

Our Cypress Grove

Obsequies of Father Joseph Rea.

Ballinacoola has lost a true friend, a fond and zealous spiritual guide, and a benevolent Catholic curate in the loving personality of Father "Joe" Rea, originally one of the Tipperary Reas. There were three branches of that name—the Rea "Jacks," the Rea "Coppals," and the Rea "Thaddys." the celebrated Rea "Norah" having never married, got his nickname from his loyalty and fidelity to lovely Norah Fleming, of Ballylanders, to whom he was engaged. Father Joe's forbears, assisted by the Buck Fentons, the Moores, the Abbey Wallaces and the Killeen Tierneys, kept the North Cork Militia in check for four hours on their way to Vinegar Hill, and would have succeeded did not the "Clamper" open the gates Padrig. Norah and Paddy Wallace held back at the bridge of Dorragh Silver Oliver and his yeomanry for which they paid the extreme penalty of the law. The funeral was large, imposing and very representative, and dear old Ballylooby was the chosen place wherein his Reverence could enjoy his last long sleep.

"This green turf shall be his rest,

This wattleboro tree his resting place."

After the Solemn Requiem Mass, celebrated by the worthy Administrator, Fr. O'Connor, Fathers Power, Sheehan and Fr. McGrath, master of ceremonies, and with an imposing choir of forty clergymen, and Canon Walsh as President, the cortege formed up and "dragged its slow length along" until it got to the ancient gate where Willie Brennan and the Pedlar Bawn hid from the scrutinizing eyes of the Caher "Responsibles." There let him rest!

The chief mourners were:—M. J. Rea, R. J. Rea (brothers); Rev. John Canon Rea, Fynnis; Father E. W. Rea, Sacred Heart College, Cork; Reverend Father Kelly, Cappawhite; Father Sheehan, Ballymacarberry; Rev. Mother Alckine, Sister Winifred (cousins); Messrs. Will H-a, John J. Rea, John and Mrs. Rea, Patrick and Nora Rea, John B. Rea, Billiodagan (cousins); Doctors Higgins, Waterford, and Connorford, Clonmel; James and Mrs. Kelly, Margaret Kelly (aunt); Thomas and Mrs. Lorrigan, John Condon, Willie Condon, Mrs. P. and W. Carroll, J. Carroll, Mrs. Prendergast, John and Minnie Higgins, Abbeyville; Jeremiah Kelly, John and Wm. O'Donnell, David Rea, Martin Rea, Tom Rea.

It was a true gathering of the clans—McCarthy Moore, McCarthy Reagh, McCarthy Glynn, and the spirit of poor Walter Rea, who guided the Whiteboys safely through the Wicklow Pass on the 15th August, 1796, will watch over him—P. J. REA