

SECOND WITNESS TO KNOCK VISION ANALYSED

Second Witness.

Testimony of Mary M'Loughlin,

I live in Knock; I am housekeeper to the Rev. Archdeacon Cavanagh ; I remember the evening of the 21st of August ; at the hour of seven or so, or a little later, while it was yet bright day, I passed from the Rev. the Archdeacon's house on by the chapel, towards the house of a Mrs. Beirne, widow. On passing by the chapel, and at a little distance from it, I saw a wonderful number of strange figures or appearances at the gable, one like the B. V. Mary, and one like St. Joseph, another a bishop [this suggests that it was hard to tell if it were images or just shapes or figures and she says they were like Mary and Joseph and a bishop - this suggests that the images were not as clear as the Church and the likes of witnesses Patrick Hill and Brigid Trench, if you trust the version of their testimonies that is accepted as official, would like to think. Worse the Nun of Kenmare categorically stated in THREE VISITS TO KNOCK that Mc Loughlin only saw a light at that point. The nun wrote that her very close friend Mary Beirne was the first to see the figures not Mc Loughlin.]; I saw an altar; I was wondering to see there such an extraordinary group ; yet I passed on and said nothing, thinking that possibly the Archdeacon had been supplied with these beautiful figures from Dublin or somewhere else, and that he said nothing about them, but had left them in the open air ; I saw a white light about them ; I thought the whole thing strange; after looking at them I passed on to the house of Mrs. Beirne's in the village ; after reaching Widow Beirne's house I stayed there half an hour at least ; I returned then homewards to the Archdeacon's house, accompanied by Miss Mary Beirne, and as we approached the chapel, she cried out, "Look at the beautiful figures." We gazed on them for a little, and then I told her to go for her mother, Widow Beirne, and her brother, and her sister, and her niece, who were still in the house which she and had left. I remained looking at the sight before me until the mother, sister, and brother of Miss Mary Beirne came ; at the time I was outside the ditch and to the south-west of the schoolhouse near the road, about thirty yards or so from the church ; I leaned across the wall in order to see, as well as I could, the whole scene [She makes it plain that she had to stand thirty yards away to see it best - clearly the vision looked better and clearer at a distance. If the vision was made from a projection then it would have looked better from that distance. She is clear that she was standing there to see it as best she could. Had the vision been a real miracle you could see it well face on but everybody had to stand at an angle to it to see it correctly.]. I remained now for the space of at least a quarter of an hour, perhaps longer; Told Miss Beirne then to go for her uncle, Bryan Beirne, and her aunt, Mrs. Bryan Beirne, or any of the neighbours whom she should see, in order that they might witness the sight that they were then enjoying. It was now about a quarter past eight o'clock, and beginning to be quite dark. The sun had set ; it was raining at the time. I beheld, on this occasion, not only the three figures, but an altar further on to the left of the figure of the B.V.M., [why does she talk as if she never mentioned the altar before! How much altering has this testimony experienced?] and to the left of the bishop and above the altar a Lamb about the size of that which is five weeks old. Behind the Lamb appeared the cross [She protested when newspapers said she saw the cross. She claimed that was not true - see page 191, Knock: The Virgin's Apparition in Nineteenth Century Ireland. This is evidence that she was tricked into putting her x on the deposition without knowing all its contents]; it was away a bit from the Lamb, while the latter stood in front from it, and not resting on the wood of the cross. Around the Lamb a number of gold-like stars appeared in the form of a halo [she sees stars and Hill reported angels. Hill was either carried away by imagination or was exaggerating]. This altar was placed right under the window of the gable and more to the east of the figures, all, of course, outside the church at Knock. I parted from the company or gathering at eight and a half o'clock. I went to the priest's house and told what I had beheld, and spoke of the beautiful things that were to be seen at the gable of the chapel ; I asked him, or said, rather, it would be worth his while to go to witness them. He appeared to make nothing of what I said, and consequently he did not [he acted as if he was not even interested!

Interesting that a priest would not take his close friend and housekeeper seriously! Was it because she had been drinking?]. Although it was pouring rain the wall had a bright, dry appearance, while the rest of the building appeared to be dark. I did not return to behold the visions again after that, remaining at my house. I saw the sight for fully an hour. Very Rev. B. Cavanagh heard the next day all about the Apparition from the others who had beheld it ; and then it came to his recollection that I had told him the previous evening about it, and asked him to see it. [His forgetting was obviously feigned. What was he up to? No wonder he is a suspect in a hoax.]

Note by the publisher of this account. — Mary M'Loughlin had gone away before Patrick Hill came. Their testimony relates to two distinct and separate times while the Apparition was present. She saw it, like one who did not care to see it, and in a transverse direction, not straight ; he saw it directly and fully, and like confiding child, went up calmly to where the Blessed Virgin stood.

This note is just there to hide the fact that Patrick Hill exaggerated. It had been noticed that the vision he reportedly saw was very impressive while hers made little impression on her. He indicates that it was very distinct whereas she indicates that it was not that clear. The publisher was trying to make out that the vision changed between the departure of McLoughlin and the arrival of Hill to reconcile the contradictions. There is no evidence that she had left before he came. The publisher was trying to make out that it changed despite the testimonies that it did not change. The alternative was to make out that her perception was not as clear as Hill's. The publisher did not wish to do that as it could suggest she was drunk or inept. Hill said that he arrived at the vision and later he remarked that some who saw the vision "who beheld what I now saw" had left. He does not say that she left before his arrival.

[She said when she first saw that figures that she thought "possibly the Archdeacon had been supplied with these beautiful figures from Dublin or somewhere else, and that he said nothing about them, but had left them in the open air." We know a consignment of statues to Knock had been broken. Why would she assume it was the Archdeacon responsible for the statues being outside? Its more natural to think the delivery people messed up. Would she have ignored the statues when previous ones had been damaged? She was only a few minutes away from the Archdeacon's house so why didn't she go back there and say, "Your Reverence I see statues outside the Church. Will they be okay?"]

[Her claim, "Very Rev. B. Cavanagh heard the next day all about the Apparition from the others who had beheld it ; and then it came to his recollection that I had told him the previous evening about it, and asked him to see it" is interesting. It is impossible to imagine him forgetting what she said until others told him about the apparition. She speaks as if he had talked to a few people who reported the vision before he "remembered". If that wasn't playacting then nothing is]

[Mary McLoughlin lied that she saw the images on the way to visit the Beirnes. She didn't see anything until after her visit. Mary Beirne was walking her home when they both saw the images first. "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". The We is her and Mc Loughlin and she specifies that they saw nothing until they got to the schoolhouse.]

Mary McLoughlin could not read or write. She signed her deposition with an x (page 191, Knock: The Virgin's Apparition in Nineteenth Century Ireland). We don't even know if it was read out to her properly. Her deposition is very weak as evidence. We can only trust it when it says things the Church didn't want to hear.

THE MAP BELOW SHOWS HOW THE GABLE COULD BE SEEN FROM THE SIDE FROM BEIRNE'S HOUSE WHICH YOU SEE IN THE EAST SIDE. YOU SEE THE SCHOOLHOUSE WHERE THE WITNESSES STOOD. WHY STAND SO FAR UNLESS THE VISION WAS UNCLEAR IF ONE GOT TOO CLOSE. YOU SEE ALSO HOW IF THERE REALLY HAD BEEN A BRIGHT LIGHT AT THE GABLE IT WOULD HAVE SHONE IN THE BACK WINDOWS OF THE PAROCHIAL HOUSE AND DISTURBED THE ARCHDEACON.



