



TOMÁS DÁIBHIS 1814 - 2014

COTHROM DHÁ CHÉAD BLIAIN BHREITH AN TÍRGHRÁTHÓRA

BE IRELAND'S GOOD OUR COMMON CREED.
HER SACRED CAUSE ALONE ENLIST US:
WITH GALLANT HEARTS AND GOD TO SPEED,
WHAT POWER ON EARTH WILL DARE RESIST US?

SLIABH gCUILINN



Tomás Dáibhis

Tá an foilseachán seo bunaithe ar chaint a thug Séamus Mac Dhaibhéid, Conradh na Gaeilge, Iúr Chinn Trá, i Mí na Samhna 2014. Tá Craobh an Iúir de Chomhaltas Uladh buíoch do Fhoras na Gaeilge a thug deontas dúinn leis an leabhrán a fhoilsiú.



Tá cóipeanna breise den leabhrán ar fáil ón
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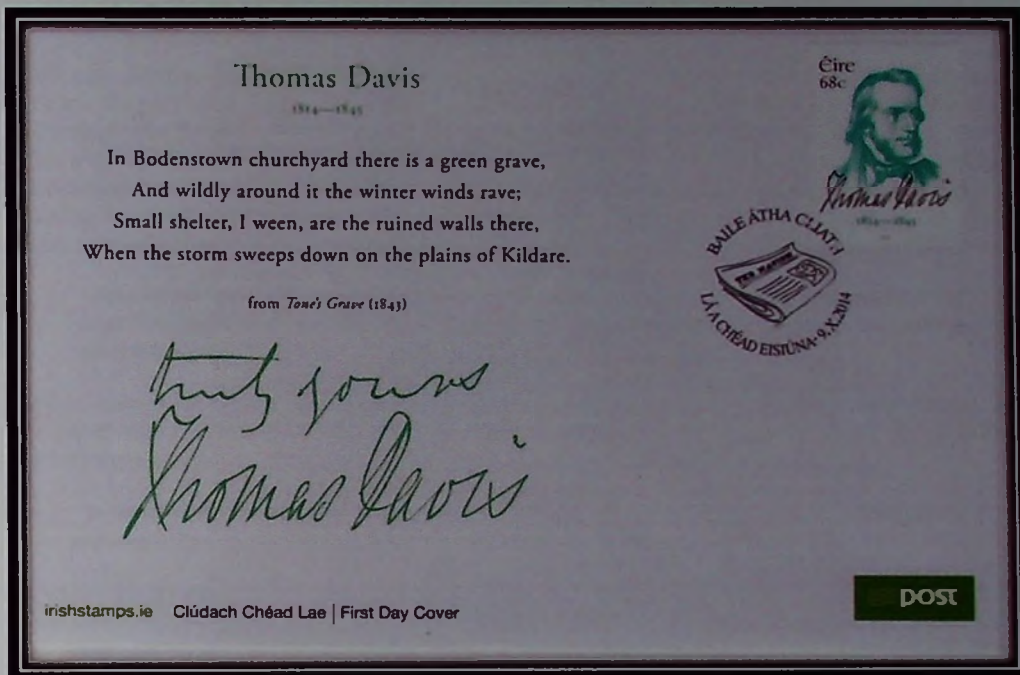
Urraithe ag



Foras na Gaeilge

"Davis would live and die a Celt" (John Mitchel)

Thomas Osborne Davis was born on 24th October 1814, a month after his father, Dr. James Thomas Davis, had died in Exeter. (Dr. Davis was an inspector of military hospitals.) That I too was born on 24th October, and indeed born at home in my grandparents' house, No. 2 Davis Street, Newry, has given me an interest since Abbey CBS days in an Irish patriot described recently by Professor John A. Murphy as "Ireland's foremost propagandist". Professor Murphy has endeavoured to resurrect interest in Davis, in this the bicentenary year of his birth, though the uptake has been patchy. An Post have now issued a commemorative stamp and the anniversary has been marked in his home town, Mallow, County Cork.



The Gaelic League has been inactive to date and this contrasts with the centenary of Davis's death in September 1945 when Cumann Cluain Ard, Belfast, held a grand *aeraíocht* and public meeting in Clonard in honour of Davis. On that occasion, a parade headed off from Hawthorn Street led by the Saint Peter's Brass and Reed Band and Saint Matthew's Pipe Band. Gaelic League branches were conspicuously present and those assembled were addressed by Harry Diamond, Socialist Republican M.P. for the Falls, and by Jack Beattie, Independent Labour M.P. Davis merits our ongoing attention not least for his central role in radical politics and propaganda in 1840s Ireland. Newry's John Mitchel saw Davis indeed as the sun around which Young Ireland orbited:

***"Of the band of friends and comrades who used to be called 'Young Ireland',
Davis was the foremost and bravest – the most accomplished and the most
devoted ..."***

Another Newry patriot, John O'Hagan (whose father, Arthur O'Hagan, was a prosperous Catholic merchant in the town), was younger than Davis though one of the Trinity College alumni who also helped establish Young Ireland. He used the word "gentilezza", which he translated as "grace of nature and manner", to describe Davis. Other laudatory adjectives come to mind when outlining Davis's personality – indefatigable, steadfast, modest, unselfish, disciplined, honest. Davis's friend and confederate, Duffy, pictured him as having a broad brow and a strong jaw. He dressed carelessly, had a winning laugh and "his voice had tones of sympathy that went straight to the heart" (Duffy). He appeared rather stand-offish to those who didn't know him but maintained close friendships with a cadre of fellow patriots. They enjoyed walks together, visits to bookshops, dinners in each other's homes, and trips to sites of historical interest. As Bernard Shaw was to later drop the first name George, so too with Davis who rarely used Osborne after

his Trinity days. His easily recognisable signature was a formal first name and surname, never 'Thomas' solely and only very rarely 'Tom'. He was an omnivorous reader, evidenced in his contributions and reviews in the 'Nation' and was particularly interested in European affairs. He was fascinated by emerging nationalism in post-Congress of Vienna Europe. He was impressed by the anti-clerical, romantic historians Jules Michelet and Augustin Thierry – their works helped shape his thinking on reviving Gaelic society. He had a working command of French, Italian and German, enjoyed Latin, followed the writings of the Utilitarians, especially Bentham, and loved the poetry of Byron and Wordsworth.



