

Representative Church Body Library, Dublin

RCB Library D3/

Records of the Diocese of Kilmore

**[including the united dioceses of Kilmore, Elphin
& Ardagh]**

1838-2003

**From the Rt. Revd Kenneth Clarke,
Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh,
at the See House, Kilmore, 2003,
with one previously transferred item from
the Venerable Guy Cave, Athlone,
in 1989 and a further item from Ian Elliott, in 2020.**

Introduction

The material in this collection, with the exception of one item, was transferred from the See House in Kilmore by the Rt. Revd Kenneth Clarke, Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh, in 2003. The collection relates to the administration of the diocese from 1838, during the episcopate of the Rt. Revd George De La Poer Beresford (when the bishopric was united with the dioceses of Elphin and Ardagh) up until the late 20th century. This represents all of the surviving archival material for the diocese, the bulk of which was destroyed in the tragic fire at the Public Records Office of Ireland in 1922. Herbert Wood records in his *Guide to the Public Records of Ireland* (Dublin, 1919), p. 237 that diocesan registry material for Kilmore between 1673 and 1871 was lost.

It is divided into 15 separate sections, and is fairly typical of a diocesan collection of this period, containing good runs of diocesan council minutes, synod minutes, visitations, accounts, letter books and diocesan reports. There are also useful materials relating to successive bishops, the See House and connected see lands, between 1855-1958 (see section /11); the diocesan clergy, 1843-1994, and miscellaneous material dealing with diocesan education and the particulars of specific families (sections /14 and /15).

The only material that was not obtained from the See House relates to a proposed merger of the dioceses of Kilmore and Tuam under one bishop, created by a sub-committee of both dioceses that sat between 1980 and 1981. The scheme never materialised, and the papers were deposited in the Library by Canon Guy Cave, formerly archdeacon of Kilmore, a member of the committee, in 1989. The diocesan collection seemed the most appropriate place to include these papers, and they are now catalogued in the miscellaneous section as /15/3). In addition, recent printed reports for the diocese, including annual accounts, from 2003 onwards have also been added to section /6, being the annual reports.

The collection should be consulted in conjunction with the diocesan list for the united diocese of Elphin and Ardagh, both of which had separate administrative structures, but were under the spiritual guidance of the Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh from the 1830s (see D4, D4A & D4B).

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1/ Rural dean's reports / visitations

With the exception of the first item, which is a bound visitation of the diocese of Kilmore only, the remainder cover the three dioceses of Kilmore, Elphin & Ardagh. Items /2 & /7 are unbound

1. 1885
2. 1914
3. 1917 [includes a letter to the bishop from the Revd Mathew J. Porteus, The Rectory, Manorhamilton, rural dean, advising that parochial information should be improved for the purposes of making accurate reports, by individual clergy keeping a 'book of facts, statistics and other information', 11 July 1918.]
4. 1927
5. 1928 [includes a letter to the bishop from the Revd T. Browne, St. Anne's Rectory, Newtownforbes, rural dean, with his findings about diocesan schools, observations on the conditions of churches and glebes, 3 July 1929.]
6. 1939
7. 1971

2/ Rural dean's reports for specific parishes only

All these items are loose & outsize schedules:

1. Dunamon (Fuerty)
1908-21
2. Granard, Abbeylara, and Drumlummon
1908-31
3. Gowna and Combkille
1926-31
4. Mostrim
1908-36
5. Kilglass
1908-36

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- 2/ 6. Rathaspeck and Street [including Coolamber Chapel of Ease]
1908-36
- 7. Templemichael
1908-36

3/ Records of the Diocesan Council

- 1. Minute Books
 - 1. 1870-84
 - 2. 1884-1901
 - 3. 1901-24
 - 4. 1925-44
 - 5. 1945-72
- 2. Attendance Book
recording attendance of members at the Diocesan Council
 - 1. 1888-1915 [unbound]
- 3. Minutes of the Finance Committee
[see also item D3/3/9/3 below]
 - 1. 1899-1972
 - 2. 1972-80 [unbound]

