

# Dr. Arthur Mussen - and the local community

Glenavy was situated in an area where the land was owned by Sir Richard Wallace, who lived mainly in Paris. He had earned for himself a high reputation for philanthropy by his generosity during the siege of Paris. In 1890 he died, and the property passed to his widow Lady Wallace. The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act 1885 also known as the Ashbourne Act was passed in Parliament. Many of the tenants took advantage of the Ashbourne Act and bought out their farms from Lady Wallace at twenty years' purchase, and an abatement of one year's rent given. The local population were then able to become owners of their land, subject to the payment of principal and interest on the purchase money, which the Government supplied. The rate of interest at that time was 4 per cent per annum. At the end of 49 years this payment would cease, and the tenants became owners absolutely of their farms, rent free.

Dr. Mussen was one of those instrumental in organising Tenants meetings in the area prior to any agreements being made with the Wallace representatives. Similar meetings took place elsewhere, and often they resulted in conflicting ideas and proposals in relation to the terms and rates that should be struck in the neighbourhoods. The following newspaper extract is from that era.

1889. "Sir Richard Wallace's Estate. The Proposed purchase by Tenants meeting in Glenavy. On Saturday evening last at five o'clock a meeting of the tenants was held in the Protestant Hall, Glenavy. Dr. Mussen was amongst those present. Dr. Mussen put a proposal to the meeting that the parishes be divided into districts, and that persons be appointed in each district to wait on the tenants, in order to ascertain the course they intended to take in the matter of purchasing their holdings. The proposal was later accepted by the meeting and two canvassers were appointed to each district." (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1889)

The following extract from the Lisburn Standard dated Saturday August 23<sup>rd</sup> 1890 reflects the feeling in the district on the death of Sir Richard Wallace. In this extract Dr. Mussen is lending his support for a proposed memorial in memory of the late Sir Richard Wallace.

*"The Cottage, Glenavy, Co. Antrim.*

*August 16<sup>th</sup>, '90*

*My Dear Mr. Clarke - I will be most happy in identifying myself with, and aiding in any way I can, the movement for the purpose of erecting a memorial to the memory of Sir Richard Wallace, although I feel convinced that his philanthropic deeds will long outlive anything we can raise. I am sorry that the late hour will prevent me attending this inaugural meeting. I am, faithfully yours*

*A. Mussen, M.D."*

*B.*



A personalised seal bearing the initials "A.M." once in the possession of Dr. Mussen.

Dr. Mussen and his wife appeared at many functions and events both in the local area and surrounding districts. The following are extracts from local newspapers highlighting their involvement.

1887 - A concert in Glenavy took place in the Protestant Hall, on Friday evening last. 23 items were set down for performance. "The plaintive old local melody 'Tis pretty to be in Ballinderry was most sweetly sung by Mrs. Watson, who received a well-merited recall." A vote of thanks for the evening was proposed by Dr. Mussen. (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> January 1887)

#### **Education at Glenavy.**

Dr. Mussen was one of those present at a meeting of the committee and supporters of the Old Glenavy Sunday School, held a few days since. The meeting was specially called for the purpose of preventing a bequest of the late Captain Ingram, being taken for other purposes than those intended by the testator. Dr. Mussen presided. (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> May 1890)

"Sale of Work in Crumlin on Friday and Saturday last in the Market House in Crumlin." At the opening of the sale of work on both days Dr. Mussen was present. (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> December 1890)

#### **Jubilee Celebrations 1897**

The longest-reigning British monarch, Queen Victoria celebrated her Diamond Jubilee, marking 60 years of her reign.

Her Golden Jubilee was celebrated on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> of June 1897. The people in the village of Glenavy turned out to take part in local celebrations to mark this event. A similar event took place in Crumlin village on the evening of the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1897.

"The Jubilee celebrations were right loyally carried out here (Glenavy). A splendid bonfire of tar barrels on the 'Green Hills' was conspicuous for miles around, and a very fine display of fireworks took place in the village opposite the Protestant Hall. The village, which was illuminated and decked with bunting, was crowded by a large concourse from the surrounding neighbourhood, who showed by their enthusiasm how fully they were in sympathy with the object of the celebration. The most notable, as well as the most pleasing feature of the evening was the cordial and hearty manner in which the Roman Catholics of the village entered into the spirit of the whole affair, and willingly and cheerfully bore a share of the expenses, although the Orangemen were at the head of it. A thoroughly pleasant and enjoyable evening was spent; not a single hitch occurred to mar the harmony of the proceedings, which brought to a close late in the evening by Dr. Mussen, J.P., making some references to the object which brought them together, and called for cheers for the Queen, which was vociferously responded to. The National Anthem was then sung, and all dispersed well pleased. Several fife and drum bands enlivened the evening by discoursing some popular, loyal and patriotic airs." (Lisburn Herald, Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June 1897)

#### **Setting of Date Stone - Stoneyford New Orange Hall 1898**

Dr. Mussen was present at a ceremony for the setting of a date stone at the new Orange Hall in Stoneyford on the 11<sup>th</sup> April 1898 at 2p.m. The stone was to be set by the Rev. J.A. Stewart of Killowen, Lisburn, but he refused to attend the ceremony. The stone was eventually laid by Brother John Forsythe, Castlereagh House. (Lisburn Herald, Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> April 1898)

