestly vestments. The head and hands are missing and the statue stands 5 ft. high. The local people believe this to be a statue of St. Fiachra (Feechra).

Some distance away is Fiachra's Holy Well to which an annual pilgrimage is made on the feast of the saint – August 30th. In 1931 a grotto was erected here under the guidance of the late Rev. Ambrose Coleman, O.P. Black Abbey. Behind to the left of the grotto can be seen a niche in the side of a huge mass of rock, this is reputed to have been the bed of St. Fiachra. In August 1970, a French party of 21 led by the Bishop of Meaux arrived in Kilkenny and attended mass at the grotto.

Inscriptions:

Name	Tomb No.	Inscription
Bolger	1	(Last upright facing gate and stile) Erected by Joseph Ryan of Ballyhendricken in memory his grandfather, John Bolger who died November 17 th 1865 aged 80 years. His grandmother Anastasia Bolger died March 17 th 1889 aged 72. His uncle, Joseph Bolger died May 4 th 1891 aged 60. His aunt, Ellen Bolger died May 1 st 1887 aged 27 and her sister, Anastasia died June 8 th 1902 aged 48 and her sister, Margaret died January 6 th 1905 aged 46. Tomb maker - Gargan Bros. Note: Cross broken off above lies behind it.
Bulger	2	(Beside above) God be merciful to the soul of David Bulger who died 12 th February 1769 aged 68, also his wife, Mary Bulger alias McDonald who died ----- 1786 aged 72 and Mary Bulger died 1792 aged 43 and son, Joseph ----
Brennan	3	(Upright between Keeffe and Wall) Here lyes ye body of John Brennan who died May 18 th 1792 aged 17, also his father Charles Brennan who died August 1800.
Unknown	4	Note: Beside above an upright tombstone lies face down and is therefore unread.
Butler	5	(Upright with a lamb lying on cross) Erected by Tobias Butler in memory of his wife, Charlotte Mary Butler who died at Newpark, Kilkenny, April 10 th 1886 aged 72 years. Tomb maker - Hoban, Kilkenny
Cahill	6	(In line with James Kelly and facing gate). Erected by Mary Cahill in memory of her husband, Daniel Cahill who died 10 th March 1803 aged 86 years.
Cantwell	7	(West end, now leaning forward between Glindon and Quirke (1)) Erected by James Cantwell in memory of his daughter, Mary who died March 13 th 1813 aged 5 years.
Coffey	8	(Inscription on stone set into north wall of chancel) Martin Coffey, June 1821.
Farrell	9	(Upright between Quirke and Hennessy) Erected by Patrick Farrell in memory of his wife, Mrs Catherine Farrell alias Congriffe who died 29 th August 1792 ----- (rest underground)
Fforstal (1)	10	(A long narrow floor slab now fixed into the left wall of the chancel, broken in the centre and with a small piece missing from the side bears an inscription in old English lettering which runs around the edge in double lines and ends on the shaft and arms of the raised cross; it reads as follows) (Translation): "Here lie Robert Fforstal formerly Lord of Kilferagh and

