

Walking *Donegal*



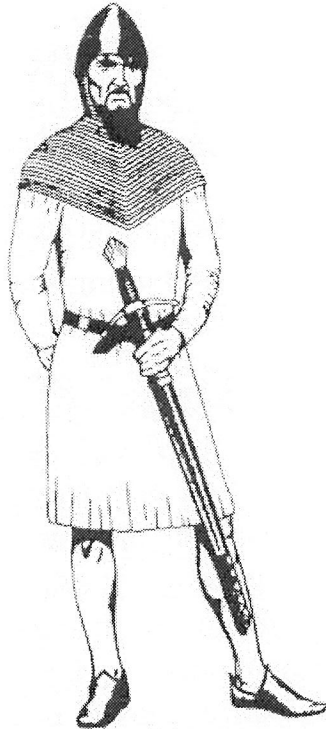
Milford



hills of donegal



Baile na nGalloglach
Town of the Gallowglass



*Gallowglass
circa 15th Century*

Milford

*Thank you for visiting the
historical and picturesque town of
Milford. We hope your visit here
will be memorable and the
attractions here will entice you to
return again.*

*This book is designed for easy use
and quick reference to the many
appealing trails, walks and paths
in our beautiful area. Visitors in
the past have commented
favourably on the panoramic
views and tranquil scenery, which
are unavoidable in this locality.*

HISTORY OF MILFORD

Milford and its hinterland played an important role in early Irish history, being home to Congal of Ceann Maghair, who became King of Ireland in 702 AD. King Congal lived close to Kinnaweer (Ceann Maghair in Irish), a heavily wooded area stretching from Bunlin Bridge to Cranford.

The region was then a stronghold of the Cineal Conaill, a clan descended from Conal Gulban, a son of Niall of the Nine Hostages. Conal and his brother Eoghan between them ruled all of Donegal, Derry and Tyrone and were known as the Northern Ui Neill. They gave their names to the counties of Tir Chonaill (Donegal) and Tir Eoghain (Tyrone). Their later descendants, the O'Donnells and the O'Neills, played a major role in the political life of Ireland. The famous Saint Colmcille was also a descendant of this clan.

At Cratlagh and Woodquarter a ringfort, souterrain and enclosure site can be seen, archaeological evidence of the importance of the area in early times. In the Annals of the Four Masters and the Annals of Ulster, it records Congal, son of Fergus of Fanad becoming King. In the Annals of Clonmacnoise it states

"Congal reigned for nineteen years and died of a sudden sickness." The Ceann Maghair settlement continued as an O'Donnell stronghold until the Plantation of Ireland in the 17th century.

The region was also strongly associated with the Gallowglasses from the 13th century. It was these Scottish mercenaries who gave Milford its original Gaelic name, Baile na nGalloglach. These heavily armed, paid soldiers came to the area to fight in the service of local chieftains. Dressed in coats of chain mail and iron helmets, they carried long swords and battle-axes. The Mac Suibhne Family of Fanad were a Gallowglass family who settled in the region. A number of the mercenaries' families became permanent residents in Ireland after the Scottish War of Independence (1286-1314).

The native O'Donnell were quick to recognise the value of such highly trained warriors and welcomed them to the country. They then joined forces and overcame three local chieftains at Fanad, Doe and Bannagh. Local folk memory recalls the Gallowglasses establishing a camp along the ridge at the top of Milford's Main Street, which later became the local livestock mart.

The rule of the local chieftains ended in 1607 when O'Donnell, O'Neill and almost 100 leading Ulster clansmen chose voluntary exile rather than submit to the English Crown. This became known as the Flight of the Earls, which left the local people leaderless and saw the plantation of the area with Scots and English settlers loyal to the English Crown. These events are often described as the beginning of modern Irish history. The Mac Suibhnes did not leave with the Earls as they had already made their peace with the English and went so far as to try to stop the fleeing chieftains taking wood and water aboard their outbound vessels. In the Annals of the Four Masters, it is stated that in 1608 Mac Suibhne fought against Sir Cahair O'Doherty at Ceann Maghair under the leadership of Sir Richard Winkel. The old gaelic way of life changed from the time of the plantation.

Milford today is a popular town beautifully situated on the shores of Mulroy Bay. There are many enjoyable walks mapped out in this booklet, which allow you to appreciate the great natural beauty of the local hinterland.