Davis went to Trinity College Dublin aged 17 and was a diligent and intellectual bibliophile, a researcher of manuscripts, and generally kept apart from others. He graduated with his B.A. on the 16th February 1836 on the same day as John Mitchel. As a graduate, he availed of access to Trinity's library and he gradually augmented his personal library. He developed new interests in political theory and economics and his own private reading materials were often richly annotated. Davis was called to the Bar in 1838 after he had spent his required year of legal studies in London. While in London, he attended debates in the House of Commons.

Davis's continuing education saw him immersing himself in music and he acquired an extensive collection of Carolan's airs. He explored the ballad genre in poetry, seeing in it an ideal means to teach Irish history. For Davis, historical accuracy was necessary in the writing of ballads. Ballads too would promote exemplary role models:

"...to set up in our souls the memory of great men, who shall then be as models and judges of our actions – these are the highest duties of history, and these are best taught by ballad history."

In his writings Davis adopted a high moral standpoint – he promoted the "republic of virtue." He praised, for example, Fr. Matthew's Temperance Movement and linked temperance with progress, industry, education and an improved quality of life. He proposed "self-education through the temperance societies." He lamented the fact that Ireland had no "national theatre"; condemned the widespread ignorance of Irish history and lack of literacy, especially in rural Ireland; and argued against religiously segregated education. While he described industrial ignorance as "a prime obstacle to our wealth" he remained anti-materialist, condemning "this thing ... which measures prosperity by exchangeable value, measures duty by gain ...". For Davis political freedom and moral regeneration were inseparable.

Davis was a Protestant though not religiously zealous. His lifelong crusade however was to win over his fellow Protestants to the idea of a transcending brotherhood of all Irishmen. For Davis, patriotism was "human philanthropy". He regarded Tone as "the greatest of great men" and like Tone aspired to uniting Catholics, Protestants and Dissenters. Since Tone's days religious animosities had of course increased – the campaign for Catholic Emancipation had seen the growing trend of the 'priest in politics'. Rev. Henry Cooke had won over many of the former Ulster democrats and radicals to Unionism. T. W. Moody explains the challenge facing Davis:

"The Union of 1800 destroyed all possibility that the colonial nationalism of Grattan and Flood would gradually expand into a nationalism comprehending all Irishmen."

Davis's Protestant background got him into scrapes at times with some Irish nationalists who thought him anti-Catholic in his views on national schools and tertiary education. Davis himself abhorred sectarianism and would have no dealings with Orangemen in particular:

"... to that irreclaimable body we say nothing. Reason or prudence, principle or commonsense, would be alike thrown away on them ..."

Thomas Davis enrolled with his friend John Dillon in O'Connell's Loyal National Repeal Association in 1841. He is regarded as an ideas person rather than as a doer and remained largely backstage. He rarely appeared at Repeal meetings in public and shared a platform with O'Connell only once (Curragh, May 1843). T.W. Moody reminds us that Davis was always "more impressive as a writer than as a speaker". Davis held O'Connell in high esteem, writing to the Duke of Wellington in May 1844:

"Recollect the populace idolize him. There is hardly a man, woman, or child from Newry to Tralee, but has looked on his manly figure and his winning manner, and heard his wonderful voice and tender eloquence. They prefer him to priest or neighbour or angel."

Davis was himself highly rated by O'Connell and others as a Protestant nationalist and as an opinion-shaper who was admired by influential colleagues. He was selected for Down on the Council of 300, though that body never met. He was too the cement that held Young Ireland together. Young Ireland had formed an élite within the Repeal Association. These were middle class, university educated young men who, as Moody noted, knew the Penal Laws "only by tradition". They had fire in their bellies and had embarked on a patriotic educational enterprise. Their organ was the 'Nation'.

The original name for that seminal newspaper was the 'National' (suggested by Duffy) though this was changed to the 'Nation'. Davis himself was initially sceptical about a weekly publication – the market was already congested and Dublin alone had six repeal papers and five anti-repeal papers. Given that the "Pilot" was pro-repeal and had a sizeable circulation and that the popular "Freeman's Journal" sided with O'Connell, Davis wondered if a new paper was feasible and if it would survive. One of his old friends, Wallis, advised him indeed that the educated classes did not read weeklies.

Léaráid thart ar 1880 a thaispeánann Dáibhis, Ó Dubhthaigh agus Diolúin ag beartú
The Nation i bPáirc an Fhionnuisce.



Duffy though quickly generated a healthy list of subscribers and contributors, including Eugene O'Curry and John O'Donovan who were scholars of Irish antiquity and passionate about Irish literature. Duffy was the youngest of the triumvirate who established the paper – he was 26, Dillon was 27 and Davis was 28. The first edition came out on 15th October 1842 in an amazing print-run of 12,000 copies. It sold out before noon on its first day, with agents clambering for additional copies. The 16 page paper cost 6d and with no illustrations was quite expensive at the time. It was, however, broken up with advertisements and even had a racing column (dropped for subsequent editions). The front page was given over to the O'Connell Tribute and another two pages were devoted to the Repeal Association. While those behind the paper were caught up in the growing momentum of the new Repeal campaign, they could do little to direct that campaign. O'Connell was the undisputed leader of Irish nationalists – the new paper would adhere to the O'Connell vision, or fold.

The paper had a most auspicious launch. Duffy could soon claim that the 'Nation' had Ireland's highest circulation – a readership calculated at a quarter of a million. The weekly expectancy about receiving the paper was perhaps best captured by Henry McManus' famous painting of people gathered around an old man reading aloud from the paper (Reading the 'Nation').

The impact of the paper was immediate. Even an anti-Repeal newspaper, "The Warder" could only commend the power and cogency of Davis's journalism:

"The Nation is written with a masculine vigour and an impetuous singleness of purpose, which makes every number tell home"

In his essay "The Press" (1957), Brian Inglis summed up the achievement of the 'Nation' and its abiding strength:

"Its impact was astonishing....it caught the public imagination as no other paper has done before or since. Why? If I had to sum up its virtue in a word, I would point to its integrity."

