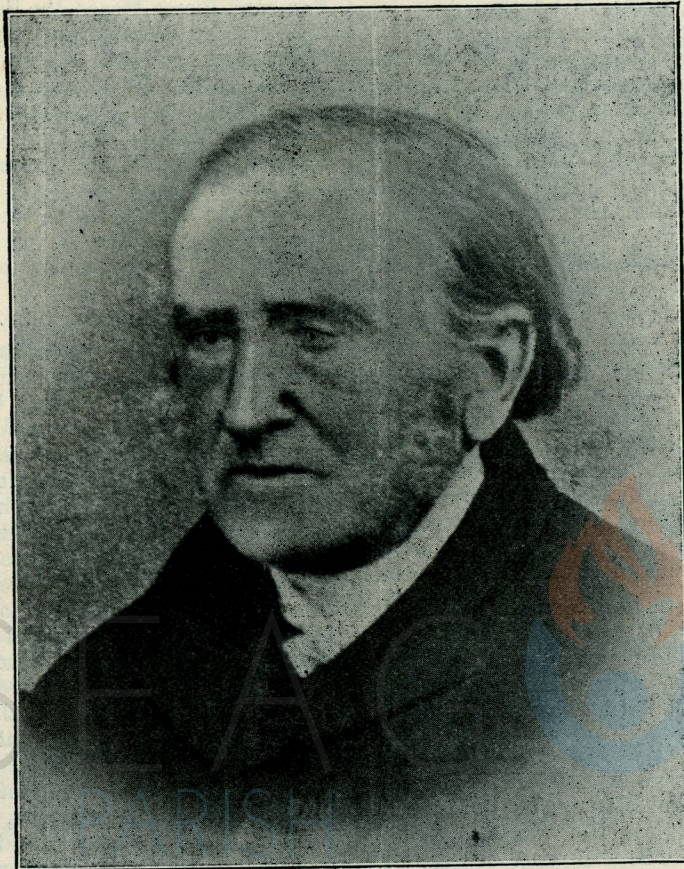


# Seagoe Parish Magazine.

OCTOBER, 1910.



*John Walker*

WE reproduce in our issue this month an interesting portrait and autograph signature of Mr. John Walker, more familiarly known as "Clerk" Walker, who acted as Parish Clerk in Seagoe Parish from the year 1825 to 1873, a period of almost 50 years. Mr. Walker was born at Walkerstown, in the townland of Kernan, in the year 1799. He was baptised in Seagoe Church on January 22nd, 1799. His father, who was also called John Walker, acted for some years as Parish Clerk, and had occupied the important post of Churchwarden in the year of his son's birth, 1799. John Walker, sen., was very highly respected, and his son used to relate how he remembered him rising at night to engage in prayer. Besides acting as Parish Clerk he was agent to Sir Francis Macnaghten for some property in the district. In his latter years he became afflicted with deafness, and used an ear trumpet, which is, we believe, still in the possession of his descendants. He died on February 3rd, 1842, in his 88th year, and was interred in Seagoe graveyard. The following entry in Seagoe Registers in the handwriting of the then curate, the Rev. John Beatty, is a proof of the high esteem in which he was held:—

Mr. John Walker having this day resigned the office of Parish Clerk, in consequence of his deafness incapacitating him from fulfilling efficiently the duties thereof, I hereby appoint his son (John Walker) his successor, whom I believe likely to make a very efficient clerk, and whose character and conduct justify the appointment. I wish at the same time to record my good opinion, coupled with that of the whole Parish



of the excellent moral character which Mr. John Walker, sen., has always sustained.

Dated this 23rd of January, 1825.

STEWART BLACKER, Vicar of Seagoe.

Witness present,

ELIAS THACKERAY, Rector of Louth.

JOHN BEATTY, Curate of Seagoe.