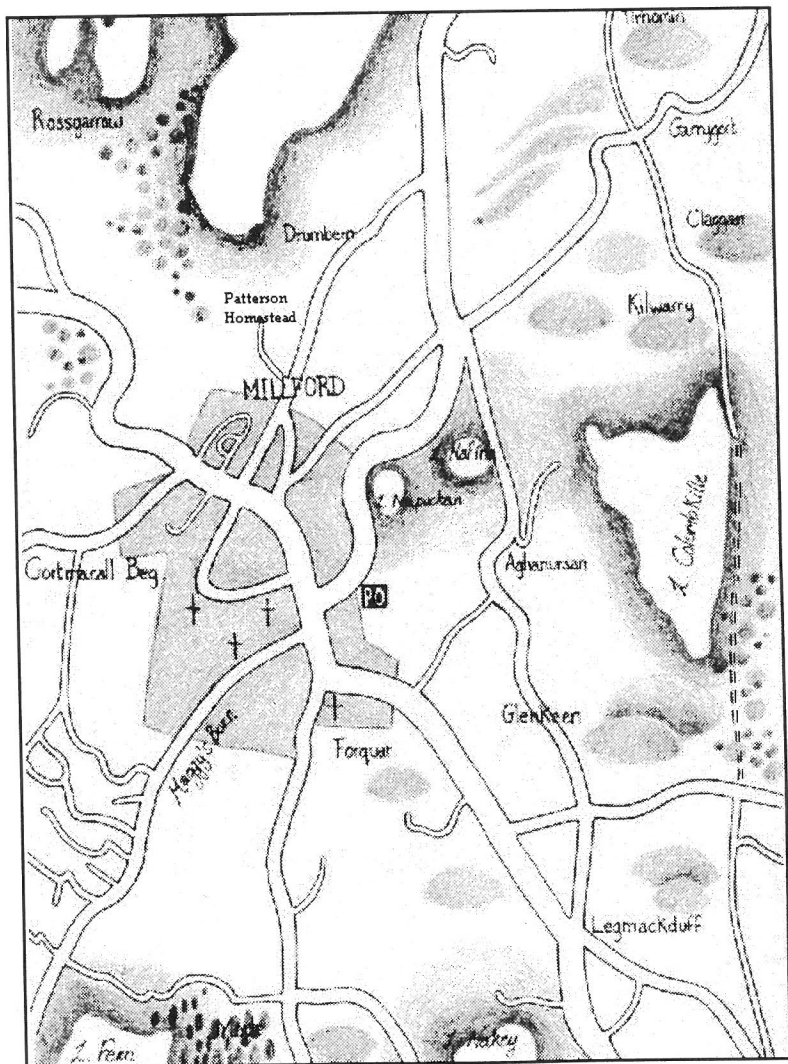
Walk 1

Nafinn

Distance 1 3/4 miles (2 1/2 miles if taking longer route)

Start at the bottom of the town and cross the bridge, taking the Ramelton Road past St. Peter's Church. Note the impressive stained glass windows and modern bell tower, a useful landmark on other walks. Continue straight ahead past the lay-by and you will see the former Milford Male School which first opened its doors in 1873. Walking on for approximately 150 yards you can either cross and turn left into a lane, or continue straight ahead to the by-pass sign posted for Kerrykeel and Fanad where you turn left. Following the lane route up a slight incline, there are spectacular views of Lough Salt Mountain at the south westerly end, Knockalla Mountains facing and the rugged crags of Crockanaffin to the right. Passing through a small yard, be sure to close the gate, continue on to junction at Aghanursan, where the longer route joins up. From here the road bears left towards Kerrykeel. It is advisable to keep to the left-hand side of this road. A short distance ahead Lough Nafinn comes into view. Nestling amidst the hills the reed-rimmed lake is a haven of peace. Press on to the junction with the sign post to the left for Milford. Turn left and then take an immediate right hand turn.

Continue along Cooper's Road noting the pleasant views of the lower ground to the left. About 800 yards along this route you will pass a small barn-like building. Bear left at this point. The building was once known as "The Diamond Hall" the local ballroom of romance, popular for miles around. You then return to the town, passing The Diamond, a former livestock mart where hiring fairs were once held.