4/ Records of the Diocesan Synod

- 1. Minute Book
 - 1. 1869-1950
- 2. Register of synodsmen
 - 1. 1870-1956

5/ Records of the Diocesan Glebes Committee

- 1. Minute Book
 - 1. 1914-52

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6/ Diocesan reports

1. Bound volumes
 1. 1872-79
 2. 1880-86
 3. 1887-91
 4. 1889-96

2. Unbound volumes including statements of diocesan and parochial accounts, bundled as follows:-
 1. 1953, 1954, 1955, 1956, 1958
 2. 1962-69
 3. 1970-79 [1975 missing]
 4. 1980, 1981, 1983, 1984
 5. 1998, 1999
 6. 2000 – 04

7/ Diocesan accounts

1. Assessment Ledgers
These volumes detail the assessment of finances in individual parishes. In the case of item numbers /5–/7, the volumes include accounts of the augmentation of stipends for each parish.
 1. 1870-76
 2. 1876-88
 3. 1889-1905
 4. 1905-20
 5. 1921-51
 6. 1942-59
 7. 1952-94

2. Cash books
 1. Rough cash book
1874-84 [unbound]

 2. Cash book
1889-1909

3. Miscellaneous items
 1. General expenses account book
1876-84

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- 1A. Account book of the Board of Religious Education
1904-1992
2. Diocesan treasurer' diocesan expenses book
1916-23
3. Ledgers of Kilmore Endowment Fund No. 2, in connection with
Bishop Elliott's scheme for the augmentation of clerical stipends
[see also below]
 1. 1928-40
 2. 1942-46
4. Miscellaneous capital, revenue and reserve income account book
including detailed items under the following heads: stipend fund,
superannuation fund, general diocesan fund, endowment fund no
II, the See House furniture fund, diocesan church repairs,
Episcopal fund, and Bishop Elliott fund.
1936-47 [unbound]
5. Government subscription account book, by parish with summary
for each year
1937-43
6. Parochial endowments capital account book, by parish
1947-61
7. Ledger of diocesan accounts (capital and revenue)
1948-53
8. Receipts and payments ledger
1966-67
9. File of loose papers containing the following items:
 1. Schedule of payments to the Bishop's Ordination Candidate's
Fund
1955-58
 2. Letter to Bishop Tyndall from S.M.F. Killinghy, Manager
Ulster Bank Ltd, Cavan, prior to Killinghy's departure to
another branch, outlining details of various investment
accounts.
15 April 1957

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3. Kilmore Diocesan Council Finances Committee, Stipend-Sub Committee minute with schedule of stipends
10 February 1958
4. Schedules of allocations of grants under various diocesan bequests, including allocation of good service grants, issued by Bishop Tyndall.
8 October 1958
5. Letter form the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland and related receipts for stock investments on behalf of the diocese, 1956-61
18 February 1961

8/ Letter books

1. Outgoing correspondence from the bishop, See House, Cavan, relating to general diocesan administration and business with individual parishes. Mostly signed by the Rt. Revd Wm. R. Kilmore.
[indexed]
1898-1909
2. Outgoing correspondence from the bishop, See House, Cavan, relating to general diocesan administration and business with individual parishes. Mostly signed by the Rt. Revd Wm. R. Kilmore.
[indexed]
1915-28
3. Outgoing correspondence relating to diocesan business from the diocesan secretary, Samuel Jones, Farnham Street, Cavan
[indexed]
1913-17

9/ Subscription rolls

being subscriptions to declaration by diocesan clergy

1. 1871-83 [poor condition, has suffered rodent damage]
2. 1885-1902

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10/ Other material relating to diocesan clergy

1. Book of orders, licensing deacons and priests to serve in the diocese 1843-1872; 1993-94
2. Copy draft appointment of the Revd Hugh Thompson, Rector of Boyle, as the registrar for the united dioceses of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh [undated, 1950s?]
3. Three resignation certificates for the following:
 1. Revd Mathew Thomas Porteous, as curate-in-charge of Killesherdony, Drumgoon, and Ashfield
9 April 1956
 2. Revd W. Gamble, as incumbent of Killougher and Cloverhill
22 March 1957
 3. Revd Charles Gordon Medcalf, incumbent of Kilmore Union
23 April 1958
4. Notes concerning examinations for priest's orders and deacon's orders, outlining the requirements of the bishop for candidates in both, including Old Testament, New Testament, Greek, dogmatics, history, pastoral missionary.
3 pp.
[undated, 1940s-50s?]

