Obedience and Nationalism: Oral histories from a Patrician Brothers' primary school during the 1960s in Galway, Ireland

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Student name: Elizabeth (Lisa) Jordan
Student number: S4459466
First Supervisor: Prof drs. Johannes Westburg
Second Supervisor: dr. M.H. (Marja) Cantell

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List of Abbreviations

DfE	Department of Education
EEC	European Economic Community
INTO	Irish National Teachers' Organisation
NPCPI	National Programme Conference on Primary Instruction
NPPI	National Programme on Primary Instruction
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PE	Physical Education

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to gain insight into the everyday school experiences, the 'black box' of schooling, for pupils in the 1960s. Thus, the research focused on participants' experiences in an urban, all-boys, 1,000-pupil Patrician Brothers' primary school in Galway City, Ireland, during the 1960s. Therefore, the political, educational, religious and cultural contexts are outlined to provide the reader with insight into society and schooling in Ireland at the time. To investigate the 'black box' of schooling, Gert Biesta's functions of education framework was utilised. Biesta (2020) breaks the functions into qualification, socialisation and subjectification and the findings are presented under these headings. An oral history methodology was used to uncover how school-life was experienced by the participants within St Pat's and how this impacted them. Thus, semi-structured interviews with four participants were carried out.

Additionally, primary and secondary research was carried out: curriculum documents, government reports, Oireachtas debates, newspapers, a pupil song-book and St Pat's commemoration book were all reviewed. The findings give insight into a curriculum and learning experience underpinned by nationalism and Catholicism, rote learning, numerous tensions between policy aims and pupil experience, obedience and corporal punishment, a code of silence and fear, and the effects that the functions of education can have on the psyche. Thus, this research highlights and captures the 'black box' of schooling and the grey area between the 'romantic' and 'horrendous' accounts of school experiences.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The 1960s are the well-documented birthplace of great change and transformation in Irish educational policy and provision (Walsh, 2016a & 2016b; Loxley et al, 2014; O'Reilly, 2012). Changing attitudes among the political leaders in the 1960s, linked to the influence of international ideas mediated through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and engagement with the European Economic Community (EEC), lead to far reaching changes that have shaped the modern educational system in Ireland (Aldrich, 2001; Walsh, 2016a). International influence also resulted in a waning deference towards the central role of the Catholic church in education as politicians began asserting their own central role in policy and decision-making (O'Donoghue and Harford, 2011). As a result, the conceptualisation of education as outlined in the curriculum of 1922 was beginning to finally evolve from a social expense for 'moral, intellectual, and religious objectives' (Tussing, 1978, p. 164). The curriculum development process in the 1960s involved the undertaking of research, such as the unpublished Towards a White Paper on Education (1967), and examining recent international developments.

Hence, change was afoot; however, it was yet to become policy. Primary school pupils would not benefit from any sweeping curriculum changes until 1971. This research therefore takes us back to a time when the culture and atmosphere of schools, and the country, were quite different. Ireland gained independence from England in 1922 and, henceforth, the Church and State in Ireland created a society based upon a shared ideology that revered a mystical, virtuous and agrarian past enveloped in Catholic doctrine.

Research Statement

The history of education in Ireland is a well researched field. However, it has been addressed mostly through the lense of educational policy and church influence (O'Donoghue, 2020; Fischer, 2016; O'Donoghue & Harford, 2016; Walsh, 2016a; Walsh, 2016b; Fleming and

Harford, 2014; Raftery 2012; Raftery and Nowlan-Roebuck, 2007). Consequently, this has led to a side-lining of more disparate elements and groups (Walsh, 2016a).

One disparate group that is strikingly absent is the perspective of former pupils. While there are some works in existence in the form of autobiographical work, academic expositions and government commission testimonies, little is available in that grey area lying between romantic, nostalgic accounts of schooling and accounts involving horrendous abuse (O'Donoghue & Harford, 2016). Therefore, this research seeks to make a modest contribution in redressing that imbalance. To do so, an oral history method is utilised to research the schooling experience of pupils in the 1960s in one school in Galway, Ireland.

My research is guided by the following sub-questions:

- What knowledge and skills were transmitted to the pupils: what did they learn related to pedagogy?
- What traditions, culture and practices were passed down, explicitly and implicitly, and how - what did they learn regarding these?
- What meaning have the pupils derived from their school experiences - how has their school experience shaped and impacted them?

Background

Ireland was the scene of a 'cultural implosion' from the 1920s as a confluence of cultural, religious and economic factors combined to create an increasingly insular and isolated Ireland' (Akenson, 2012, p. 39). A return to a Gaelic Ireland, or in the words of Archbishop Gilmartin of Tuam, 'to build up a real Irish Ireland' (ibid, p. 40), was a policy aim being propagated through the education system. Thus, the various educational policies and curriculum introduced from 1922 to 1960 sought to make Irish education truly national by positioning the Irish language, Irish history, Irish music and the associated cultural tradition at the epicentre (O'Buachalla, 1984). Additionally, the Catholic Church became an omnipresent power and triumphant force in Irish society from 1922 (Walsh, 2016a), thus maintaining a dominant role in the provision of education regardless of the political party in power (Whyte, 1980).

The State's reliance on the Church to provide key services which it could not afford to provide alone, education and healthcare amongst them, was another reason the Church was entrenched in Irish society (Drudy and Lynch, 1993). Furthermore, the Irish government enshrined the church's pivotal role in education in the Irish constitution, *Bunreacht na hÉireann*, in 1937 (Article 42). Indeed, the Catholic Church's support was so fundamental to policy change that 'in effect, due merely to the extent of its presence, no policy measure can be realistically implemented in the system without the tacit consent of the Church' (O'Buachalla, 1998, p. 23). Hence, the 1920s to 1960s truly saw the church at the pinnacle of its power, with:

> '...a priest, nun and brother in every corner of society. They presided over schools, hospitals and a wide variety of social welfare institutions. . . Like all good authority figures, their supervision and control persisted even in their absence. In the most subtle and yet penetrative forms of power, the supervisory eye of the Church was internalized in the minds and hearts of Irish Catholics.'
>
> (Inglis, 1998, p. 211)

Nationalism and Catholicism had ardent believers occupying all levels of roles within the government, including the powerful and influential. As leader of the Irish Free State from 1922-1932, W.T. Cosgrove announced that 'the Dáil [Irish Parliament] will not make laws contrary to the teachings of the Church' (in Ó'Buachalla, 1988, p. 61). Eamon De Valera, who served as Prime Minister numerous times between the 1930s and 1950s, continued the tradition of church deference. Hence, by the 1960s, 'Catholic moral code was imprinted into virtually all social policy' (Ryan, 2014, p. 77). De Valera's vision of Ireland was a nation of 'frugal virtuous peasants' (Titley, 1983, p. 126) and he advocated for an Irish culture comprising native sports, music, dancing, folklore and literature. Keen to press ahead with this policy of Gaelicisation, he believed that the major responsibility for the revival of the language rested with the schools (Hyland, 1987).

The 1922 curriculum was designed by the Report of the National Programme Conference on Primary Instruction (NPCPI). Its aim had been to create a curriculum in accordance with Irish ideals and conditions and its Report stipulated 'the strengthening of the national fibre by giving the language, history, music and traditions of Ireland their natural place in the life of Irish schools' (NPPI, 1922, p. 4). Coolahan (1981) notes, the most important function of the school programme was the 'promotion of a knowledge of Irish' (p. 40). Additionally, personnel from

the Catholic Church were centrally involved in the curriculum development process, and all subsequent amendments, resulting in a continually strong religious ethos (Inglis, 1998).

There were three subsequent amendments made to the 1922 Programme in 1926, 1934 and 1948 (Revised Curriculum for Infants). The sole subjects to retain their compulsory status throughout were: Religion, Irish, English, Mathematics, History and Geography (distinct subjects from 1926), Music and Needlework (for girls). The status of the Irish language was raised as both an obligatory subject, to be taught for a minimum of an hour per day, and as an instrument of instruction. Physical Training became optional in 1926 and remained so until 1971. In contrast, Music became a fundamental subject in the construction of a new nation state and was focused on the revival of the Irish language and promoting religious and other nationalistic values (McCarthy, 1999).

In relation to religion, the Council of Education (1954) concluded that a parent's first duty is to 'train their children in the fear and love of God', which also 'becomes the first duty of the school' (cited in Ryan, 2014, p.71). Ferriter commented that the prevailing idea in this report was 'that a child was born in a state of sin' (2010, p. 598). This long awaited government report on curriculum highlighted that 'the position of the Catholic Church in the mid twentieth century was still all-pervasive and endorsed by the State' (ibid). Indeed as Williams (1999) posits it 'endorsed very emphatically the denominational and catechetical character of primary education' (p. 323).

Despite calls for curriculum reform (INTO 1941, 1947; Church of Ireland 1950), bureaucratic inertia reigned. Additionally, the Council of Education (1954) supported and reinforced the status quo, thus strengthening the stagnation within Irish education (Walsh, 2016b). Furthermore, from 1943-1967, the Primary Certificate examination was implemented on a compulsory basis to attest to the completion of primary school (O'Reilly, 2012; Walsh, 2016a). It focused on English, Irish and Mathematics only and the emphasis was solely on written skills. Hence, within the classroom, it resulted in rote learning, a narrowing of the curriculum experience for pupils and a decline in the progress of the Irish language (Walsh, 2016a; McAuliffe, 2004; Kelly, 2002).

The corporal punishment of children in schools was accepted practice in Ireland until its abolishment in 1982, despite arguments against it by educators and parents as far back as the 1950s (Sheehy-Skeffington, 1955; 1956). According to Maguire and O'Cinnéide (2005), corporal punishment was commonplace and, although the severity of the punishment or the reason that it was inflicted was sometimes objected to, parents generally supported a teacher's right to punish their children. Moreover, the government and the courts in Ireland consistently refused to limit the use of corporal punishment by parents and teachers, or to differentiate legitimate punishment from abuse (Maguire and O'Cinnéide, 2005).

Additionally, the DfE governed regulations for the use of corporal punishment within schools (Appendix 2) and for lodging complaints against teachers who violated such. However, it is apparent that the rules were often broken with scant follow-up, accountability or repercussions for the teacher, even in the most flagrant violations (Maguire and O'Cinnéide, 2005).

System of schooling in Ireland

Primary schools in the Republic of Ireland are also known as national schools. Currently, just over 90% (down from a peak of 95% in the 1960s) are owned, managed and run by the Catholic Church. The remainder comprises Church of Ireland schools, multi-denominational, Irish language medium and Gaeltacht (Irish speaking areas) schools. Children in Ireland attend primary school for a total of eight years, commencing at the age of four or five years, and transfer to second level education at the age of twelve or thirteen years, approximately. The eight classes in the primary school cycle are: Junior Infants, Senior Infants, First Class, Second Class, Third Class, Fourth Class, Fifth Class and Sixth Class. In the 1960s there was also a Seventh Class.

The types of national schools dotted around the country in the 1960s included one and two teacher rural schools and large, urban schools in cities and towns. In 1960, there were 341 schools in Galway out of 4,882 nationwide educating 29,667 primary school pupils out of 506,208 nationwide (DfE, 1959-60). There was one Church of Ireland school in Galway City at the time. The remainder were established, owned and managed by the Catholic Church and run on a local level by a parish priest, brother or nun. The schools overseen by a brother or nun were

established and staffed directly by that particular religious order. St Pat's national school, the school attended by the participants in this research, was one such school founded by the Patrician Brothers.

Chapter 2: Theoretical exploration

The aim of this research is to understand what was experienced by pupils in the 'black box' of one school in Galway, Ireland, in the 1960s. This is done through the collection of oral histories narrated during semi-structured interviews, as outlined in chapter three. Thematic analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006), using the framework of Gert Biesta (2020), as outlined in chapter two, will then be implemented to analyse the data in chapter four. The findings will be discussed in chapter five. This chapter will outline and describe the theoretical underpinnings of this research study. The theory that explains the particular research problem is also described (Abend, 2013; Swanson, 2013).

Qualification, Socialisation and Subjectification

My investigation on the experiences of education in 1960s Ireland is based on the framework of Gert Biesta regarding the functions of education. Biesta (2020) suggests that research into education be geared toward the three realms of purpose referred to as qualification, socialization and subjectification.

Qualification is defined as the function of education 'to do with the transmission' or 'the making available of knowledge and skills' (Biesta, 2020, p. 92). Qualification can be seen as an essential function of education and a task that 'provides an important justification for schooling' (ibid, p. 88). The 1922 curriculum was not centred on a pedagogical or educational approach, but rather utlised a political and nationalistic frame of reference steeped in Catholism. This underlying religious and nationalistic philosophy dominated the education system for nearly 50 years and 'impacted on the content and methodologies used, on the selection and recruitment of teachers and, consequently, on the learning experiences of and outcomes for pupils' (Walsh, 2016a, p. 13).

Socialisation follows from qualification as ‘even the simplest provision of knowledge and skills already provides a certain way of (re)presenting the world and presenting what is considered to be of value’ (ibid, p. 92). Thus, Biesta defines socialisation as ‘the (re)presentation of cultures, traditions, and practices, either explicitly but often also implicitly, as the research on the hidden curriculum has shown’ (ibid, p. 92). Didactic teaching and punishment featured prominently in schools in Ireland pre-1971, which emanated from the Catholic belief in the doctrine of original sin (Walsh, 2005). The hidden curriculum is the largely subliminal messages absorbed by children from the surrounding school environment about the desirability of conforming to certain norms, values, beliefs and behaviour. As Apple (2004) notes: ‘incidental learning contributes more to the political socialization of a student than…civics classes or other forms of deliberate teaching of specific value orientations’ (p. 79).

Thirdly, Biesta argues that education also impacts the student on an individual level, for example, ‘either by enhancing or by restricting capacities and capabilities’ (ibid, p. 88). This individuation is the function that Biesta refers to as subjectification.

The ‘black box’ of schooling

Following on from the functions of education, I utilised the definition of Marc Depeape in relation to the ‘black box’ of education. Depeape (2012) has defined the ‘black box’ of education as ‘the real educational actions within and outside the family, in the school space as well as in the classroom’ (p. 134). In this research, I refer to the ‘black box’ of schooling, as in the everyday experiences of pupils within the school space, including the classroom and school-yard. Until recently, such experiences have remained unassembled and unused.

Meda and Vinao (2017) outline the progressive efforts being made in the study of school memory to access the ‘black box’ of everyday school life. In particular, the focus is on the individual memoirs of the actors in school life in order to inform us of the school's empirical culture. This is indicative of a recent and growing willingness ‘to study school memory as a useful resource for deciphering the "black box” of schooling’ due to the ‘empirical and material nature [which] could account for what really went on in the classrooms’ (Meda and Vinao, 2017, p. 4). This is especially related to that which is known to have occurred but has remained

undocumented due to being disallowed, taboo or unconventional.

Memory

To access and understand the 'black box' of schooling, we must first access school memory. Memory can be defined as 'the medium through which we live our lives in history as well as the resource which enables us to bear witness to history's power in shaping our lives' (Gardner, 2010, p. 188). Approaching the past through spoken memories produced in the present enables us to engage in a continuous dialogue between past and present in order to understand the past (Cunningham and Gardner, 2004). To understand the 'persistent' past is to seek 'a completion of the events of the past, an appreciation of them which could not be perceived in their own time...in the same way that the truth of our own present must remain to be explored by future interpreters' (Gardner, 2010, p. 183).