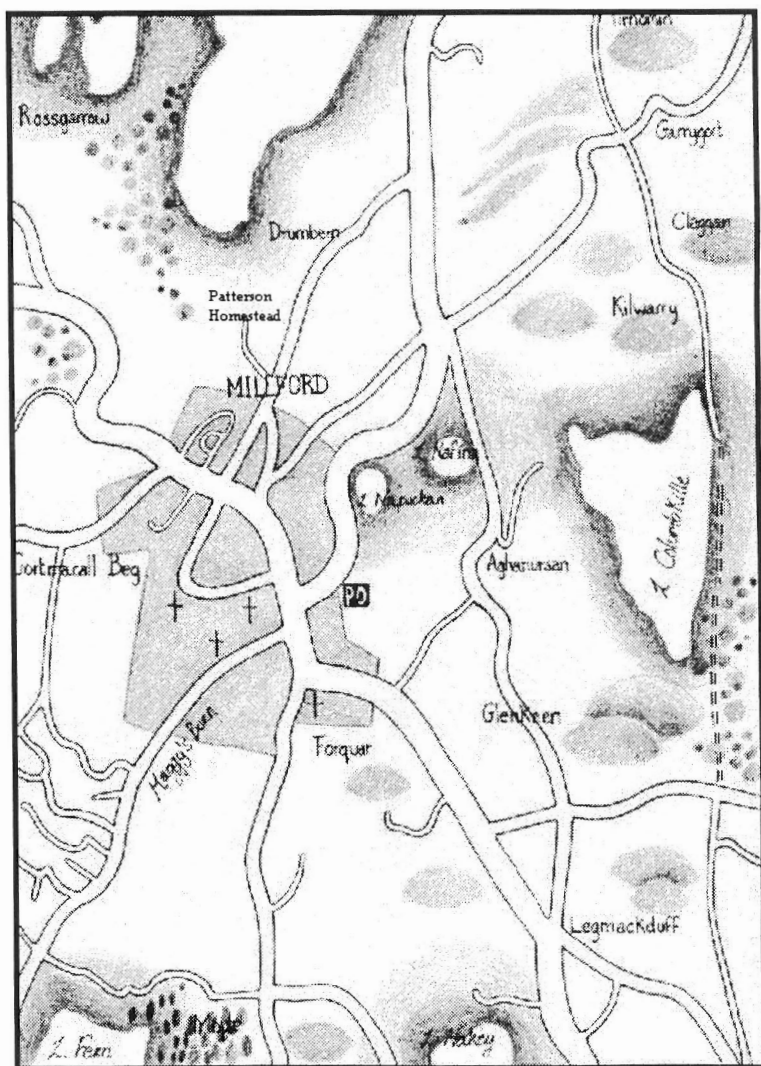


Walk 2

Drumbern

Distance 2 miles

Start from the centre of town and head uphill towards The Diamond. Keeping the public house on the right pass Cooper's Road and continue straight ahead. On the right hand you will see a former school built in 1902. At the next junction, turn right towards Kerrykeel. This route continues up an incline with mixed native woodland. To the left there are excellent views of Bunlin Valley and the long ridge which stretches from Lough Salt Mountain to Crockalaght to the west. The road descends gradually towards Mulroy Bay and the old Bakery and Flour Mill, now derelict. About 650 yards further on, at a T-junction, turn right and follow the main road climbing to the next junction. Take a right hand turn here onto the Milford Road. On the left Lough Napuckan comes into view. It was considerably larger at a time when it was controlled by sluice gates and used to supply water to the mill at the bottom of the town. Today reeds and bulrushes surround it. Straight ahead and the road will lead back to the centre of the town again.