		<p>Ballyfrank, Chief of his nation, who died March 16th 1540 and Patrick Fforstal formerly Lord of Kiferagh, who died April 18th and his wife Ellen Comerford who died June 25th 1568. On whose souls may God have mercy”</p> <p>Note: The words “Dus D Ballyfrank” occur over the top of the cross and out of their proper place.</p>
Fforstal (2)	11	<p>(A large altar tomb with beautifully interlaced cross in centre lies close to above also in old English lettering running around the sides and continuing on hands at both sides of the cross, reads as follows) (Translation):</p> <p>“Here lie Robert Fforstal, Esqr. who died September 14th 1585 and his wife Catherine ----- who also died ----- 1583, also Mr. James Fforstal who died ----- and his wife Ellis Shortall who died 25th of ----- 1597 together with Ellen Comerford, wife of said James who both erected this tomb at their own expense for their posterity”.</p> <p>Tomb maker - James Conney, 1608</p> <p>Note: Some lettering obliterated from above.</p>
Gore	12	<p>(Upright facing entrance gate and between Gory and Bulger)</p> <p>Erected by William Gore of Newhouse Ormond in memory of his son Daniel who died July 14th 1784 aged 24 years. Rest in Pace. Amen.</p>
Gory	13	<p>(Upright beside above)</p> <p>Here lieth ye body of Patrick Gory who died March 11th 1790 aged 58 years. May his soul rest in peace.</p>
Glindon	14	<p>(Large upright tombstone at west end)</p> <p>Erected by Patrick Glindon of Outrath in memory of his father John Glindon who died September 21st 1855 aged 73 years, also his mother, Mary Glindon alias Brophy who died 1st March 1845 aged 56 years and his brother Thomas died December 22nd 1846 aged 19 years. R. I. P.</p>
Henesy (1)	15	<p>(Upright and close to Hennessy (2) and evidently the same family, see similar names *)</p> <p>Erected by Mr Martin Henesy of Brownstown in memory of his father Mr. Symon* Henesy who departed his life 25th March 1825 aged 75 years. Also his mother, Mrs Barbara Henesy alias Keough who departed this life December 18th 1822 aged 62 years. Also his daughter, Mary* Henesy who died February 19th 1821 aged 3 years. Here also is interred the above Mr Martin* Henesy who departed this life November 11th 1847 aged 55 years.</p>
Hennessy (2)	16	<p>(Upright between Farrell and Quirk,)</p> <p>Simon* Henessy died March 25th 1825 aged 75 Mary* Henessy died February 19th 1821 aged 3 Martin* Henessy died November 11th 1847 aged 55 Catherine Henessy died August 28th 1877 aged 80 Katie Henessy died August 15th 1877 aged 14 Denis Henessy died April 6th 1883 aged 54 Edmund Henessy died May 2nd 1922 aged 61 Mary Henessy died July 29th 1902 aged 80</p> <p>Tomb maker - Gargan Bros.</p>

Kane	17	(Near chancel and behind Roberts – upright) Here lies the body of Richard Kane who died March 17 th 1765 aged 52, also his wife, Joan alias Kelley who died January 3 rd 1783 aged 63 with three of her children.
Keeffe	18	(Upright between Mulrooney and Brennan) Erected by Martin Keeffe, Walkin Street, Kilkenny in memory of his beloved wife Mrs Mary Keeffe who died 29 th October 1872 aged 58.
Kelly (1)	19	(All Kelly tombstones close together and near West wall). God be merciful to the soul of James Kelly who died 24 th November 1764 aged 58, also his son Patrick died 13 th April 1789 aged 30. Also the body of Mrs Mary Murphy alias Kelly of Outrath who died September 10 th 1813 aged 36 with one of her children. R. I. P. Deservedly regretted. Tomb maker - W. Brophy
Kelly (2)	20	(Large Celtic cross) Erected by Mrs Elizabeth Kelly of Lavistown in memory of her husband, John who died 3 rd December 1862 aged 64, also their son, James died April 6 th 1878 aged 33. A son, Edward died August 26 th 1884 aged 30. Son, Patrick died October 25 th 1892 aged 45. Also above Mrs Elizabeth Kelly died 25 th March 1893 aged 68. Side of Cross: Bridget Kelly died 23 rd March 1913. John died 13 th September 1926 and wife, Ann Kelly died 12 th May 1932.
Kelly (3)	21	(Small upright) Here lieth ye body of Michael Kelly who died January 28 th aged 1 year and 3 months, 1761 son to Paul and Joan Kelly alias Shea.
Kelly (4)	22	(Starting left to right and facing entrance) Here lies the body of James Kelly of Outrath who departed September 10 th 1762 aged 36 years, also his son Michael Kelly who departed April 22 nd 1794 age 42 with three of his children. R.I.P.
Kelly (5)	23	(In line with Kane and Roberts, facing gate) Here lieth ye body of Edmund Kelly who departed November 30 th 1761 aged 70, also his mother Kate Kelly alias Murphy died February 1773 ---- (Rest underground)
Kelly (6)	24	(Between Kelly (5) and Roberts; very worn) Here lieth the body of Mr Kieran Kelly of the City of Kilkenny, ----- 18 th January, Year of Our Lord 1773 aged 54. R.I.P.
Lawless	25	(Plain wooden cross) Jack Lawless R.I.P.
Maher	26	(Celtic cross between Butler and Quirk) Erected by Joseph Maher of Sheestown in memory of his beloved mother Bridget Maher who died August 20 th 1900 aged 55, his brother John Maher died October 16 th 1892 aged 20 years and three children.
Mulrooney	27	(Once upright, now leaning, between Kelly (3) and Keeffe)

