

MAYNOOTH LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



“Gleann Ailighe” Parson’s Street, Maynooth

HOME OF THE LAST GOVERNOR GENERAL –DOMHNALL Ua BUACHALLA

This image is of the former Maynooth home of the last Governor General of the Irish Free State, Domhnall Ua Buachalla (Daniel Buckley) ; 5th February 1866 – 30th October 1963.

The family, originally from County Cork, set up business in Maynooth in 1853. Daniel Buckley, an Irish language activist, achieved a certain fame when he was successfully prosecuted for having the Irish version of his trade name painted on his grocery wagon. He founded a company of the Irish Volunteers in Maynooth, and at age 50, led them to fight in Dublin after hearing of the outbreak of the 1916 Rebellion. He was elected an abstentionist Sinn Fein MP for Kildare North in 1918, and later a T.D. (Teachta Dála) for Kildare/Wicklow. In 1922 he was part of the Four Courts Garrison and was an unsuccessful Dail candidate in 1922 and 1923, before regaining his Dail seat for Fianna Fail at the 1927, only to lose it in the 1932 General Election, which Fianna Fail actually won. Later in November 1932 Eamon de Valera appointed Domhnall Ua Buachalla Governor General replacing James McNeill, and until the Abdication crisis in 1936, Domhnall Ua Buachalla performed his mission to “run down” his official office by keeping himself invisible, performing no official functions, not residing in the Viceregal Lodge, insisting on being addressed in the Irish language and using only private transport, including his bicycle. Following the Abdication crisis the Constitution of Irish Free State was amended to abolish the Crown and office of Governor General. Ua Buachalla was suddenly side lined and left personally liable for one year’s rental an expensive private residence in South Dublin and no official Pension. High Court litigation led to a last minute resolution and a subsequent reconciliation with de Valera resulted in his appointment to de Valera’s advisory Council of State in 1959, when de Valera won the Presidency. De Valera delivered the graveside oration at Ua Buachalla’s state funeral in Maynooth in 1963.

The house was burned by the Black and Tans, stationed in Maynooth, on the 31st December 1920 and was subsequently refurbished. It was Ua Buachalla’s private residence when he became the last Governor General.