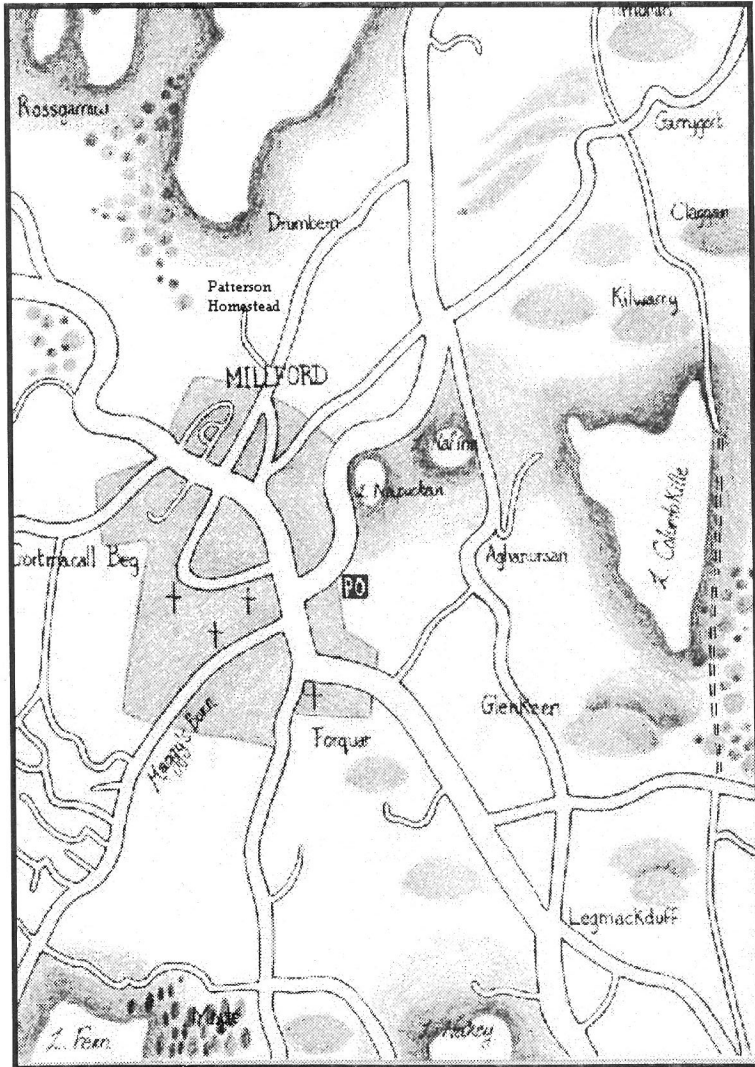


Walk 3

Columcille Trail

Distance 4 1/2 Miles

Start at the bottom of the town and cross the bridge, taking the Ramelton Road past St Peter's Church. Walk past the by-pass for Fanad Head and Kerrykeel, and take next road to the left. Follow to the crossroads and go straight across with the road climbing, opening up views of the craggy hills of Crockanaffin. When you reach the next junction take the road to the left which leads towards the lake. (The road to the right leads to Loughros with its holy well and Holywell Hill, the site of an ancient ringfort). Taking the road to the left, Lough Colmcille will come into view on the left-hand side of the road. On reaching the lake take time to enjoy its great beauty and tranquillity. At the northern end of the lake there are a group of stones known as Colmcille's Chair. The rocks display a number of unusual markings. There is the ancient Christian symbol of the fish and two grooves, which are thought to have been made by the saint kneeling in prayer. Having absorbed the serenity of the lakeland setting move on along this lane until Mulroy Bay comes into view. Cross the junction and follow the lane to Tirhomin, climbing until a spectacular panorama opens up. Fanad can be seen from this-point and the sea beyond. Having enjoyed the vista turn around and walk back as far as the junction. Turn right towards Urbal Shinnny and Mulroy Bay. At the crossroads take the second road to the left and this will lead you back to the centre of town again.



Walk 4

Dean's Trail

Distance 6 1/2 miles

From the centre of town turn left into Church Road. In the valley on the left you will see two Presbyterian Churches. There is a graveyard beyond the second church with some magnificent yew trees. The belfry of this church was built with the stones of St Colmcille's Church, damaged by lightning in 1987. Continue on to the crossroads, straight ahead past the original Technical School, on the Kerrykeel Road (Quay Road). This route climbs gradually with wooded area to the left and wonderful views. Once the road begins to descend again turn left at the T-junction towards the bay. There is a Marian shrine on the left just before the old Milford quay. In days gone by, steamers used to navigate out of Mulroy Bay to Derry, Glasgow and England. Cross the road here and take the road off to the right where the main road bears left. Walking uphill between hedgerows, look back at the picturesque view of the bay. The road continues to climb between Ranny Hill on the left and Hamilton's Hill on the right. On reaching a large grey barn, turn right and follow this road to where it joins Dean's Road. Take the sharp right turn leading to Ballyboe Lake. The lake is surrounded by reeds and is home to a lot of birdlife. The birds' song is most delightful. Ahead you will see a signpost for Milford, follow this route to the right. Approximately 150 yards ahead there are visible traces of a former ring fort on the left-hand side of the road. Keep on walking and go straight across the junction towards Urbal Shinnny. At the crossroads, follow the Lough Road back to Milford past Lough Napuckan.

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Tourist Attractions & Leisure Pursuits in Milford:

Mulroy Bay,

Woodquarter Picnic Area.

Lough Fern,

Fishing.

Magheradrummon,

Clay Pigeon Shooting.

