

RICHARD GRIFFITH

IN 1822, BY AN ACT OF GEORGE IV, RICHARD GRIFFITH, A DUBLIN BORN GEOLOGIST AND CIVIL ENGINEER, WAS SENT TO THE SOUTH WEST OF IRELAND TO SUPERVISE THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW ROADS, BRIDGES AND MARINE FACILITIES IN KERRY, WEST LIMERICK AND PART OF CORK.

ON HIS FIRST VISIT TO TARBERT + TRALEE, HE DID THE PRELIMINARY WORK WHICH LED TO THE PIER AT TARBERT AND THE BLENNEVILLE - TRALEE CANAL.

BROUGHT ABOUT THE NEW ROADS AND ALSO TO THE SUPPRESSION OF THE WHITEBOYS WHO WERE ACTIVE IN CERTAIN AREAS. A HUGE IMPROVEMENT IN COMMUNICATIONS

EMPLOYMENT IN MAKING THE ROADS MEANT A GREAT ALLEVIATION OF THE POVERTY WHICH WAS RAMPANT AT THE TIME. SMALL FARMERS EARNED ENOUGH TO INCREASE THEIR STOCK, AND THE EXPERIENCE THEY GAINED IN ROADMAKING WAS PUT TO USE IN THE MAKING OF BOHARENS, DITCHES, DRAINS ETC.

THE NEW ROAD FROM CASTLEISLAND TO NEWCASTLEWEST WAS COMPLETED BY 1827 AT A TOTAL COST OF £24073-9-3. NEW BRIDGES WERE BUILT AT HEADLEY'S BRIDGE, FEAKES BRIDGE + DEVON ROAD. FEAKES BRIDGE WAS ALSO KNOWN AS THE WELLESLEY BRIDGE, AFTER THE LORD LIEUTENANT OF THE TIME, UNDER WHOSE DIRECTION GRIFFITH WORKED. SEVERAL OTHER SMALLER BRIDGES WERE CONSTRUCTED.

ORIGINALLY ESTIMATED TO COST £3,000 THE BRIDGE OVER THE FEAKE AT LISTOWEL WAS BUILT FOR £2418 UNDER THE PERSONAL SUPERVISION OF GRIFFITH WHO ALSO DESIGNED THE BRIDGE.

PRIOR TO 1831, KING WILLIAM'S TOWN DID NOT EXIST. IN THAT YEAR JAMES WEALE, A PRINCIPAL OFFICER IN THE BOARD OF WORKS, DREW UP A PLAN FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF POBALL U CHAOIN WITH THE WHITEBOYS VERY STRONGLY IN MIND. THE PLAN INCLUDED THE BUILDING OF A MODEL NEW TOWN - KING WILLIAM'S TOWN. BEGUN IN 1832, THE WORK WAS COMPLETED BY RICHARD GRIFFITH IN 1837c.

A NEW LINE OF ROAD WAS OPENED BETWEEN CASTLEISLAND AND KING WILLIAM'S TOWN. THIS NECESSITATED THE BUILDING OF BRIDGES AT CHURCH STREET, ADRAVILLE AND KING WILLIAM'S TOWN, AND OTHER SMALLER BRIDGES. GRIFFITH'S NAME IS PERPETUATED BY A STONE ON

THIS ROAD WAS EXTENDED EASTWARDS AT LEAST AS FAR AS THE JUNCTION WITH THE BANTEER ROAD WHERE A NEW BRIDGE WAS BUILT OVER THE BLACKWATER AT BALLYMACQUARK. FROM ABOUT THAT TIME ON, THE MAIL, FOR WHICH CHARLES BIANCONI HAD THE CONTRACT, WAS DELIVERED FROM CORK TO TRALEE VIA CASTLEISLAND WHERE BIANCONI HAD A HALTING SITE AT MOANMORE, CONVENIENTLY ADJACENT TO A BLACKSMITH, WHERE WAS THE SITE AND WHO WAS THE SMITH IN 1853.

THE NEW KILLARNEY ROAD BRIDGE WAS BUILT BEFORE 1837.

KING WILLIAM'S TOWN BECAME BALLYDESMOND IN WILLIAM IV, THE SAILOR KING, REIGNED FROM 1830-1837.