		Erected by Bridget Mulrooney in memory of her husband, James of Gowran who died 8 th July 1820 aged 46, also his mother, Frances Mulrooney alias Keley who died 29 th July 182-- aged 56.
O'Connor	28	(Cross lying down near West wall) In loving memory of Peter O'Connor, Sheastown 9 th May 1910. Tomb maker - Gargan Bros.
O'Shee (1)	29	(Altar tomb in chancel; very worn) "In hoc signo vinces" Here lies the body of Colonel John O'Shee who departed this life 22 nd December 1813 aged 37 years, also Dinna (?Diana) O'Shee, his aunt. Also his brother, Arnold O'Shee who departed this life September 11 th 1813 Major, aged ? 71years.
O'Shee (2)	30	(An inscribed tablet previously set into chancel wall and now missing read) Here lies the body of Miss O'Shee of High Street, Kilkenny who departed this life 18 th Jan 1821 at the advanced age of 88 years. Likewise the body of Miss Catherine O'Shee, her sister who departed this life on Palm Sunday 1819 at the age of 77 years. R.I.P.
O'Shee (3)	31	(Celtic cross beside O'Shea below) Erected to the memory of Nicholas Power O'Shee, born 7 th August 1822 and died 31 st March 1902 and his wife Gwendoline died 14 th March 1912 aged 76? and who lies here at his side. R.I.P. Tomb maker - O'Shea, Kilkenny
O'Shee (4) or O'Shea	32	(O'Shee plot at west end (outside) church) In loving memory of Gwendoline, wife of Nicholas Power O'Shee and youngest daughter of the Earl of Litchfield, who died March 14 th 1912 aged 74 years.
Power (1)	33	(In St. Fiachra's Churchyard) D.O.M. God be merciful to the soul of John Power who died November 1758 aged 69, also his wife, Margaret Power alias Bergin died 1741 aged 50 with Thomas, Margaret, John, Joan and John, grandchildren of above and children of Patrick Power.
Power (2)	34	(In St. Fiachra's Churchyard) Erected by Matthew Power in memory of his father, Edward Power who died September 27 th 1813 aged 70, also his mother, Margaret Power died October 2 nd 1817 aged 70, also his son, Edward Power died January 24 th 1818 aged 2 years 7 months. Lord have mercy on their souls. Amen.
Purcell	35	(Inscribed altar tomb in St. Fiachra's churchyard on the site of what was believed to be the Cell of St. Fiachra. The altar tomb is enclosed by a wall and railing). Here rests the body of Kenny Purcell, Esq. who departed this life 30 th May 1861 in his 81 st year, Clerk of Peace for County of Kilkenny for nearly 20 years. Also the body of Frances Augusta, widow of William Henry Hunt, Esq. J.P., Jerpoint House and relict of Kenny Purcell Esq. She died 26 th July