It was the earnest, reflective, patriotic Davis who gave this paper its characteristic virtue. In spite of the grinding routine of the weekly work, and the occasional charges levelled against him of being anti-Catholic, Davis's stamina held up and his editorials, articles on literature, his coverage of local and foreign news, and his poetic output, all secured a loyal and avid readership. When the pressure of deadlines was off, on a Saturday afternoon, Davis and the 'Nation's' inner circle could relax with evening suppers and conversations held in turn in their various houses. On Sundays they often went on excursions to places of interest in and around Dublin. It was Davis

who oversaw the whole enterprise, covering others' holidays, sometimes single-handedly putting out full editions. For John O'Leary "Davis was the *Nation* and the *Nation* was Davis."

Davis was the only paid member of staff working on the 'Nation' (his annual £500 salary was considerable at the time). He quickly became the main contributor of materials. At his home in Baggot Street, where he resided with his mother and sister, and was attended by the family friend Neville, Davis packed his days with writing. His output was prodigious. He normally contributed over 15,000 words per week, including editorials, reviews, poems and articles. Many of his articles were reproduced in the American press and in French and Italian newspapers. Davis, as has been noted, wrote in support of Temperance and consciously forged a continuum with the work and activities of those involved in 1798 (in contrast to O'Connell who rarely alluded to the United Irishmen). T.W. Moody in fact states:

"The ideal of the Nation was that of the United Irishmen brought up to date."

In an attempt to make Repeal more attractive to Protestants, Davis commenced a series of "Letters from a Protestant on Repeal" in the 'Nation' on 17th December 1842:

"If you would liberate Ireland, and keep it free, you must have Protestant help".

Davis himself wrote under the pseudonym of the 'Celt', indicative of his conversion to a Gaelic revival (it is interesting to note too that a previously mentioned Newry contributor to the 'Nation', John O'Hagan, used the Irish language pen-name "Sliabh gCuillin"). Of all of Davis's 80 or so poems published between 1842 and 1845, "A Nation Once Again" is probably the best known. It was printed in the 'Nation' on 13th July 1844 at a time when Davis was in love with Annie Hutton whose mother, hostile to Davis, removed her to Italy. This forced separation meant that Davis immersed himself even more in his newspaper work. His poetic output assumed a romantic bent, one such poem being "Mí-na-Meala" ('Honeymoon') published in July 1844.

THE SPIRIT OF THE NATION. 227

A NATION ONCE AGAIN.

Allegretto Spiritoso. f

When boy-hood's fire was in my blood, I read of an-ient free-men, For
Greece and Rome who brave-ly stood, THREE HUNDRED MEN and THREE MEN.
And then I pray'd I yet might see Our fel-lows rest in twain, And

Davis and Annie Hutton had first met at Christmas 1843 when Annie's father, Thomas Hutton, invited Davis to dinner at his family home at Elm Park, Drumcondra. Annie was 18 and Thomas Davis was 29. The age difference didn't complicate their relationship as much as Davis's political allegiances. Annie's mother was a determinedly anti-O'Connellite and saw Davis as a key player in the O'Connell camp. She removed Annie from the Dublin scene, taking her to Europe and preventing correspondence. The Huttons returned to Ireland in March 1845 thereby making a reunion possible. On 13th August 1845, after a year-long and painful separation, Davis was welcomed back into the Hutton home. In just over a month, Davis would be dead. (Annie Hutton died aged 28 and unmarried, and was buried in Saint George's cemetery near to the family residence at Elm Park).



Through the 'Nation', Davis's contribution to encouraging and expanding literacy in English is immense. For him, a well-equipped and fully stocked Repeal reading room was worth more than a dozen Repeal gatherings. These rooms, promoted by a Committee of the Repeal Association (described by Davis as "the Schoolmaster of the People of Ireland"), might be seen as the precursors to our public libraries – the idea for them likely came from the great Chartist 'democratic educational experiment' of establishing reading rooms in working class areas of Britain. Improving literacy and advancing learning were two of Davis's main objectives. In a country of c8.5 million, 3.7 million were totally illiterate. Davis aspired to a time when there would be a reading room in every parish in Ireland – replete with newspapers, journals, maps, illustrations and books. He wanted people to learn from books "instead of drinking, smoking or card playing" (for him the three main vices of the day):

"Were such a room in every village, you would soon have a knot connected with it of young men who have abjured cards, tobacco, dissipation, and, more fatal, laziness, and were trying to learn each some science, or art, or accomplishment – anything that best pleased them, from mathematics to music."

Improved literacy was linked with moral regeneration and in its early days the 'Nation' had over three hundred subscribers from various teetotal societies and reading room committees. Over 1,000 copies were dispatched to the Repeal Wardens and 9,000 copies were sold by agents or by

THE EDITOR OF "THE NATION"

Has the pleasure of announcing, that he will commence in his NEXT NUMBER, and continue at intervals, a

National Gallery,

Containing Portraits of Distinguished Irishmen, Living and Dead, Painted expressly for this Journal, and Engraved by MR. LANDELLS.

THE BEST WOOD ENGRAVER IN EUROPE.

PORTRAITS OF

THOMAS MOORE, and
GERALD GRIFFIN, Author of "The Collegians,"
Are now ready: and those of

O'CONNELL,
FATHER MATHEW, and
JOHN BANIM,

Are in the Engraver's hands.

Several others are in preparation.

NATION Office, 12, Trinity-street, Dublin,
October 14th. 1842.

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS.

We have no words to thank our friends sufficiently for the generous and unprecedented support which we have received from the very announcement of this Journal up to this day. There never was any Newspaper in this country which commenced with such a circulation as ours, nor, we venture to affirm, with half of it. The only way in which we can hope to return the kindness we have received is by making THE NATION worthy of the National support it has already attained; and this we shall earnestly labour to do.

We owe some explanation for apparent negligence to a multitude of friends who might naturally have expected that their kind and encouraging letters would be acknowledged; but the fact is, that we could not in half a year answer all the letters we received for the last month, and hence we were obliged to leave those correspondents unanswered upon whose kindness we could reckon most confidently.