Oral history

Memories are woven together to create oral history. To use oral history sources in any field brings three special advantages (Bornat et al, 2000). Firstly, a voice is given to those that would not ordinarily have one, allowing us to 'create a more complex and rounded picture of the past' (Bornat et al, 2000, p. 3). Secondly, it allows us to explore the often private worlds of relationships and experiences, untold and unwritten, on an individual and interconnected level. Thompson (2000) explains that 'oral history can delve into the hidden world...revealing the daily experience...as told by the subjects, clients or patients at the receiving end of services' (p. 4). Thirdly, it facilitates fresh perspectives through the reexamining of established narratives; the analysis of life stories 'enable us to make connections which are possible in no other way' (Bornat et al, 2000, p. 4).

Gardner (2010) states that oral history is a means of not only explaining but also interpreting the past as a life story breathes life into the historical landscape within which that life has played out, emboldening our senses to see and feel as if we were there while also giving us a sense of how things were in the past.

Oral history must be treated with the same strict criteria of fact checking as applies to any document but herein lies the difference: there are no false sources, ‘'untrue' statements are still psychologically 'true' (Portelli, 1981, p. 100). Hence, ‘interviews often reveal unknown events or unknown aspects of known events, and they always cast new light on unexplored sides of the daily life of the non-hegemonic classes’ (ibid, p.99). This is especially so through a participant's divergence rather than adherence to known facts. Portelli (1981) addresses the sole issue of credibility in relation to this stance, stating that ‘what the informant believes is indeed a historical fact (that is, the fact that he or she believes it) just as much as what 'really' happened’ (ibid, p. 100).

Chapter 3: Methodology

This research explored oral histories obtained through semi-structured interviews. The aim was to gain in-depth knowledge and information about the past as remembered by the participants. While an oral history approach is challenging and never straightforward, nor without implications for the uses of historical data generated by memory work, it can be incredibly valuable and insightful (Gardner and Cunningham, 1997; Gardner, 2010).

Method Justification

Qualitative research can be described as the ‘interpretative paradigm, which emphasizes subjective experiences and the meanings they have for an individual’ (Starman, 2013, p. 30). The purpose is to ‘understand or explain behaviour and beliefs, identify processes and understand the context of people’s experiences’ (Hennick et al, 2011, p. 17). This form of research focuses on a relatively small sample size of participants to get in-depth information of the participants' experiences in relation to the research topic (Hennick et al, 2011).

The objectives of this research meant that qualitative research would be most applicable for the research purpose (Sogunro, 2002; Kumar, 2005). As the research aims to gain insight into the ‘black box’ of schooling in the 1960s in a particular school in Ireland, qualitative research will provide a more in-depth and valuable insight into these perspectives: ‘Qualitative methods are

typically used for providing an in-depth understanding of the research issues that embrace the perspectives of the study population' (Hennick et al, 2011, p. 10).

Oral history is one of the oldest, best known, and most often used methods in qualitative research (Given, 2008). I chose an oral history method in particular as oral histories enable us to expose things that were previously hidden, thus allowing us to 'chart new territories and map familiar terrains in innovative ways' (Doney et al, 2017, p. 457). Such documentation, or 'charting', is essential in understanding the 'black box' of schooling and how policy and curriculum translated into the classroom experience.

Research Methods

I chose the interview method as interviews are 'primarily used when you seek to capture people's individual voices and stories' (Hennick et al, 2011, p. 117). Similarly, Rasmussen (2012) states that the interview based approach is chosen as a way of exploring former pupils' perspectives on everyday school life, which was the case in this research in capturing the 'black box' of schooling.

A semi-structured format was chosen for the interviews so that there was a 'road-map' of guidance (Adams et al, 2007). Additionally, semi-structured interviews can be conducive to establishing and maintaining a positive environment, which is also a responsibility of the interviewer to ensure (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Furthermore, McAteer (2013) states that the semi-structured interview allows 'both the researcher and the participant the freedom through which to explore an honest and authentic account' (p. 73). The questions were designed as open-ended due to such an approach being 'more invitational and devolved to the interviewee: they can elicit a freer narrative and are one means of devolving agency to the interviewee' (Skinner, 2012, p. 23).

To ensure each participant had freedom in answering, an estimated timeframe of 30-60 minutes was set with freedom to go over this timeframe should they wish or to follow up at a further date. Two interviews ran over this by two to four minutes, while the other two were 40-45 minutes each. All interviews were conducted with the participant's situated in their own home, so each

setting was primarily determined by the participants. Two interviews were conducted via Zoom, one in-person and one over the phone. Each interview appointment was based on the participant's schedule to avoid distractions or others being in the environment. Participants were also asked to ensure a calm and quiet environment beforehand. Audio of the interviews was recorded using a mobile phone and transcribed after, for which consent was received in advance.

Maykut & Morehouse (1994) highlight practical ways to gather data related to the experiences of research participants, among them 'in-depth interviews…and the collection of relevant documents' (p. 46). Hence, regarding the latter, primary and secondary data was also used supplementary to the interview data. Curriculum documents, Parliamentary debates, government reports and newspaper articles relating to the 1920s-1960s period were studied and provided valuable insight. At my disposal was also a book of songs from 1966 that one participant had retained. Additionally, St Pat's commemoration book proved an important document in giving me background information, history and context regarding the school.

Data Collection

Four to six participants were to be interviewed so that a deeper analysis could be undertaken that could not be achieved if more participants were involved due to the size and nature of this research. In the end, four participants were interviewed as it was the number of participants who freely and willingly contacted me and consented. This lack of control over the samples was a qualitative challenge, as well as ensuring detailed and rich information was obtained during the interview process. As the participants were self-selecting, this may have implications for bias. However, it is difficult to determine and generalise people's reasons for choosing to partake or not.

Three participants, who were known to me as family acquaintances, had stated their willingness to participate when told about the nature of the project informally by a third party. One further participant was recruited through an advertisement in the Galway Advertiser, a free newspaper circulated throughout Galway weekly. The advertisement explained the nature of the project and requested that former pupils from St Pat's volunteer to be interviewed by contacting me. Information about the research and a consent form was forwarded to all participants.

Therefore, four, individual, semi-structured interviews with former pupils who attended St Pat's during the 1960s in Galway, Ireland constitute the empirical material for the analysis of school experiences in what Depeape (2012) refers to as the 'black-box'. All the interviews were transcribed and anonymised. The data was then sent to each participant so that each had the opportunity to review, edit or add to the information collected. This ensured that all participants were satisfied that their responses accurately represented their views.

Data Analysis

After the data was collected, it was analysed closely to accurately depict the content of the interview, which requires the researcher to 'to choose quotations that fairly represent your conversational partners' experiences and understanding' (Rubin & Rubin, 2011, p. 65). Thematic analysis is a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and this was the most suitable approach to analyze the data to determine patterns of meaning in the experiences within the 'balck box'.

The interviews were analysed using a deductive thematic analysis approach. An inductive approach to thematic analysis (Crabtree and Miller, 1999; Frith and Gleeson, 2004) works from the bottom up whereby the data is approached without a theoretically informed coding frame. In contrast, a deductive approach to thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Hayes, 1997) utilises some form of template, usually derived from the relevant literature, in order to code and derive themes from the data (Willig, 2013). This research implemented a deductive approach using Gert Biesta's (2020) functions of education framework as a template in coding the data under qualification, socialisation and subjectification.

The participants are given different names to protect their anonymity and are outlined in the table below, along with the years they attended St Pat's:

Participant 1	Caoimhín (P1)	1959-1965
Participant 2	Aodh (P2)	1965-1970

Participant 3	Gerard (P3)	1958-1964
Participant 4	Michael (P4)	1964-1968

Table 1 - Information regarding participants' names and attendance

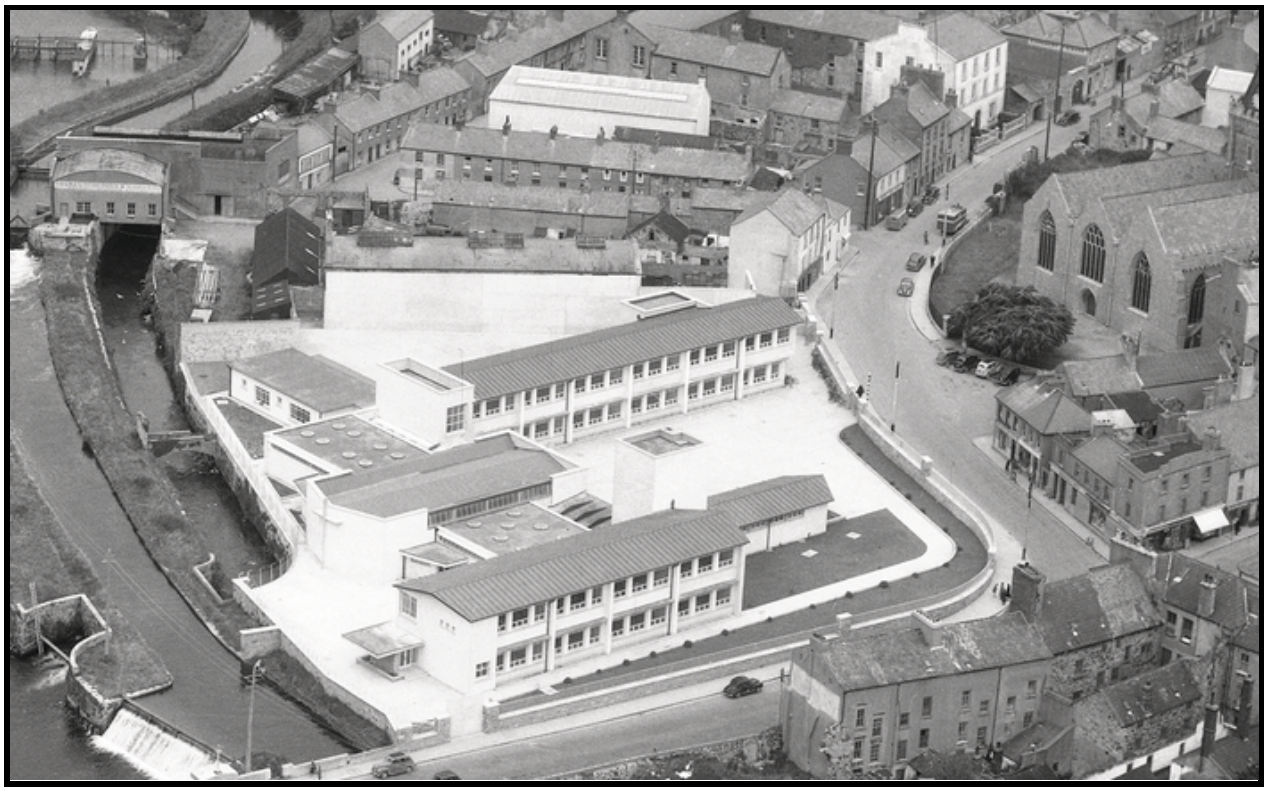
Galway City

Galway, a harbour city on Ireland's west coast, traces its roots back to 1124. In 1961, there was a population of 22,000. Emigration featured heavily as did the Catholic Church. Bishop Browne oversaw strict adherence to Catholic codes of morality around the city. His job was rendered relatively easy thanks to Archbishop John McQuaid of Dublin, who served from 1940-1971, and who 'obsessively monitored Irish life' to such an extent that:

> '...he did not have to ban a film, book or play outright, it was sufficient for his secretary to make it known that the archbishop had wondered if that (name of film, book or movie) was the sort of thing a good Catholic should witness.'
>
> (O'Gorman, 2021, p.33).

St Pat's National School

I chose this particular school to find participants from due to its history, size and nature. I also have close links to it: My mother works there, my brother attended as a pupil in the 1990s and I have taught there as a substitute teacher since 2015. Founded in 1827 by the Patrician Brother, Paul J. O'Connor, St Pat's moved to its current building on Lombard Street (below) in 1954 where it accepted boys from second class to seventh class (McNamara, 2018; Kenny, 2018).



Source: https://saintpatricksgalway.ie/about-us/school-history/

In the 1960s, St Pat's was experiencing record pupil numbers having reached 1,000 pupils in 1959. Hence, it was a school typically attended by boys of Galway city at this time. It was free, and so attracted pupils of a majority working class and farming background. However, as it was located in the city centre, middle class business owners also sent their sons. The only other schools for boys in the city were a mixed, all-Irish speaking, fee paying school and a Church of Ireland school. The former would not have suited the majority of parents, as other than the fee, English was the first language and the Catholic Church also strongly propounded segregated education.

Ethical Considerations

This data has been collected, protected and stored in accordance with the University of Groningen's Ethical Guidelines. All participants in the semi-structured interviews gave their consent after being informed about the purpose, methods, intended use of this research, format of the interview, their rights as a participant and how the data would be recorded and stored. Participants were free to withdraw at any stage. After the interview, participants received the

transcript and had an opportunity to review, amend and add any notes to ensure transparency and accuracy. Furthermore, all data was anonymised to ensure no participant could be identified, and confidentiality of information supplied by participants was respected.

Chapter 4 - Findings and Analysis

This chapter will provide a detailed account of the interview data. The data is presented under the main research question and three sub questions of this study. This research set out to capture the 'black box' of schooling in one particular school in Ireland, as experienced by pupils who attended in the 1960s. The three sub questions are based on Gert Biesta's framework of 'qualification', 'socialisation' and 'subjectification'. They provide the framework for collecting, organising and analysing the data in order to understand the 'black box' of schooling. All emphasis within the participants' quotes is their own.

Qualification - a basic education via rote learning

During the 1960s, the compulsory subjects included only religion, Irish, English, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Music and Needlework (for girls) or Algebra/Geometry for large boys schools (Walsh, 2012). As this comprises a wide area, I will focus on what stood out in the oral histories of the participants, particularly in relation to the contexts discussed in chapter one.

The conception of a child under the 1922 curriculum was largely of one 'who needed to be filled with knowledge, to be moulded into perfection by strict discipline and the amassing of vast quantities of factual data' (Walsh, 2016, p. 6). However, there was an attempt to move away from this in the 1960s. The Department of Education's (DfE) Report of 1959-60, while commending teachers in the moral grounding given to their pupils and 'grasp of the official programme', also tentatively suggested that 'possibly too much time is given to memorisation of knowledge when it might be better to develop and strengthen powers of reasoning and judgement' (p. 39).

However, my investigations indicate that memorisation was an important aspect of schooling as experienced by the participants. Overall, the participants recall classroom experiences of rote learning, with no development or focus on powers of reasoning, judgment and critical thinking. The participants recalled that 'nothing was explained' (P2). Caoimhín (P1) describes the learning process as, 'listen, then look, then put it down on paper, and then you had to learn it by heart'. Learning would be done for homework and participants would be quizzed the following days and weeks.