11/ Material relating to bishops, including materials relating to the See House and connected see lands

[For additional bishop-related material see letter book, D3/8/1 & /2 above, and Episcopal mandates, D3/12/5 below]

1. Two insurance policies for 'Kilmore House' and contents, being the bishop's house, and now known as Kilmore See House
1855; 1858
2. Papers, including legal opinion, relating to the bequest of the Rt. Revd Alfred George Elliott, Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh 1897-1915, who left all of his property – plate, furniture, books, prints, pictures, and other goods – for the benefit and enjoyment of his successors, together with a fund of £30,000 to augment the incomes of clergy in the diocese. Elliott died in office at the See House, on 28 September 1915, at the age of 87.

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5 items [See also item D3/12/3 below]
1914-15

3. Deed concerning the consecration of the chapel in the See House, and dedication of same to St Cecilia, by the Rt. Revd Alfred George Hughes, Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh, with the permission of the RCB.
5 June 1914
4. Volume entitled 'List of books in the Library, See House, Kilmore', being a list of titles and authors of all books in the library. Accounts for 1544 volumes; with loose list in the same hand [undated] of pictures in each room of the see house, compiled by the Revd F.S. Atkinson, Derrykeen Rectory, Cavan
22 October 1915.
5. Volume entitled 'Bishops' Log Book', being a volume of the details (including dates, sermons preached if any etc) of bishops' visits to parishes, private chapels and other parochial events, and covering the movements of Bishops Moore, Barton, Hughes and Mitchell.
1916-55
6. Seal matrix bearing the arms of the united dioceses of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh, impaled with the personal arms of the Rt. Revd Albert Edward Hughes, and bearing the date 1939, which was the year he was consecrated as bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh; together with blank form, signed and sealed with the same seal by Edward Kilmore. Presumably the seal was used during his term of office, 1939-50.
[1939-50]
7. Draft licence to be issued by Bishop Mitchell, to extend of the rights of burial in that portion of the see lands of Kilmore adjoining the cathedral graveyard set aside for bishops of the diocese, to include former bishops, as well as wives and widows of such persons and children of such persons who died whilst their father occupied the see.
1955
8. Pastoral letters issued by the Rt. Revd Charles Tyndall, Bishop of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh 1956-58), as follows:
 1. General pastoral letter to the united diocese.
24 November 1957

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11/8/ cont

2. Printed information, informing pastoral letter and notes for an address by parish clergy in relation to the Church of Ireland's Peoples' Collection, 1957, to raise money for the alleviation of acute distress amongst clergy widows and dependants throughout the Church of Ireland.
1957
3. Instructions concerning the state prayers and copies of the prayers to be read on both sides of the Irish border.
February 1958
4. Circular letter of parish clergy concerning the Lambeth Conference and various resolutions made at the conference, particularly in relation to marriage.
October 1958

12/ Legal papers

1. Copy deed book including diocesan notes
1871-1910
2. Papers, including copy conveyance and other legal comments, relating to arrangements to transfer the church in Castlesaunderson Demesne, County Cavan, to the custody of trustees, and ultimately linking it with the parish of Killougher and Cloverhill. The arrangement was made possible by the generous gift of the church by Alexander Saunderson, and additional gift of £200 per annum for 10 years by his cousin, Mrs Lydia Foote, of Rhode Island, USA, to provide weekly services in the said church.
4 items
1954-58
3. Letter to the Venerable C. M. Kerr, The Rectory, Edgeworthstown, archdeacon of the diocese, from D. Pratt, Chief Officer and Secretary, RCB, concerning arrangements for the administration of the Elliott Bequest to various parts of the united diocese.
11 September 1958
4. Minute of meeting held in the Protestant Hall, Cavan, concerning the transfer of the finances of Gowna parish, to the diocese of Elphin and Ardagh, and of Drumreilly union to the diocese of Kilmore, and sales of redundant glebes.
23 October 1958
5. Two episcopal mandates issued by the Most Revd John Allen Fitzgerald, Archbishop of Armagh, and Primate of All Ireland, to the Rt. Revd

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12/ cont.

