

1879 Depositions of Witnesses of "Apparition" of Mary, Joseph, John and angels on the gable of Knock Chapel

After the reported two hour apparition, depositions were taken from the witnesses. There are clues in those statements. Was it a miracle or paranormal or something more natural?

THE CELLS COLOURED IN **RED** AT FACE VALUE INDICATE THE SUPERNATURAL OR INEXPLICABLE

THE CELLS IN **BLUE** ARE CLEAR EVIDENCE OF THE MAGIC LANTERN THEORY

THE UNCOLOURED CELLS DON'T INDICATE ONE WAY OR THE OTHER

THERE ARE FAR MORE BLUE CELLS INDICATING THAT THE EVIDENCE FAVOURS A NATURAL INTERPRETATION

WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS
1 Patrick Hill	Allegedly 13 or 14. In fact, believers lie about his age. As he was baptised in 1868 we may presume that he was born that year. People in those days did not delay baptism.	Yes - standing a couple of feet from the ground	"full and round, as if they had a body and life". Note the "as if" - he was not sure. When "approached they seemed to go back a little towards the gable." Indicates that	Yes - very detailed. Mary's feet visible. But contradicted by, "There was a line or dark mearing between the figure of the Blessed Virgin and that of St. Joseph, so that one could know St. Joseph, and the place where his figure appeared distinctly from that of the Blessed Virgin and	Yes he vaguely said he saw them move but this was in the context of the images seemingly coming out from the wall and going back into it rather	No - said he was told at at 8 about the vision and ran to the church and said it was very dark. The darkness	Yes	Yes

	Hill was 10 or 11 - far too immature to be taken seriously. He lied about his age for that reason.		Indicates that the roundness was an illusion and the images were not standing out from the wall.	Virgin and the spot where she stood." This indicates that the vision was not that plain. The dark bit was needed to be able to see that it was two figures and he states that it was there for that purpose. This makes them sound like blurs.	than the figures showing any sign of life.	probably fell early that night.		
WEEKLY NEWS 1880		SAME	The little wall was blocking the Currie child's view. Says he lifted Currie to see the images on the gable, not at it.	Says it was visible from the wall.		NO IT WAS DARK		
DAILY TELEGRAPH 1880			Stated that he was told the images were on the gable wall. "Oh, come up to the chapel, and see the Blessed Virgin against the wall".	Says he heard about the apparition and ran to the chapel and didn't see it from the wall where he stood. He didn't see it until he went over and got closer to the gable. Indicates that he lied when he said that the vision was very clear.				
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS

2	Mary McLoughlin	Says she saw three appearances like the above entities.			Didn't say what she meant by saying the images were moving. The images could have moved as a block slightly or an entity might have seemed to be breathing.	Yes	Yes	Yes
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS
3	Mary Beirne	<p>Says she saw three appearances like the above entities standing a couple of feet above the ground.</p> <p>Is definite that the Mary figure was lifesize. She says she is not sure about the other two. She says they may have stood lower than her. But this is a mistake for she said the three stood a foot and a half or two feet from the ground.</p> <p>Not a single one of the other testimonies say the images were lifesize.</p>	<p>"they stood a little distance out from the gable wall"</p> <p>- this is not that reliable for she never went up close enough.</p> <p>She said that during Father Lennon's investigation, she was shown images from a magic lantern. She said they were trying to make pictures like what she saw but they could not make them like the apparition. She admitted later in life that the images</p>	Clear and distinct and she could make out details of the Virgin's clothes		<p>Sort of.</p> <p>According to the published account - which was not authorised by her, it was still bright. Her declaration that she went away from the scene and saw the altar when she got back may imply that the vision was clearer the darker it got.</p> <p>Her original account says that it was a darker night than usual because of</p>	Yes	

They would have been asked by the Commission if they were. The Commission would have avoided the question if they were not lifesize as that would be a sign that the apparition was a joke played on them.

that the images were like they were painted on the wall - sounds like a possible magic lantern to me!

because of the rain. She says too that it was dusk when she first saw the images. You would expect the dark to have fallen earlier too if it was such a wet evening.

"When you saw them first, did they seem to be up against the gable?"

"When we saw them first (that was from the wall of the schoolhouse), we thought they were a couple of feet out from the gable, and then, when we went on, they seemed to go back into the gable, and when we came close they looked as if they were standing against the wall. I put out my hand to touch them as they looked so solid and I found nothing."

"An old woman came up to kiss the Blessed Virgin's feet" - no mention of

WEEKLY
NEWS 1880

Calls them
three white
statues

the name of
the woman or
if she touched
the feet.

"Heavy rain
fell from the
south against
the gable but
no rain fell on
the ground
within two or
three feet."