The participant's formative primary school years are all characterised by being 'drilled' (P4, P1) in subjects allowing for no questioning or depth of understanding: 'it was just a case of you learnt these things off, but you never really sort of **understood** them' (P2). Encouragement was generally not forthcoming (all participants) and the natural curiosity of children was not indulged (P1, P2): 'I remember being made to sit rigidly in one place throughout class' (P2). Despite the various calls for redevelopment of the educational system between 1930 and 1960, the pedagogical experience for these participants in St Pat's remained traditional and narrow.

Within the European context of the 20th century, the cornerstone of nationalism was that a state should be a country with its own distinct language and culture (Keroudie, cited in Walsh, 2016a). This perspective influenced Irish policy in the post-colonial era of 1922 to the 1960s and resulted in the interlinking of patriotism, nationalism and the Irish language revival within the school system. As Prime Minister de Valera (1937) declared: 'we cannot fulfill our destiny as a nation unless we are an Irish nation—and we can only be truly that if we are an Irish-speaking nation'. Over two decades later, the DfE's 1960 Report stated that much work remained to be done 'to bring home to the pupils that they should love and esteem' the Irish language as it is 'the most fundamental characteristic of nationality that any country can have' (p. 40).

Deducing from the participants' responses, their experience with Irish was in stark contrast to the policy aims. The translation of the Irish language policy into the classroom led to very negative and ineffective learning experiences. Only Michael (P4) differs as he was a native speaker of the language coming from a rural, Irish speaking area, which he states was very uncommon for the pupil population. Both he and Caoimhín remember the focus of lessons as being mainly grammar

and essays, which caused a deep hatred of the language. Aodh (P2) recalls just learning off Irish essays and detesting the subject and lessons so much that he may have ‘blocked them out’. According to the participants, there was no focus or incentive to converse in Irish throughout the day and there was no focus on oral language during the lessons: the emphasis was purely written work. This was potentially one of the knock-on effects of the Primary Cert examination. There was no English translation or anchoring given during lessons according to the participants. This caused great confusion as Caoimhín remembers: ‘we didn't even know what the hell’ the verbs and tenses meant.

The DfE Report of 1963-4 warned that pupils would only associate the Irish language with taskwork and drudgery should it become ‘anything less than a way of life’ by being taught as a mere, isolated subject. This statement was not a warning but a lived experience for the participants. Games, activities, visuals and informal methods were advised to engage pupils and foster an urge towards self-expression (DfE, 1963-4). However, when asked of his experience of the teaching methods, Aodh responded, ‘Oh they beat it into you, it certainly wasn't osmosis you know (chuckles), it was 'YOU WILL LEARN THIS''.

Music was used as a tool in the promulgation of what became the 'twin markers of Irish identity': Irish language and Catholicism, rather than being promoted for its aesthetic and intrinsic merit (McCarthy, 1999). It was heavily based on song singing with a repertoire of songs chosen to promote Irish and religious values (McAuliffe, 2004). This was evident in the participants’ answers where music lessons consisted solely of learning nationalist songs and religious hymns. Caoimhín remarked how they could sing the Latin mass from beginning to end: hymns were ‘a big thing’ and ‘every bloody hymn you can think of, we knew’. This is also demonstrated by Michael’s song copybook from 1966 containing nine songs, all of religious or nationalistic persuasion, in one of three languages: Irish, English or Latin. It was reported that music learning in Irish was 'less a pleasure than a strain' (INTO, 1939, p. 1014), which Caoimhín echoed in his interview regarding learning the ‘same bloody four or five songs every year’ in Irish.

The chief aim of history was to ‘develop the best traits of the national character and to inculcate national pride and self-respect’ (NPPI, 1922, p. 5). This was to be achieved ‘not by the cramming

of dates and details', but by demonstrating 'that the Irish race had fulfilled a great mission in the advancement of civilisation' thus justifying the nations' existence (ibid). However, the experience of the participants within the classroom was merely nationalistic dogma steeped in anti-Britishness, along with rote learning. Caoimhín recalled a '**very anti-British**' and 'a very republican kind of nationalist' lens where the Irish 'were the angels' and the British 'were the devils' because of 'what they did to poor old Ireland'. It follows that all the Irish revolutionaries 'were heroes and good guys and the British were all cruel, heartless, murderers, thieves and landlords' (P1). Michael remarked that it wasn't until he studied history at university, in an unbiased environment, that he could appreciate that there was 'cruelty on both sides' within British-Irish relations. Additionally, he remembers a focus on learning dates and names of battles throughout the centuries in Ireland. Similarly, Aodh elaborated that the teaching of history '**never** got into an understanding of why something took place' (P3).

The new history programme (1962) addressed 'really important historical issues', particularly the 20th century which previously 'received no more than superficial attention' but was now being effectively dealt with (DfE, 1963-4, p. 51). However, despite all of the participants being in attendance in St Pat's until at least 1964, three of them recall a sole focus on Irish history pre-1916. There was no emphasis on modern or social history, including the Irish famine from 1842-1845 (P1, P4).

The participants stated that they never received any actual physical education in St Pat's. The pupils of St Pat's played Gaelic games in the schoolyard, learnt at home or on the street from older siblings and neighbours. The DfE Report of 1959-60 stated 'more could be done for pupils in matters of health and physical development' (p. 39), implying that games played or dances taught were insufficient. Overall, it appears the importance of physical activity was recognised in the organising of after-school league games by the Brothers, yet there was little action of a concerted nature to make it a core subject within St Pat's, reflective of policy on a national level. Potentially, the Brothers felt inadequately trained or equipped to instruct pupils.

Socialisation

This socialisation process can be defined as 'the (re)presentation of cultures, traditions, and practices, either explicitly but often also implicitly, as the research on the hidden curriculum has shown' (Biesta, 2020, p. 92).

Nationalism and Religion

The curriculum was tasked with inculcating a sense of identity and nationhood steeped in Catholicism. This was evident in the oral histories of the former pupils of St Pat's where the eminent culture, traditions and practices were rooted in religion and nationalism. Additionally, a code of silence was strongly evident, a type of compartmentalising and separation of feelings. Similarly, and unsurprisingly for the time, corporal punishment, fear and the importance of obedience loomed darkly throughout.

The socialisation process involved overt cultural nationalism in St Pat's. For example, the raising of Ireland's tricolour flag in the schoolyard at intermittent times is recalled by Micahel and Aodh who both attended St Pat's in the latter half of the 1960s. The pupils would line up according to their class and sing *'Amhrán na bhFiann*' [Ireland's national anthem, translated as '*The Soldier's Song'*] as the flag was raised. Michael explained that, 'Brother Robert, who was the principal at the time, had come back from America, and I'd imagine this was one of the things he'd picked up from assemblies and schools in America'. Ideas for promoting nationalism were clearly considered and implemented in St Pat's. Similarly, Michael remembers the school marching up town for 'the 50th celebration of the 1916 rising' in 1966 and large school involvement with the celebrations around Galway.

Additionally, obedience and amalgamation were part of the implicit socialisation process as evidenced by the participants' responses. Caoimhín states that the boys were largely treated as a 'homogeneous block' to be shaped and moulded, rather than encouraged to develop according to their own personalities and talents. There was an atmosphere of: 'Do what I say and that's it. Get on with it' (P2). As Caoimhín recalled 'if you stuck your head over the parapet, you'd be very quickly put back in your place'. He further elaborated that if any boy was different in any way at all, they would be singled out by fellow pupils or potentially the teacher, or both.

Linked to obedience and amalgamation, Caoimhín recalls a ban on self-expression: ‘don't try to express yourself, don't try, like we didn't do art, we didn't do music…we sang songs that we were taught, that was about it’. A pupil who Caoimhín sat beside in fourth class used to doodle at the back of his copybook, and he remembers him as gifted at drawing. However, he recalls the boy receiving ‘a belting for it, you know: "Don't be doing this on your copybook”’. Akenson (2012) states the aim of schooling in Ireland at this time was the development of ‘certain cultural traits for the nation’s sake’ rather than ‘developing the potentialities of the individual pupils for the pupils’ sake’ (p. 41). Congruently, this is evident in the schooling experiences of the four participants. Singing was merely learning overtly nationalistic and religious songs (P1, P2, P3, P4). One such song remembered by Aodh is ‘*Wrap the Green Flag Around Me Boys’,* about an Irish rebel who is shot and lies dying, which he says was ‘portrayed as sort of being the ultimate sacrifice for Ireland’. Herein lies a tension between nationalism, of dying for one’s country, and religion, where not killing is a strict commandment.

Nationalism was also expressed explicitly through sport played in the schoolyard. Only Gaelic games, such as Gaelic football, hurling and handball were allowed. As Michael recalled, the Brothers ‘weren't into having soccer and rugby, in that era it was all - that era was very, still very nationalistic, big emphasis on everything patriotic’.

Furthermore, cultural nationalism was achieved through the ethos of St Pat’s, which the participants remember as a ‘republican’ (P1), ‘proud’ (P3) and ‘Gaelic’ (P4) ethos, interwoven with the Catholic ethos. The link between religion and ethos is noted by Williams (2000). He states that the two are not necessarily conjoined but that a school with a Christian ethos, usually, ‘aims to foster in young people a commitment to the message of the gospel’ as a matter of policy (p. 77). Interestingly, Aodh remembers talks by ‘charismatic’ Brothers returning from missions where they were ‘bringing the word of God to deepest, darkest Africa’. Joining the Brotherhood was sold to the pupils as a ‘great choice in life’ and the talks had the effect of getting them ‘greatly enthused, about this idea, sort of, of saving souls’ (P2). This attests to Akenson’s (2012) and Lynch’s (1989) highlighting another implict function of schooling in 20th century Ireland: St Pat’s was a fertile recruitment ground for future bothers needed to continue proselytizing after inculcating them in the teachings of the church.

Responses varied when asked about explicit teachings in religion. Two participants recalled explicit practises and traditions, speaking of being drilled in 'Christian Doctrine' (P1) and learning off 'the Catechism and Ten Commandments' (P2) regularly. Caoimhín recalled how sins, 'obedience and rules, rules, rules, rules' and an 'all powerful, punishing, fearful God' were preached about every day and the boys were to passively absorb it. Furthermore, Aodh remembers being taught that Catholics 'could be saved' from the damnation of hell but Protestants could not. However, if they were to convert a Protestant to Catholicism: 'this was the ultimate thing, it would pretty much guarantee your place in heaven...it was a goal, you know, so to save your soul (chuckles)'. Pupils were hence further explicitly encouraged in the tradition of proselytism. Interestingly, the two other participants had barely a vague remembrance but 'imagine(d) we got a lot of that [religion]' (P4) and that doing religion everyday 'was probably taken for granted as such' (P3), which demonstrates the implicit and pervasive role of religion in St Pat's at the time.

Code of Silence and Obedience

An implicit feature of the socialisation process was a code of silence amongst all the pupils in the classroom and school yard, as mentioned by all participants. It was effectively enforced by the boys themselves. No issue nor information was ever admitted nor reported to the teachers. All participants explained that even if a boy was receiving the blame, he might deny it but never offer up the name of the actual culprit. This was for reasons of self-protection and self-preservation: no pupil ever wanted a reputation as a 'tell-tale' for guarantee of reprisals (all participants), or 'hammerings' in the words of Caoimhín, in the schoolyard from fellow pupils.

A consequence of this code of silence was evident in the schoolyard, which could be compared to the 'wild-west' judging by the interviews; a tough and menacing element existed and the boys learnt methods of protection. There was often a particular group of 'tough guys' who would pick fights: the boys learnt quickly to 'mind themselves' and not to 'cross their path' in order to avoid trouble (P4). Michael retells how 'you rarely got picked on if you were a footballer', so he was 'lucky enough' in that regard. Similarly, all other participants played Gaelic games in the yard which offered this element of protection from other gangs of boys. Supervision seems to have

been minimal but Caoimhín stated if a fight did break out ‘you might see a priest or a Brother out (chuckles) and then everyone would scatter because if you were caught you were getting the cane’.

An implicit permission and promotion of the boys’ code of silence by the teachers is demonstrated in the interviews. The participants all stated that no pupil would approach a teacher with a problem or issue. Gerard (P3) reckons ‘the teachers understood’ the boys code of silence; though they might try to push for information, the issue of reprisals in the schoolyard was never acknowledged nor addressed through proper supervision at break-times.

Linked to this code of silence was also a compartmentalising between school and home. The pupils treated them as two distinct entities, even though there was generally no difference between the expectations at home and in school. Caoimhín rationalises that ‘we probably felt if we told our parents they'd say, well you must have been doing something bold to get smacked’. This echoes Maguire and O’Cinnéide (2005) from chapter one: parents generally accepted corporal punishment as long as it was within reason. Correspondingly, Aodh recalls ‘you certainly wouldn't bring stories home - school was school and home was home’. He recalled one lay teacher who took a particular dislike to him in third class, blaming him for things he had no responsibility for. He was quite affected by it and didn’t know how to deal with it, but mentioned it to nobody. O’Sullivan states that the Irish school teacher was considered a figure of authoritarianism in the era, ‘a key figure in the cultivation of deference to authority figures, particularly religious’ (2005, p. 443). Hence, the teacher yielded significant power which resulted in a powerlessness in pupils, and their parents to an extent.

This sense of powerlessness is vocalised by some of the participants, especially in relation to the unpredictable yet predictable use of corporal punishment. Caoimhín describes the pupils as ‘soft-targets’ who ‘couldn’t do a thing’ in relation to teachers use of corporal punishment. Similarly, Michael felt pupils were at the mercy of teachers who felt ‘fed up, frustrated, angry’. He believed they felt as such due to what was going on in their own lives, and subsequently took those feelings out on the pupils in the confines of school. This sentiment was echoed by Gerard. Aodh remembers a Brother who, seemingly at random, took ‘an extreme dislike to a particular

pupil' and would put all his 'effort into punishing him [the pupil], with the cane'. He recalls it as being 'quite violent'. This resulted in a fear that permeated the learning in the classroom: 'a lot of the reasons we learnt is **we were afraid**... we were **afraid** of the punishment' (P1). Aodh brings to life the sense of fear created by corporal punishment in the story of a boy who accidentally broke a window in the school yard:

> He was so. **terrified**. about having done this, that he literally dropped the pole and ran *screaming*. out of the yard, he was just so terrified...and it was only a small window, and it was just a pure accident. That's sort of an indicator of the environment. I probably would have reacted the same way myself.

Consequently, obedience and compliance with the standards and expectations of behaviour as set by the Brothers was achieved through the pupils' powerlessness and fear. While the code of silence was borne out of a fear of further punishment and retaliation, similarly obedience was achieved through the participants' sense of powerlessness and fear created by the threat and use of corporal punishment. Three of the participants remember some teachers who were 'brutes' or 'very cruel' (P1), and 'perfectly happy' (P2) to use the cane liberally (P1, P2, P4). Michael remembers it happening every day, and the general punishment was two to six strikes depending on the pupil's transgression, who the pupil was, or the teacher's mood that day. Additionally, fear was created by the depiction of a strict God to ensure obedience**:** 'God was a God that you know, you stepped out of line you were going to go to hell - there was a lot of emphasis on sins (chuckles)....and how you'd roast in hell (chuckles)' (P1). This is in line with the report on curriculum from the Council of Education (1954) stating the first duty of both parents and schools is the training of children in the fear and love of God. However, the participants were trained only in the fear of God in St Pat's, perhaps to ensure obedience.