The signatures of both father and son are entered on the same page, the writing of the old man being very indistinct, and that of John Walker, jun., in a clear, strong hand. John Walker, jun., who became Clerk in 1825, had an eventful youth. When only 16 years of age he became a bugler to the Seagoe Yeomanry, and in the eventful year of Waterloo, 1815, he, with the Yeomanry, were sent to Drogheda to garrison that town during the absence of the regular forces on foreign service. He used to describe very vividly the scenes enacted just outside Old Seagoe Churchyard on the day when the Yeomanry left. Mothers, Sisters, Sweethearts, and Wives were in agonies of distress when they saw the Seagoe boys marching away. Mr. Walker's bugle and sword were sold at Archdeacon Saurin's auction, but it is not known who now has them. They were interesting relics of a past day. Mr. Walker used to describe Drogheda as "a very rebelly place," and related how some of the inhabitants attacked the Seagoe men, and left three of them apparently dead on the street. When the other members of the force heard of the attack they sallied out in a body and destroyed the district where the attack was made. Mr. Walker married a namesake of his own, Miss Eliza Walker, on March 11th, 1819. His eldest son, also called John, was born on November 22nd, 1823. Mr. Walker received a very complete education before he became Clerk. It was necessary for him to qualify in ordinary educational subjects so that he might act as Schoolmaster, and he also received special instruction in Music. The following interesting certificate is extant:—Board Room of the Association incorporated for Discountenancing Vice and Promoting the knowledge and the Practice of the Christian Religion.

17 Capel St., July the 1st, 1825.

This is to certify that John Walker was on the 24th day of February, 1825, admitted into the Seminary for training Parish Clerks and Schoolmasters instituted by the Association, and that he continued a student in the Institution four months. His progress during that time was, as appears from the Judgment Books, creditable to him and his conduct in every respect unexceptionable. James Aickin, *Superintending Clergyman*; Charles Dickinson, Francis Lynch Blossie, John A. Russell, *Members of Committee*; Richard Graves, *Secretary*; James Wilson, *Assist. Secretary*.

After leaving the Training College in Dublin, Mr. Walker entered upon his duties in Seagoe. Great care was apparently exercised in the appointment of Parish Clerks. The Candidate was required to take a solemn oath before he was appointed. The following were the terms of the oath taken by Mr. Walker—

Affidavit to be made before a Master in Chancery or a Master extraordinary in Chancery—John Walker, of Kernan, in the County of Armagh, maketh oath on the Holy Evangelists that he is a subscribing witness to the annexed Petition of the Honourable and Reverend Pierce Meade, the Reverend Francis Beatty, the Reverend Michael Sampson, the Reverend William MacMullen, and the Reverend James Saurin, addressed to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and Privy Council of Ireland, and saith that he was present and saw the said Thomas Beatty and Michael Sampson, and Daniel William MacMullen, and James Saurin sign their names and affix their seals to the said Petition, and saith that the name John Walker subscribed as a witness to the said Petition, is this Deponent's proper Name and Hand-writing.

This Petition is dated 1827.

The Bishop's Licence to John Walker to officiate as Parish Clerk of Seagoe is an interesting document. It runs as follows—James, by Divine Providence Bishop of Dromore, to John Walker, of Segoe, in our said Diocese of Dromore, greeting, whereas you are Recommended unto us as a fit and proper person to be Singing Clerk, in and for the said Parish of Segoe. We do by these presents give and grant unto you our full Licence for that purpose during our Will and Pleasure, In testimony whereof we have herewith caused our Consistorial Seal to be affixed the twenty-fifth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six. W. T. Hamilton, Registrar of Dromore.

The trust imposed upon John Walker in these solemn terms was very faithfully fulfilled by him during a long term of years. His chief duties consisted in leading the singing of the Psalms in Church, and answering the responses, but another very important duty consisted in keeping the Church Registers of Baptisms, Marriages, and Burials. His musical duties were accomplished with ability. For many years the instruments used in the musical portion of the services in Seagoe were two flutes or pipes, one of them was played by Mr. Walker, and the other by Mr. Charlton. The two leaders sat in the front of the gallery and before a Psalm was started they made sure that they were on the correct pitch by sounding a square flat pitch pipe. Mr. Walker had a good voice, and his 'Amens' are remembered still by many of our older parishioners. He was fond of singing in his own house, and a favourite song of his was "Jessie to the Fair." He was a proficient performer on the flute, and on Sunday evenings after service he spent his time singing some of his favourite Psalms. On Sunday mornings he came across the field from Walkerstown, by a path that he got made for himself, and for many years called at Mr. Collins' house beside the Church, where he sat for an hour and enjoyed a good smoke. He was always dressed neatly in black, and wore a white cravat and silk hat. Archdeacon Saurin was a very close friend of his, and Mr. Walker had some funny stories to tell about the "Deacon." His grandson, Mr.