Least it should be supposed that we have not fulfilled our pledge respecting the size of the Paper, we must request our readers to measure the sheet of THE NATION, before it is cut, with the largest Paper they can find, that they may convince themselves it is, as we promised it should be.

THE LARGEST PAPER EVER PUBLISHED
IN IRELAND.

THE NATION.

"To create and to foster public opinion in Ireland—to make it the voice of the soul."—CHIEF, BACON WOLFE.

DUBLIN, SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1842.

THE NATION.

With all the nicknames that serve to delude and divide us—with all their Orangemen and Ribbonmen, Tories and Whigmen, Ultras and Moderates, and Heaven knows what rubbish besides, there are, in truth, but two parties in Ireland: those who suffer from her National degradation, and those who profit by it. To a country like ours, all other distinctions are unimportant. This is the first article of our political creed; and as we desire to be known for what we are, we make it our earliest task to announce that the object of the writers of this Journal is to organise the greater and better of those parties, and to strive, with all our soul and with all our strength, for the diffusion and establishment of its principles. This will be the beginning, middle, and end of our labours.

And we come to the task with a strong conviction that there never was a moment more favorable for such a purpose than the present. The old parties are broken, or breaking up, both in England and Ireland—Whiggery, which never had a soul, has now no body; and the simplest partisan, or the most selfish expectant—who is generally a creature quite as unreasonable—cannot ask us to fix the hopes of our country on the fortunes of a party so weak and fallen. Far less can we expect anything from Toryism, which could only serve us by ceasing to be Toryism; even in its new and modified form it means the identical reverse of all we require to make the masses in this country happier and better. But this shifting of parties—this loosening of belief in old distinctions and dogmas, has prepared men's minds for new and greater efforts. Out of the contempt for mere party politics will naturally grow a desire to throw aside small and temporary remedies—to refuse to listen any longer to those who would plaster a cut finger, or burn an old wart, and call this doctoring the body politic—and to combine for great and permanent changes. The

But no National feeling can co-exist with the mean and mendicant spirit which esteems everything English as greater and better than if it belonged to our own country, and which looks at all the rest of the world through the spectacles of Anglican prejudice. There is no doubt at all that the chief source of the contempt with which we are treated by England is our own sycophancy. We abandon our self-respect, and we are treated with contempt; nothing can be more natural—nothing, in fact, can be more just. But we must open our eyes and look our domineering neighbour in the face—we must inspect him, and endeavour to discover what kind of a fellow he is. Not that we ought to do him injustice—not that we ought to run into opposite extremes—not, above all, that we ought to take universal England to be fairly represented by the disagreeable person who sometimes condescends to visit Ireland—a fat man, with his head in the clouds and his brains in his belly, looking the incarnation of self-importance, and saying, as plainly as plumb-pudding countenance can speak—"I am a Great Briton." JOHN BULL is as much a better fellow than this animal, as he is worse than what our shameful sycophancy would make him. We must learn to think sensibly and candidly about him; and we do not doubt that THE NATION will tend materially to this end.

We may be told that we expect to effect too much through the means of a newspaper, but nobody who knows this country thoroughly will say this. A newspaper is the only conductor to the mind of Ireland. Periodicals or books make no considerable impression, because they have no considerable circulation. Speeches are more effective; but we include them among the materials of journalism. O'CONNELL the orator, is as much the fool of the Press as O'CONNELL the writer. And it is undeniable that the journals, with all their means and appliances, were, and are, and are to be for many a day, the stimulating power in Ireland. Their work may not be apparent, but it is not the less sure; its slow and silent operation acts on the masses as the wind, which we do not see, moves the dust, which we do see—and in both cases the invisible giant is sometimes forgotten.

direct subscription. A vast number of people are recorded as listening to others as they read aloud from the 'Nation'. Few rules applied to all reading rooms but one stated that a reading room could not be located in a public house. T.M. Ray, the secretary of the Repeal Association, is generally acknowledged as the originator of the reading room concept,

*"but Davis was his close partner in all that concerned them."*Helen F. Mulvey

Ray saw the reading rooms as a means of educational and social improvement:

"It is impossible to exaggerate the benefits that may arise from these institutions; under cautious management they will withdraw the people from vice and idleness, and familiarise them with habits of virtue, patriotism and industry. The artisan can resort to them as a delightful recreation in his leisure hours, while the illiterate can become acquainted with the passing events of the day by hearing the public journals read aloud."

In Davis's view, Irish speaking areas should have their own materials as Gaeilge:

"To the districts where the Irish language is spoken, they [Reading Room Committee members] should send a purely Irish Grammar and an Anglo-Irish Grammar and Dictionary for each room, to be followed by other works containing general information, as well as peculiarly Irish knowledge. Indeed, we doubt if the Association can carry out the plan-which they began by sending down Dr. MacHale's translations-without establishing a newspaper, partly in English, partly in Irish, like the mixed papers of Switzerland, New Orleans, and Hungary."

Ba tírghráthóir cultúrtha é Davis gan amhras. Bhí Daniel O'Connell féin ar ndóigh neamhbhalbh agus diúltach agus é ag tagairt don Ghaeilge:

"The superior utility of the English language, as a medium of all modern communication, is so great that I can witness without a sigh the gradual disuse of Irish."

Ba chainteoir dúchais é O'Connell, agus deirtear go raibh Davis in éad leis maidir lena líofacht. Ba í an Ghaeilge an chloch a ba lú ar phaidrín O'Connell. Go bunúsach, ní raibh an Ghaeilge úsáideach sa saol poiblí a thuilleadh, dar leis.

Cé gur ghráigh Davis agus O'Connell tír s'acu, agus gur aontaigh siad faoi Aisghairm an Aontais, bhí easaontas eatarthu ar a lán ceisteanna eile. Ba fhathach é O'Connell ar ardán na hÉireann áfach. Bhí sé ina dhia beag ag cosmhuintir na tíre, Gaeilgeoirí ina measc. In aiste dá cuid nár foilsíodh (Roinn an Bhéaloidis, Coláiste Ollscoile Bhaile Átha Cliath), scríobh Ríonach Uí Ógáin faoi stádas O'Connell:

"They (the old Irish speakers) had so much respect for O'Connell that he was like a small god to them."