Furthermore, it is apparent from the participants' responses that they were socialised not to question in St Pat's, which is also a form of obedience. All participants spoke of an atmosphere of acceptance and unquestioning, of duty and responsibility, of respecting 'your betters, whatever they decided' (P1) in school, at home and in society. Interestingly, Garvin (2010) notes a passive acceptance and culture of fear prevailed in Irish society in the 1960s, instilled by the Catholic Church. This acceptance and fear was reflected in both Galway and in St Pat's deducing from the participants' responses. Caoimhín relayed that it was 'fear that kept control', that 'there was no

such thing as rights', you did what you were told and that it was 'the case for adults too, particularly those who weren't as well educated, not to question'. Aodh recalls 'your role was to sit down and shut up, and take what was given to you and you certainly weren't asked or encouraged to question anything, so it was a case of sit there and be taught'. He states 'that was the environment at the time, you didn't really question this…I suppose it was the...environment where you were less likely to question anything - both at home *and* at school. Like, it was a much more authoritarian sort of time'. To 'survive', Michael relayed that 'you kind of kept your head down and your mouth shut as much as you could and try not to attract attention', a statement echoed by the other participants.

Corporal punishment was an explicit practice used to ensure obedience and compliance with the expectations within St Pat's, as evidenced by the participants' statements. Most corporal punishment in St Pat's occurred in breach of the DfE's rules governing it. The only rule that appeared to be adhered to was the second part of rule three that stipulated only a light cane or rod may be used. The cane used is still vividly remembered by Aodh:

> It was a bamboo cane. Like they used to buy these in bulk from the suppliers [chuckles]. This was an item that you ordered, you know, along with pencils and pens and general school supply materials. I remember, or I do have an image of seeing, sort of a big bundle of them somewhere in the school, you know, maybe 10 or 20 of them...all tied together, you know, you just picked your instrument out of that. So yeah it was like a cane and it just had a curved end on it.

Rule one stipulating that corporal punishment only be used for grave transgressions, and never for mere failure in lessons, was contrvened daily according to the participant's accounts. All four stated that the cane was administered for not knowing the answer to a question, or 'if you were cheeky or seemed to be cheeky', or for the usual things children get up to such as being noisy and 'giggling or messing in the class', or 'if you were talking to somebody beside you' (P1, P3), or for 'not having your homework done' (P2).

The cane would be administered to a variety of body parts: palm of the hand, back of the hand or the backs of the legs (P1, P2, P4). However, Aodh recounts that one Brother 'had a fondness for catching your locks and lifting you out of the seat'; an action in direct breach of rule three that stated the boxing of children's ears, the pulling of their hair, and similar ill treatment were absolutely forbidden.

Subjectification - a sometimes distant past

Subjectification is the individuation of education; how it impacts the student on an individual level, for example, ‘either by enhancing or by restricting capacities and capabilities’ (Biesta, 2020, p. 88). The depth of reflection by participants is varied according to their career choice. Caoimhín and Michael both became teachers and hence had reflected upon their school experiences prior to the interviews. Whereas, Gerard and Aodh stated that being part of the research caused them to reflect on their experiences for the first time.

Michael qualified as a secondary school teacher. He believes his experiences ‘had a big influence’ on him, in that he realised pupils within a classroom have various learning styles and, thus, the teacher has a responsibility to cater to these different styles through their teaching methods.

Caoimhín feels that the education received in St Pat’s encouraged a deferential and inferior attitude in him. He feels pupils of St Pat’s, as it was not a fee-paying primary school, ‘weren't educated to be leaders’ but to be ‘obedient followers’. He reflects that his experience in St Pat’s instilled a lack of self-confidence and self-esteem in him, which was something he feels he didn’t overcome until he was ‘about 25, maybe 26’. Additionally, Aodh and Michael noted the powerful effect that the unquestioning and biased approach, the ‘indoctrination’ particularly in the teaching of history and religion, had on them at the time as children.

Aodh recalls being struck by his daughter skipping into school happily in the 1990s, whereas this was anything but his experience of school in St Pat’s - it was to be endured, enjoyment was not a factor. He feels his primary school experience has little bearing on who he is today. He continued his education to third level with a career path in science and technology, something that he always had an interest in and was never encouraged or developed in St Pat’s. However, the Catholic ethos and religious teachings of the school have had a significant bearing upon him: ‘as regards formative, the only other thing I can think of is Catholic guilt (chuckles)...even now that sticks with me, so (chuckles) still haven't managed to shake it off’. Despite not being a practising Catholic anymore, the religious doctrine is still felt by Aodh mentally and emotionally.

Gerard had the least classroom memories and, perhaps because of this, was the most stoical in reflecting on his primary school experiences: 'I'm sure it shaped me in some way or other, I suppose it's the nature of what you are today, sort of all these experiences when you're going through your life and stuff like that'. He accepted life in St Pat's as just the way things were: 'I'm sure guys got belted from time to time and I'm sure in the yard at break time there was fighting as well, but that's normal, I think in any primary school'.

Chapter 5 - Discussion and Conclusion

Reviewing the findings in relation to the research aim and sub-questions reveals many interesting aspects, and exposes tensions within the 'black box' of St Pat's in the 1960s. The participants' responses highlight what Walsh (2005) states regarding the needs, interests or abilities of the individual child generally being ignored in the curriculum of the 1960s, while it simultaneously placed a strong emphasis on didactic teaching, the 3 R's and punishment. While school experiences are remembered to varying degrees by the participants, certain aspects were remembered by all and some common feelings shared. For example; rote learning, biased and superficial teaching, an unquestioning approach, a code of silence, fear, corporal punishment, nationalism and Catholicism.

One such tension evident from analysis of the findings is between the Irish language policy aims and what was achieved in the classroom. Despite the most important aim of the curriculum being the 'promotion of a knowledge of Irish' (Coolahan, 1981, p. 40), the language policy was a failure both nationally (Walsh; Kelly, 2002) and within the classroom of St Pat's. The participants, bar the one native Irish speaker, loathed it despite the aim of inculcating 'love and esteem' for it. They became neither Irish speaking nor bilingual.

A further tension exists between the chief aim of history, which was to 'develop the best traits of the national character and to inculcate national pride and self-respect' (NPPI, 1922, p. 5), and the deference and compliance that was in fact developed in the participants throughout their time in St Pat's. As also noted by the other participants, Caoimhín felt the Brothers were preparing them 'to be compliant, obedient, citizens of Ireland'.

Additionally, the neither neutral nor apolitical conception of knowledge is highlighted by the findings. St Pat's maintained and promoted cultural and religious narratives that were reflective of a society dominated by the Catholic Church. All the participants recall a very republican nationalism steeped in anti-Britishness during history lessons. This was despite the curriculum stating simply to focus on, amongst other aspects of Irish history: 'the historic connection between Ireland and England, and lessons in citizenship' (NPPI, p. 13). The lack of curricular framework and guidance, and the Catholic-Protestant divide, translated into explicit, nationalistically-biased teaching and learning regarding British-Irish relations.

Overall, the participants' responses indicate, the school subjects largely served as agents of Gaelic and Catholic identity to create an accepting, obedient and deferential citizens. Similar to the findings of O'Donoghue & Harford (2011), the participants were treated as vessels 'who needed to be filled with knowledge, to be molded into perfection by strict discipline and the amassing of vast quantities of factual data' (p. 6). As per Biesta's (2020) term of qualification, the justification for schooling was largely for nationalistic and religious purposes.

Nationalism was also evident in the ban on all foreign games in the school yard of St Pat's: only Gaelic games were allowed. PE was an optional curriculum subject and the participants received no training nor education in games nor anything physical. The theme of subordination of personal identity to group honour and the 'common good' was rooted in the underlying philosophy of Gaelic games and considered 'an excellent preparation for later life' (Revised Notes for teachers, 1932, p.10). The Council of Education in 1954 highlighted 'the absence of physical training as a defect in the existing curriculum', yet recommendations were cautious with a suggested 30 minutes per week and no attempt was made to make it compulsory (Duffy, 1997, p. 30).

This highlights one significant paradox that prevailed nationally and within the 'black box' of St Pat's: the absence of PE as part of the overt policy aims of nationalism. In contract, PE was an important component of nation-building throughout schools in Europe during the 20th century. According to Tröhler and Westburg (2017), 'the idea and existence of the nation-state always

depended not only on loyal civil citizens, fabricated by the school, but also on brave and competent soldiers' (p. 7), such as in the USA, France and Germany. However, having gained independence in 1922, Ireland was not in need of soldiers and the State iterated a neutral stance on the world stage. Gaelicisation was instead focused on as a building block of Irish nation-hood.

The religious and natioanlistic aims of education seemed to have been in tension with each other regarding PE. *Bunreacht na hÉireann* specifically excluded the State from playing a mandatory role in the provision of physical or religious education (Keogh, 1987). The formulation of Article 42.3.2 (Ireland, 1937) effectively abdicated the State of its responsibilities and enabled the Catholic church to have power and provision over both, in addition to the education system. Hence, as per Walsh (2012), every branch of human training in the education of Catholics in Ireland is subject to the guidance of the Church. Notably, the incorporation of PE into the ideology of Catholicism, resulted in the period of the most rapid growth of the subject within the system between 1954 and 1973 (Duffy, 1997). Therefore, the possible link between physical education and sexuality in Britain (Kirk, 1992) might have been one of the reasons why the Church seems to have initially blocked progress and why it eventually became involved in the policy and implementation of PE in primary schools (Duffy, 1997).

Additionally, some particularly salient aspects of the hidden curriculum as experienced within the 'black box' of St Pat's are revealed. The experiences of fear and violence are quite striking, not least because of the current perceptions and expectations of a 'good' educational culture and teacher. Garvin (2004 & 2010) and O'Toole (2012) infer that a culture of fear and a code of secrecy operated within Irish society. This is reflected in the findings: a culture of obedience and fear and a code of silence created by the presence of corporal punishment and the powerlessness it engendered. Subsequently, the pupils also perpetuated violence should their code be disobeyed by a fellow pupil. Similarly, according to the participants, weaker, different or isolated pupils may also be targeted in the schoolyard. This socialisation process involves a cycle of injustice that was subliminally adopted and perpetuated by the pupils, whereby a lack of compliance with the pupils' codes resulted in violence.

A further aspect of the hidden curriculum was the expected passive acceptance of knowledge in St Pat's. Caoimhín feels pupils 'weren't educated to be leaders', but to do what they were told: pupils 'weren't encouraged to question', it was a case of 'know your place' and 'monkey say, monkey do'. All participants echoed these sentiments. Such schooling practices are what Barrow and Woods (1994) conclude to be indoctrination: they are demonstrative of a 'lack of respect for an individual's rationality' (p. 80) and are based on the premise of 'think as we think and don't dare to question' (p. 81). Evidently, this was the unofficial ethos within the classroom of St Pat's as per the findings. Indeed, two participants explicitly stated that they experienced indoctrination achieved through both the qualification and socialisation functions of education within St Pat's.

It is evident from the findings that the 'black box' of schooling can never be generalised. As per O'Donoghue and Harford (2016) and Portelli (1981), that divergence in experiences add to the richness and complexity of happenings rather than presenting as a problem. Vitally, they give a more complete picture of the 'grey' area located between the two ends of the experience spectrum. For example, although corporal punishment was described in rich detail by three of the participants, most of the Brothers weren't excessive in their punishment of these particular participants. Additionally, all of the participants remember two brothers in particular, and a lay teacher, who were kind and well-liked and who generally never resorted to corporal punishment. There were, however, flagrant violations by other teaching staff.

Regarding subjectification, the individuation of education according to Biesta's (2020) framework, participants tended to sway between a nostalgic and critical stance on their experiences. The participants were all aware that schooling can have an effect yet two participants (P2, P3) felt it neither enhanced nor hindered their capabilities. However, there is a shadow cast by Aodh's primary school days that still lingers, such as the 'Catholic guilt' (P2). This highlights a powerful subjectification effect. Religion and identity were synonymous in St Pat's which can contribute to an ethnocentric view of one's culture and identity. Hence a person can grapple or struggle with the incongruence between personhood and what they were thought to believe and this can affect their behaviour, feelings and thinking.

Interestingly, the findings also demonstrated the somewhat evolving nature of subjectification.

The ‘black box’ of schooling provided a reference point for the two participants who subsequently trained to be teachers. They were challenged to make sense of their primary school days in university, which in turn caused them to be more reflective and inclusive in their teaching methodologies due to their own negative experiences in the ‘black box’ of schooling. They returned to how they felt and their points of view as former pupils to inform their own teaching styles and methodologies. They also gained an understanding into the point of view of the teacher: the difficulty of maintaining discipline and learning in a class of 50 boisterous boys. The bias learnt in St Pat’s was also overcome at university.

Furthermore, regarding the individuation of education on a collective level, O’Toole (2012) states that engaged citizenship is weak in Ireland as a result of the authoritarian hierarchical control by the Catholic Church throughout the first half of the 20th century. Censorship was enforced according to the Catholic Church’s strict moral code. Free discussion was not promoted resulting in a lack of openness and transparency. Inglis surmises that the Church’s institutional monopoly over the frameworks of society contributed to a ‘disposition in which people were not encouraged to think for themselves’ (p. 253). A consequence of this system of control is what O’Toole terms ‘fatalism and a sense of powerlessness’ (ibid, p. 28), characteristics which impede engaged citizenry. This is reminiscent of the participants’ responses accepting the times for what they were and as just the way things were. Two mentioned how the structures of society were not talked about and adults were passively accepting, too. The subjectification function of education on a collective level arguably resulted in a passive society who simply turned away from the Church, as the participants did, rather than confront it and demand change. Naturally, other factors are also potentially at play, yet this result is still indicative of a strong subjectification process and how the ‘black box’ affected these participants.

Limitations

Limitations of this research are largely due to the research sample design and the use of oral history methodology. This was a convenience sampling where the participants were all self-selecting. Additionally, and while the findings are worth exploring further and interesting when situated in the broader literature, the sample size is relatively small and the findings are not generalizable. Geography is also a factor: St Pat’s was an all-boys, large, city school in the

West of Ireland run by Patrician Brothers. An all-girls school run by nuns, or a mixed school run by lay teachers, in a rural area or inner-City Dublin may render varying experiences. However, O'Donoghue and Harford (2016) regard this to be a strength: 'disagreement is to be encouraged to stimulate cognition of alternatives and contribute to debate on them' (p.7). Abrams (2014) considers gender to be a significant variable in interview conduct and outcome. Hence, as all the participants were male and I am female, and at least 30 years younger, this might have influenced what the participants relayed.

Recommendations for Further Research

Certain aspects have been identified that warrant more exploring. In terms of geographical area and school specificities being mentioned as a limitation, this is an area that could be researched further to offer comparison and understand whether experiences differ widely or not. In particular, larger scale studies would be beneficial in determining how common these findings are; cross-sectional or longitudinal studies would also significantly enhance our understanding of the 'black box' of schooling.

