

arranged by wire for our accommodation, and would not go back on it, there was almost a riot between two rival houses, and I expected any moment to see the old Shillelagh's at work, but we managed to preserve the peace until we reached Killarney, we secured accommodation at Graham's Elbow Hotel, the groom met us at the station, and in a few minutes we were at the hotel, it was fairly late by this time, so after partaking of supper we decided on bed.

Aug 17<sup>th</sup> 17.

We were up and about early, and after breakfast

we took a stroll through the town, it is a busy little village, typically Irish, small diminutive donkeys pulling miniature drays, driven generally an old woman barefooted, and wearing a shawl; a good number of our lads were in the town, and they seemed to be quite at home; the previous night we arranged to do the grand tour of the lakes, and at 10 am two drays carried a party of 10 of us, the morning was beautiful, the sun was shining, and we were all in great spirits, our driver pointed out objects of interest as we proceeded, and between times told us Irish

yards, of which he seemed to have an unlimited supply. He was a great character, and with his blenny would make the proverbial cat smile. The tour of the lakes is done in stages, the first is a drive of several miles to the entrance to the gap of Dunloe, this drive is very lovely, most of the way we carried the Earl Kilmorock's property with us, he is the largest land owner in the County of Kerry, about 11.30 am we finished our drive, pulling up at Kete Kearney's cottage, the little white washed cottage has a history all its own. It is said that his lady, Ka-

203  
 Kearney was the most beautiful woman in all Ireland, and was greatly sought after by many her lovers; now it is used to supply refreshments, wet and dry, here I first tasted Poteen and mountain dew, the former is whisky made from potatoes, and has a decidedly smoky flavour, mountain dew consists of goats milk mixed with Poteen. I partook of it rather sparingly, for a little of it goes a good way, I bought a pipe here made from bog oak, it was carved fantastically, and was rather a good souvenir, but I afterwards saw

it to a friend of mine, who greatly fancied it; the next stage of our journey was through the beautiful gap of Dumboc, usually this is done on horseback, but when we came to count the ponies we found we outnumbered them by one, and as I was the fittest of our party it fell to my lot to pad the hoof the whole way, I did not mind this, for the gap is not bad walking, and a walk of seven miles had no fears for us; from Kate Kearney cottage we gradually ascended, until we reached the highest point of the road some

1200 ft, all the way we had to patronise some friend or another who for our benefit blew a trumpet or fired a pistol so that we could appreciate the remarkable echo it produced, when we were not pestered with these gentry it would be some old dame who would hold forth as to the merit of Poter or mountain dew, and shure sorr wauls ye not be thrying a wee drap of the mountain dew, and God bless ye sorr and may ye come back again with a lady as fine looking as yourself; we met with Blarney Blarney everywhere, of course we did

not swallow all we were told, but it was very amusing to hear these people, who since they were born had no doubt told the same tales to thousands of visitors who have visited this famous spot.

We reached the third stage of our trip, the upper lakes, at 1.30 pm, here we had lunch, and entered the rowing boats that were waiting us, and we started on our 1st mile spin down the three lakes of Killarney, upper, middle, and lower, the upper lake is the smallest of the three, but it is really hard to say which is the more beautiful, on either

side of us we had great towering mountains, the highest being the McGillicuddy Reeks, from time to time as we passed along we saw deer grazing on the slopes, through a pair of field glasses we obtained a splendid view, one the largest of the lot was a real beauty, we counted 14 antlers on his head, he was quite close to us, and did not seem at all disturbed at our presence, and seemed to gaze enquiringly at us as we passed along; several of our party hallooed and shouted to see what sort of an echo it would produce, I tried my hand or rather voice at the

208  
good old Coo'ee, and with good results, so good in fact that I was asked to repeat it so often that at last I jibbed, this call lends itself splendidly to an echo, it seems to ring on from place to place until it gradually dies away in the distance.

We ~~passed~~ <sup>passed</sup> from the upper to the middle lake after shooting the rapids at the old Weir bridge, it is rather good fun this shooting ~~shooting~~ of the rapids, at times it is very rough and also dangerous, but it was just right at this time, the rapids are caused through the waters of the upper lake pouring

209  
into the middle lake, and at this spot is confined to a small passage, and bubbles and boils along right merrily.

It is beyond me to attempt to describe the glorious beauty of Killarney, no pen or <sup>picture</sup> can possibly do it justice, so I will not attempt the impossible.

