CHARLEVILLE is a busy market town in North Cork, located close to the border with Limerick. It is situated in a rich agricultural area known as the Golden Vale which spans parts of Counties Cork, Limerick and Tipperary. It is in the townland of Rath Luirc or An Ráth, indicating that there was a settlement here in Early Medieval times, over a thousand years ago. The lands were purchased by Richard de Cogan and was in ruins by 1615. The associated graveyard, renamed Holy Cross Cemetery, has many interesting headstones and features including a monument to the Irish-language poet Séan Cléach-Mac Donnghaill (1691-1754) who was a native of the Churchtown area.

1. OLD PARISH CHURCH AND GRAVEYARD: The fragmentary remains of the medieval parish church that was reputedly built in 1350 by Richard de Cogan and is reflected in the success of the Golden Vale cheese plant (part of the Kerry Group), the biggest employer in the town.

2. SITE OF THE BRIDEWELL JAIL: Now occupied by the Amber service station, marked the southern limit of the Borough of Charleville.

3. FENIAN HALL: Moloney Jewellers was used as a meeting house for nationalists and was known as the Fenian Hall. Outside the building stands The Republican Monument erected to the memory of those who gave their lives in the cause of Irish freedom. It was built on the spot where Padraic Pearse addressed a meeting in 1913 and was unveiled in 1923 by David Kent.

4. ST. JAMES’ CHURCH OF IRELAND: Built in 1846 on the site of an earlier Protestant church built by Roger Boyle in 1665. It is built of limestone ashlar and is a fine example of the Neo-Gothic style so popular at the time. It was converted to a Library by Cork County Council in the 1990s.

5. BRUCE FAMILY BURIAL VAULT: A monument to the Bruce family who, in partnership with the Evans family, operated one of the first private banks in Charleville in the early 19th century.

6. AIB BANK: Built during the 19th century as a townhouse and according to local lore it was one of the first slated houses in town. The building features a fine classical portico.

7. THE FORMER CHRISTIAN BROTHERS’ SCHOOL: Opened in 1866, past-pupils included Eamon de Valera (President of Ireland 1919-1927, 1937-1943), Daniel Mannix and Bishop Henry Murphy of Limerick.

8. REMAINS OF MEADOWVALE CREAMERY: Creameries like this developed across Ireland in the late 19th century to accommodate the new technology of large scale separation of milk for making butter in commercial quantities.

9. MALACHY O’SULLIVAN’S BUTCHER SHOP: Daniel O’Connell addressed a Monster Meeting here, organised by the Charleville Repeal Association in 1843.

10. MARKET HOUSE: A distinctive building built in 1769 to accommodate the buying and selling of local produce. The arched ground floor was originally open and used for the sale of farm and meat products from the adjacent Shambles Lane. The upper floor was used as a courthouse for many years until the 1980s.

11. BRÚDAR’S COFFEE SHOP: Has a notable traditional shop-front. It is the birthplace of Daniel A. Binchy, first Irish Minister to Germany from 1929 to 1932.

12. GRAIN STORE: This substantial three storey building is one of a number of 19th century grain stores in the town, many of which were used by Morrissey Millers.

13. FEVER HOSPITAL: An imposing two-storey building built in the 1840s for Kilmallock Poor Law Union. It is now incorporated into St. Mary’s Secondary School and is known as the Mannix Block.

14. FORMER NATIONAL BANK (now the Credit Union): Officially opened by Daniel O’Connell in 1835. The Banking system developed in Ireland in the 19th century and bank buildings were usually architect designed to reflect an atmosphere of stability, prosperity and honesty.

15. FORMER CATHOLIC CHURCH: Built in 1812 and now serves as the Community Hall. It was built following the collapse of an older thatched chapel on or near the present site. The adjacent priest’s house was where An Tathar Peádraí O Laoghaire taught his extra-curricular, and much sought after, classical studies.

16. CLANCY TERRACE: A terrace of fine early 19th century townhouses. The middle house was occupied by the Mercy Nuns when they first came to Charleville in 1836 at the invitation of Mary Clancy. The corner house is the birthplace Eliza Lynch (1835-1886) whose family fled to Paris to avoid the famine. A woman of renowned beauty she had an intriguing life as a Paris courtesan and then married an English diplomat before the marriage was reversed and she is still regarded as a national heroine.

17. THE OLD PADILION CINEMA: Built by local business men in 1923. It was a popular venue. Rebuilt again following a fire in 1942 and finally closed its doors in the 1970s.

18. THE FORMER POST OFFICE: Known locally as Corny Graham’s Post Office, it has an elegant fanlight door with a key stone bearing the date 1823.

19. NATIONAL SCHOOL: Built in 1833, it opened in 1837 with boys on the first floor and girls on the ground floor. In the 1940s the girls moved to St Anne’s School, and the present building continued as the boys’ school until 1972. The building is now the home of the Schoolyard Theatre.

20. CONVENT OF MERCY: Built in 1839 for the Mercy Nuns who were part of a wide-scale religious movement at the time to provide education for all levels. The former convent chapel now houses the Mercy Order Provincial Heritage Museum which presents interesting information on the history and heritage of the Order. Access on request.

21. HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH: An outstanding example of a late-19th century Neo-Gothic church. The steeple and porch of the building reflect the growing confidence of the Catholic Church in late-19th century Ireland. The foundation stone was laid by the Bishop of Cloyne Robert Browne, a native of Charleville, in 1894. The Gothic features, such as pointed windows, buttresses and finials give an air of an ancient building.

22. MOATVILLE HOUSE: An interesting and unusual historic house built on the grounds of Charleville House. It was the birthplace of Bishop William Reeves and of Dr Marie Park after the family who built it in the late-18th century.

23. FORMER POST OFFICE: Known locally as Corny Graham’s Post Office, it has an elegant fanlight door with a key stone bearing the date 1823.

24. AINS OF MEADOWVALE CREAMERY: Creameries like this developed across Ireland in the late 19th century to accommodate the new technology of large scale separation of milk for making butter in commercial quantities.

25. FAMOUS PEOPLE

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CHARLEVILLE
Historic Town founded 1661

24. Weavers' Cottages
16. Clanchy Terrace
11. Brúdair's Coffee Shop
20. Mercy Convent
25. Charleville Park (reconstruction)
15. Former Catholic church
10. Market House
9. O'Sullivan's Butchers
13. Former fever hospital
21. Holy Cross Catholic Church
12. Grain Store
19. Former National School
17. Pavilion Cinema
18. Old Post Office
14. Former National Bank
7. Christian Brothers' School
6. AIB Bank
5. Bruce Family Vault
1. Monument to Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill, Holy Cross Cemetery
3. Former Fenian Hall
2. St James' Church of Ireland
4. Former Reen Hall
16. Christian Brothers' School
17. Christian Brothers' School
18. Christian Brothers' School
19. Christian Brothers' School
20. Christian Brothers' School
21. Christian Brothers' School
22. Christian Brothers' School
23. Christian Brothers' School
24. Christian Brothers' School
25. Christian Brothers' School

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