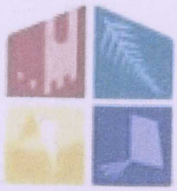

NUI MAYNOOTH

THE ANNA LIFFEY MILL, LUCAN

SHACKLETON PERIOD: 1859 – 1978

by

DOLORES COLLINS

Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of MA (Local History)

Department of Modern History, National University of Ireland, Maynooth

July 2004

Head of Department: Professor R. V. Comerford

Supervisor of research: Dr. Jacinta Prunty

The Anna Liffey Mill, Lucan

Shackleton period 1859 to 1978

THESIS SUMMARY

This thesis traces the chronology of events during the Shackleton period of ownership of the Anna Liffey flour mill just outside Lucan village mill from 1859 to 1978. It begins with the period of Joseph Fisher Shackleton, the first member of the family to come to Lucan, from the Quaker village of Ballitore, Co. Kildare. The family had a milling tradition from the late eighteenth century and Joseph Fisher applied the same degree of expertise to this new enterprise. The mill prospered under his direction. Lucan was a small village on the west side of county Dublin and the mill offered very welcome employment. Many generations of families were employed by the Shackletons over the years.

Issues dealt with in the succeeding chapters include the family's adaptation of new technology which was vital to the prosperity of the milling industry. The Shackletons acquired land and property in the village itself and its hinterland. A sizeable proportion of the second chapter is given to the 1913 Lockout, which resulted from the employers refusing to employ workers who were members of the Irish Transport & General Workers Union. Although the initial union troubles originated in Dublin city, Shackletons' mill was the first to lock out its workers and these events assumed importance in Lucan. The mill continued to operate throughout World War I and survived the political unrest associated with Irish independence.

The imposition of import restrictions introduced by the government in 1932 increased the profitability for millers and Shackletons were able to remodel the mill in 1936 and install new machinery. World War II took its toll on the industry but the Shackletons held on and survived the war years. However, due to increasing competition from larger mills a decline began from the 1950s on but the adaptation of new technology kept the firm afloat for the next twenty years. Roma Foods Ltd. had been one of the Anna Liffey mill's best customers and that firm expressed a desire to buy the mill. This was achieved in 1978 when the Shackleton period was effectively brought to a close.

(Thesis submitted by Dolores Collins, July 2004)

CONTENTS

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge some of the people who helped me complete this study: the Department of Modern History, NUI Maynooth; the course director, Dr. Raymond Gillespie; Dr. Terence Dooley; special thanks to my supervisor, Dr. Jacinta Prunty, who gave me practical guidance and assistance; Mrs. Mary Shackleton, who gave me tapes of the story of the mill by George and Richard Shackleton and allowed me make use of any pictures and artefacts she had; Mrs. Anne Buchanan (nee Shackleton), who met with me to offer any assistance in my research; Michael Lynch, Fingal County Council, who allowed me access to the Anna Liffey mill; Fred Hamond, industrial archaeologist, who supported my study; Laddie and May Birnie, whose oral histories were very helpful (a special word of thanks to Laddie who brought me on a complete tour of the mill); also to Frank and Sheila Corrigan, Michael Gannon; Walter McDonagh; the assistance I received at the various repositories visited; my colleagues in the MA class whose friendship and encouragement I value. Finally I would like to thank my family who were so patient and supported me throughout my studies.

Abbreviations

IFMA	Irish Flour Millers' Association
IIDA	Irish Industrial Development Association
IDA	Irish Industrial Authority
IGTWU	Irish Transport and General Workers Union.
GSWR	Great Southern and Western Railway
MGWR	Midland Great Western Railway
NABIM	National Association of British and Irish Millers
NAI	National Archives of Ireland
NCAD	National College of Art and Design
RHA	Royal Hibernian Academy
RIA	Royal Irish Academy

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INTRODUCTION

In April 2000, Fingal Council purchased the Anna Liffey mill near Lucan for the sum of £3.65 million. Business operations had finally come to a close in November 1998, and subsequent applications to convert the mill to modern apartments were refused planning permission. The premises were formally conveyed to Fingal County Council in June 2000 and so ended an era of milling in this picturesque site on the river Liffey. The focus of this thesis is the complex of buildings known as the Anna Liffey mill, or Shackletons' mill. The area nestles under the shade of the overlooking tall trees of Luttrellstown estate on the Strawberry Beds road about three quarters of a mile from Lucan village, in the townland of Clonsilla.

Plate 0.1

Anna Liffey Mill, Lucan (photographed by D. Collins, April 2004)

The aim of the thesis is to attempt to bring to life the history of the Anna Liffey flour mill and its relationship to the local community in the west county Dublin village of Lucan from 1859 to 1978.