		1882 aged 82 years. Note: Kenny Purcell was born in the Coalmarket, Kilkenny and purchased Kilfera House in 1857 (originally Ryans). William Henry Hunt was great great grandfather of Mrs Montagu Stopford who now resides at Kilfera. Mrs Kenny Purcell was a daughter of Paul Arthur Helsham – see St. Canice’s Cathedral Records.
Quirke (1)	36	(Upright between Farrell and Cantwell) Erected by John Quirke of Sheestown in memory of his father, Timothy Quirke who died January 8 th 1908 aged 85 years, also his niece, Mollie Quirke who died July 16 th 1906 aged 3 years. His mother, Mary Quirke died July 3 rd 1909 aged 75 years. R.I.P. Tomb maker - Gargan Bros., Kilkenny
Quirke (2)	37	Upright between Hennessy and Maher Erected by Michael Quirke in memory of his beloved wife, Judith Quirke alias Whelan who died May 3 rd 1815 aged 55 years. Timothy died June 29 th 1883 and his wife Mary, daughters Mary, Ann, Johanna, Katie and Ellen.
Reddy	38	(Upright nearest chancel and behind Roberts) Here lies the bodys of Philip Reddy and his son, James who died May 14 th 1749. <i>Requiescant in Pace</i> This stone was erected by his son, Edmund, September 19 th 1781. Edmund died April 7 th 1784 aged 54.
Roberts	39	(Upright facing front gate. Cross on top). Erected by John Roberts of Sheastown in memory of his father, James who died 26 th September 1868 age 72, also his mother, Elizabeth Roberts alias Brophy who died 14 th July 1869 aged 68. Also his brother, William died August 12 th 1845 aged 11 years and brother Michael died 18 th Sept 1848 aged 7 years, also above John died 21 st Jan 1886 aged 43 years, his wife Ellen died Jan 18 th 1913 aged 65, his son James died Feb 22 nd 1893 aged 21 years. Michael Roberts died Nov 18 th 1944 aged 80 years. R.I.P.
Shee (Coat of Arms)	40	Inserted in the front wall of Mr Barry Whelan’s stables nearby is a slab bearing the Shee Coat of arms and underneath the following: “Insignia Richard Shee Armigeri 1582 “ Mr Whelan lives at Sheestown House, originally the home of Col. G.I. Poer O’Shee. Inscribed tablet showing Shee Coat of Arms now in Rothe House reads: R. S. “Insignia. Richardi. Shee. Milites. qui. Hoc. Opus. Fecit. A. D. 1578”
Wall	41	(Between Reddy and fallen tomb stone and Brennan) Erected by James Wall in memory of his father, John Wall who died January 9 th 1809 aged 64 years, also his wife Mary Wall alias Carty who died February 27 th 1785 aged 42 years with six children of James Wall.

Index

Name	Embedded& Referenced Names	Tomb No.
Bergin	See Power (1)	33
Bolger		1
Brennan		3
Brophy	See Glindon	14
Brophy	See Roberts	39
Bulger	McDonald	2
Butler		5
Cahill		6
Cantwell		7
Carty	See Wall	41
Coffey		8
Comerford	See Fforstal (1)	10
Comerford	See Fforstal (2)	11
Congriffe	See Farrell	9
Farrell	Congriffe	9
Fforstal (1)	Comerford	10
Fforstal (2)	Shortall, Comerford	11
Glindon	Brophy	14
Gore		12
Gory		13
Henesy (1)	Keough	15
Hennessy (2)		16
Hunt	See Purcell	35
Kane	Kelley	17
Keeffe		18
Keley	See Mulrooney	27
Kelley	See Kane	17
Kelly (1)	Murphy	19
Kelly (2)		20
Kelly (3)	Shea	21
Kelly (4)		22
Kelly (5)	Murphy	23
Kelly (6)		24
Keough	See Henesy	15
Lawless		25
Litchfield	See O'Shee (4)	32
Maher		26
McDonald	See Bulger	2
Mulrooney	Keley	27
Murphy	See Kelly (1)	19
Murphy	See Kelly (5)	23
O'Connor		28
O'Shee (1)		29
O'Shee (2)		30
O'Shee (3)		31
O'Shee (4) / O'Shea	Litchfield (daughter of Earl of)	32
Power (1)	Bergin	33
Power (2)		34

Purcell	Hunt	35
Quirke (1)		36
Quirke (2)	Whelan	37
Reddy		38
Roberts	Brophy	39
Ryan	See Bolger	1
Shea	See Kelly (3)	21
Shee		40
Shortall	See Fforstal (2)	11
Wall	Carty	41
Whelan	See Qurike (2)	36