Más amhlaidh go raibh O'Connell ar nós cuma leis faoi bhás na Gaeilge, a mhalairt de dhearcadh a bhí ag Thomas Davis. Go luath ina ghairm mar eagarthóir ar an 'Nation', bhí tagairtí déanta aige don Ghaeilge ar chlos dóibh í, "Ireland would grow bright and eloquent."

Chreid Davis go raibh éacht déanta ag Cumann Seandálaíochta na hÉireann, (a bunaíodh sa bhliain 1840) leis an Ghaeilge a chaomhnú ach bhí sé den tuairim láidir go raibh géarghá le nuachtán i nGaeilge, nó cuid de i nGaeilge ar aon nós.

D'fhoilsigh sé dhá aiste ar théama na Gaeilge sa bhliain 1843 (Aibreán agus Nollaig). San idirlíon eatarthu, mhaolaigh sé ina dhearcadh ábhairín. In aiste Aibreáin, scríobh Davis focail a chuaigh i bhfeidhm go mór ar mhacasamhail Dúghlas de hÍde agus a chomhghleacaithe a bhunaigh Conradh na Gaeilge:

"To lose your native language and to learn that of an alien is the worst badge of conquest – it is the chain of the soul."

Chuir sé ceist ar a lucht léitheoireachta a thaispeánann go raibh sé cuíosach saonta agus mí-réalaíoch ina dhearcadh i leith na Gaeilge:

"Had Ireland used Irish in 1782, would it not have impeded England's conquest of us?"

Sa darna aiste (Nollaig 1843) thug sé fúthu a mhaígh nach raibh aon litríocht nua-aoiseach sa Ghaeilge – dúirt sé lán dóchais go raibh sé indéanta litríocht a chruthú. Mar fhreagra dóibh siúd a dúirt nach raibh focail/téarmaíocht sa Ghaeilge a bhí feiliúnach do shaol nua na heolaíochta, dúirt Davis go ndéanfadh na Gaeil, mar a rinne na Gearmánaigh cheana, focail nua a chumadh. Agus thug sé dúshlán dóibh siúd a dúirt nach raibh ar chumas mhuintir na hÉireann an Ghaeilge a athréimniú:

"If an attempt were made to introduce Irish either through the national schools or the courts of law into the eastern side of the island, it would certainly fail...But no one contemplates this save as a dream of what may happen a hundred years hence. It is quite another thing to say, as we do, that the Irish language should be cherished, taught, and esteemed, and that it can be preserved and gradually extended."

Davis had been a member of the provisional committee of the Irish Celtic Society, is known to have attempted translations of poems from Irish to English, pushed for the re-gaelicisation of place-names, and exhorted his friends to learn Irish with him. His own language tutor was the Irish scribe Ó Longáin, though Davis never attained anything like fluency. Shortly before he died, Davis took a renewed interest in promoting the Irish language in the 'Nation'. On August 23rd 1845 he published a long review of John O'Donovan's "Irish Grammar". And in probably the last essay penned by Davis before his September illness, Davis issued a plea for a new emphasis on the teaching of Irish in the schools of the western seaboard, where, he realised, the work for the preservation of the Irish language was most likely to be successful.

Thomas Davis died unexpectedly of scarlatina on 16th September 1845, at his mother's residence, 67 Lower Baggot Street, Dublin. He was attended to the end by the loyal Neville who had worked for the family for years. His funeral was a large and representative one, led by the Lord Mayor of Dublin and members of the Repeal Association. The '82 Club attended, as did members of the R.I.A., the Irish Library Association and the Irish Celtic Society. William Carleton was present as were Newry men John O'Hagan and John Mitchel.

Davis's love for Ireland was profound and unbounded. John O'Hagan said that in William Wordsworth, Davis had found

"the ideal pure love and exalted love of country, an ideal that took full possession of him".

He is acknowledged as a classic exponent of Irish nationalism, and recognised as such by later consummate propagandists like Griffith and Pearse. Davis's maxims have entered the canon of nationalist slogans – "educate that you may be free", "a people without a language of its own is only half a nation". C.G. Duffy (1890) believed him

"... fittest to be a teacher ... but beyond the thoughts he uttered and the noble strains he sang, the life he led was the greatest lesson he has bequeathed".

A more recent biographer, Mulvey, distils Davis's work into "improvement and preservation", in the pattern of early Victorians, and considers him like O'Connell, a constitutional reformer. Pearse and later nationalists would claim Davis for the republican separatist tradition, citing the explicitly militaristic tenor of at least 30 of his poems and ballads and his abiding theme of the Saxon as the foe. In 2014 however, on the bicentenary of his birth, few have remembered him publicly, much less claimed him for their particular party or ideology, though this may accord with Davis's own wish to have left only a benign, all-embracing, indelible, patriotic trace on his country's psyche:

***"Be my epitaph writ on my country's mind,
'He served his country and he loved his kind' "***

NEWRY'S FAMOUS THOMAS DAVIS PIPE BAND

(Alt bunaithe ar agallamh a rinne Anita Gallagher le Séamus Fitzpatrick)

Newry has always had a vibrant musical tradition and a jewel in the crown over many decades was the Thomas Davis Pipe Band. The pipe band was started in 1945 (the centenary of Thomas Davis's death) by Felix O'Hanlon and Tommy Fitzpatrick as a breakaway band from the Newry Irish National Foresters' Pipe Band. Other founder members were Barney, Joe and Anthony Fitzpatrick, Danny Matthews and Paul Maguire to name but a few. Felix, or Felie as he was known, was the first Pipe Major of the band having learnt the art of piping in a Scottish regiment. As Pipe Major, Felie exerted a great influence on the band and their first uniform was modelled on the Black Watch uniform complete with busby. Ba mhinic tionchar bhannaí míleata na Breataine ar bhannaí an Iúir – rud atá intuigthe i gcomhthéacs na beairice a bhí lonnaithe ag Cearnóg Halla an Línéadaigh.



Píobairí na bhForaiseoirí taobh amuigh de Halla an Mhistéiligh

In its early days the band had a couple of nicknames, one of which was "the Blackberry Band". The curious label came from the band's practice venue - McConville's pub in High Street. Mr. McConville acted as a blackberry agent for the jam factory and he bought blackberries from children and stored them in the pub. Presumably there were always a few purple faces among the band members indulging as they went past the store of blackberries and hence the nickname. The second nickname was better known 'The Fitzpatrick Band' and that was not hard to fathom given that the family could have up to nine members in the band at any one time.