The Shackleton family in many ways reflected the economic circumstances of a particular class of Irish industrialists, especially that of the Quaker community. Many Quakers in Ireland tended to concentrate their business efforts in milling and evidence of their association with flour mills is well documented from the mid-eighteenth century into the twentieth century. Throughout this period, the Quakers were engaged significantly in commerce, especially in basic and necessary products such as iron, wool, wood and grain together with their manufactured derivatives.[1] They tended to steer away from dealing with products that were deemed luxurious and wasteful but were very astute in changing from one product to another when economic circumstances changed.[2] This was certainly the case with the Shackleton family, who proved to be innovative business people. They were originally involved in the establishment of a successful non-denominational school in Ballitore, Co. Kildare in 1726. They also owned a tannery and became involved in milling in the area in the 1770s.[3]

The present mill buildings at Anna Liffey date back to the 1820s. Local legend maintains that a watermill known as the 'Devil's Mill' was established on the site in the 1720s. Mills were already in operation upstream at Leixlip and Lucan and downstream at the Wren's Nest and Palmerstown. Therefore, this would have been one of the few sites left to build a weir without interfering with the water flow to the existing mills.[4] While the mill was part of the Luttrell family estate for almost 450 years, Luke White took over ownership in 1799, renaming it 'Woodlands'.[5] His son, Thomas, leased land to William Delany of Stradbally, Co. Laois, for the purpose of erecting a watermill. The latter built a sizeable mill complex at a cost of £12,000, comprising an eight-storey flour mill, weir and races,

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1 Richard Harrison, 'Irish Quakers in flour milling' in Andy Bielenberg (ed.), *Irish flour milling – a history 600- 2000*, (Dublin, 2003), p. 88.
2 Ibid., p. 88.
3 Jonathan Shackleton, *The Shackletons of Ballitore, a genealogy* (Dublin, 1988), (Sheet 2).
4 Fred Hamond, industrial archaeologist, extract from commissioned conservation plan (Dublin, 2000), p. 4.
5 Jim Lacey, *A candle in the window, a history of the barony of Castleknock* (Dublin, 1999), p. 46.

kilns, eight-storey wheat loft, stores and offices, and a two-storey dwelling.[6] In 1846, the mill was leased to Richard Rainsford, who vacated it in 1855.[7] It is uncertain whether the great famine (1845-49) had an impact on the mill, but after Rainsford, the mill was leased in quick succession to Alexander Duffield, Messrs. Todd and Browne, and J.B. West.[8] An inventory of 1859 notes the existence of four pairs of French burr stones, a pair of shelling stones, fans and sieves for cleaning the incoming grain, a sack hoist, elevators and conveyors, and silk machines for dressing the flour.[9] The real turning point came when the Shackleton family leased the premises in 1859 for a term of sixty years at £200 per annum, and this is where the study begins.

Located close to a small but established village, the new mill owners had the advantage of a local workforce. The benefit to the Lucan community was the promise of sustainable employment given by a family well respected for their business experience and technological expertise. The Shackletons had also acquired a smaller mill at the 12th Lock on the Grand Canal called Grange and subsequently bought land and other property in the village itself and its hinterland. Therefore, employment was generated in the farm and gardens which they acquired. Due to their ownership of houses in the village and hinterland, some of which they built themselves, it was possible to lease them to the workers at a fixed rent. This interdependence is referred to in succeeding chapters. A noteworthy aspect of the study is the progress of the mill's fortunes despite the fact that comparatively similar-sized mills began to decline sharply from the early twentieth century onwards. Why did the Shackleton family succeed in the milling industry until the late twentieth century when the trend towards large-scale enterprises in the Irish milling industry in the post-second war decades was encouraged? Was the family's innovativeness in readily adopting the technical changes necessary to carry on milling the deciding factor

6 Hamond, Extract from commissioned conservation plan, p. 2.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Ibid.

in their success? What effect did the change in fortunes have on the local community when the mill eventually began to decline in profitability due to competition from larger mills in the 1950s?

SOURCES

Primary Sources and Methodology

There are rich primary sources available for the construction of this local history, housed in various national repositories and in local hands. Written documents and letters appropriate to this thesis were deposited in the National Archives of Ireland, Bishop Street, Dublin by the Shackleton family when the mill closed in 1998. Fingal County Council have in their possession a box list of records of the mill which still survive in the now empty premises. These include correspondence from the downstairs office, upstairs office, manager's office, and laboratory. As the mill is closed it was only possible to have a brief look at these sources on a special visit sanctioned by Fingal County Council. However, items stored at Mrs. Mary Shackleton's cottage, Lucan, include a collection of artefacts such as lists of customers, company calendars, ledgers, time clock, kiln shovel and sample flour bags. These have been made available for perusal and are helpful to the research.

The Valuation of Tenements Act of 1842 (Richard Griffith, Commissioner of Valuation) provided for a uniform valuation of all property in Ireland. It records the valuation in 1854 of the mill and adjoining house of Woodlands, as this was the former name of the area in which the Anna Liffey mill is situated. A comprehensive guide to the general study of mills in Ireland is recorded in the Valuation Office Mill Books. Regrettably, the county Dublin volume is missing from the collection, although the Shackletons are mentioned in relation to their mills at Carlow and Kildare. Other primary sources come from Dail debates, and local as well as national newspapers.