William Walker, remembers him telling how the "Deacon" when driving home from a service at Aughaccommon one Sunday afternoon saw a fine flock of ducks near Kilvergan, and getting out of his carriage bought them from the old woman who owned them. He then put the ducks into the well of the carriage and drove off with them to the Rectory! Mr. Walker on one occasion made an interesting find when digging in one of his fields. He discovered the horn of an Irish Elk, a species of wild animal which was at one time plentiful in Ireland. Mr. Walker's duties as keeper of the Parish Registers were performed with great fidelity and exactness. Several of the large volumes of Registers in the safe at the Rectory are altogether in his writing. There are no blots, no erasures, and no blanks, and the names are written in the clear and distinct hand, which is noticeable in his signature printed above. He was present at all weddings for many years, in fact from 1825 to 1873, when failing health and the approach of old age made it impossible for him to fulfil his duties. When his sight became dim he used a quaint pair of horn spectacles, more like motor goggles than anything else.

The old man was very fond of children. One of them remembers how he used to exchange pleasant and funny sayings with them when he met them coming from school. "Hi! Hi!" he used to say "something terrible has happened, all the crook-sticks are broken," and the children would run away laughing at the thought of all the crook-sticks breaking and the big potato pots falling into the fire.

When Disestablishment overtook the Church great changes occurred and Mr Walker was not so intimately connected with the Parish as formerly. Still his name is to be seen in the Registers up to 1873 and he attended the services. One Sunday morning in the spring of 1876 after receiving Holy Communion he was seen to enter the Vestry in tears and taking away with him his large old Prayer Book he left the church never to return. He must have felt that it was the last time he could attend the service owing to increasing weakness. He died the same year and was interred in Seagoe Churchyard near the ruins of the Old Church where in his early boyhood he worshipped with his parents. "Having served his own generation he fell on sleep and was gathered to his fathers." Old Seagoe Graveyard contains no more honoured remains than those of "Clerk" Walker and the whole Parish respects his memory.

We are indebted for many of the above particulars to information supplied by Mrs Walker, of Seagoe Villa, Mr Nesbitt, Mr D. W. Walker, Mr T. J. Montgomery, and others. The portrait is taken from a photograph in the possession of Mrs Walker of Seagoe Villa.

### **Harvest Thanksgiving Services.**

The Annual Harvest Thanksgiving Services in Seagoe Church will take place on Thursday, October 27th, at 8 o'clock, and on Sunday, October 30th, at

Morning and Evening Prayer. The Rev Canon Grierson, B.D., Rector of Banbridge, will preach at the Thursday service, and on the Sunday the Special Preacher will be the Rev R. D. Patterson, Rector of Ardmore.

Contributions of Flowers, Fruit, and Corn for the decoration of the Church should be sent to the Church on Wednesday morning, October 26th, from 10 to 12. The offerings on Thursday evening will be given to Foreign Missions, and we hope all will give most liberally towards the ingathering of the great spiritual harvest. On Sunday the collections will be devoted to our Parochial Funds.

### **District Harvest Services.**

The following Services will be held in the various Districts:—

- |                |                                |               |
|----------------|--------------------------------|---------------|
| Tamnificarbet, | Sunday, October 23rd,          | at 7          |
|                | Monday, "                      | 24th, at 8    |
| Hacknahay,     | Sunday, "                      | 30th, at 8-30 |
|                | Preacher—Rev. R. D. Patterson. |               |
|                | Monday, October 31st,          | at 8          |
| Carne,         | Sunday, Nov.                   | 6th, at 8-30  |
|                | Monday, "                      | 7th, at 8     |
| Drumgor,       | Sunday, Nov.                   | 13th, at 7    |
|                | Monday, "                      | 14th, at 8    |

### **Baptisms.**

"Suffer the little children to come unto Me."

- Sept. 3rd—Frederick William, son of Frederick and Elizabeth Abraham.
- " " —Norah Eveline, daughter of Thomas and Mary Ruddell.
- " " —Margaret Atkinson, daughter of George and Christine Robinson.
- " " —Mary Sarah, daughter of Leonard and Sarah Jane Mayes.
- " " —Henry Valentine, son of James and Anne Sands.
- " " —Letitia, daughter of James and Sarah Jane Preston.
- " 14th—Robert, son of William Edward and Elizabeth McCann.

### **Marriage.**

"God is love."

- Sept. 10th—William James McClatchey, Edenderry, to Anne Matilda Best, Ballyhannon.

### **Burials.**

"Jesus said unto her, Weep not."