Milford Busking Festival,

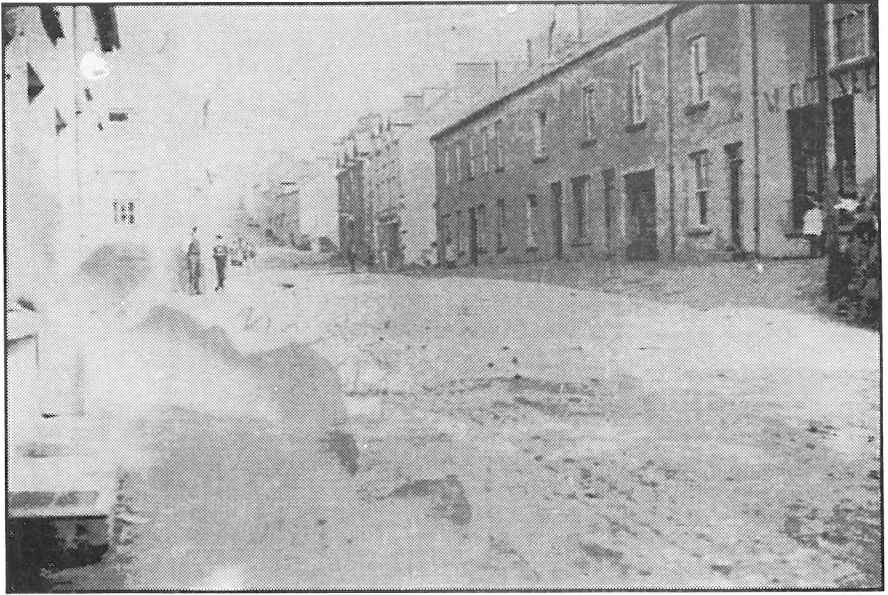
Last Weekend in August.

Bingo,

Sunday Parochial Hall,
Tuesday Milford Inn.

Traditional Music Sessions in local pubs, check local papers.

Check Milford IRD for further information.



Milford Late 1800's



lford Area

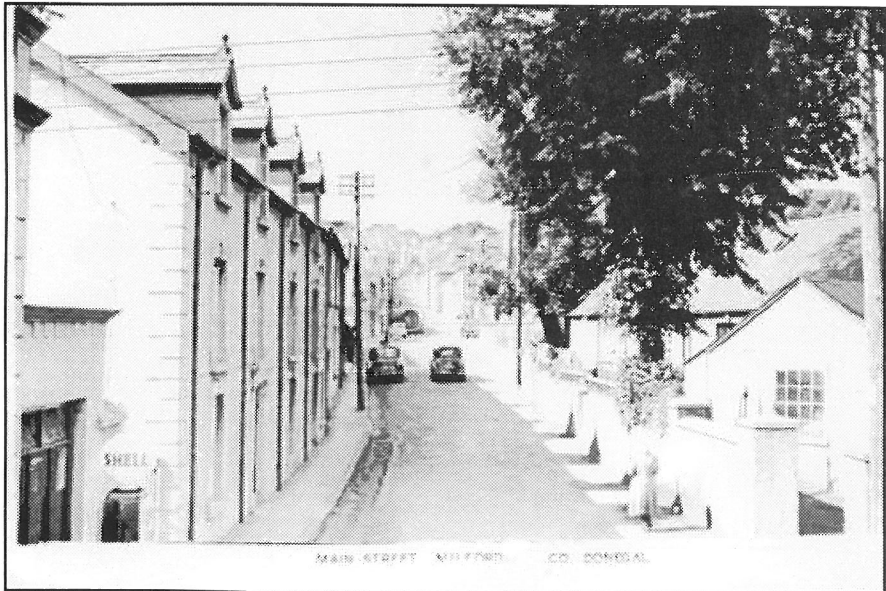






Main Street Milford, Co. Donegal

Milford Early 1900's



MAIN STREET MILFORD CO. DONEGAL

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SERVICES:

Post Office		Main Street	53259
Banks:			
	AIB	Main Street	53389
	NIB	Main Street	53397
	BOI ATM	Main Street	
Churches:			
	St. Peter's	Saturday	Sunday
	R.C.	7:30pm	11:00am
	Presbyterian	Sunday	11:00am
	Church	11:00am	
	Reformed	Sunday	
	Presbyterian	11:30am	
	Church		
	Mission Hall	Sunday	
		8:00pm	
Garda Barracks	Main Street	53114	
Library	Mon.,Sat 4-6pm	Thurs. 3-5:30pm	
Fire Station	Quay Road	53574	
Health Centre	53108	Dr. Carr 53369	Dr. Noonan 51370
Restaurants			
	Max's Café	Main Street	53688
	Milford Hotel	Main Street	53116
	Milford Inn	Ramelton Road	53313
Co. Council	Lr. Main St.	Opening 2000	
Taxis			
	McLoughlins		53212
	Waters		53278