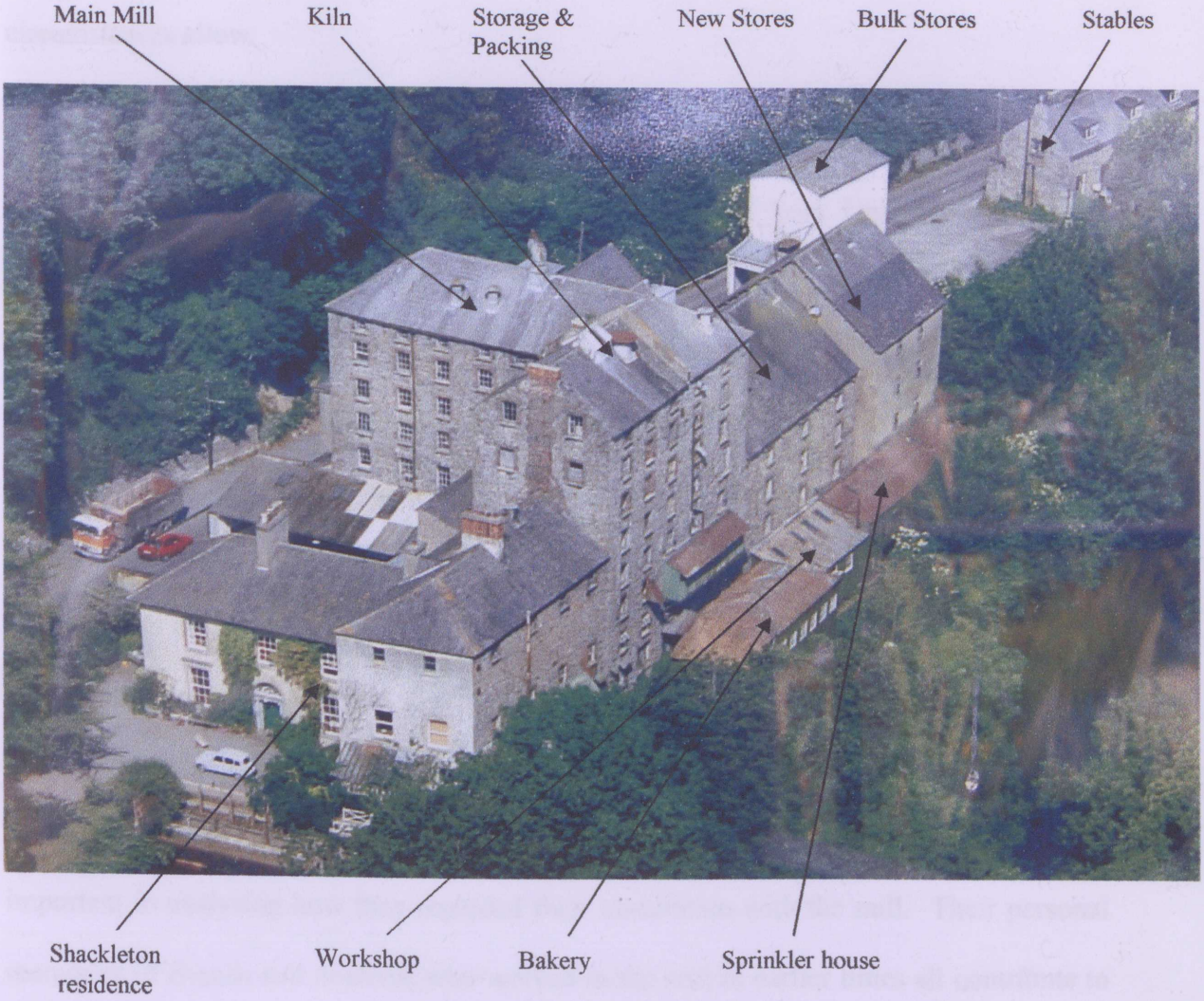

Plate 0.2

Anna Liffey Mill (c. 1982), picture supplied by Mrs. Mary Shackleton, Stable house, Anna Liffey.

A private tour made possible in April, 2004, by Fingal County Council was invaluable in observing at first hand how the milling processes worked and the purpose for which each building existed (see 0.2). This tour was conducted by Alexander (Laddie) Birnie, who was a millwright in the Anna Liffey mill for over thirty years. He has an in-depth knowledge of the layout of the mill and the machinery that was involved to produce the end product. Despite recent neglect, the present condition of the mill is such that one could envisage milling being resumed at short notice as the essential machinery is still in situ and was maintained up to 1998. Fingal County Council opened the mill to the public for one

day in 2000, and it is envisaged that it will be eventually opened on a regular basis when circumstances allow.

The oral sources are of significant value in writing this local history. The late George Shackleton (1899-1983) was interviewed by Philip Gale of York University in August 1981 and tapes of this interview, lodged in the care of Mrs. Mary Shackleton, were made available. The quality of the tapes is 'patchy' in parts and not all of the dialogue is concerned with the workings of the mill. Nevertheless, there is enough substance therein to gain an insight into the 'highs' and 'lows' that were encountered by the Shackleton family in the course of the mill's history. The late Richard Shackleton (1916-2000) taped a short version of the history of the mill in 1996 which is very concise and of good quality. These tapes are invaluable in assessing how business transactions were viewed from an employer's point of view, and are helpful to the thesis. Additional oral interviews of former workers and their relatives were undertaken by the author of this thesis and are important in analysing how they regarded their association with the mill. Their personal memories of friends and relatives who worked in the mill in earlier times all contribute to the breadth of perspectives required to do justice to the project. During the 1930s it was considered that a substantial amount of local heritage had been lost in Ireland. Consequently in 1938 the Department of Education asked all the National Schools to collect folklore and the local history of the various districts and these essays provide a very valuable source.[10] The Lucan schools entered into this project enthusiastically.[11]

The literature review has been very useful in gaining a deeper knowledge of the history of the Anna Liffey mill, in relation to the Shackleton family and to the mill itself. Stories relating to the mill have periodically been the focus of local attention in books and journals

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[10] Department of Irish Folklore, University College, Dublin, for Lucan parish, file no. IFCS794, pp. 131-148.