- Sept. 3rd—Gertrude Loney, Edenderry, aged 6 months.
- " 15th—William James McKeown, Killycomaine, aged 6½ years.
- " 18th—John Steele, Portadown, aged 10 years.
- " 21st—Henry Monroe, Levaghery, aged 91 years.



### Obituary.

Our list of Burials this month is an unusually sad one. The death of little Jack Steele by drowning while trying to save his pet dog brought sorrow to many hearts and an overwhelming grief to his father, mother, and sister. He was one of the brightest and happiest of our school children. His early death reminds us of the awful uncertainty of life, and bids us think seriously of the coming eternity. We hope the children of the Parish will learn from this sad death the lesson of kindness to dumb animals. He lost his life in the effort to save his pet dog. "He prayeth best who loveth best all things both great and small." Another sad death has been that of William James M'Keown, who died from the effects of burns received through his clothes accidentally catching fire while he was playing near the hearth. At the inquest the Coroner spoke strongly about the dangers incurred by young children when playing near unprotected fires. Fire screens can now be purchased at a very small cost.

Last month we announced the serious illness of Mr. Henry Monroe, of Levaghery, and this month we regret to have to chronicle its fatal termination. Mr. Monroe was one of our oldest and most respected parishioners, and was very much interested in the welfare of the Parish. He retained his mental and physical powers wonderfully up to the last, and notwithstanding his great age was able to go about the farm until a few months ago. We desire to express our deep sympathy with his relatives in their bereavement.

### Memorial to Dean Dawson.

Five years have elapsed since the death of our late Rector, the very Rev. Dean Dawson, but as yet no memorial has been erected to his memory. He did a splendid work in Seagoe Parish, and built a Church which is said to be one of the finest country Parish Churches in the Diocese. It is fitting that his memory should be perpetuated by a permanent memorial in the Parish. Various suggestions have been made, but the idea which seems most feasible and which would associate his name with one of our most useful buildings is that of a Dawson Memorial Wing to be added to Seagoe Parochial School-house. There is a great need of further accommodation in the School. Proper Class rooms, Cloak rooms, out-offices, and boundary walls and gates are required to bring the School up to modern standards. On Sundays also further space is needed for the Infant School and Girls' Bible Class. A preliminary meeting has been held in connection with the subject, and it is hoped that in the near future the scheme may be brought to a successful issue.

We intend in an early issue of the Magazine to publish a sketch of the proposed Memorial Building.

### Girls' Friendly Society.

The Seagoe G.F.S. will open their Winter Session with a United Service in the Parish Church on Wednesday evening, November 2nd, at 8. All the Associates, Members, and Candidates are expected to be present. We begin the Session a month later this year owing to the absence from home of our Secretary, Miss Armstrong, and also on account of the special course of Lectures now being given in Blacker's Mill Reading Room every night and which most of our Hacknahan G.F.S. members are attending.

### C.I.M.S.

A meeting of the Men Communicants of the Parish will be held (p.v.) in Edenderry Parochial Hall, on Thursday evg., October 6th, at 8 o'clock, for the purpose of forming a branch of the Church of Ireland Men's Society. We cordially invite to this important meeting all the men of the Parish who are regular Communicants. The rule of the Society, which is being widely established in Ireland, is that Members must be Communicants, and non-Communicants can join as Associates.

### Communicants Union.

The Lord Bishop suggests that in every Parish a Communicants Union should be started to unite together the Communicants in the Parish. On Monday, October 17th, a meeting of our Communicants will be held in Edenderry Parochial Hall. All our Communicants are invited to be present and join the Union. The rules will be explained at the meeting.

### Nature Notes.

The swallows have taken their departure. On Wednesday, Sept. 21st, they started on their long flight to the tropical climes of Africa and the South. On Sept. 8th, apparently a small contingent migrated but the main body remained until Sept. 21st. It will be interesting for our local observers to watch for stragglers. Some few birds seem always to get left behind.

### Congratulations.

We heartily congratulate Mr. Robert T. Montgomery on obtaining a Silver and a Bronze Medal at the recent Grocers' Exhibition in London. These are very high distinctions and were won in open competition against the best talent in the United Kingdom.

### Offertories for September.

	Morning.	Evening.
Sep. 4th—15th S. aft. Trinity	£2 1 5½	£0 11 2
„ 11th—16th S. aft. „	1 3 6	0 12 3
„ 18th—17th S. aft. „	1 9 6	0 9 9
„ 25th—18th S. aft. „	3 0 3	1 0 6
Week-Days	...	0 11 11
Total,	£7 14 8½	£3 5 7