Charles Tyndall, Bishop of Derry and Raphoe, empowering Tyndall to preside at all meetings of the Diocesan Council, and ordaining to holy orders all candidates for ordination in Kilmore Cathedral, on 28 October 1958, during the episcopal vacancy created by Tyndall's translation from the diocese to Derry and Raphoe.
27 October 1958

13/ Maps

1. Map of county Longford, showing the location of churches and parish divisions, based on printed Ordnance Survey.
3 March 1838
2. Map of county Cavan, showing the location of churches and parish divisions, based on printed Townlands Survey.
8 May 1869
3. Map of the diocese of Kilmore, showing parish unions, rectories, vicarages, perpetual curacies, parishes without churches and suspended parishes. Parishes are coloured.
Drawn by Hodges, Foster and Co. Dublin, based on printed Ordnance Survey.
Undated [late 19th century]
4. Rough map of Kilmore see lands.
[undated, 20th century]

14/ Papers relating to Diocesan Education

For account book of the Board of Religious Education see 7/3/1A above.

1. Facsimile copy of order appointing John Robinson as schoolmaster in Cavan, 5 October 1611.
[late nineteenth-century copy]
2. Copies of the final approved scheme of the Charlton Charity Endowment under the Educational Endowment (Ireland) Act, 1895, for the education of the protestant population in Meath and Navan; and the same for counties Meath and Longford. Both Scheme No. 125.
28 June 1895
3. Copy of the final approved scheme of the endowment fund for Tullyvin and Benbawn schools, under the Educational Endowment (Ireland) Act, 1895, with later typescript summarising the terms of the scheme.
6 July 1888

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14/ cont

4. Agreement for Elizabeth Talbot, Principal Teacher at Billis National School, Cavan, to be caretaker of the school premises.
1957
5. Legal opinion and related correspondence relating to Drumod School, County Leitrim, and its endowment.
April 1968
6. Report of the Warden of the Wilson's Hospital School, concerning the report of the Department of Education on the 'Provision of Post-Primary Education for the Protestant Community', with a copy of the latter report and accompanying tables. Also includes letter from the Department inviting the Most Revd Robert Bonsall Pike, Bishop of Meath, to represent the Church of Ireland at a departmental meeting in Dublin to discuss the general question.
1967-68

15. Miscellaneous

1. Draft copy of 'Cathedral Scheme for Kilmore Cathedral' submitted to a special meeting of the chapter, concerning the cathedral's economy fund, special services and regular services, with a handwritten note to the effect that the scheme 'never came off!'.
Typescript, 2 pp
[undated, 1950s?]
2. Correspondence, notes and fliers for diocesan overseas exhibition to celebrate the year of missionary renewal, entitled 'One World'. The exhibition, which organised by Canon Guy Cave, involved clerical and lay representatives from throughout the united dioceses of Kilmore, Elphin and Ardagh. Includes a note, possibly in the hand of Bishop Tyndall, noting that Canon Cave's organisation of the event had been 'excellent'.
1958
- *3. *File of papers of a sub-committee of the dioceses of Kilmore and Tuam relating to a proposed merger of the dioceses under one bishop
1980-81
*This item was transferred by the Venerable Guy Cave, Athlone, in Sept. 1989
- *4. Missions Account Ledger containing the *Report of the Kilmore Diocesan Board of Missions* for 1908. The volume was maintained by Cecil Edward St Lawrence Leslie (1843-1930) of Corrovahan House, Drung, Co. Cavan, who served as Honorary Secretary and Treasurer until his death in 1930. Leslie was a son of the Rt Revd Charles Leslie (1810-1870). The volume

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itemises contributions from parishes and the organisations to which the funds were distributed.

1899-1908

*This item was transferred by Ian Elliott, of Corrovahan House, Drung, Co. Cavan in 2020