

# NEWSLETTER

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**Did your ancestors  
emigrate from  
Blacksod?**

**We feature extracts from  
emigrants' letters.**

*Book of the Week*

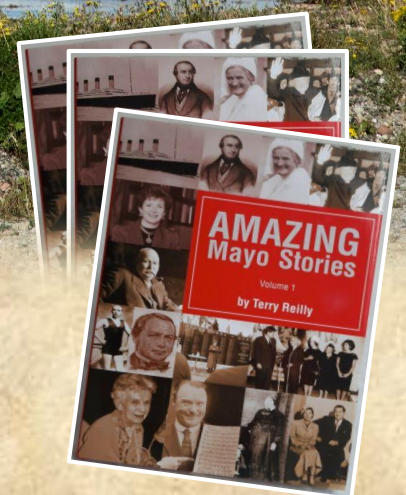
**Amazing Mayo Stories**

*by Terry Reilly*

Order online from our ebay bookstore

€15 (+postage)

*Image of Blacksod Harbour: Courtesy of Gareth McCormack*





## James Hack Tuke – a Friend to Ireland's Poor

During the years of 1883-84 just over 3,300 people from North West Mayo emigrated from Blacksod to Boston and Quebec to start a new life. This was as a result of the generosity of James Hack Tuke who funded the emigrations. The Erris region at the time was suffering badly and Tuke thought the people here deserved a better life.

James Hack Tuke was an English businessman and Quaker who witnessed the Famine in Connacht during 1847. More than 30 years later, seeing similar conditions threaten the west again, he devised a relief plan known as the Tuke Fund.

The fund gave assistance to those who wished to emigrate. The poorest areas were to benefit from this fund, of which Belmullet and Newport were included. Families chosen by the Tuke Fund committee received a grant of three to six pounds for the purchase of new clothes and were also given "landing money" so they would not arrive penniless in a strange country. They were directed towards rural parts of the US and Canada.

What became of those families is documented in their letters home. The extracts below are taken from Rita Nolan's book, 'Within the Mullet'.

**Ontario, July 16<sup>th</sup>, 1883.**

*"I am working in a bridge-factory at a dollar and a quarter per day (five shillings of your money). Mary has got a very good place in a jeweller's shop at five dollars a month, and Annie is next door to her at the same wages. Bridget is gone to an old couple to mind the house for them and is getting 3 dollars a month from them. The highest wages here at present is a dollar and a-half per day that is 6s. per day but lodgings is dear but everything else is cheap in it.*

*I could get 1lb of beef for 3d. here that I'd pay 1s. for in Belmullet. I may tell you honestly I could buy more provisions here for one shilling than I could in Ireland for two shillings. If you give me a present of a house and farm in Tip I would not go back to it.*

*I have only 10 hours a-day to work here. I could not describe it to you it's more like Paradise."*

**Toronto, July 8<sup>th</sup>, 1883.**

*"We are happy we are all working for the same man for 8 dols. per month each 3 of us and board, and the rest of the family live in a house across the road. Tell Jim he can earn lots of money, any young man that can plough or bind can get 25 dollars a month in harvest time. Tell the rest of the boys this. Anthony, if you were here you would do well this is a better place for young men than America. Canada is a great place, if all the people in Ireland would come here there would be lots of room for them".*

**St. Paul, Minnesota, May 21<sup>st</sup>, 1883.**

*"I wish my father and mother and friends were all out here. Pat is at the plumbing trade, Maria and Delia at Tailor's trade – so that in a short time we will be all right, we will have a property of our own please God."*

### A brief history of FAULMORE/FALLMORE (Fál Mhór, great enclosure)

Situated in the southern extremity of the parish of Kilmore Erris, 3¼ miles south of Bingham Castle. Bounded on the north by Termon; east by Blacksod Bay; south by Cartrongilbert; and west by Blacksod Bay and Nakil and Letterbeg. The property of Major Bingham. It contains 680 acres, 2 roods, 4 perches\*, of which 219 acres are cultivated and 89 acres blowing sand; the remainder is chiefly cut-out bog with rocky bottom. There is a Coast Guard Station and small pier here.

\* There are 40 perches in a rood, and 4 roods in an acre.

Extract from Ordnance Survey  
Namebooks of 1838



James Hack Tuke

In the years 1883-84 a total number of 3,464 emigrants from the Belmullet and Newport areas received assistance from the Tuke Fund. It was clear that the Tuke emigration scheme had not only brought prosperity to the emigrants but had also improved the conditions of those remaining in Ireland. For those left behind their suffering was eased by the money regularly sent to them by those who had left for the US and Canada.

### A brief history of the surname CARR

Ó Carra - Carr, Kerr; 'descendents of Carra' (spear); a common Ulster surname. Families of the name Carr are of diverse origins.<sup>1</sup> Some descend from Scottish settlers named Kerr who came to Ulster with the 17<sup>th</sup> century plantations. Other families will descend from English settlers named Carr. Still others, are of Irish origin, their ancestors having adopted the form Carr as an anglicization of an Irish name such as Ó Carraigh (more often rendered as Carry), Ó Maoilchéire (Mulcair), and of Mac Giolla Chathair in Co. Donegal.<sup>2</sup>

As per the civil birth register of 1890, the Carr surname was principally found in counties Donegal, Galway and Dublin. In Mayo (1901), the Carr surname was most common in the east of the county – Ballina, Swinford, Doocastle, and Kiltimagh areas.

<sup>1</sup> Woulfe, Rev. Patrick, 'Irish Names and Surnames',

<sup>2</sup> De Breffny, Brian, 'Irish Family Names'

