

# North Mayo Heritage Centre **NEWSLETTER**

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**You Tube**



The townland of  
**CASHEL**  
in 1838

We include extracts from  
Ordnance Survey Letters  
of 1838

**Feature article:**  
**Irish furniture and  
furnishings of old**



## **Book of the Week**

**Taking the Boat:  
The Irish in Leeds 1931 - 1981**

### **Cover images:**

A settle bed (above),

(Image from Claudia Kinmonth, courtesy Bunratty Folk Park, Shannon Heritage).

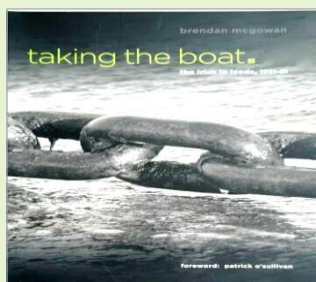
A butter box (right) capable of holding 56 lbs of butter, marked with the creamery's details. A butter box could be converted to many things including a board-ended stool, an upholstered seat and a sewing box (pictured)  
(Image from: R. Paschhoff, courtesy Cork Butter Museum)





## Book of the Week

### Taking the Boat: The Irish in Leeds: 1931 – 1981



The book is a wonderful account of those who were forced from Ireland through unemployment to adopt Leeds as their 'home'. However, relocation was not easy and many recall the struggles with adjusting to life in a new environment.

Despite spending most of their lives living in Leeds, some did not consider it their home, and retained 'no love for England'. As with other centres in Britain, music, church and the pub brought the Irish community together. Some recall how in the construction industry the Irish stuck together like some kind of 'Irish mafia'.

**€15** (+postage)

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## FEATURE ARTICLE

### Irish Furniture and Furnishings of Old

We can learn a lot from our rural Irish ancestors, such as how to furnish our homes economically and sustainably. Farming families usually lived in relatively cramped spaces. All objects were hard won, would last for generations and were adapted to serve multiple functions.

Large families found ingenious ways to accommodate everyone at night. The dual-purpose settle bed was a bench that folded outwards to form a wide floor-level double bed. Placed near the fire, it conveniently contained its own bedding. When opened out, with its four enclosing high sides, it transformed into a playpen for a toddler. Other beds could be folded away or disguised to make the parlour more versatile. The most popular was the "press bed", which looked like a tall cupboard.

Worn out wooden cartwheels were frequently dismantled, and the spokes were used to make new ladders. The central hubs became stools, and the curved outer sections of the wooden rim (called 'felloes') made perfect rockers for wooden cradles.

In the 19th century, people made hanging cradles, which as the name suggests, were suspended from the roof. In coastal areas, driftwood was carefully collected and made into furniture.

A falling table was hinged up flat against the kitchen wall when no longer needed. It saved space, and used little timber, as it only needed one hinged leg to support it. Hen coops were often incorporated into the base of dressers. These enabled women on smaller farms to guarantee a good supply of eggs during the winter months, as hens benefitted from the light, warmth and extra food from indoors.

Butter boxes, once used to pack and transport 56lbs of butter were also saved and recycled. They could be turned upside down, immediately becoming a plain fireside stool, but with a little creativity, a hinged lid was often added, and paint and upholstery helped people create sewing boxes, with padded seats.

Hessian or woven cotton bags used to hold animal feed or flour were saved and soaked. They were then scrubbed to remove any print, and later re-sewn to make everything from pillowcases, quilts, tablecloths, curtains, clothing, babies' nappies, tea towels, bags and aprons. Recycling, reuse and resourcefulness went without saying. The old proverb "necessity is the mother of invention" was demonstrated daily.

Resources:  
[www.irishtimes.com](http://www.irishtimes.com)  
[www.claudiakinmonth.ie](http://www.claudiakinmonth.ie)



### A brief history of the townland of

#### CASHEL

(Caisiol, a stone fort)

Located in the east of Achill Island. Bounded on the north by Bunacurry townland; east by Salia Bay; south by Salia, Sraheens and Dooega townlands; and west by Mweelin and the townlands of Maumnaman.

It contains 1,687 acres, 3 roods, 0 perches.

The property of Sir Richard O'Donnell, and is held by tenants on leases of 2 lives. It is not let by the acre, but is divided into 96 sums, each sum paying 10 shillings 6d. yearly. Co. Cess, about 1 shilling 6d. per acre for the arable. About 120 acres are reclaimed. The houses are of stone, and the inhabitants are very poor. The road from Newport to Doogort Colony passes through it.

Extract from Ordnance  
Survey Letters of 1838

### Trace Your Roots

If you are interested in professional help to research your family history, why not contact us. All research can be done remotely. Perhaps we can help you!

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[northmayogenealogy.com](http://northmayogenealogy.com)

### A brief history of the surname

#### CALVEY

**Mac an Calbaig, M'Ecallough, M'Ecallowy, M'Icallowe, MacCalvey, Calvey;** 'son of An Calbac' (an Irish personal name, meaning 'the bald'); a rare surname.<sup>1</sup>

**(Mac) Calvey, Calway:** MacCalvey is recorded as a synonym of MacKelvey but Woulfe treats it as a different name, viz. Mac an Chalbhaigh (so it could be *calbach*, bigheaded). Modern statistics show that Calvey is mainly found in Cos. Mayo and Sligo.<sup>2</sup> Of the nine Calvey births in Ireland in 1894 – including variants – all nine were in Co.Sligo.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Extract from 'Irish Names and Surnames' Rev. Patrick Woulfe <sup>2</sup> Extract from 'The Surnames of Ireland' by Edward MacLysaght,

<sup>3</sup> Extract from 'Matheson's Special Report on Surnames in Ireland' by Robert E. Matheson.