

## HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

### NAAS LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



#### LOCK COTTAGE — CANAL BANK

There are five locks on the Naas branch of the Grand Canal from Sallins to Naas. These were essential as Naas is around three hundred feet above sea level. All locks had a lock-keeper's house who would attend to the boats as they traveled up and down the branch line. This particular branch reached Naas in 1789.

All the cottages have now disappeared except this one. Locals would have known it as "Bracken's Cottage" with its unique four chimney style. Of great historical interest to Naas people would be the story of Seamus O'Kelly and his connection with the cottage.

O'Kelly came to Naas in the early 1900s as editor of the local newspaper, the Leinster Leader which had been founded in 1880. He was a gifted author of both plays and poetry and earned the title of "the Gentle Revolutionary" for his interest in the nationalist cause of the time. During his time in Naas O'Kelly lived at this cottage. He left for Dublin but returned to Naas again for a short time in 1916.