In terms of school culture and ethos, it would be interesting to research the 'code of silence' found in St Pat's and whether it is prevalent today in schools, or when this changed and how. Similarly, regarding the 'culture of fear' and separation between home and school, it would be of interest to research whether this dissipated with the abolishment of corporal punishment in 1982.

Another element worth exploring is the changing perceptions and expectations of teachers, especially regarding the social-emotional welfare of pupils. Specifically, in terms of when and how changes occurred and what impact they had upon pupils' experiences in the 'black box' of schooling. This would all provide an opportunity into understanding how the 'black-box' is shaped and impacted by the individuation of policy, pupils and school staff.

Conclusion

This research gave insight into the 'blackbox' of schooling from the perspective of former pupils, something not previously studied in Ireland. Most archival material and written sources related to education are authored by those in power at the time - in this case, teachers, priests,

civil servants - or are centred and focused on the policy level (Coolahan, 1981; Farren, 1995; Mulcahy & O'Sullivan, 1989; O'Buachalla, 1988; O'Sullivan, 2005; Walsh, 2012; Jones, 2006). Some works exist in the form of autobiographical work, academic expositions and government commission testimonies; however, little is available in that grey area lying between romantic, nostalgic accounts of schooling and accounts involving horrendous abuse (O'Donoghue & Harford, 2016). This research exposes and captures the grey area of everyday school life: the area in between horrendous and romantic. Oral histories allow us to 'create a more complex and rounded picture of the past' (Bornat et al, 2000, p. 3), which this research hence enabled regarding the 'black box' of schooling in St Pat's in the 1960s.

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Appendices

Appendix 1 - Compulsory and optional subjects, 1900-1971

Year	*Compulsory subjects (Primary School)*	*Optional subjects (Primary School)*
1900	English, Arithmetic, Kindergarten methods, Manual Instruction, Drawing, Object Lessons and Elementary Science, Singing, School Discipline and Physical Drill, Cookery (girls), Laundry (girls), Needlework (girls)	French, Latin, Mathematics, Irish, Instrumental Music
1922	Religion, Irish, English, Mathematics (Arithmetic, Algebra and Geometry), History and Geography (one subject), Singing, Drill, Needlework (girls)	Drawing, Advanced Algebra, Advanced Geometry, French (or other continental language), Latin, Nature Study, Book-keeping, Elementary Science (conditional), Cookery, Rural Science and School Gardening, Manual Instruction (Woodwork) and Domestic Science
1926	Religion, Irish, English, Mathematics, History, Geography, Music, Rural Science/Nature Study, Needlework (girls)	Drawing, Domestic Science, Physical Training, Manual Instruction
1934	Religion, Irish, English, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Music, Needlework (girls), Algebra or Geometry (large boys' schools only)	English (first class), Rural Science/Nature Study, Domestic Science, Drawing, Physical Training, Manual Instruction, Algebra and Geometry (girls' schools and small schools)
1948	Religion, Irish, English, Arithmetic, History, Geography, Music, Needlework (girls), Algebra or Geometry (large boys' schools only)	English (first class), Rural Science/Nature Study, Domestic Science, Drawing, Physical Training, Manual Instruction, Algebra and Geometry (girls' schools and small schools)
1971	Religion, Language (Irish and English), Mathematics, Art and Craft, Social and Environmental Studies (History, Geography, Civics, Elementary Science), Music, Physical Education	N/A

Appendix 2 - Rules governing corporal punishment

The rules governing corporal punishment are listed below as per Maguire and O'Cinnéide (2004):

1) Corporal punishment should be administered only for grave transgression - [never for failure in lessons (this last phrase was deleted in 1931 and added again in 1946)].

2) The Principal Teacher only should inflict the corporal punishment. An interval of at least ten minutes should elapse between the offence and the punishment.

3) Only a light cane or rod may be used for the purpose of inflicting the corporal punishment. The boxing of children's ears, the pulling of their hair, and similar ill treatment are absolutely forbidden, and will be visited with severe penalties.

4) No teacher should carry about a cane or other instrument of punishment.

5) Frequent recourse to corporal punishment will be considered by the Department as indicating a bad tone and ineffective discipline.

The rules were revised again in 1965. The gist of the 1965 rules is as follows:

1. Teachers should have a lively regard for the improvement and general welfare of their pupils, treat them with kindness combined with firmness and should aim at governing them through their affections and reason and not by harshness and severity. Ridicule, sarcasm or remarks likely to undermine a pupil's self-confidence should be avoided.

2. Corporal punishment should be administered only in cases of misbehaviour and should not be administered for mere failure at lessons.

3. Any teacher who inflicts improper or excessive punishment will be regarded as guilty of conduct unbefitting a teacher and will be subject to severe disciplinary action.

Appendix 3 - Informed consent form

INFORMED CONSENT

I, (name of participant)

hereby consent to be a participant in the current research performed by
(name, telephone and e-mail of researcher or contact person of the research team)

Elizabeth (Lisa) Jordan
+353 85 185 8816
e.j.jordan@student.rug.nl

I have agreed to take part in the study entitled

The 'black box' of Schooling in 1960s Ireland: Oral history of everyday life in primary school

and I understand that my participation is entirely voluntary. I understand that my responses will be kept strictly confidential and anonymous. I have the option to withdraw from this study at any time, without penalty, and I also have the right to request that my responses will not be used. The researcher is responsible for a safe storage of the data.

The following points have been explained to me:

1. The goal of this study is

gain insight into pupils experiences of school-life in the 1960s

Participation in this study should help advance our understanding of

the 'back box' or everyday life of primary school in an Irish city during the 1960s: the experiences, climate and politics of the classroom and the subsequent learning and impact upon the participant

2. I shall be asked to

answer questions relating to my memories and experiences of attending St.Patrick's Boys National School, Galway, during the 1960s.

3. The interview will last approximately **30-60** minutes.

4. I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time. I can also refuse to answer any question during the interview process without any consequences of any kind.

5. I agree to my interview being audio-recorded and transcribed. I will be provided with a transcript of my interview within seven days. I can redact and/or clarify any of the information provided in the transcript by contacting the researcher.

6. My responses will be treated confidentially and my anonymity will be ensured. Hence, my responses cannot be identifiable and linked back to me as an individual.

7. I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.

8. I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the researcher's thesis dissertation and thesis presentation.

9. I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained on the researcher's laptop, which is password and pin protected and thus only accessible to her, until certification of the grade by the exam board by 25th July 2021. Upon certification, the consent forms and original audio recordings will be permanently deleted.

10. I understand that a transcript of my interview, in which all identifying information has been removed, will be retained for two years until 25th July 2023 after which it will be permanently deleted.

11. I understand that under freedom of information legalisation I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.

12. The researcher will answer any questions I might have regarding any aspect of this research, now or later in the course of the study.

13. I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

Date:	Signature researcher:
5/3/2021	E Jordan

Date:	Signature participant:

Appendix 4 - Data extraction table (Participant 1)

Qualification	Socialisation	Subjectification
‘a **lot of the reasons we learnt is we were afraid**...you know, we were afraid of the punishments...we didn't...the other thing there was, we learnt an awful lot by rote - so everything was all, saying the tables out loud and all this kind of thing, saying poetry off, learning poetry off by heart, but there'd be no interpretation of it obviously - just say the poems, maybe passages from prose, so you had to learn everything by heart’ ‘when it came to **history,** it was only Irish history and it was up to about 1916’ [Were ye ever thought to question (that narrative by the teachers)?] ‘Oh no, well we didn't, we wouldn't, it wasn't until obviously...even throughout secondary school there was an element of that. It wasn't until I went to university and I did history there that you kind of, it was totally different kind of approach and you could see both sides and it was, cruelty on both sides, but we got all this’ **Nationalism (Soc) / Subj* ‘we all were [all scared], that's the thing, and you'd have to learn things: 'who made the world? God made the world.'...**declaring all this thing off by heart, we didn't really know what we were saying’** ‘the **subjects** were maths, Irish, English, now as I said Christian doctrine, and some geography and history, right, that was it’ **‘Rote learning and learning things off by heart was big, big part of the whole thing** - for example with maths, you'd have tables, arithmathic, algebra, fractions, interest, compound interest -	‘but ahm you know, I was nervous as well at that age, can you imagine going in and ***the culture and the atmosphere was very, very different***’ [to current times] ‘you'd be nervous going to school in the morning you know, it was always an anxiety and **the way you survived was you kind of kept your head down and your mouth shut as much as you could and try not to attract attention**’ ‘ you know, we'd never tell our parents...if we got *lashed*, which was a strange thing, I often look back on that now, and have often talked to other fellas and...ahm, we probably felt if we told our parents they'd say well you must have been doing something **bold** to get smacked, you know, so we just didn't tell them and ahm, it was that kind of conspiracy of silence among the boys… Also, you didn't want to be known as a tell-tale, like you know, we would never tell on each other in class either, if something happened when the teacher was out - you would *never* ..say 'oh it was so-and-so'...ah if he was blaming you you wouldn't say - all you'd say is 'it wasn't me', you wouldn't say 'it wasn't me, it was Johnny', you just never told - you know - there was that kind of spirit among the boys, you know, and I suppose it was a protection thing...but you wouldn't do that because if you **did** - you know - when you went out into the yard (chuckle) - you know, you get a hammering the in the yard aswell (chuckles) from the **lads**, so there was a kind of a, you know, that's just the way it was I suppose at the time, and being all **boys**, and all male teachers	‘ahm, overall I came through it fairly okay, you know I wasn't too traumatised by the time I came out the end of it...but that was the way it was then and we just accepted that’ ‘respect your betters - whoever they might be, whatever they decided, ya know, so it was that kind of a culture...and that's looking back on it now, at the time of course we didn't know any different, we just, that was it’ Resilience Compartmentalising Element of 'getting on with it' ‘we were afraid though, it was fear that kept control when I look back. It wasn't that we loved the place you know, it was just fear and duty, responsibility - that was what was drilled into ya, duty, your duty and responsibility, there was no talk of rights’ *F ‘learn and do your homework and behave yourself, but that came from home aswell. That would come from your home, you were getting the same kind of message at home too’ <u>Effects of schooling reflection:</u> ‘I think...I think I would have been very withdrawn for years. Deferential, lacking confidence, but you know as time went on as I got more educated, went to college, I kinda lost that but I mean that was there for a long, long time...probably still comes out every now and again with authority figures - sometimes I've an issue with authority still, because I saw authority as a kind of - not a benevolent thing, you know, something that you know you have to rebel against to survive, you know, there's an element of that developed in, but, as I said to ya, I think.....you know the Brothers

that'd be kind of percentages, weight and measures and remember at that time it was all pounds, shilling and pence - it was pre decimalisation and area was another thing, like acres, rudes, purchase17:04 and all this kind of thing - the old way of calculating the area. So, it was all of that was by heart, apart from algebra, which was...then there was some problem solving as well...but it was all to do with this old one like 'the train is going at 50mph and is heading to Galway and Galway is 62 miles from Athlone, how long would it take the train to get there?, so you'd have to calculate this kind of thing about the speed and the time kind of thing, volume and that kind of thing too. SO that was the whole maths throughout the whole years there'

'Irish then was grammar, grammar, grammar. Now we had an Irish reader and spellings, Irish poetry - some Irish poetry, and Irish songs - but they were the ***same four or five bloody songs over, over again,*** jaysus (chuckles). And we'd be singing these things off by heart and sure we hadn't a clue what they meant, ya know. But there no emphasis on the spoken language it was all grammar, grammar, grammar - grammar, and of course we hated that, and we got belted for it, [CP] and we had to learn off how to form verbs and sure we didn't even know, and they wouldn't even say the present tense in English to explain to you that this is now the present tense, all they'd say is oh modh cionnilloch or something like that, sure we didn't even know what the hell that was, so it was all basically no anchoring, we all ended up - we *hated* it, basically.'

'Then with **English,** English was spellings and some grammar but less emphasis on grammar, reading, poetry but then of course we all understood that easily - oh and writing, the same with Irish - writing, penmanship was very important, ya know, to learn to

'ya see, I suppose the ethos in the likes of St Pats was Republican, Christian, I don't know how - it was very much **Republican, Catholic - Catholic more than Christian and it was religious...religion was all about sins...and it was all about obedience...and it was all about the Roman Catholic church basically, you know, the rules of the church - there wasn't too much talk about a loving God'**

'God was a God that you know, you stepped out of line you were going to go to hell - t**here was a lot of emphasis on sins (chuckles)....and how you'd roast in hell** (chuckles)'

'No, no you didn't dare [ask questions], if you did - if you did that was *cheeky* - and you'd get a belt, so you know, it was very much preparing us to be compliant, obedient, citizens of Ireland, rather than questioning…'

'we weren't educated to be leaders, you know what I mean, **we were educated to be followers - you know, do what you're told, know know your place'**

'so **Christian Doctrine or religion**, that was every day, every day, I'd say about 12:20-1 o'clock and we'd break then at 1 o'clock, so it was all, and again you had to learn it off by heart, it was all **rules** based, **doctrine,** when you think of the learning like 26:06, it was just rules: 'who made the world?', 'God made the world'. you know, all this, you'd go right up, I can't even now - even things like three divine persons and one god, there was no explanation of that, you just accepted it. The Father, the Son, the Holy Ghost, that's it, Bang (stick on desk) and sins, the seven deadly sins and the ten commandments, and all this rules, rules, rules, rules, rules'

'[There was no explanation of how or why or discussion of the stories in the

would never admit this but I think the ethos there was to make us...the followers rather than the leaders. That's the best way I can describe that. If you went to the Jes, you were told, you were taught to be a leader - I'm just using them as an example, and Taylors Hill and Salerno; whereas the Mercy and Presentation, the Brothers - this is back now in the sixties - the Mercy, the Presentation and the Brothers, you were there to be...taught your place, learn respect, do what you're told, you know that kind of thing, whereas...I qualified myself as a teacher so I've looked back and I see it. The Jes, the Jesuits - I only use them as an example - they would have been encouraging their boys to express themselves, to be questioning, you know, and that leads too to more of a leadership, and confidence, even if you're not a leader but you have a self confidence, whereas we weren't encouraged to question, you know, monkey say money do, that was, that's the significant difference in the way we were educated'

Subj / Justification / Soc / Punishment@home & conditioning:

'I would say certain youngsters would have had a worse time than I had or a terrible experience, that would have affected them all their lives and still does 52:07, you know there's no doubt about it, but as I say, ya have to weigh that up against the times that were there, only for the Brothers and the nuns, a lot of us, these people, would have got no education at all, you know...they wouldn't have got - from that education they got opportunities, the ones that were able to come through the system relatively unscathed mentally, or emotionally or whatever, so you have to get-and, like, when you fifty or sixty guys in a class how do you maintain discipline...but I don't make that as an excuse, I'm just giving the look from both sides but at the same time it didn't excuse some of the carry-on. I mean we had all accepted a level of corporal punishment because ya got it at home too, ya got belted, ya got a belt or ya got-my father didn't have a cane or my mother, but she used to use a dishcloth,

write properly, to be able to write properly'