The middle and largest lake of the three is about five miles long and nine wide, we passed Colleen Bawn rock on our right but did not stop to inspect it on this day, we proposed seeing it the following day; at last we reached the Weir.

ing of the waters at Bricken  
 bridge, this is one of the most  
 beautiful spots one could possi-  
 bly imagine, it is simply  
 gorgeous; we passed along  
 into the lower lake, the last  
 of the three, and finally  
 reached Ross Castle where  
 we left the boats, we had  
 finished our trip through the  
 most glorious lakes in the  
 world, it is no wonder  
 people say "see Killarney and  
 die", nothing more beautiful  
 can ever be seen.

Ross Castle is  
 a very interesting old place,  
 it was originally the seat  
 of the O'Monaghs and through  
 a marriage with <sup>one of</sup> the Ross

Clan, it was so named,  
 it is now the property of  
 the Earl of Kenmare, we were  
 allowed to go all over it, and  
 a keeper explained its history  
 to us as we went along,  
 there is little left of it now  
 except the outer walls, and  
 stairways, but we climbed  
 to topmost portion of the build-  
 ing where the Kenmare flag  
 was flying to denote that  
 the Earl was at home; this  
 building was last attacked  
 and destroyed by Oliver Crom-  
 well, who outwitted its defend-  
 ers by attacking it from the  
 water instead of by land  
 as they anticipated, the gues-  
 were all unarm'd and turned

2  
towards the land, and I do  
live that the taking of the  
Castle proved an easy one  
for the Ironsides; the original  
guns for its defence are still  
on view, never having been  
shifted from where they were  
first placed.

We finished our  
days outing by driving from  
Ross Castle into Kilkenny,  
arriving there in nice time  
to have a wash and brush  
up and sit down to a  
good substantial dinner,  
we spent the remainder of the  
evening in the town, where we  
were treated to lunkings and  
lavings of the pale blarney.

213  
Aug 18<sup>th</sup> - 17.

We arranged to go  
for a long drive through the  
Kilkenny district, most of  
the way embracing the lakes,  
we started out about 10 am  
and our first halt was  
at Buckross Abbey, now al-  
most a total ruin, this was  
the property of the ~~order~~ order,  
and until Cromwell invaded  
Ireland was a rich and  
prosperous order, he attacked  
and partly burnt it down,  
the roof which consisted of  
thatch was completely  
destroyed, but a number of  
the order still continued to  
live there for many years  
afterwards, when they finally

214  
left the Abbey and returned to Louvain, where the headquarters of the order were.

There is plenty of evidence to show that the building was once a very fine structure, it is beautifully situated, a most glorious drive leads up to it; the walls of the abbey are almost covered in ivy; inside the building one can see the cloister walk where the monks marched around and around reciting their orisons, one of the trees, an old yew, is very ancient, it is a fine piece of timber, and great care is taken to preserve it, barb wire has been placed

215  
around it, to prevent people from cutting their names and otherwise defacing the tree, still <sup>the</sup> barb wire did not prevent us from securing a small twig that I wanted as a souvenir; this property and the country immediately surrounding it is now the property of a Mr Vincent, a son of one of America's millionaires who purchased it a few years ago, this gentleman is a very large landowner in the County of Kerry, in fact ranks second only to Lord Kenmare; I was told he spends large sums of money preserving and improving the property he has acquired, the roads are in splendid order

and it was grand to be  
howling along in a jouncing  
car with a good sleeping pony  
in the shafts; we left the  
Abbey behind and continued  
through Vincent's estate which  
continues for a number of  
miles on one side of the  
lake; our next halt was at  
Colleen Bawn's cave, we went  
through her one time hour,  
with the aid of our matches  
we successfully reached the  
opposite entrance without break-  
ing our necks, but we had  
to proceed cautiously, the stone  
floors were wet and slippery,  
and taking it all round I  
consider Colleen Bawn had  
a very poor taste.

After a brief halt  
we resumed our journey, and a  
few hundred yards further on  
we came to the Colleen Bawn rock,  
where she is said to have thrown  
herself into the water and finally  
drowned, the poor Colleen seems to  
have had rather a busy time  
from her two lovers, she re-  
turned the affection of one, but  
her fear was greater than  
her dislike for the other a  
Hunchback; the final act was  
brought about by the favoured  
one shooting the man with the hump.  
Shortly after leaving  
Colleen Bawn rock we came  
upon some land that is said  
to contain unlimited supplies  
of copper, during the present war

the government commenced to work, but were forced to abandon the attempt through striking water, until this difficulty is mastered it will always contain copper.