Walk 5

Mass Pad

Distance 4 1/2 miles

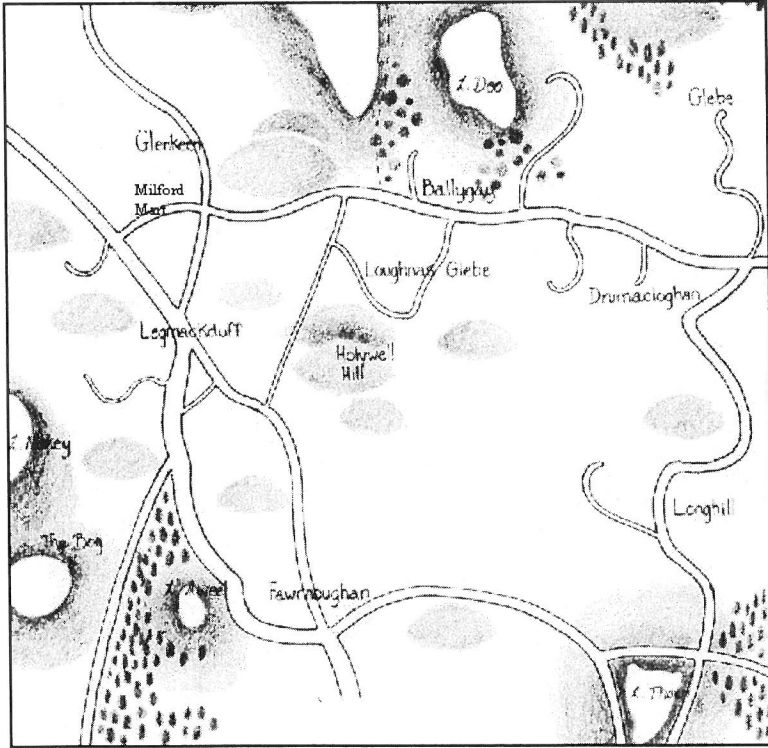
Start from the centre of town and go uphill towards The Diamond, left through the Gap and go straight across the crossroads. Turn left at the National School just before the old La Scala Cinema. Climbing slightly Lough Fern comes into view on the left. There are excellent views of the surrounding hills. Once past the Convent School there is a lovely view of Mulroy Bay. Continue past the various houses at Carrickybressil and the start of a conifer plantation on the right. A forest path will come into view on the right. Take the well-maintained forest path, which gradually meanders downhill through shady pines to a bridge over Bunlin River. The track gets narrower but will widen again towards the Church of Brigid in Golan. This church was built in 1870 to replace the Mass Rock that was the place of worship in Bunlin. At the chapel take the lane to the right where the road veers left. Facing Knockalla Mountain beyond the bay, the path rejoins the road and the view opens up. Continue on downhill and turn right at Bunlin Bridge. Staying on the main road until you reach a cottage, turn right onto a small lane. Follow this lane until Mulroy College comes into view, then past the graveyard and the former cinema, back to the top of the town.

Walk 6

Loughros

Distance 5 Miles

This walk starts at Milford Mart. Walk through Mart grounds and cross the road onto Ray road, up a steep hill past native woodland on the left. On reaching a crossroads, the right turn leads to Loughros with its holy well and Holywell Hill with its ringfort, the left turn goes to Lough Colm. Continuing straight ahead, and reaching the brow of the hill, we glimpse Lough Swilly due east. Looking back, Lough Fern and Lough Salt are seen on the horizon, Crock na Dreolin in front. The road meanders through whins, gorse and bogland. In the first valley a road to the left goes to Lough Dubh, a peaceful trout lake. Continue uphill - quite a steep incline through lightly wooded terrain. At the summit enjoy a panoramic view of Lough Swilly and the Inishowen Mountains with the craggy hills of Glenalla to the left. As the road descends, the townland of Glentidally is on the left and Drumacloghan on the right. There is a mixture of farmland and grazing on both sides. Walking past a crossroads to a T-junction, take a sharp right turning back onto the Ramelton road. The road meanders on through farmland and woodland towards the Thorn Lough, approximately 1-mile. At the next crossroads when the Thorn Lough is seen in front to the right, turn right following the sign to Milford. Walk past an old stone quarry on the right. After half a mile approach the main Milford - Ramelton road. There is a derelict homestead on the main road. Take a sharp right up a steep incline. Continue, having a view of Moyle Hill with Lough Salt in the distance on the left and looking back for a view of the Donegal Highlands. As the road veers left, one approaches the site of the old Lagg church, which was built in Penal times. This site has been



recently restored. The church served the town of Milford and its hinterland until 1961. Descend the hill through wooded area seeing Lough na Key to the left. On a clear day Errigal and Muckish are visible from here. Pass an old stone quarry on the right. At the next junction keep right and take the unused road back to the Mart.