[11] Mary Mulhall and Joan O'Flynn, *Lucan and Lucanians, a revised history of Lucan* (Kildare, 1996), p. 122.

of Lucan. In a chapter on population and employment, the journal *Lucan and Lucanians, a revised history* (eds. Mary Mulhall and Joan O'Flynn) (Kildare, 1996), provides a brief history of the mill. It also provides photographs of the mill workers in the early 1900s and the 1930s. In the chapter 'People of note in Lucan' it gives a brief biography of Jane Wigham Shackleton (1843-1909) who, because of her skills as a photographer, was responsible for many of the photographs of this early period. The weekly *Lucan Newsletter* dates from 1970 and has frequently related stories of a historical nature. There have been several items concerning the history of the Anna Liffey mill recorded in the *Newsletter*, with photographs of workers of early periods. The legend of the 'Devil's mill' is repeated in many publications, for instance, Francis E. Ball's *A history of the county Dublin* (Dublin, 1979) and Sr. John Bosco's *Lucan – old and new* (Lucan, 1940) . The latter publication also conveys a knowledgeable understanding of the milling processes in respect of the Anna Liffey mill.

Jonathan Shackleton compiled a genealogy sheet of the family from 1580 to 1987 of which the Anna Liffey branch of the Shackletons forms part (see Appendix A). A survey of historic buildings was prepared by students of the M.Arch.Sc. course at University College, Dublin, in 1987, which included a architectural description of the Anna Liffey mill. Mark Bence Jones, in his *Guide to Irish country houses* (London, 1988) notes the existence of the Anna Liffey mill and adjoining house. The information gleaned from these sources is very helpful in building up a background to the Shackleton family and to the building itself. *Irish flour milling, a history 600-2000*, Andy Bielenberg (ed.) (Dublin, 2003) presents a story of Irish flour milling by various writers on the subject, with several references to the Shackleton milling family. Majella Flynn's *Harvest, a history of grain growing, harvesting and milling in Ireland* (Cork, 1996), outlines the importance of grain growing and milling as an essential feature of Irish agriculture from earliest times.

Thesis structure

The study opens with the acquisition of the mill by the Shackleton family in 1859. The reason why this mill became a suitable location to expand their milling business is explored. Chapter I demonstrates how the first generation of Anna Liffey Shackletons 'set the seal' on what was to become an economically successful flour mill, and how their progressive policies in relation to trade and technology contributed to the family's fortunes. This economic success, in turn, provided a base for structured employment in the local community, the extent of which is discussed in this chapter. It also deals with Lucan village itself at the time of the Shackleton takeover and how the village developed during their tenure of the mill.

Chapter II deals with the story of the mill under the direction of the next generation of Shackletons. The family was greatly involved with the Irish Industrial Development Association and the need for regulatory trade marks to protect business interests. The creation of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union in 1909 led to organised labour objectives in the face of alleged exploitation by employers. It was the harbinger of organised industrial action which affected Dublin in 1913. At this time, James Larkin, who was general secretary of the above mentioned union, was the leading exponent of socialism and syndicalism. The term 'Larkinism' became a catch-all phrase to denote syndicalism, socialism and, most notably, the sympathetic strike in 1913. Shackletons' mill in Lucan assumed centre stage from the outset of the crisis as it was the first firm to lock out its workers.[12] The ensuing trouble at the Anna Liffey mill was a microcosm of what was happening in Dublin generally at this time. These events in Lucan brought into focus the conflict of interests of the 'warring' parties involved, both nationally and locally, and form a sizeable section of the second chapter. The chapter concludes with the effects of World War I on the milling industry which, on the whole, was beneficial to Irish milling

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[12] Padraig Yeates, *Lockout Dublin 1913* (Dublin, 2001), p. 27.

for a time. Nevertheless, the millers eventually had to contend with an influx of cheaper flour.

The third chapter continues the history of the mill from 1922 to 1939. This was a time for change for the milling industry. When Ireland gained independence in 1922, Irish millers were experiencing a period of stagnation. The Irish Flour Millers' Association, of which the Shackletons were staunch members and at times leaders, sought government help for their industry. The Cumann na nGael government was reluctant to order tariffs, favouring a more competition-led economy. That situation changed when the Fianna Fail government came to power in 1932 and the millers acquired the tariffs they needed. New initiatives were introduced in 1936 when once again the mill had to keep abreast of technology. This was a progressive period for the Anna Liffey mill and it was able to increase its workforce from fifty to eighty workers. Taking into consideration the Grange mill at the 12th Lock, Lucan, up to one hundred people were employed by the Shackletons.