'**Irish history** like I said was very much a kind of nationalistic, one-sided, slanted and very much highlighting the Gaelic League and all that, right up to 1916. **Geography** then was all physical geo, but in the sense that you looked at a map of Ireland and you'd have to learn all the rivers and the lakes and the mountains and the main cities and know where all the counties were...so you'd be tested with a map that would have a river running, but there'd be no name on the river and they'd say 'what river is that?' and you'd have to be able to say, identify it. And then we did the same for all the countries in the world on a globe map, a big map of the world up on the wall, different colours you know that's Canada, that's Australia, that's Germany, that's whatever. But you had to know then, what's the capital of Germany, what's the capital of France, what's the capital of Uganda or whatever'
'and you had to be able to recognise on a map the country in the world, the main rivers in that country, the capital and big cities, the main mountains...like you know, you'd be learning 'oh, they're the Alps, you'd be able to identify them, or they're the Pyrenees, or you know and the same with a map of England. So that was really what **Geography** was all about'
'you'd have to [take it down in a copy first from the board] and then you'd have to be able to draw a map yourself of Ireland. I used to (love that 23:59, and then you'd have a blue biro and a red biro maybe or something, a pen, and you'd draw out the map and then with red you might put in the rivers, without looking at the map you had to be able to create where the rivers were, roughly, and then you'd mark in where Dublin, Galway, Cork, Belfast, that kind of thing, and then you'd have to put in mountains and be able to out the mountain, know where the mountains

Bible? They were just all presented as facts to know?]
Interviewee: Correct, and there was no emphasis as I said to ya, a significant difference between the kids I see today and their learning - there was no emphasis on a loving God, it was all an all-powerful, punishing, fearful, keeping - it was a control thing you see. Those were basically the subjects ya know. was just, you know, nobody sat down and talked about - you learnt eh stories that the Bible, the New Testament of course, but you didn't kind of, you didn't, outside of that there was nothing'

'There was no such thing as rights, I never heard any of us ever saying well we have a right to this/exist. It was 'you do what you're told, you've a duty, your responsibility', you were taught right from wrong, respect, that was it. That was the kind of atmosphere and culture at school and at home, so you need that, when you're talking about this era you need to have that background. But that was the case for adults too, particularly those who weren't as well educated, to question - like they would just tip the cap as they say you know if you ask your parents about it I'm sure they'll tell you the same thing'

Soc & Qual
'So don't stand out or you'll be cut down?
Interviewee: Oh yeah, no no or don't try to express yourself, don't try, like we didn't do art, we didn't do music we didn't - like when I say music we sang songs that we were taught, that was about it, you know songs in Irish that's all, Irish songs'

across the back of the legs, a wet dishcloth, ya got a good lash of it, and that was it, short and sharp and that was it, there was none of this 'you're going to sit on the nasty step for an hour', it was over, ya got your punishment and that was it, it was move on, but you know, that was the kind of culture pervading then for everybody so it wasn't just in the school, but some of the people in the school were...brutes, were just brutes...absolute brutes 53:38 and those people were traumatised, ya hear about it now ya read it in the paper, these guys were traumatised but ah I didn't see any of that, and as I said to ya, it wasn't until I got to about, I'd say I was about twenty-five, maybe 26 before I started to gain a self confidence that other people would have had at 17 or 18 and I've put it all down to that schooling, ya know do what your told, tip the cap, know your place, and that was it'

were, that kind of thing so it was all to do with - that's why I say **physical geography**, if you looked at a map, you were able to identify the main rivers, mountains, towns or cities, same with England, or Europe so you knew where things were in your head, but you also learnt it off by heart' 'There was no **music**, the only sport was out in the yard. We played handball, we played football, but it wasn't organised like a team playing against another school - it was just amongst ourselves in the yard.' 'we were taught nothing about **sports,** we just brought in whatever played in the streets ourselves' 'Any **religious songs**? Oh we knew all the hymns, every bloody hymn you can think of, we knew - we could sing the Latin mass from start to finish (laughs), oh yeah hymns were a big thing, we knew all the hymns for Novenas as they called them, that was all apart of the learning' 'the way we **wrote Irish**, all the letters were different - it was the old Irish lettering … so we had to learn that script, we had to learn that script as well as the English script you know, and ahm, so that's the way it was but even now, if you get the old schoolbooks, pre-65, you'll see the old Irish script in them, the way it was written'		

Nationalism	**Fear**	**Corporal Punishment**
'but it was very, very...ahm...v**ery anti-British - in what we learnt (chuckles)...in other words, we were the angels and they were the devils and what they did to poor old Ireland, you know, it was a very Republican kind of nationalist bent on it and all our revolutionaries were heroes and**	'a lot of the reasons we learnt is we were afraid...you know, we were afraid of the punishments.' *Q 'we all were [all scared], that's the thing,' *Q	'a lot of discipline and discipline was dished out with the cane, so it was corporal punishment then..it was, was very much in vogue as the method of control and punishment...so there was liberal use of the cane for everybody' 'some of the teachers didn't use the cane now that much in fairness but ah, there were, there were brutes there as well you know...like in any,

good guys and the British were all cruel, heartless, murderers, thieves and landlords, ya know, that was the spin basically' 'I suppose the ethos in the likes of St Pats was Republican, Christian, I don't know how - it was very much **Republican, Catholic..'** *[Soc] Irish history - only up to 1916, too 'contentious' past that and only dealt with in uni 'it was too contentious, because it was too soon after the civil war, well not soon jesus the was 40 years over, but there was still people alive who had families involved and who were against each other, and who had suffered what goes on in a war - death, murder, torture, some of them were treated as informers so there was probably, the Department of Education wouldn't have gone any further than that' <u>Participant 2 & 4:</u> Saluting Irish flag and singing national anthem Principal had returned from a trip to America and, influenced by what he saw there, started this tradition in early-mid 1960s.	'we were afraid though, it was fear that kept control when I look back. It wasn't that we loved the place you know, it was just fear and duty, responsibility - that was what was drilled into ya, duty, your duty and responsibility, there was no talk of rights' *Q	at the time in any...***some of them were very cruel** and...there was always one' Then there'd be the odd fight in the yard and it'd draw a big crowd - then you might see a priest or a brother out (chuckles) and then everyone'd scatter because if you were caught you were getting the cane, that was basically it' *[Yard] 'all punishment was physical29:00 punishment, there was no such thing as just - but you'd get verbal, dog's abuse as well you know but you always got the cane' 'Yeah, every single day, every single day [CP would happen], depending on, you know, you might get two on each hand or, if you were really bold, you might get six on each hand, you know what I mean, it was every day…' 'if you didn't know the answer to a question, if you were cheeky or seemed to be cheeky, if you were caught giggling or messing in the class, you know anything or if you were talking to somebody beside you, you know the usual things that kids get up to - if you were caught at any of that: cane, cane, cane' 'Yeah, it was just, some of them loved doing it, some of them just loved giving you the cane, I've no doubt about it. And if they were angry, whatever was going on in their own lives aswell, you know if they were fed up, frustrated, angry - they took it out on us, we were soft targets you know, and we couldn't do a thing, you couldn't' Mitching story - brought back by guards: 'I remember that happening to two friends of mine, they were marched to the school gate and brought in and by jaysus they got a hand few (hits) (chuckles), so they were caught mitching and I tell ya they didn't do it again (chuckles)' (could be arrested or sent to correctional schools for mitching - education compulsory until 14 yrs or completion of primary cert) 'we had to learn that aswell, how to write that way, so you had to be able to switch from one to the other, you know, you couldn't be putting an Irish T when you were in your English writing book and vice or versa, you'd get a you know, but that's what you had to watch for' *Qual

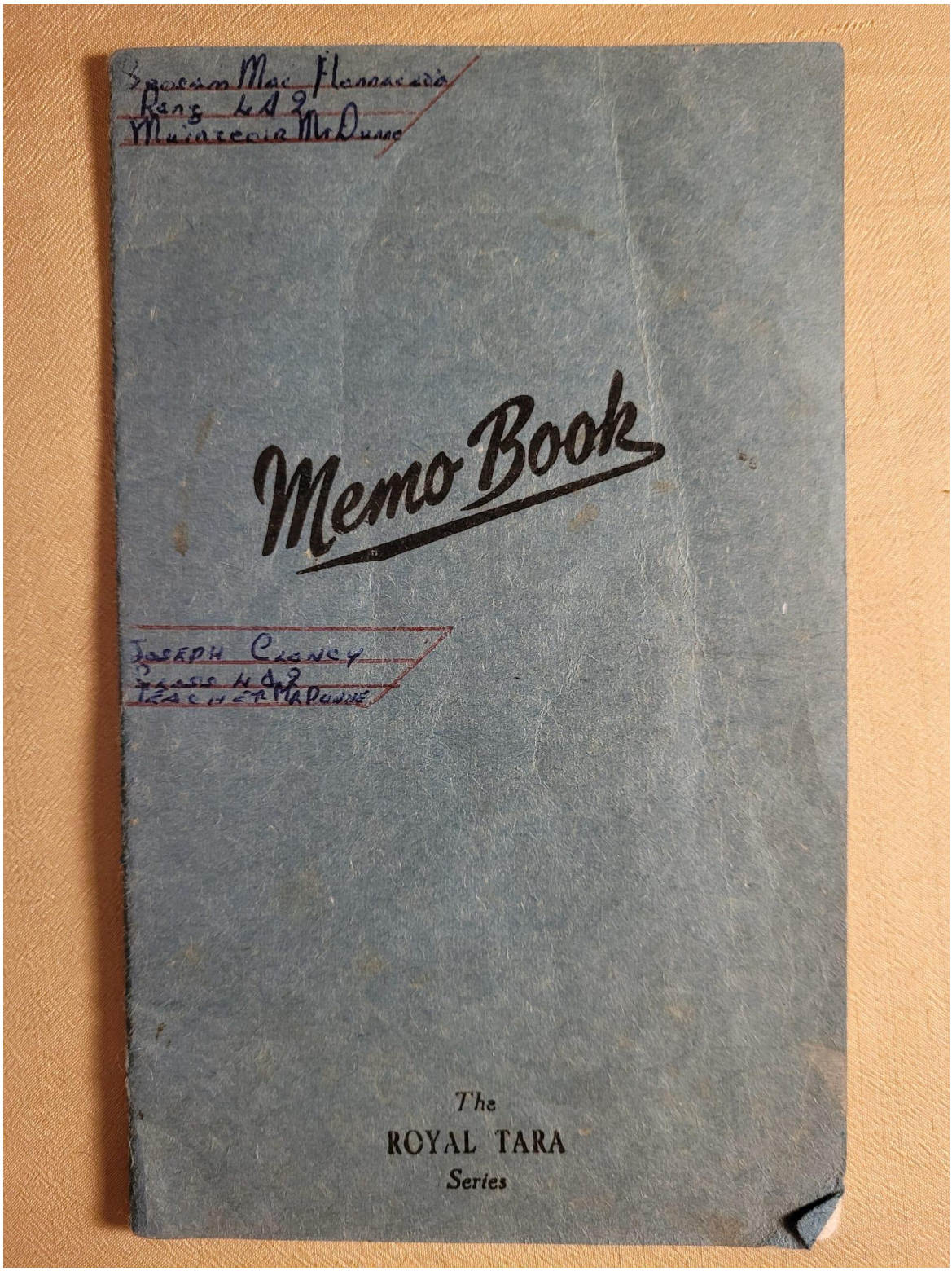
Poverty / Social Class	Justification	Teaching Methodologies / Styles
‘at that time, if you didn't have money, no matter how bright you were, you wouldn't be able to go to university unless you got a scholarship - there wasn't the free education, you know, money was a big issue then’ ‘Yeah the Jesuits, we used to look on them as the, the 'high brows' in the town, you know, they all go to the Jes, but I don't think the Jesuits had a [primary school at that stage, I'm not sure, but you had to pay in the Jesuits SS, you had to pay in Taylor's Hill, had to pay in Salerno’ ‘So the free education from 1967 opened education up to everybody, like the Jes, because you didn't have to have money to go there. It changed everything’ *[free education 1967 for secondary school]* <u>Friends</u> ‘Your friends were your friends because you liked them39:14 or they weren't your friends because you didn't like them, it had nothing to do with their background, colour or whatever’ *Friendships <u>Multiculturalism / Black people</u> ‘Yeah basically the school wasn't deliberately not multicultural but just wasn't at the time, so it wasn't an issue. The only time we talked about Black people was when we'd collect money for the Black babies, charity, who were starving in Africa - we collected money for them but outside that we wouldn't have been thought of anything else you know’ <u>Demographic of school</u> - Working class ‘Yeah there was, but mainly in the likes of St. Pats - like we had a business and there would have been the sons of business men in the town but it was the convenience of the school that it	‘people like the brothers would provide the schooling in fairness, that was one of the roles they had so they provided the schooling, whereas if you going to the Jesuits, you'd have to pay’ ‘the Mercy nuns and the Presentation nuns and the Christian Brothers would provide, ah, free secondary education - not that was one of the biggest roles they had and one of the best things they ever did *in fairness* you know they're in for a lot of criticism now because of the abuses and everything else but they did provide - a lot of people wouldn't have gotten an education, if they weren't there’ ‘Now the only thing I would give the teachers, looking back now, I suppose if you have fifty young lads in the class, like how do you keep control...you know. Now maybe that's a small excuse but it's not an excuse really, some of them were...some of them were brutes, they were just brutal’ ‘he teaching and that *was* teaching then, it wasn't unique to Ireland, boys and girls were taught the same way in England and the world over, it was someone standing at the top and 'A is Apple, B is for..' (in orator voice), ya had to learn it off by heart, and the same for poetry, ya learnt 3 or 4 verses of poems - I still know them, strangely the ones you learnt by heart are still with ya, you know, ya learnt everything, there was no such thing as 'oh what do you think the poet felt when he was writing that?' (mocking voice) There was *NONE of that!* (chuckles), that was it, no: 'Oh what was his inner feelings', ah jaysus forget it (chuckles)’	‘Yeah, yeah - they [lay teachers] were as tough, they were as tough as the brothers bar one...we had one teacher I always remember <u>Mr Dolan</u>, again he had a great love of reading, but ahm, he..he wasn't a great teacher but he'd, he'd a nice manner about him, he'd a way of getting us to do things and he didn't ever seem to have disciplinary problems in the class, ah, he'd take out the cane and threaten us alright but he never used it and ahm, he'd have been more of an encouraging type of a teacher, rather than, ya know’ ‘Well we had one of the nice teachers I told you about earlier, <u>Mr Dolan</u>, that man, the year before we went into his class, his wife died, and he was left with a young family19:59 but sure didn't he hit the bottle...and he used to smoke like a trooper (laughs) so he used to come into the class with the Irish Times, I can still see him, and he'd have the IT under his arm and he'd put it down on the table, he'd say the prayer...every class started with a Hail Mary or some prayer, you blessed, when the teacher walked into the room everyone stood up...the priest [brother or lay teacher] would start the class, he'd bless himself, he'd say a prayer, bless himself, we'd all sit down...that was the order brought to the class straight away by that. And when class ended you said a prayer, when the bell went, ***you stood up, blessed himself and said a prayer and out the door then the teacher would go and we'd all sit down then***20:51(when would kids leave?)...ha(something indiscernible and laughs) I remember he used to smoke in the class, I mean he used, I don't know whether it was allowed or not, but he used to do it anyway, he'd stand over by the window and he'd be blowing smoke out the window and every now and again, we'd catch him, he'd have a nagin of whiskey and he'd say to us: "heads down now lads" and he'd put a sentence or two up on the board "I want you to write this out", so while we'd all be