Distance 5 miles

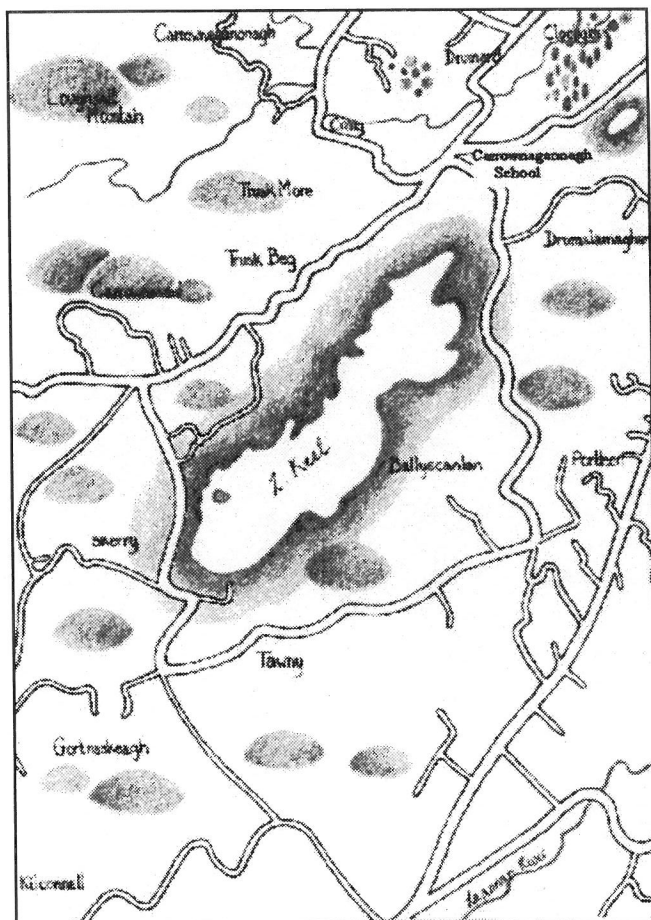
Start from the centre of town and go uphill towards The Diamond, left through the Gap and go straight across the crossroads. Turn left at the National School just before the old La Scala Cinema. Climbing slightly Lough Fern comes into view on the left. There are excellent views of the surrounding hills. Once past the Convent School there is a lovely view of Mulroy Bay. Continue past the various houses at Carrickybressil and the start of a conifer plantation on the right. Where the road dips steeply into a hollow, the old Carrownaganagh School comes into view. The road now rises sharply towards the school. Just before reaching the school turn right then take the road to the left, then the next right. Further ahead and to the right there is a good view of Knockalla Mountain in the distance. Approximately 200 yards ahead, Lough Salt Mountain rises up and to the left is Truskmore Mountain. At a sharp right hand bend there is a lane straight ahead for anyone interested in climbing Lough Salt Mountain. Caution is needed when climbing here. Continue on through rough terrain and down a steep hill. Enjoy the tranquillity of this walk and the sound of a babbling brook coming from the left-hand side of this road. In their respective seasons there is a good supply of raspberries and blackberries growing on both sides of this road. Continue along this straight stretch of road for a half mile. To the left you will see rising ground, with a heather covered rocky mass on the right, an ancient fort, Dunmore. Turn sharp right at the next junction and you will have a good view of Knockalla Mountain in the distance to the left, and the mountains of Inishowen to the East. A further 400 yards ahead you reach the main road.

Walk 8

Lough Keel

Distance 5 1/2 miles

To get to this walk turn left at Milford Cinema, drive to Carrownagannagh School. Take a left at the school uphill through some spectacular scenery. To the left there is a new plantation of trees and a magnificent view of Ranny Hill towards Fanad. The landscape is rocky and totally unspoiled. As you crest the hill you get a glimpse of Lough Keel to the right. The road bears right skirting the lake giving a magnificent view as one walks along the South East tip of Lough Keel with Lough Salt mountain on the right. The road descends quite steeply away from the lake through pleasant mountain terrain. As the road rises through farmland Lough Fern appears in the valley on the left. The road descends steeply. At the crossroads take a right through farmland. This is in the townland of Ballyscanlon. The Lennon valley is on the left and finally the village of Kilmacrennan can be seen in the distance in the far valley. After approx. 1 mile there is a T. junction. Turn right here uphill through farmland. Take the next right (about 400m further on). As the road rises the landscape becomes wilder - Lough Salt looms ahead with Lough Keel to the right. Be warned! Parts of this road are muddy. Continue straight ahead through mountainous terrain to a four-road junction. There is an optional route to the right edging the lake. The walk goes through bogland with Lough Keel on the right.