The period surrounding World War II and its aftermath and its affects on the economic and labour situation locally and nationally is discussed in the fourth chapter. The Emergency and rationing had an unavoidable impact on the milling industry. By the 1950s and 1960s outside influences began to affect the former good milling business of the Anna Liffey mill. The third generation of Shackletons were just as innovative as their forebears in modernising the mill to suit the advanced technical requirements of the later decades of its existence. However, it proved unsustainable to keep the mill under the Shackleton family 'umbrella' and our study ends in 1978, when Roma Foods Ltd. acquired a controlling interest in the business.

The concluding chapter outlines the key points that the Anna Liffey mill had on the economic and social life of the village of Lucan. One of the main questions to be asked is – how important was the mill to the Shackletons and to the Lucan? Was it the focus of

community identity in this once small village? In terms of its future use, will it be possible to present it to the visiting public in a manner which will pay tribute to the Shackleton family and to the workers who, by mutual co-operation, were so successful in their efforts for so long in keeping the business solvent when other similar- type mills failed?

CHAPTER I

The early years – 1859 to 1900

Milling has a long history in Ireland, and the ruins of mill buildings can be seen in and around many Irish towns and villages. Some have been converted into apartment blocks, some remain derelict, and a few, like the Anna Liffey mills, bought with the intention of protecting, conserving and presenting them to the public. While this mill has always been associated with Lucan, being closer geographically, it was actually located in the barony of Castleknock and in the parish of Clonsilla.[1] The mill was situated in the river valley overlooked by Luttrellstown Castle, and at the end of a road known as the Strawberry Beds. Samuel Lewis' *Topographical Dictionary* notes its situation under the parish of 'Clonsillagh'.[2] The Anna Liffey mill was formerly known as Woodlands, as listed in the general valuation under the then owners, Richard Rainsford and William Delany (see Tables 1.1 and 1.2). This helps to place in context the size and content of the mill.

Table 1.1 deals with the valuation of house and pasture, which is located on two roods of land.

Richard Rainsford/Wm. Delany	House & Pasture		
	£	s.	d.
Net annual valuation	0	13	0
Net annual value of building	16	0	0
Total net annual value	16	13	0

TABLE 1.1 General valuation of Tenements, (Richard Griffith), for Woodlands, 1854.

1 Samuel Lewis, *Topographical dictionary of Ireland*, Volume 2, (London, 1838).
2 Ibid.

Table 1.2 deals with the valuation of flour mills, offices, kilns and water, which is located on twenty acres, fifteen perches.

Richard Rainsford/Wm. Delany	Flour mills, offices & kilns, water		
	£	s.	d.
Net annual valuation	0	13	0
Net annual value of building	146	0	0
Total net annual value	146	13	0

TABLE 1.2 General valuation of Tenements, (Richard Griffith), for Woodlands, 1854.

The Strawberry Beds road, or Lower Road, was a very popular resort for many years, bringing large numbers of visitors from the city on fine Sundays during the strawberry-picking days – hence the name. The area was renowned for the strawberry crops when vendors, pipers, fiddlers and publicans reaped a rich harvest when the ripened fruit was ready to sell.[3] There were pretty houses along this scenic route and the main entrance to Luttrellstown castle was the last lodge gate before one encountered the Anna Liffey mill. A legend grew up concerning how the mill was once called 'The Devil's Mill'. It was said that the former building on the site was erected in a single night by his 'satanic majesty'.[4] It is not uncommon for some of the older generation in Lucan and Clonsilla to continue to refer to the mill as 'The Devil's Mill'. Lucan village was described in 1902 as 'the parochial district of Lucan bounded on the north by Coldblow and Pass-if-you-can on the frontiers of county Meath, on the south by the Bush of Balgaddy and Ballyowen, on the east by the 'Devil's Mill' and the Low Road, on the west by St. Catherine's and the Salmon Leap.'[5]

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3 Weston St. John Joyce, *The neighbourhood of Dublin* (Dublin, 1995), p. 257.

4 Ibid., p. 358. (this legend is also referred to in Lewis's *Topographical dictionary, Volume 2*, under Clonsillagh).

5 Rev. William Donegan, C.C., *Lucania – topographical, biographical, historical* (Dublin, 1902), p. 7.

Ordnance Survey map of County Dublin, scale 1: 10,560 (sheet 17), 1873

Figure 1.1

The village of Lucan was fortunate in many respects as its position on the banks of the river Liffey gave it some economic and tourist advantages. It is probable that it contributed to the decision of some firms to establish factories, or mills, at a location where running water was deemed an essential requirement of production. Rev. William Donegan wrote about Lucan in 1902 and described the advantages of the village as possessing the famous Spa hotel, its sulphur springs, its famous Irish woollen factory, its long-established flour mills, 'giving to it an importance with which many villages are not invested'.[6] Lucan had indeed become very popular in the nineteenth century due to the presence of a sulphurous spa, which was considered effective in curing many diseases, from eczema to rheumatism. In 1891, Thomas More Madden M.D. wrote to recommend the location as a