"Was there a
wind? No".

"Was there any
change in the
appearance
while you
were looking
at it? It was
just the same
all the time".

"Why did you
leave? We
heard that a
woman in the
village Mrs
Campbell was
dying and we
all made off to
see her!". A
lie - she would
have already
known the old
lady was ill!

In reply to the
question as to
how many
people were
there, she said,
"I think there
were about
twelve".

She stated that
they were gone
ten minutes
and came back

Didn't see feet
of Mary

Says there
was good
light, when
asked if it
was
daylight.
Sounds
like the
light was
okay but
not the
best.

1932 Testimony		Yes		"Appeared to be something like shadows or reflections cast on a wall on a moon-lit night. I approached nearer the gable and passed my hand along the wall to find there was no material substance there." Contradicted his 1879 deposition.			Lamb	
1936 Sworn statement		Yes		Yes				
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS
6 Maggie Beirne		YES		Yes. Mary's feet visible.		No	Yes	Said she saw no cross
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS
				Clear and distinct and could see the eyes. At the time he arrived there was "some ten or twelve people had been collected around the place, namely,				

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9 Bridget Trench	75	Yes - standing a couple of feet from the ground.	<p>"I went in immediately to kiss, as I thought, the feet of the Blessed Virgin ; but I felt nothing in the embrace but the wall". The image must have been on the wall.</p> <p>Contradicts:</p> <p>"they appeared to me so full and so lifelike...that I could not understand why I could not feel them with my hands such as I beheld them with my eyes".</p> <p>Patrick Hill declared that she said the image went on the wall when she got too close "they receded, she said, from her".</p>	<p>Yes - but undermined by her claim that the Virgin wore something on her head resembling a crown. She was therefore not sure what it was. Was her eyesight tricky? If it was then her claim that the figures were 3-d is suspect.</p> <p>Mary's feet visible.</p>	No	No		
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS

10 Catherine Murray	8	Yes - but described as three likenesses of those entities		Doesn't say. "likeness of the Blessed Virgin Mary and that of St Joseph and St. John, as I learned from those that were around about where I was" implies that the images were so unclear that she needed to be told what they were. She should have known from religious statues what the images were - unless they were indistinct.		No		
WEEKLY NEWS 1880		"I gathered from her that she had also seen the three figures on the gable." She said they were as big as Mary Beirne.						
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS
		"He saw the images — beautiful images — the Blessed Virgin and St Joseph." The reference to the Virgin and Joseph is just a note by						

11 John Curry	6	<p>the priest writing down the testimony. That is virtually admitted in the following,</p> <p>"He could state no more that he saw the fine images and the light, ... nice things and the lights."</p> <p>He only reported seeing images. He did not know what they were. He can be considered an exception - unlike him, the others all agreed that Mary and Joseph and a bishop appeared.</p>				No		
1937 New York Tribunal		Yes	Says Trench touched the picture. The images were then flat on the wall.		Appeared to be alive. But this contradicts his claim that Mary had a face like a statue. He also says that Bridget Trench touched nothing but the picture when she tried to touch the figures. Said he did not see the figures move.		Lamb may have been under Joseph's arm and not on the altar like the others said	
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS

		JOHN)						
12 Judith Campbell		Yes - but described as three likenesses of those entities - stood a foot from them implying they were near the ground		Clear and distinct		Says she was there when night came on but could have meant she arrived at twilight not daylight.	Yes	
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS
13 Margaret Beirne 2		Yes				No	Just mentions altar	
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS
14 Dominick Beirne Sen		Yes - but described as three likenesses of those entities		Yes		No	Just mentions altar	Yes
WITNESS	AGE	JOSEPH, MARY AND A BISHOP (allegedly APOSTLE JOHN)	FIGURES FLAT AGAINST WALL?	CLEAR AND DISTINCT**	MOVEMENT?	SEEN IN DAY-LIGHT?	ALTAR LAMB	CROSS
		It is merely stated that he gave the same testimony as the Beirnes.						

15 John Durkan		Thus we have no testimony from him at all. The priests who were investigating hadn't a clue how to check the story. What would you think of a court case where a lawyer saying witness 2 said the same thing as witness 1 so witness 2 doesn't need to testify?						
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** - Note: A magic lantern on a rough gable wall would make transparent images.

Nobody was apparently asked if the images were transparent or not or if they were no record was kept.

This may suggest that references to transparency might have been left out or avoided thanks to leading questions as the priests didn't want people to think a magic lantern was used to make the vision.

WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
	Indicated that it was dull - he didn't see the light though he was running in the direction of the gable. He only saw it when he got closer:	Bright light Covering the Gable. Believers say that no Magic Lantern could make a light that				Not mentioned For the space of one hour and a half we were under	

1 Patrick Hill	"When we, running southwest, came so far from the village that on our turning the gable came in view, we immediately beheld the lights, a clear, white light". Why does he talk as if the light was the most striking thing? What about the images he claimed were very distinct and clear? What about first impressions?	bright. But we must remember the witnesses only said there was light all over the gable. A lantern would manage to do that . The light would be brighter around where the lens was trained on and duller elsewhere.	All the time	Yes		were under the pouring rain ... I noticed that the rain did not wet the figures. The figures staying dry would be expected if they were projections from a magic lantern.	YES
WEEKLY NEWS 1880		LIGHT DID NOT COVER THE WHOLE GABLE AND WAS SOFT AND BRIGHT					When asked if he could touch he strangely does not answer but says instead that an old woman tried to touch the Virgin's feet. Says he was at a distance.
DAILY TELEGRAPH 1880		LIGHT DID COVER THE WHOLE GABLE. Not necessarily miraculous.					YES
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
	Does not say if the light		Yes - but		Yes - like little	Not clear. She says the gable had a dry appearance. A wall can look dry at night when it is lit up. She was only saying it looked dry not that it was dry.	

2 Mary McLoughlin	was that bright, but she did say she could see the figures better after dark and said the light was white.		Yes - but does not say it rained all the time		stars. Was the rain interfering with the light source?	Even if it was dry, that may not have been a miracle in her view for she didn't say it rained all the time. "I was outside the ditch and to the south-west of the schoolhouse near the road."	NO - she stayed at the ditch
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
3 Mary Beirne	She says only that the body of the lamb seemed to be reflecting light - suits the view that pictures were used and light shone on them	Probably not. The light, if remarkably bright, should have been seen from her house if one looks at the ordinance survey map. Even her and McLoughlin didn't see the light until they got closer to the gable despite having a partial view of the gable from the Beirne house. This indicates the light was dull.	All the time		Yes - like little stars		
WEEKLY NEWS 1880							
1932 Testimony - not under oath		Yes	Yes				
1935 testimony to Liam Ua Cadhain	Soft silvery light like the moon						

1936 deathbed sworn statement for Commission							
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
4 Patrick Walsh		Very bright light - but says it was "high up in the air above and around the chapel gable" which contradicts what some of the other witnesses said - the rest were silent. He says it was "a large globe of golden light". This contradicts the witnesses who said the light was soft and white.	Yes - but does not say it rained all the time				NO
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
5 Patrick Beirne							
1932 Testimony							
1936 Sworn statement		Whole gable bright with white light	Heavy drizzle				
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW

6 Maggie Beirne			Yes - but does not say it rained all the time but only at the time she went to see the vision				
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
7 Dominick Beirne							Says the eyes of the images could be seen so YES
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
8 Mrs Flatley							NO
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
						Yes - the wind blew the rain in the direction of the gable but the gable remained dry as did the ground underneath the vision. Another miracle is	

9 Bridget Trench		Extraordinary brightness				Yes	how if the gable and the ground were really dry, why some visionaries didn't stand against it to get shelter from the rain! Also why did people stand at the south gable of the school house to get all the rain and wind?	YES
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW	
10 Catherine Murray								
WEEKLY NEWS 1880								
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW	
							NO - he said he went on the wall near the Church to see them. No mention of Hill's claim that he took him up closer. The priest wrote down the testimony	

11 John Curry							and so it is really hearsay about what the child said. It does not suffice as evidence. Nevertheless, when the priest didn't write that Curry had a close up view, its probable that he didn't have. A child could not resist saying he saw the vision close if he really did.
1937 New York Tribunal							
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
12 Judith Campbell		She says first that night came on and then she mentions she saw a beautiful light shining around the figures. This seems to imply the images got clearer the darker it got.	Yes - but does not say it rained all the time			Says the place where the images appeared was "quite dry". So she must have thought it was just damp.	YES
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW
13		Bright light that sparkled at times - the sparkling could have been					

Margaret Beirne 2		caused by the rain getting in the way of the light source.				yes		
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW	
14 Dominick Beirne Sen		The falsifier of his testimony has it that he said, "Bright light like the sun" but he actually merely said it was plain like the noonday sun.	Says it rained at the time he arrived at the scene but does not say it rained all the time			Gable not mentioned and only says the images were dry, if the images were made of light this would be what you would expect		
WITNESS	DULL LIGHT	BRIGHT LIGHT	RAINING	ANGELS	SPARKLE	MIRACLE DRY GABLE	CLOSE UP VIEW	
15 John Durkan								