Continue through a small plantation, keeping Lough Keel visible to the right and the hills of Leabadubh on the left. The road leads on to a series of junctions. Take a right turn back to the starting point at Carrowmagannagh School.



Milford Busking Festival:

The Festival takes place over the last weekend in August each year. The first festival took place in '97 and proved to be a tremendous success. Buskers from all over Ireland participated, providing a great variety of musical entertainment, from classical to pop, as well as street entertainment for all ages. Adjudication and prizegiving takes place on Sunday evening with prizes in a wide range of categories. There is a wide variety of other entertainment run in conjunction with the Busking Festival.

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Main Street, Milford, during the Busking Festival

THE PATTERSON - BONAPARTE CONNECTION WITH MILFORD.

In the latter part of the eighteenth century, William Patterson, from the north of Ireland, settled in Philadelphia, and afterwards established himself in Baltimore, where he turned to business (shipbuilding, and gun-running during the American revolution) and became one of Baltimore's wealthiest citizens. In an autobiographical note attached to his will, he made a distinct reference to his birthplace: " I was born on the first of November, old style, in the year 1752, at a place called Fanat, in the county of Donegal, Ireland." It has since been found that he was born in Rossgarrow, Milford. To this place, and the neighbouring townlands of Urbalshinney and Glenkeen, the ancestors of William Patterson came from Newton-on-Ayr late in the seventeenth or early eighteenth century. In 1779, he married the eighteen year old, Dorcas Spear, and by her had 13 children - eight sons and five daughters, among them Elizabeth (1785-1879). Jerome Bonaparte (1784-1860), Napoleon's youngest brother, was a lieutenant in the French Navy, fighting in the Caribbean. To avoid capture by the British, he was forced to land in the US. He arrived in New York, and then went to Baltimore and there at a party, met Elizabeth Patterson. Two months later, on Christmas Eve 1803, they were married in Baltimore Cathedral, the Archbishop of Baltimore performing the ceremony. The couple remained in America until the spring of 1805, when they embarked on a neutral vessel, The Erin, and Jerome landing at Lisbon in May, made his way to Paris to meet with his brother, Napoleon. The ship meanwhile sailed on to Amsterdam, where permission was refused to Elizabeth to go ashore to join her husband, so she sailed to Dover, thence to London and there gave birth to their son, Jerome Napoleon Bonaparte, on the 7th July 1805. Soon afterwards Elizabeth Patterson Bonaparte returned to America with her infant son.

Napoleon was incensed at the idle and dissolute conduct of his youngest brother, Jerome, whom he had hoped one day to place at the head of the French navy. Jerome was still in love with his American wife, a lady distinguished alike for her beauty and her talents; but, in July 1807, Napoleon having represented to Jerome, that the branches of the Imperial family were not entitled to enter into alliances according to the dictates of their own feelings, but were bound to form such as were more suitable to his policy, the Emperor engineered the dissolution of his brother's marriage to Elizabeth in a French court, thereby allowing him to marry again. On the 12th of August 1807, Jerome married Princess Frederica Catharina, daughter of the king of Wurtemberg, and a few days later was proclaimed King of Westphalia. Elizabeth did her utmost to try to gain recognition for herself and her child from Napoleon, but he did not grant her a title, as he did not recognise her marriage to his brother in the first place. He did however grant her an allowance, but refused to recognise her as a Bonaparte. In 1816 she visited Ireland and spent some time in Donegal, the home of her ancestors.

She had ambitions that her son, Jerome, would become a Prince or a King, but he dashed her hopes when he married Susan May Williams, a Baltimore heiress. They had two sons, Jerome and Charles Joseph. Jerome (1830-93) entered the US army, resigned, and then joined the French Imperial Army of Napoleon II (his cousin), and fought in the Crimea. Charles Joseph (1851-1921) studied law at Harvard and practised in Baltimore. He was appointed Secretary of the Navy in 1905 and served as Attorney General (1906-09) under President Theodore (Teddy) Roosevelt.

Elizabeth Patterson Bonaparte died on 4th April 1879 and is buried in Green Mount Cemetery, Baltimore, Maryland and the epitaph on the tomb reads:
After life's fitful fever she sleeps well.



The North Donegal Forum
Organised the overall project
(A series of seven walking booklets)



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Under the Leader II Programme