6 Donegan, C.C. *Lucania,* p. 7.

health resort and urged people to visit saying 'Lucan is within half-an-hour's easy reach of the second city in these islands by one or other of three lines of railway, by two of which it is also brought in direct communication, with the most remote parts of Ireland'.[7] The extent to which the spa water was considered beneficial to health was evident in the fact that a hotel was built with accommodation for approximately one hundred guests, having a separate wing for invalids in which hot and cold sulphur baths were provided.[8]

Lucan was in fact renowned for having several spa wells. Before 1758 a spa well was discovered in the centre of the village which was popular for Sunday visits for the purpose of finding cures for skin diseases and rheumatism.[9] It is probable that the entire district from Hermitage to Leixlip contains many spring wells, either undiscovered or long since forgotten.[10] However, the spa which became most associated with Lucan was first discovered in 1758 and became the venue where a hotel was built to cater for visitors about one mile on the Leixlip side of Lucan. Health and leisure resorts were developed throughout Britain in early eighteenth century such as Bath, Tunbridge Wells and Leamington for the social elites.[11] The spa in Lucan remained popular well into the 1900s until the people began to turn to other venues for Sunday entertainment and the spa house itself was subsequently washed away in a flood on 8 December, 1954.[12]

Regular employment close to a village was a great advantage to a community in order to improve living standards and to give a sense of security. Lucan House gave gainful employment but casual work on farms or work outside the area was the only option for many. When two Quaker-owned mills opened up within a few years of each other, Shackletons at Anna Liffey and Hills, who opened a woollen mill at a location much closer

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7 Thomas More Madden M.D., (ed.) *Lucan spa and hydropathic as a modern health resort* (Dublin, 1901), p. 10.

8 Mary Mulhall and Joan O'Flynn, (eds.) *Lucan and Lucanians, a revised history of Lucan* (2nd edition) (Kildare, 1996), p. 55.

9 Ibid., p. 51.

10 Ibid.

11 P. Clark, (ed.) *The Cambridge urban history of Britain*, 1540-1840 (Cambridge, 2000) p. 776.

12 Mulhall and O'Flynn, *Lucan and Lucanians*, p. 54.

to the village, in 1859 and 1863 respectively, it was bound to have a beneficial effect on the local community in terms of regular employment. This new development helped to create an era of economic stability in Lucan in contrast to other west county Dublin villages which were not so fortunate.

Shackleton background

The Quaker community is renowned for keeping accurate records of births, marriages and deaths of all their members and the Shackleton family is no exception to this rule.[13] The genealogy of the family consists of a series of seven genealogy sheets which follow the male lines of descent of the Shackletons. Abraham Shackleton first came to Ireland in 1720 to a position as tutor to the children of James Duckett of Duckett's Grove, Co. Carlow, and William Cooper of Cooper's Hill, Co. Laois. He later opened a boarding school in Ballitore, Co. Kildare in 1726 which lasted for over one hundred years. Three well-known members of the extended family include Mary Leadbeater (nee Shackleton) who wrote the *Ballitore Annals* in 1862, Ernest Shackleton, the famous Polar explorer and Francis, who became associated with the disappearance of the Irish crown jewels at Dublin Castle in 1907.[14] The family had been involved in the milling business from the 1770s at Ballitore, Co. Kildare, where they operated a grain mill on the river Griese.[15] Participation in manufacturing business seems to have been a general trend among the Quaker community. From their relatively small beginnings of farming and small trading, by the mid-nineteenth century they had evolved into a predominantly middle and upper middle-class body, prominent in textile manufacture, shipping and railway development as well as in retailing.[16]

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13 John Grenham, *Tracing your Irish ancestors* (Dublin, 1992), p. 38.

14 Jonathan Shackleton and John MacKenna, *Shackleton, an Irishman in Antartica* (Dublin, 2002), p. 88. The events surrounding the mystery of the Irish crown jewels are also the subject of a book by Myles Dungan, *The stealing of the Irish crown jewels* (Dublin, 2003).

15 Jonathan Shackleton. *History of the Shackletons of Ballitore* (Dublin, 1988).

16 S.J. Connolly, (ed.) *The Oxford Companion to Irish history* (Oxford, 2002), p. 548.

Ballitore is unique is that it was the only planned Quaker settlement in Ireland and the small museum in the centre of the town reflects the Quaker tradition. There were several branches of the family involved in milling, but George Shackleton of Ballitore seized the opportunity to set up new milling establishments at Straffan, Co. Kildare, and the 13th lock on the Grand Canal nearer to Dublin, in order to benefit from the port facilities and to access foreign grain and markets.[17] His son, Joseph Fisher Shackleton (1832-1908), was put in charge of the Anna Liffey mill in 1859 and the smaller Grange mill at the 12th Lock of the Grand Canal about two miles from Lucan. It is evident that the milling interests of the family were now gravitating towards Dublin, attracted by the expanding demand for flour in the city and its hinterland.[18] Moreover, the existence of both the Grand and Royal canals and railway lines close to Lucan made it an attractive proposition in terms of transport.