1974. Pic. le caoinchead Séamus Fitzpatrick

Other practice venues for the Thomas Davis included a store at the old harbour office on Monaghan Street, Barney Fitzpatrick's builder's yard in High Street and behind Anthony Fitzpatrick's house on Canal Street.

The band's first uniform from early 1946 was a black tunic, a black tartan and black busby. It then changed to a green tunic with a green shawl and a bottle green kilt. The next shawl was embroidered with a green shamrock. In the early 1960s the tunic was red, buttoned up to the neck. Later again the band was attired with a red waistcoat underneath the red tunic. As with the instruments, the uniform could prove costly but expenditure was kept down as Mary Fitzpatrick (Anthony's wife), in a labour of love, would sew the uniforms for the band. The band also wore spats: originally a protective covering for the ankle, shoe and sock but now their use is ornamental in pipe band regalia.

While the band's very first attire was on loan from another band, likewise there was a curious inter-band twist in the story of the first instruments. Tommy and Felie bought flutes which they then swapped for pipes with a Protestant band from out the Tandragee direction (that band presumably had little liquid cash but was eager to change from pipes to flutes so presumably it was a good deal for the few pounds Thomas Davis had gathered up). In any case, co-operation and friendship between bands was above religion and politics:

"If on the 12th July a band needed a drum they came to us and asked us for the loan of our drum, we gave them the drum. If we were going to a competition and we needed a new drum or if one of our drums burst, we went and asked them and they gave us it. And we all played together."

(Séamus Fitzpatrick)

In the same vein, two of the band's keenest sponsors were Willie Baird and Joey McCullough and although the band never played down Canal Street, out of respect for community relations, they would always stop and pipe a couple of tunes outside Willie's butcher's shop. The playing over, Willie, a music lover, would give them a round of applause.

Funding was always an issue as pipes and drums were not cheap instruments. In the early years the band did a door-to-door collection for funds. Individual members were also sponsored by their workplace. On one occasion an individual band member was busking as a fund-raiser on Hill Street (without a permit), a bucket in front of him for donations, when he was accosted by the well-known and ubiquitous Sergeant Junk. When accused by the earnest Sergeant of breaching regulations, the quick-thinking piper said that the bucket belonged to a window-cleaner, had nothing to do with him, and that he was providing street entertainment *gratis*. Múineann gá seift! By the 1980s it could cost into the thousands to kit out a band. In those later years the band would often play outside Woolworths and the Council would fund them for entertaining the rate-payers over the summer and during festivals.

Felie O'Hanlon continued as Pipe Major until the late 1950s when Anthony Fitzpatrick

took over. Anthony's name, like the family name, was synonymous with the band as he was Pipe Major for over 40 years. The Pipe Major is the director of a pipe band. As such Anthony was the main teacher of the pipes. He would also choose and arrange tunes and sets in conjunction with the leading drummer or Drum Sergeant:

"The Pipe Major would select a march, strathspey and a reel and he and the leading drummer would get together and they'd play it over and the leading drummer would make a beat to suit it."

(Séamus Fitzpatrick)

Over the years the band won many awards including the prestigious World Pipe Band Grade IV Championship in 1956, and the coveted Champion of Champions title in 1966. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s the band won a plethora of awards and represented Ireland several times at the international Celtic Festival of Lorient in Brittany, France, quite an honour and experience for any band. Anthony also taught piping outside the band and at one time coached Annesborough Pipe Band. Some of the famous names associated with the band were Frank Burns, Harry McEvoy, Joe Murphy, Bernie Fitzpatrick - to name but some. When Anthony died, the baton or the title of Pipe Major passed on to his son Joe. The band is silent now but its fortunes fluctuated throughout its history so who knows, perhaps it will rise again?



Baill an bhanna i Rinn Mhic Giolla Rua – pictiúr a bhí ar chlúdach an LP a d'eisigh siad sa bhliain 1985 ar an lipéad REGO Irish Records and Tapes Inc (R 51000) ar a raibh ríleanna, cornphíopaí agus píobaireacht aonair. Ní ábhar iontais é go raibh píosaí ann a chum Thomas Davis é féin 'The West's Awake' agus 'A Nation Once Again'.