was in town. That time a lot of people lived over their shops so it was the nearest school to us so that's where we went and 43:01 so you had a good mixture but the majority of them would probably have been working class, because there was no _charge43:11 for their education' <u>Social Class/Poverty - Abuse/Fear/ Justification:</u> 'There wasn't an obvious divide that we noted but as we got older yes, no doubt about it. The poorer you were the more abuse you got, basically. Because they weren't afraid of those parents, they were afraid of my parents coming down, you know what I mean, because my father might come down and knock on the classroom door and say 'what's going on here?' so there was an element of that, BUT, also a lot of those guys did very well at school, and went on to the technical school and they would not have got the education otherwise because the state sure as hell wasn't providing it' <u>Social Class affecting soc. Ranking:</u> 'Yeah, yeah and took on that, but there was, you would, you could see it alright, some guys definitely got it tough, a lot tougher than I would have gotten it, but yeah there was an element to that there's no doubt about it, no doubt, sadly, based on who you were and what you were and your economic background or whatever...absolutely made a difference, your social ranking'		writing, he'd be taking a slug out of the bottle...That really isn't much of the typical example (chuckles)' 'Oh yeah, yeah, yeah [you were expected to know it off by heart in a day or two]. And it was all kind of 'look', no listen, then look, then put it down on paper, and then you had to learn it off by heart. SO the next day when he'd come in then, he'd say, he'd put up the map of Ireland or something or whatever he did the day before or whatever, and then he'd start pointing and 'what's that? what's that? You didn't do your homework last night' you know, so it was very much that kind of teaching method you know' 'it was basically what they call the 3 Rs - writing, reading, arithmetic, that was basically it, that was the focus and that was it, you know so, and there was no encouragement to develop, you know if you were good at drawing with a pencil and you were maybe making little sketches or whatever, the teacher would never say 'Oh that's great do that', you'd get a lash, 'What are you doing? Don't be scribbling on your copy book'. And I know that from one experience there was a guy beside me and he was very good at drawing, I'd say I was about 10, and I used to love watching him drawing, you know drawing faces, he was *really* good at drawing, but I remember the teacher giving him a belting for it, you know, ''Don't be doing this on your copybook', because it was at the back of his copybook he'd be showing me and I'd be trying to copy what he was doing, but you know, there was no encouragement for that, no thanks'

Yard / Playground	**Ireland and Galway 1960s**	**Friendships**
'Yeah, I have no recollection of any supervision, we were just out in the yard and that was it you know, walked in and out and there was no segregation	<u>Ireland 1960s</u> - insular, Roman Catholic, Recession, high unemployment & censorship, not multicultural	'no, no, we accepted them and that was it and they were either nice or they weren't nice. Your friends were your friends because you liked them39:14 or

between the boys who were only six and the boys who were twelve, but you played with your own class, that was it really 28:30 and we played [Gaelic] football, we'd play handball, we'd hang around you know, just run around the place and that was it. Then there'd be the odd fight in the yard and it'd draw a big crowd - then you might see a priest or a brother out (chuckles) and then everyone'd scatter because if you were caught you were getting the cane, that was basically it' *[CP] 'we were looking at them you know, kind of 'oh, different' and a lot of people like them for that but then a lot didn't so they were easily picked on - but in fairness in the school yard you got picked-on if you were tall, fat, small, red-headed, if there was anything different about ya you were going to get picked-on...' [*in relation to first Black family arriving]* '...teased and name-calling and that kind of thing, so you'd get that anyway, but there was no kind of racial tensions that you have now, there was none of that, really'	- internal tourism - safe for children however <u>Galway 1960s</u> - Black family arrive in Galway (sort of novelty - no racial tension) - Very few non-Irish ppl, participant was only slightly 'foreign' person as grandfather was Italian: 'everyone else was Irish, there just wasn't a multicultural society then so it was a very insular...we'd come through an awful depression in the fifties, high unemployment....huge censorship....now it was a wonderful time to grow up as a child, because it was very safe' 'Yeah, yeah, but the lads would have been a novelty, that would be a better word (the Casabons arrival), they were so different and new, that would have been it, there was no - it wasn't a multi-cultural time. Ireland that time didn't have foreigners, very few, I mean you had a small Italian community, you had a small Jewish community, but you didn't have...I mean you'd English people obviously, Germans - a few Germans had come over, maybe the odd French person you'd meet, but it wasn't the way it is now'	they weren't your friends because you didn't like them, it had nothing to do with their background, colour or whatever. That didn't enter the equation at all, they were either nice guys or they weren't, they were either bullies or they weren't bullies, you know yourself when you're in school, it didn't enter our head' *Also social class

Appendix 5 - Participant's song-copy from fourth class (1966)



25-4-66

Home Work
Song of
Step Together

Step together boldly tread,
Firm each foot erect each head,
Fixed in front be every glance,
Forward at the word advance
Spirited flies that foes may dread
Like the deer on mountain heather.
Tread - light left - Right
Steady boys and step together

II

Step together - be each tramp
Quick and light no blundering ramp
Let its cadence quick and clear
Fall like music on the ear.
Noise befits not hall or camp
Eagles soar on silent pinions,
Tread - light left - Right
Steady boys and step together

26-4-66

Home Work

Song

Silent Night

Silent night, Holy night
All is calm all is bright
Round yon virgin, Mother and child,
Holy Infant so tender and mild
Sleep in heavenly peace (twice)

II

Silent night, Holy night
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glory streams from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts Alleluia,
Christ the Saviour is born, (twice)

26-4-66

The First
Was to co
In fields
On a co
Noel, n
Born is

26-6-66

School Work

Sonc

Ambrán Dochais

Glan go deo le Iosa is buaigh.
Glan gan mhoill dót geaonaodh dhúinn.
Leanam faithe dóchais
Is dteanga bhinn na Tóofla. (4)
Fuis sgasaimis go beannaí
Is comhair an t-saoil.

Z

Blaoga lael fé réimgan ruaig
Beidhg siad saor is beannaidh buaidh
Peanfaimdne an fochrann
Dó las at sineir romhainn (4)
Is ní heagal linn go bheodhfeidh
A geró mar ndéidh.

21-6-66 Sermon Work 26-6-66

Song

We Stand for God

We stand for God and for his glory
The Lord supreme and God of all
Against his foes we raise his standard
Round the Lord's we hear his call,
Strengthen our faith, Redeemer,
Guard us when danger is nigh
To thee we pledge our lives and service
Strong in a trust that never shall die.

(Repeat the last two lines)

We stand for God Jesus our Master,
He died to save, with love untold,
His law divine and truth unchanging
On this our land, their place must hold

26/6/66 School Work

Song

Adoremus

A-do-re-mus in ae-ter-num
sa-nctis-si-mum sac-ra-men-tum
lau-da-te, Do-mi-num om-nes gen-tes
lau-da-te eum om-nes po-pu-li.
Quo-ni-am con-fir-ma-ta est
super nos mi-se-ri-cor-di-a
e-jus, et ve-ri-tas Do-mi-ni
ma-net in ae-ter-num.
Glo-ri-a Pa-tri et fi-li-o
et spi-ri-tu-i sa-nato
sic-ut e-rat in prin-ci-pi-o
et nunc, et sem-per, et in
sae-cu-la sae-cu-lo-rum
Amen.

25-4-66

Home Work

Sonc

A Bhréidimh Athair

A bhréidimh athair taoiseach beo,
D'aireagáin bríoróis is claidhfeamh is do
Gach aithgastúil do bhíonn fós
Ná chloisfeam siúd a mhíle glór
A chréidimh athair, bíam go bráth
Go dtís duit go bhfaighimid bás.

II

A chréidimh athair, fathaí chugat
A dúisíodh taithíocht bhaile smúit
Ach bhearfaidh Naomh na hEiríonn bua
Do bhéir go glé, caithréimeach buan.

25/4/66

A-do-
na-
fau-
fau-
fau-
Buo-
Supe-
a-gus,
Na-
Go-
et sp
di-c
et n
zae-
Amen

25-4-11

HOME WORK
SONG

Adoro te

Adoro te de-vo-te
La-tens De-i-tas.
Quae sub his fi-gu-ris
Ve-re lati-tas,
Tibi se cor me-um
To-tum sub-ji-cit
Quia te con-tem-plans
To-tum de-fi-cit

II

Vis-us, tac-tus, gustus in te fal-li-tur
Sed au-di-tu so-lo tu-to ere-di-tur
Ere-do quod-quod di-xit
Dei-i fi-li-us
Nil hoc ver-bo ve-ri-ta-tis ve-ri-us

III

Ge-su, quem ve-la-tum nunc ad-mi-ro-o
Quo fi-at it-id quod tam si-ti-o
Ut te re-ve-la-te cor-ram fo-ci-e
Vi-su sim be-a-tus tu-ae glo-ri-a
A-men

25-4-11

Home Work

Some

Tantum Ergo

Tantum er-go Sa-cra-men-tum
Ve-ne-re-mur cer-nu-i
Et an-ti-quum do-cu-men-tum
No-vo ce-dat ri-tu-i
Prae-stet fides sup-le-men-tum
Sen-su-um de-fe-tu-i

II

Ge-ni-to-ri, Ge-ni-to-que
Laus et ju-bi-la-ti-o
Sa-lus, ho-nor, vir tus que-que
Sit et be-ne-di-ctio
Pro-ce-denti ab u-tro-que,
Com-par sit laus-da-tio.
A-men

26-4-66

Home Work

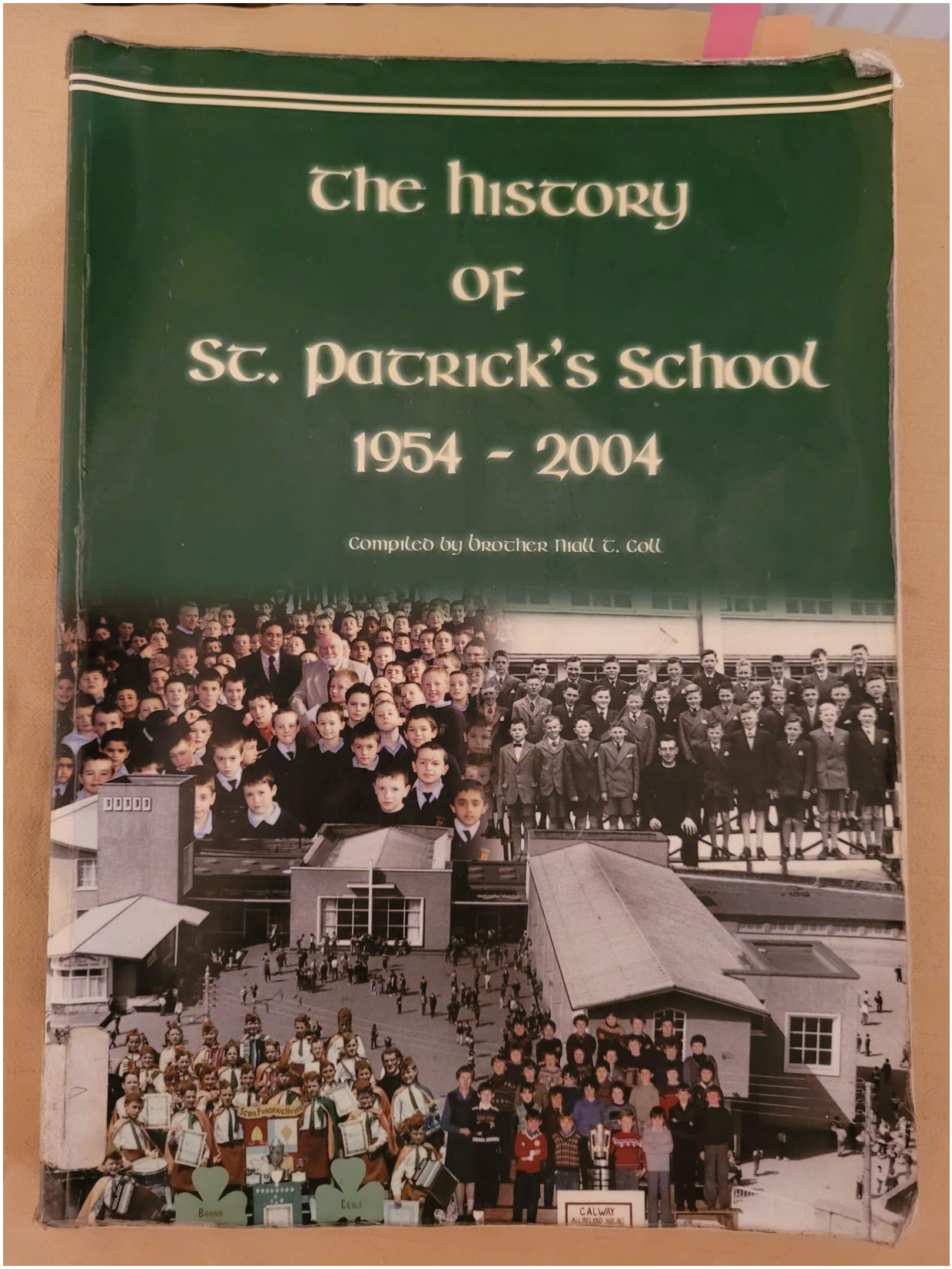
Song

The First Noel

The First Noel, the Angels did sing,
Was to certain poor shepherds in fields where they
in fields where they lay keeping their sheep
On a cold winters night that was so deep
(twice) Noel, noel, noel, noel,
Born is the king of Israel

(twice)

Appendix 6 - The history of St Pat's commemoration book



in 1796. He joined the Brothers of St. Patrick in 1823. On November 30th, 1826, accompanied by a young teacher, James Walsh, Bro. Paul reached Clarinbridge following an arduous four-day walk from Tullow.

Bro. Paul went on to Galway and stayed at Eyre Square. He had only ten shillings in his pocket and for the next few weeks had to pay for his lodgings. On January 15th., 1827, with just one shilling, Paul O'Connor and James Walsh took up residence at Lombard St. and the Patrician Brothers had begun their great work in Galway. The attendance on the first day was 300 and the salary of the Brothers was to be £60 a year.

Before long Bro. Paul noted that many of the students came from a background of extreme poverty. He realised that, in this situation, they had little enthusiasm for learning and, to relieve the situation, he established an Orphan's Charity or, as it was later called, The Poor Boys' Breakfast Institute which began in May, 1830, and continued for seven days a week and 365 days a year, even long after the founder's time and, in some form, right up to the present. The breakfast, at its origin, consisted of oatmeal porridge with molasses or treacle and, during the Great Famine, 1,000 boys were fed each morning. The Breakfast Institute was a great tribute to the organisational ability and Christianity of Bro. Paul and the generosity of the citizens of Galway on whom it depended for funds. Bro. Paul was also concerned for the moral well-being of the students, one of whom, the great Father Tom Burke, O.P., acknowledged the great debt he owed to Bro. Paul - who died in 1878.

The Monastery was a free school for the poor so Bishop Mc Evilly urged the Brothers to establish a fee-paying school for the middle-class families.