About 1 pm we reached the lake at the point of the meeting of the waters. Here we had lunch, and gave our waddy a rest of something like an hour. Quite close to this spot is a cottage famous for the honeymoons spent there, we were shown the bride chamber, and there were then some of the boys who were of our party promised faithfully to return there for their

honeymoon; a visitors book is kept and its pages are well filled; we resumed our journey about 2 pm, and shortly afterwards joined the road that leads to Kenmare, made famous by Andrew Mack in his song "The road to Kenmare if a road is worth singing about, then this one is, for it is almost as smooth as a billiard table; and to ride on a jouncing car over its gentle slopes is a positive delight.

We intended to pull up and inspect the Torc Waterfall, but owing to one of our party wishing to catch an afternoon train we aban-

done the idea, but I understand although rather pretty it cannot compare with the falls on our own blue Mts.

We at last arrived back in Killarney about 4 pm, after the most glorious drive of my life, the picture of it will always remain in my memory, once seen can never possibly be forgotten; our drive covered something like 20 miles.

We spent the evening in the Killarney town hall listening to a Miss Stein's concert, the novelty of the thing appealed to us, and although several people tried to dissuade us from going, we

persisted, and found ourselves to be the only five soldiers in the hall; I never remember hearing a more enthusiastic audience in my life, the concert was almost wholly conducted in Gaelic, and it was <sup>so</sup> much Greek to us, but there was no doubt about the fervour of either the performers or the audience, once especially I thought the roof would come off when a young chap with a fine baritone voice sang "O'Donnell's Aboo", every man and woman and child joined in the chorus, their blood was properly up; we only remained about an hour, but the concert lasted

long afterwards, well after midnight I heard the band playing as they marched through the streets home, all the band and a number of others were dressed in the Irish national costumes, the pipes were also the Irish type of bag pipes.

The following afternoon at 8 found us saying good bye to Kilmarnock with a great feeling of regret that we could not linger longer in this fairland, still we made the best of our time <sup>while</sup> here, and we had hopes of revisiting it some day in the future, after a pleasant ride of about 8 hours we arrived back in the city.

Aug 20<sup>th</sup> 17.

I spent most of this day with my friends at Kilmarnock and it passed all too quickly, I began to realise that my furlo had nearly come to an end. I was due to report at Weymouth the following afternoon at 6 pm; my friends came to see us off from Kingstown and did not leave the wharf till after 9 pm.

Aug 21<sup>st</sup> 8.17 After an uneventful trip across the channel we reached Holyhead, and was soon on our way to London where we arrived about 6 am; I spent the morning with my friend from the A. I. I. headquarters, and

224  
I was his guest to dinner  
at one of London's leading  
restaurants, a splendid evening  
to a capital holiday.

I caught the 4pm  
train from Waterloo, and finally  
reached Weymouth at  
6, I along with a number  
who were reporting back from  
furla, were at once taken in  
tow by a sergeant attached  
to Mount Video camp, which  
we reached about 7pm. I  
was once back to camp life,  
pretty hard too, after spending  
two months in hospital, with  
every attention and another  
fortnight living as the very  
best, and as well comfort  
bed to sleep in, still I was

225  
not disposed to grumble, and  
was prepared to accept the food  
with the best, and vice versa.

Aug 20<sup>th</sup> 17.

I was examined  
by another medical board,  
and learnt later that I was  
classified as P. S. B., at the time  
I did not know the significance  
of this, but I was soon told  
that I stood an excellent  
chance of a trip home, this  
seemed to be too wonderful to  
be true, so I decided not to  
build false hopes upon it.

The same afternoon  
a batch was drafted to West-  
Lawn camp some two miles  
away, I was among the number.  
I remained at this camp for

226  
about a week, and the 30<sup>th</sup> Aug  
I was again boarded, this time  
finally, and my previous class-  
ification was confirmed by  
Lieut Colonel Gordon; when  
I learnt that I was still mar-  
ked Australian class, my joy  
was great, and visions of  
home and friends made me  
as happy as a sand bag;  
still although it would be  
extremely hard luck if some-  
thing should turn up to prevent  
my going, I decided to regard  
the possibilities & probabilities as  
an even chance, I decided  
not to mention the matter in  
any of my letters to Australia,  
for should I come a couple  
9 — the disappointment

227  
would be mine only.  
Sept 1<sup>st</sup> 1847.  
I was again transferred this  
time to Herby Citadel, just  
outside the town of Portland,  
and some five miles from  
Weymouth. Herby Citadel is  
considered to be the finest and  
strongest barracks in the world,  
it is situated on Portland  
Bill, and rises above sea  
level some 6 to 700 ft, all within  
a mile from the water edge,  
the barracks was wholly built  
by convict labour, drawn from  
the famous Portland prison  
some half mile away, the  
buildings and towers are  
all of stone, and very solid.