

The Fever Hospital

Built in the year 1880, it replaced a temporary hospital which served during the Great Famine. The two storey stone building of five bays with a slated roof, is situated in College Road. In its courtyard, the dispensary continues to operate to the present day, while the Fever Hospital now serves as a school.

Fever Hospitals were supported partly by rates and partly from subscriptions raised locally. They were too small to cater for major epidemics, and simply housed patients to try and prevent the spread of the disease, because medicine was then in its infancy.

In the first year of opening, the contract for providing bread at 8d for a 4lb loaf was awarded to Maurice O'Connell of Castleisland and Michael O'Connell was to provide new milk at 2d a quart.

In February 1893, there was an outbreak of the dreaded typhoid fever in the parish. The source of the outbreak was attributed to the unsanitary water of the Dooneen River. Symptoms of the fever were first noticed in the townland of Cragg, and quickly spread throughout the parish. The hospital was soon filled to chronic overcrowding, and witnessed so many deaths, that victims were placed together in mass graves at the right hand corner of St. Stephens' Cemetery and at old Kilbannivane, Churchtown to try and contain the spread of the disease.

In the course of a few days in February 1894, 12 people died and in the week ending March 31st 1894, 10 had died. It was not until September 1894, that the fever finally disappeared, closing a terrible chapter in Castleislands' history. In 1918/1919 the hospital had to contend with a lesser epidemic, this time the Spanish Influenza, brought to Ireland by troops returning from the trenches of France, at the close of World War 1. The last house-doctor to serve the hospital was Richard Harold, M.D.

In 1930, the building was sold to Archdeacon Casey, and so ended an era, the closing of Castleislands' only Hospital.

KOS 15 The winter of 1670-71 was particularly severe. Many suffered from ague, smallpox and fever.

60 In 1847 a temporary fever hospital was ^{established} erected
61 Doctors were sending people there who had any fever