In 1862, the Brothers took over a house in Nuns' Island, a house which was owned by a Mr. Murray. Bishop Mc Evilly provided some of the funds for the " Middle Class Seminary" or "St. Joseph's Seminary" which opened in Nuns' Island in 1863. The boys ranged in ages from 7 to 17, so there was a primary as well as a secondary section. Because of its association with Dr. McEvilly who visited the school and even taught some classes there, it became known to all as "The Bish". In 1931, the Brothers sought permission from the bishop, Dr. O'Doherty, to purchase a former bond store and stables of Persses' Distillery, situated opposite the school, and owned by a Mr.Miller. Permission was granted and in July, 1931, the bishop blessed and opened the new school which was constructed by James Stewart and Sons. The building was on the site of the present St. Joseph's College. Among the many famous students to attend "The Bish" were Padraic Ó Conaire and Walter Macken.

In the early days, the Monastery School was run by a committee which contained some of Galway's most famous citizens, one of whom, in 1827, was Fr. Peter Daly, a controversial and powerful figure in the Galway society of that time. Throughout the latter half of the 19th. century and in the first half of the 20th. century, dedicated Brothers and some lay teachers continued their services to the people of Galway, in both schools. It is true to say, however, that poverty was a factor in the lives of most of the boys who attended the Monastery school, not forgetting that some of the pupils of that school came from well-off families. It is a tribute to the Brothers that despite the many obstacles, they were able to provide time for such things as sport and music. There were many hard-fought athletic duels between "The Bish" and "The Mon" and many of Galway's most famous sportsmen can trace their first experience to the Patrician Brothers. One need only mention hurlers such as the great Mick King, Martin King and Tom Fleming, the latter two being the only Galway City men on Galway's first All-Ireland winning team of 1923, the famed Duggans, Sean, Paddy (Mogan) and Jimmy, of College Road, M. J."Inky" Flaherty (Bohermore), Galway goalkeepers, Jimmy Hegarty (Woodquay) and John Kelly (Prospect Hill), Paddy Egan (Castlegar), the O'Shaughnessy Brothers, Michael, John and Des, of Eyre St., stalwarts of Galwegians and Connacht rugby, All-Ireland winning footballer, Liam Sammon, Paddy Lally (Galway Rowing Club), Tommy Lally of Glasgow Celtic, Galway Rovers and St. Michael's Gaelic Football Club, Irish Boxing Champion, Sean Harty (Bohermore) and many more.

The schools struggled through very difficult times in the 1930's, 40's and fifties, yet they also provided music (The Harmonica Band and Bro. Cuthbert's famous Choir), sports, with very little facilities, and drama, with many plays being produced. Eventually, however, the schools became so dilapidated and overcrowded, with toilets from a bygone age, it was decided to build a new school. To this purpose, a number of events were organised to raise funds. These included a number of pantomimes and concerts at the Savoy and Town Hall Cinemas, a week of Tofts Amusements in Eyre Square and a hurling tournament at the Sportsground, involving Galway, Limerick, Cork and Tipperary. The concerts featured many well-known local artistes such as Tom Lynskey, Peggy Folan, Angela Lynch(Lupton) and Galway's own Sonny Molloy. The famous Peggy Dell and her band performed and, on one occasion, world famous tenor, Fr. Sidney Mc Ewan, appeared at the Savoy. These concerts also led to the formation of The Patrician Musical Society with Bro. Cuthbert as the first director.

The Shambles Barracks had been purchased from the British Army for £1,200 in 1909, by the famous Galway priest, Fr. Peter Dooley, P.P., St. Patrick's. The barracks functioned as a tenement for some years and on this site, the new St. Patrick's School was built between 1952 and 1954, at a cost of £120,000, on the instructions of Bishop Michael Browne of Galway. The architects were Messrs. Robinson, O'Keeffe, Devane and the builders were Messrs. James Stewart, Galway. On February 1st., 1954, it was blessed by the Apostolic Nuncio, Archbishop O'Hara, and officially opened by the Minister for Education, Mr. Seán Moylan. On March 31st., The Old Mon and Bish National Schools closed and on April 1st., the boys marched from the two schools to the magnificent new St. Patrick's. There were 20 teachers and 914 boys.

On the first Staff were:

Principal – Bro. Lewy O'Sullivan, Brothers Killian, Cuthbert, Luke, Brendan, Aidan, Raymond, Christopher, Maurice, Alexius, Edwin, Alphonsus, Fabian, Linus, Rembert, Finbarr and Camillus, with Messrs. Cyril O'Mahony, Connie O'Donoughue and Ned Carroll. Messrs. Pádraic Siocrú and Gerry Mc Namara were substitute teachers. Very soon afterwards, Mr. Joseph Noonan also joined the staff.

Rang a I f
transferred to
Seán Philb
Cunningham,
Walsh, Steph
Michael Ca
Naughton, M
John Tierney,
Murphy, John
Concannon,
Tommy Ward
Tim Lally.

From Tullow to Galway

James Casserly

In the Ireland of the late 18th. and early 19th. centuries, the opportunity for an education was available only to a tiny minority. It was generally the privilege of the wealthy, many of whom were sent abroad to be educated. The infamous anti-Catholic Penal Laws had helped to lower the moral standards of the majority of the people who were denied the opportunity of any kind of education and this situation led to widespread drunkenness, faction-fights and general immorality. It was this situation and the associated abandonment of Christian values which led to the founding of the Patrician Brothers.

At Tullow, Co. Carlow, in 1777, the local curate was horrified by the widespread immorality and total indifference to Christian teaching. To redress the situation, Fr. Daniel Delany instituted Sunday Schools in his church for both children and adults, so as to give instruction in the Catholic Faith. In a short time, a large number of people, over 1000, were receiving instructions and, to cope with these numbers, he had the help of some men and women, whom he himself had trained. Soon, however, many of these helpers found it increasingly difficult to give of their time to this worthy cause. Marriages, deaths and emigration led to a great decrease in their numbers. Dr. Delany, by now Bishop of Kildare and Leighlin (pronounced Loughlin), who had himself done Trojan work, soon realised that what was needed was a permanent teaching organisation. He founded the Brigidine Sisters in 1807 and in 1808 the Patrician Brothers, named for Ireland's most revered female and male saints. Later, on his deathbed, his message to his Brothers was: "Love God and live together in peace and charity."

The first seven Brothers were professed by Bishop Delany, at Old Derrig House, on January 31st., 1823. In 1888, they were established as a Pontifical Congregation by Pope Leo XII who gave them permission to wear the Green Sash in honour of their patron. The first Patrician Brothers, who came from Bishop Delany's own church congregation, were men of devotion, courage and dedication. They were also practical men, because in addition to giving religious instruction, they supported themselves by their trades, as most of them were skilled tradesmen. They worked long hours after school to maintain themselves and their lives consisted of extreme hard work and poverty.

They set the standard for future wearers of the Green Sash. So successful were they that in a few years, the Patrician Brothers had established schools at Mountrath, Fethard, Mallow, Carrickmacrosss, Ballyfin Demesne, Abbeyleix and Newbridge.

In 1875, they established themselves in Madras, India, where they had to contend with a hostile climate, insects, disease, snakes and, most importantly, long-established and overwhelmingly dominant religions. They were later to labour in Africa, Australia and the U.S.A. Like all Catholic Schools in the U.S.A. and Australia, they received no aid from the state but they have maintained their schools due to the great faith of themselves and the Catholic population. But long before the flowering of their efforts worldwide, the Patrician Brothers had arrived in Galway. That historic year was 1827.

There could be no greater contrast between the high-flying, fast-growing wealthy city of today and the Galway of 1826 which at that time was extremely overcrowded, poverty-stricken, where disease was endemic, unemployment was of horrific proportions – and all this before the catastrophe of the Great Famine. In the midst of this chaos, there were among the more wealthy citizens those who were concerned for the fate of their fellow townspeople. Prominent among these were Patrick Lynch, Richard Martin, and especially Dr. Edmund Ffrench, the last Catholic Warden of Galway and also Bishop of Kilmacduagh and Kilfenora. These men, who were all, coincidentally, members of Galway's great tribal families, saw the vital role of education in relieving the burdens of the poor.

Galway had not been without some provision for educating poor children. A school for the poor, called The Charity Free School, had been founded at Back Street (now St. Augustine St.) in 1790. In 1824, the school was transferred to Lombard Street and located in the Lombard Barracks which had been built in 1749 and had been purchased from the government by Warden Ffrench in 1823. The teachers in the school were Patrick and John Gill. The school was managed by a committee drawn from subscribers, the chief subscriber being Warden Ffrench, who gave £100 a year.

Meanwhile, the Patrician Brothers had already been established in Co. Galway, in Clarinbridge, due to the influence of a progressive Catholic Landlord, Mr. Christopher Redington. In December, 1826, in response to requests from Warden Ffrench, two Patrician Brothers arrived in Galway. One of them, Bro. Paul O'Connor, was a truly remarkable man.

Bro. Paul James O'Connor was born in Leighlin, Co.Carlow

The Papal Nuncio showed his kindness during the ceremony when, seeing that his train-bearer, seven-year-old Kenneth Garvey of Market Street., was tiring, he asked him to rest himself by sitting. This the justly-proud little acolyte promptly did.

FREE DAY

On being requested by a senior boy of St. Joseph's College , Dr. O' Hara graciously granted a full day's holiday to all the students of the City's Schools.

The Papal Nuncio showed his interest in the progress of the city by flying to Oranmore airfield on Sunday evening. This was told by Most Rev. Dr. Browne at a banquet later in the Railway Hotel. Dr. O'Hara was unable to travel to Galway on Saturday but promised His Lordship on the telephone that he would be here at 4 o'clock on Sunday. He flew to the Galway airport and expressed himself thoroughly delighted with the arrangements. Today he again took off from Oranmore for Dublin. Said Dr. Browne, 'Those who say Galway does not need an airport are mistaken.'

Over 100 guests attended the sumptuous luncheon in the hotel after which speakers paid tribute to the Patrician Brothers for their educational work and to the contractors and architects for the magnificence of the new school buildings.

EDUCATION

His Lordship, referring to decentralisation, said that he felt that the civil servants and their families who would be coming to Galway consequent to the decision to open a branch of the Social Welfare Department here would not need to worry in any way, for with the opening of the new school and with the other fine colleges in the City, they could feel secure in the knowledge that the education of their children would not be neglected.

On Monday evening the Papal Nuncio attended a concert given by the pupils of the Convent of Mercy Schools and on Tuesday visited the Dominican and Presentation Convents.

From *Galway Observer* February 6th, 1954

The Man Who Started It All Brother Paul J. O'Connor

A native of County Carlow, James O'Connor entered The Patrician Brothers in 1823 and was sent as first Superior to Galway in 1826. In 1830 he established The Breakfast Institute to feed the hungry orphans of his school, and The Aloysian Society "to give edification to the faithful, priests to the Church and saints to heaven". Later he helped to found St. Joseph's College that Catholic pupils might no longer have to attend non-Catholic schools. A tireless worker, an inspiring leader, a gifted educator, poet, administrator, legislator, mechanic even, he was transparently a man of God, and God was visible with him in all he tried to do. He died at Galway on 18th April, 1878.

Extracts from Local Press on the Opening of St. Patrick's School

NEW GALWAY CENTRAL BOYS' SCHOOL FEBRUARY 1954

The Galway Central Boys' Schools, now nearing completion at a cost of about £100,000, will be blessed by his Excellency the Papal Nuncio, Most Rev. Dr. Gerald O'Hara, and formally opened by the Minister for Education, Mr. Sean Moylan, on Monday, February 1st.

The ceremony will be preceded by High Mass in the Cathedral at which His Excellency will preside and preach.

On the following day, the Feast of the Purification, His Excellency the Papal Nuncio will officially open the magnificent new Calvary Hospital at Renmore for the Sisters of the Little Company of Mary, popularly known as the Blue Nuns.

The blessing and official opening of the new schools will take place immediately after the High Mass at which His Lordship, Most Rev. Dr. Browne, Bishop of Galway, will also attend. The two Prelates, in their ceremonial robes, and accompanied by attending priests and acolytes, will move in procession from the Cathedral via Shop Street and Mainguard Street to the schools in Lombard Street.

The new schools, the plan of which has been based on the most modern educational ideas, will provide a Godsend to the youth of the city who have been grievously handicapped for several years by the want of adequate classroom accommodation. They consist chiefly of a senior department and a junior department. The junior department consists of twelve classrooms, each of which has accommodation for forty pupils whose ages will range from seven to eleven years.

The senior department contains only six classrooms having desk accommodation for a total of 240 boys but there is provision in the general plan for the extension of this wing of the building so as to afford six more classrooms should the attendance warrant it.

Both senior and junior departments have their own separate lavatories, washbasins, drinking fountains and a cloakroom with centrally heated tubular coat racks on which the boys' coats are dried and aired as they hang.

In the central block between the two departments is a large assembly hall with seating accommodation and a stage. This will be used for drill, school concerts, plays, etc.

Outside the building there is a large play shelter and a large space for a handball alley.

The schools will be under the charge of the Patrician Brothers.

The Central Boys' Schools should provide for the primary educational needs of the boys of Galway for many years to come.

From *Connacht Sentinel*, January 9th, 1954

TREMENDOUS WELCOME

Galway accorded a tremendous welcom e to His Excellency Most Rev. Dr. O'Hara, Apostolic Nuncio, when he paid his first official visit to the city on Monday to bless the new St. Patrick's Boys' Schools at O'Brien's Bridge.

It is over three hundred years since a Papal Nuncio visited Galway and to mark the occasion the Freedom of the City was conferred on Dr. O'Hara in a simple but impressive ceremony in the assembly hall of the new schools which had been officially opened by Mr. Sean Moylan, Minister for Education.

Papal, National and Diocesan flags flew from many buildings while over 3,000 school children lined the main streets from St. Nicholas' Pro – Cathedral to the new schools.

Today His Excellency blessed and opened a new hospital – Calvary Hospital – at Renmore for the Little Company of Mary.

Monday's ceremony which opened with Solemn Votive Mass in St. Nicholas' at which the Papal Nuncio presided. Very Rev. M.D. Forde, P.P., St. Nicholas' was celebrant; Rev. G. Callanan, C.C., do., deacon; Rev. J. Fitzgerald, C.C., do., sub-deacon; Rev. B. Duffy, C.C. ,do., master of ceremonies. Assistant priests at the Nuncio's throne were Right Rev. Monsg. Mitchell, V.G., Castlegar; Very Rev. P. Canon Glynn, Adm.; Ven. Archdeacon D. Hynes, President, Coláiste Einde, and Rev. M. Spellman, Diocesan Secretary. His Lordship Most Rev. Dr. Browne, Bishop of Galway, was attended by Very Rev. J.J. Hyland, P.P., Salthill, and Very Rev. M. Mc Donough, President, St. Mary's College. The attendance at the Mass included the Mayor, Ald. J. Owens, and members of the Corporation in their robes.

Speaking at the Mass, the Nuncio referred to the great debt the world owed to the Irish for their wonderful spiritual contribution to mankind. Everywhere there were souls to be saved there the Irish were to be found, said Most Rev. Dr.