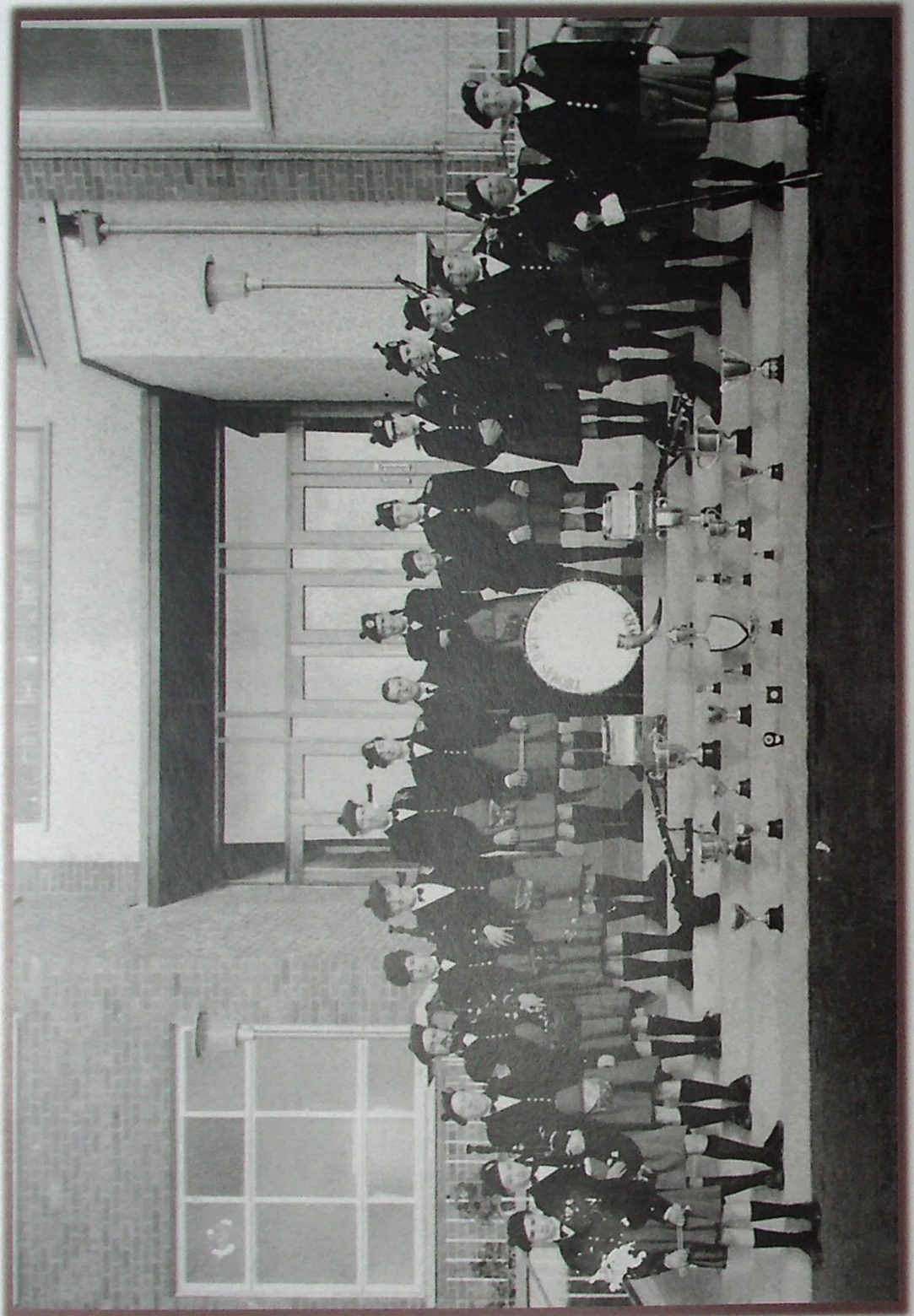
Thar na blianta ag ócáidí dhifriúla, thiocfadh le bunadh an Iúir a bheith cinnte de go mbeadh an Thomas Davis ar thús cadhnaíochta – Paráid na Féile Pádraig, Paráid Fhéile na Canála, Mórshiúl na Cásca, laethanta móra an INF agus an AOH. Ba fhoinsé ioncaim don bhanna na himeachtaí oifigiúla seo. Is cuimhin linn ar fad iad i mbun cleachtaidh, ciorcal déanta acu – drumadóireacht, píobaireacht – ardú meanman don lucht éisteachta. Mar ba mhinic mór-thiúin náisiúnta na hÉireann á sheinm acu. Roghnaíodh an Banna Thomas Davis chun Páirc an Iúir a oscailt; cheol siad go bródúil neamheaglach ar shráideanna an Iúir san lár 1960í nuair a nach raibh rialtas thuisceart na hÉireann ró-shásta go raibh náisiúntóirí i mbun agóide; agus mháirseáil siad go buacach i gcomórtais i gcéin is i gcógar. Cosúil le Thomas Davis féin, bhí siad neamhsheicteach. A dhála féin arís, chothaigh siad go síochánta meon an náisiúnachais agus chothaigh siad go fonnmhar sultmhar ceolmhar é. Bhí siad mar dhlúthchuid de fhabraic chultúrtha an Iúir ar feadh na mblianta. Tá dea-chuimhní againn ar fad orthu.

Má tá na píoba ciúin agus na drumáí múchtha leis an Thomas Davis imithe in éag, maireann ar fad liricí agus fonn 'A Nation Once Again' mar thanáiste ar 'Amhrán na bhFian' i gcroíthe mhuintir na hÉireann.



Banna Thomas Davis ar Shráid Mhuineacháin sna 1980í – pic. le Craobh an Iúir





Ulster & All-Ireland Junior Champions 1966. Taobh amuigh de Scoil na Mainistreach. Pic.le caoinhead Séamus Fitzpatrick

THOMAS DAVIS CLUB CLG Corrinshego

The first mention of the name Thomas Davis in association with Corrinshego was in 1905. The Gaelic League in Newry and district was at that time the dominant cultural organisation. The language movement in fact attracted members in their hundreds. In Newry town itself the parent Branch of the Gaelic League was comfortably off and by some accounts a bit self-satisfied and lacking in initiative. Newer, more radical and politicised language activists were emerging in the town and sister Branches of the Gaelic League were formed locally. Those more nationalistic in their outlook formed the Irish-Ireland Society in Newry – members included George Cahill, Robert Kelly, Proinsias Patterson, Seamus O'Hanlon, Pádraig O'Curran and James Galvin. The Society's first annual report described the group as "democratic in the extreme" and declared that they aspired to "the establishment of an Irish Ireland, politically as well as intellectually free." Their rallying song was 'Sinn Féin Amháin' and they published 'Cuisle na nGaedheal'. Their activities included Irish classes, lectures on Irish history, feiseanna, and long walks with picnics. They even had a football team up and running in their first term with a pitch at the Marshes next to Fag an Bealach's grounds. Most members of the Society came from Ballyholland and Corrinshego and they met in their club rooms in Kilmorey Street, though they shortly separated into two distinct groups. The chief Corrinshego figures included members of the Campbell, Courtney and Kinney families and they founded their own Thomas Davis Club. It was a friendly parting and the two groups came together annually for a great bonfire at the top of Courtenay Hill on Oíche na Féile Eoin. By 1907 the Thomas Davis Club in Corrinshego, presided over by Aodh Ua Ceannuidhe (Hugh Kinney), had affiliated with Sinn Féin.