Joseph Fisher Shackleton had a decided advantage in taking on the challenge of running the Anna Liffey mill due to the experience of his family's milling tradition. Moreover, the fact that wider Quaker networks were available to call upon guaranteed a degree of safety from ill-considered speculations and was a definite asset in the risky business of taking over the Anna Liffey mill.[19] As already mentioned, an adequate water flow was essential for the efficient operation of a mill, as the majority of grain mills in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were water-powered.[20] This was made possible when a natural reservoir was provided by constructing a weir across the course of a river. The water was led from the river to a dam close to the mill via a head race or channel which was cut along the valley side, where it was then directed from the dam through sluice gates to the

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17 Richard S. Harrison, 'Irish Quakers in Flour Milling' in Andy Bielenberg (ed.), *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000* (Dublin, 2003), p.98.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid., p. 88.

20 Majella Flynn, *Harvest, a history of grain growing, harvesting, and milling in Ireland* (Cork, 1996), p.92.

waterwheel or turbine.[21] The Anna Liffey mill was situated in a perfect position for such a process.

Shackletons' mill at Anna Liffey produced fine flour, while layers mash and pig meal were made at the Grange mill on the 12th lock of the Grand Canal, which was on the Lucan to Newcastle road. Grass meal was taken from grass cut in fields at Baldonnel Aerodrome between the months of May and October, dried and ground to a bright green powder, which was used for winter feeding.[22] The family business in Dublin was divided in the early days between three brothers. Abraham ran the firm's office at 35 James Street and two bakeries in Meath Street. Richard was experienced in the technical end of the business, having travelled to Budapest, Hungary in 1877 with other millers to study a new roller system. Joseph Fisher managed the mill at Lucan.[23]

The mill began to prosper under Joseph Fisher Shackleton's direction. In 1869 he was financially in a position where he was able to purchase the adjoining property, Broomfield, for £1,400 (see Figure 1.1).[24] It was later developed as a vegetable, fruit and flower garden.[25] He also began to buy up houses in the village and to build others for some of his employees. Eight houses built by him close by the mill at a place called Tinker's Hill were said to have been partially built with the rubble from Broomfield.[26] Meanwhile, he had improved the living accommodation at the mill where he built a gate lodge and planted trees along the avenue.[27] Obviously, Joseph Fisher Shackleton was intent on creating pleasing accommodation for his own family, while at the same time contributing to worker accommodation and employment.

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21 Flynn, *Harvest, a history of grain growing, harvesting, and milling in Ireland*, p.92.
22 Mulhall and O'Flynn, *Lucan and Lucanians,* p.55.
23 George Shackleton, transcript of tape (interviewed in 1981 by Philip Gale, York University).
24 Fred Hamond, industrial archaeologist, commissioned conservation plan on behalf of Fingal County Council, 2000, p. 2.
25 Ibid.
26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.

General milling trends - from 1884

A decisive turning point occurred in the growing and milling of wheat in Ireland at the end of the nineteenth century under the joint impact of new milling techniques and the importation of low-priced wheat and flour from North America.[28] The population decline, due to the Great Famine of 1845-1849, had affected flour consumption adversely for more than a century. Wheat production during this period was also affected by the growing demand for meat among the industrial population in Britain. As the farming population declined, tenant holdings in Ireland were reorganised to suit cattle production rather than wheat growing. By 1877 the area under wheat had dropped to 105,000 acres, a fall of 85% in thirty years.[29] Improved transport facilities contributed to the development of large-scale exports of wheat and flour from America to Europe. Moreover, the American wheat became popular because of its milling and baking qualities and the palatability of the resulting bread. American flour made inroads into the home market and Irish millers saw their markets in Britain gradually disappearing. Therefore, the milling of flour for sale in Ireland had to be based largely on imported wheat.[30] While it is generally assumed that the potato was the basic diet of the Irish, and explained the tragedy of the famine, the Commission on Irish Industry in 1884 affirmed that the 'great food of the Irish is the white bread'.[31] The Commission drew attention to the impact of American competition on Irish flour millers by the mid-1880s.[32] However, the pace of innovation in Irish flour milling compared favourably with Britain, for instance, when the smaller population and scale of the Irish industry was taken into account. Nevertheless, many of those who failed to adapt

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28 Report of survey team, Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, re flour milling in Ireland up to 1933, from *Survey of industries based on grain milling and flour milling in Ireland up to 1933* (Dublin, 1965), p. 11.

29 Ibid.

30 Ibid., p.1.

31 Ibid., p.59.

32 Ibid., p.69.

went out of business, and only those who adopted the new technologies were able to survive.[33]

English flour began to make inroads into the Irish market from the early twentieth century, when the whitening or bleaching of flour was prohibited in the U.S.A. The preference for bleached flour for much of the Irish trade provided British mills with an opportunity in the Irish market.[34] Whiteness was no longer equated with American flour, and many UK millers had begun to bleach their flour.[35] There was some anxiety in the Irish Flour Millers' Association about this practice but bleaching had become familiar and continued to be used.[36] The practice of bleaching flour was maintained up to the 1950s at least at the Anna Liffey mill. A former worker at the mill said that in order to kill impurities, dyox gas was used, which also had the effect of bleaching the flour but another gas was introduced subsequently as dyox was considered harmful.[37] Contact with Odlum Limited regarding dyox gas elicited the information that chlorine was used initially to kill impurities.[38] This was followed by using chlorine pumped through with salt and this blend was called dyox gas. This practice was later discontinued and it is now illegal to use these agents to whiten flour.[39]