#### **The Flooding of Lough Neagh Convention at Belfast 1901**

"On Friday afternoon last week at the Grand Central Hotel, Belfast, a very representative conference was held to consider the vexed question of the flooding of Lough Neagh (owing, it is alleged, to the defective drainage works on the Bann), and the serious damage to property and injury to health which results there from. Sir James Henderson, D.L., occupied the chair, and the large attendance included delegates from various County and District councils. Dr Mussen was in attendance." (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> May 1901)

### **Major Henry Pakenham's Home coming in 1901**

“An enthusiastic meeting of the inhabitants of Crumlin and surrounding districts was held in the Masonic Hall on Wednesday last for the purpose of according a hearty welcome to Major Harry Pakenham (son of General Pakenham, Langford Lodge), lately arrived home from South Africa. Colonel McClintock, J.P., presided over the meeting. Addresses of welcome were delivered by the Chairman, Dr. A. Mussen, J.P.; Rev. J. Clarke, Mr. E.J. Johnston, Mr. J. Laird, J.P.; Rev. J.A. Canning, Mr. Philip Corken, Mr. Dickie, and Mr. Gillen. Major Pakenham suitably replied by giving a very graphic account of his experiences at the front. General Pakenham also spoke, thanking them for their kind sympathy expressed for his son, Lady Pakenham, and himself. A hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the Chairman, and also to the Crumlin Flute Band, who were in attendance, and played some stirring music.” (Lisburn Standard, Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 1901)

### **Apprentice Boys of Derry - Murray Club of Glenavy 1905**

“Under the auspices of the above club a concert and variety entertainment, of a very enjoyable character, took place on Wednesday evening in the Protestant Hall, Glenavy. The club was established about six months ago, when a deputation proceeded to Derry and obtained a charter. Since then there has been a steady increase in the membership, which at the present time numbers close on thirty.” Dr. Mussen attended this concert. (Lisburn Herald, Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October 1905)

### **The presentation to Dr. Mussen J.P. and Mrs. Mussen 1906**

The following local newspaper extract gives us another insight into the lives of Dr. and Mrs. Mussen and demonstrates the high regard in which they were held in the local community.

“The closing meeting of the Crumlin and Glenavy Tennis Club for the season 1906, was held at “The Cottage,” Glenavy, where Dr. and Mrs. Mussen very kindly placed their beautiful grounds, gratis, at the disposal of the club. There was a very large attendance present. The members took this opportunity of making a presentation to their host and hostess, who have done everything in their power to promote pleasant and healthful recreation for the neighbourhood. Miss Rosamond Downer, hon. treasurer for the presentation fund, expressed how very grateful the members felt to Dr. and Mrs. Mussen for the interest they have always taken in the club, and their many and continued kindnesses. The Club felt desirous to show their gratitude in a practical form, therefore she would ask Mrs Scott, hon. secretary, to present a little gift, with the warmest regards of the entire club.

Mrs Scott very gracefully presented to Mrs. Mussen, a solid silver rose bowl, an exact copy of an old Montieth bowl, suitably inscribed, and filled with beautiful roses; and, in a few choice words, she said she had very great pleasure in making the presentation to Dr. and Mrs. Mussen, on behalf of the members of the tennis club, with the very best wishes and grateful remembrances of the many happy hours they had spent together.

Dr. Mussen, replying for Mrs. Mussen and himself, said he felt utterly unable to express his feelings on the unexpected receipt of this beautiful and thoughtful present, accompanied as it was by such kind and friendly remarks. Any little trouble taken for the club by Mrs. Mussen and himself was a sincere pleasure. He could assure them if the club derived as much pleasure from coming to The Cottage Tennis Courts, as Mrs. Mussen and he derived from seeing them enjoying themselves, he was quite content. He contemplated the close of the 1906 season with genuine regret, as he always looked forward to the recurrence of their weekly meetings with anticipated pleasure. Dr. Mussen further added that he had just audited the accounts of the club, and he was happy in stating they had a substantial balance to their credit.

Mrs. Henry Thompson having spoken a few words, the proceedings terminated with three cheers for Dr. and Mrs. Mussen. The rose bowl was supplied by Messrs. Sharman D. Neill, Donegal Place, Belfast and the roses by Messrs. Alexander Dickson, Royal Avenue, Belfast.” (Lisburn Herald, Saturday 29th September 1906)



A photograph showing the tennis court at Dr. Mussen's residence.

August 1912 - Killead Parish Bazaar. Dr. Mussen occupied the chair at the 2 day bazaar in connection with Killead Parish Church. (Lisburn Herald, Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August 1912)

### **Bazaar in Upper Ballinderry Schoolhouse 1913**

A bazaar was held on Easter Monday and Tuesday - 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> March 1913. The opening ceremonies were chaired by Dr. Mussen, Glenavy. (Lisburn Herald, Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 1913)

### **Dundrod Presbyterian Church 1913**

A ceremony was held for the opening of the new hall at Dundrod Presbyterian Church in memory of the late Rev. Robert McBride on Wednesday Afternoon, 2<sup>nd</sup> inst, at 3 o'clock. Dr. Mussen, J.P. was one of those in attendance. (Lisburn Herald, Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> April 1913)

1914. Dr Mussen gave a 2 shilling donation towards the Grand Bazaar and Fancy Fair (Roman Catholic) held in the New Schools, Crumlin 6 - 9 October 1914.

### **Stoneyford Bazaar 1918**

On Friday and Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of June a Bazaar and sale of work was held in the schoolroom. The sale was re-opened on Saturday when "Dr. Mussen took the chair, and in a humorous speech declared the legitimacy of aiming at clearing off debt by means of a sale. He then declared upon Mrs. St. George to declare it open." (Lisburn Herald, Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1918)