In 1930 a newly established league in South Armagh started around Lá Fhéile Pádraig, the Camlough & District Junior Football League. Corrinshego were one of the first to submit a team – others expressing initial interest included Camlough, Carrickbracken (drawing players from Bessbrook and the Camlough Road area) and Bessbrook Geraldines (affiliated to GAA 1907). An early report on the competition in the 'Frontier Sentinel' indicated that the Corrinshego team was 'well balanced' and it was predicted that they 'should go far'. They won their opening match against Camlough by 2 goals 9 points to Camlough's 1 goal and 2 points. The Corrinshego team list highlights names we associate with the townland and club: E. Clarke, John Quinn, John O'Reilly, F. O'Callaghan, Peter Quinn, Paddy Quinn, Jerry O'Reilly, M. Feehan, Felix Mackin, E. Mullan, D. Clarke, J. Mullan, J. Mone. Corrinshego's match against Carrickbracken, played before a large crowd and refereed by Mr. P. (Poppy) Fearon, P.E.T., (Mr. T. Mulligan from Newry was another referee of the competition) was heralded by the 'Sentinel' as 'one of the finest games seen in Camlough for some time and was thoroughly enjoyed by the spectators'. Peter Quinn was the Corrinshego star performer. Corrinshego won the league that year - their defence was described as 'almost impregnable' and the 'Sentinel's' report on the final (12th July 1930) concluded:

'It would be invidious to pick out any number of the Corrinshego team for special mention. In defence and attack there was not a weak spot. They are especially deserving of the highest praise in view of the fact that the club was but recently organised.'

To celebrate their win, the team and supporters held a grand dance in Corrinshogo Hall in August 1930. There was music (Messers. E. Kelly, F. Mackin, B. Quinn and H. Mullan) and step dancing (Mrs. Courtney, Mr. Patrick Mallon), and a special thanks was passed to Mr. Francis Courtney for the use of the hall. Songs were rendered by Misses Rose Ann Campbell and Brigid Rogers, and by Messers. Jim McCullough, John Reilly, Mick Mackin, Thomas Jackson and Mike Feighan.

1931 brought a second season for Corrinshogo and once again they submitted a team to the Camlough & District Junior Football League. The Camlough & District GAA League Minutes show that Corrinshogo were registered as Corrinshogo Plunketts (not Thomas Davis). This was not a good year for Corrinshogo, they even failed to travel to Camlough for one of their games. The 'Frontier Sentinel' also records an ominous "Corrinshogo defeat for the first time in their history". Corrinshogo were alive in the Armagh GAA from the 1930's -1950's even attending County Board Meetings. An extract from the 1944 County Board Minutes shows the Corrinshogo representatives as S. Kiely and E. Clarke. In the early years, the senior football team was dominated by a few families. The Quinn family fielded six players, including Peter Quinn who represented Armagh in the 1930s as a senior football player. Camogie was also very strong in the club during this era. Corrinshogo was no different to other parts of rural Ireland and in the 1950s it was hit hard by emigration and the harsh realities of economic life. The football team folded but a vibrant social scene was kept alive. Corrinshogo Hall was used for table tennis three days per week. Guest-teas kept the Women's Committee active. Lukie Quinn's Band often played at the social functions.

The football team was revived in the early 1980s and its proudest day came on Sunday, August 8, 1982, when Corrinshogo defeated Clonmore with a scoreline of 2-9 to 1-6 in a sunny Ballymacnab to lift the Junior County Football Championship for the first time. Further honour was brought to the club when Eamonn Fearon played corner back on the Armagh minor team that progressed to the 1992 All-Ireland final against Meath. Corrinshogo has provided players to represent the county at all levels.



Champions 1982

Sa lá atá inniu ann

2013 saw the start of Thomas Davis CLG's first ever Ladies' football team. 2014 has now seen an Under 14 ladies' team and an Under 16 ladies' team. The girls are training hard and bonding as a team. The future of ladies' football at Thomas Davis is hopeful.



In 2013 Thomas Davis GAC also won the Irish News Club & Volunteer Award "Small Club of the Year". This was a tremendous achievement for the Club and for all involved in the application. Gerry O'Reilly became the new Senior Manager in 2013 and, with great commitment and dedication from the team and management, achieved league promotion. The Senior Team went on to win the Armagh Senior Division 3B League and also entered the Brian McKeown Cup Tournament and came home with silverware. The Club has just won the President's Award for Culture and Heritage – gradam atá rí-thuillte acu.



Thomas Davis CLG have undertaken the development of a Community Sports Campus based at Doran's Hill, Newry. The site is approximately 14 acres in size and is strategically located just off the A1 Motorway between Dublin & Belfast. Working in partnership with Newry & Mourne District Council and the Department of Regional Development, Thomas Davis CLG were able to purchase the site and now are in the process of fully developing the site with many phases of development planned. The first phase is a full-size sand-based, grass gaelic field which began June 2012. The gaelic field will be fully complete with a perimeter wall & fence, ballstops, team dugout areas & a raised viewing area for spectators. All funding for the development of this field has been raised by club members through various fundraising schemes.



Na Sinsir/Seniors 2014

The second phase is a Community Pavilion which will be fitted with 6 changing rooms to accommodate both male and female teams, with changing and shower facilities all located on the lower floor of the building. The second and third floors will accommodate community rooms and a community gym. Funding for this phase is currently with DSD & SIF.

Further phases are planned which include a second playing pitch & a handball / hurling wall. Thomas Davis CLG have also offered a portion of the land on the upper part of the site to the local Irish medium primary school, Bunscoil an Iúir, to relocate to the site. This offer is currently well advanced with the proposal receiving the full support of the school's Board of Governors who are now liaising with the Department of Education on this proposal.

Tá éacht déanta ag coistearí díograiseacha Chlub Thomáis Dáibhis le roinnt blianta anuas. Obair dheonach atá idir láimhe acu agus níl deireadh lena bhfuinneamh agus níl teorainn lena bhfís. Tá súil ag Gaeil an Iúir go mbeidh an Roinn Oideachais ó thuaidh toilteanach scoil nua a cheadú ar bharr Chnoc Uí Dhoráin. Beidh suíomh den scoth ann agus áiseanna spóirt nach mbeidh a sárú ar fáil. Tá a leithéid tuillte ag daltaí óga Bhunscoil an Iúir.



Todhchaí Chlub Chor Fhuinseoighe - Foireann faoi bhun 16 (2014)



Tá muid buíoch do Mary Mc Court a chuir téacs agus pictiúir chugainn

ORIGINAL DESIGN FOR
"THE SPIRIT OF THE NATION"
(By F. W. Burton.)