Technical advances – from 1860

The Shackletons were always keenly aware of the advantages of keeping abreast of technological developments in the milling industry. When Joseph Fisher Shackleton first came to the Anna Liffey mill in 1859, there were six pairs of stones for grinding wheat and

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33 *Survey of industries based on grain milling and flour milling in Ireland up to 1933*, p.72.
34 Ibid., p.79.
35 Glynn Jones, 'The introduction and establishment of roller milling in Ireland, 1875-1925' in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000*, p. 126.
36 Ibid.
37 A. Birnie, transcript of interview with D. Collins – 21 November,1903.
38 Odlums Group Limited, Alexander Road, Dublin 1, transcript of telephone conversation, 9 June 2004.
39 Ibid.

the power to drive the mill was by a waterwheel.[40] The adoption of the roller system was a major factor in successful flour milling during the last quarter of the nineteenth century as it facilitated the production of flour on a large scale and the production of a variety of flours concurrently.[41] Irish millers who failed to adopt the roller system found themselves unable to compete in the flour market, so it seems that Joseph Shackleton's foresight was rewarded. The structure of the Anna Liffey mill was altered internally with five floors replacing eight floors. Later further buildings were added.[42] The rollers were arranged according to the 'gradual reduction' process whereby the grains of wheat were gradually reduced to white flour with practically no discoloration from bran.[43] It is recorded that in one district where there were twenty seven mills in 1874, only three remained in 1900, as those millers who failed to adopt the roller system themselves were unable to compete in the flour market.[44]

The use of roller mills in place of the old stone grinders required a high capital but low labour input. As already outlined, it also facilitated the production of flour on a larger scale and the production of a variety of flours concurrently. Meantime, the Anna Liffey was still improving its technology. In 1902, the remaining water-wheel was replaced by a 'Esher-Wyss' turbine, from Switzerland.[45] A small Gilkes turbine was installed in 1906, which drove a dynamo to provide light to the mill, the offices, and a nearby forge. Up to that time, paraffin lamps were used to create light. When the river was very low in summer, or very high in winter, the water power was augmented by a steam engine, then a gas engine, then a diesel engine. It was not until much later in the 1930s that the E.S.B. 'came down the valley' and electric motors were installed.[46]

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40 Richard Shackleton, transcript of tape of the history of the Anna Liffey mill (short version) made in 1996.

41 *Survey of industries based on grain milling and flour milling in Ireland up to 1933*, p.12.

42 Hamond, commissioned conservation plan, p.3.

43 Ibid.

44 *Survey of industries based on grain milling and flour milling in Ireland up to 1933*, p.1.

45 Richard Shackleton, transcript of tape, 1996.

46 Ibid.

Steel rollers were installed in the Anna Liffey mill in 1900 and new methods were introduced for sieving the flour and for cleaning the wheat before grinding. At this time, bakers' flour was made for making yeast bread. This flour was made from glutinous wheats from Canada and the U.S.A.. The flour was packed in jute bags. A weaker flour was made for home baking using milk and baking powder.[47] The wheat used to make this weaker flour came from Australia and from the west coast of the U.S.A. It was packed in four stone and ten stone bags and delivered to neighbouring counties, for instance, Kildare, Wicklow, Meath and Westmeath. Horse-drawn vehicles were used to deliver the bags of flour to the canal, or to the railway station. This mode of transport continued up until 1920, when a steam wagon replaced some of the horse-drawn wagons, and subsequently, motor lorries took over the task.[48]

The Anna Liffey mill was constantly upgraded as new technology methods were introduced in the milling industry. The mill building itself was also improved at the beginning of the twentieth century. A large concrete and steel store was constructed and a pitched roof and attic floor was added to block G (see Plate 0.2). In addition, the two bakeries owned by the Shackleton family in Meath Street, Dublin, gave a profitable outlet for their flour. In February 1904, the Shackleton family business was incorporated at a cost of £18,000 as George Shackleton & Sons Ltd.[49] By this stage, the shareholders included not only Abraham, Joseph Fisher, and Richard, but also Joseph Fisher's three sons, William Edmundson, George, and John Wigham. Together with the three brothers, Joseph Fisher's wife, Jane, and their eldest daughter, Mary, were also named as shareholders.[50]

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47 Richard Shackleton, transcript of tape, 1996.
48 Ibid.
49 Hamond, commissioned conservation plan, p.3.
50 Ibid.

The changing village - new infrastructure

The population of Lucan at the time the Shackleton family's arrival was quite a small community of 552 persons.[51] The census for 1891 shows the population of the village at 843 persons.[52] The indication from these figures shows that the population was beginning to grow steadily, which would denote confidence, socially and economically. The community was well served by transport facilities. The two canals, the Grand and the Royal, were comparatively convenient to the village as also were the two railway lines running almost parallel to the canals. The Great Southern and Western Railway was approximately two miles away from the village, and the Midland and Great Western Railway was merely one mile from the village centre.

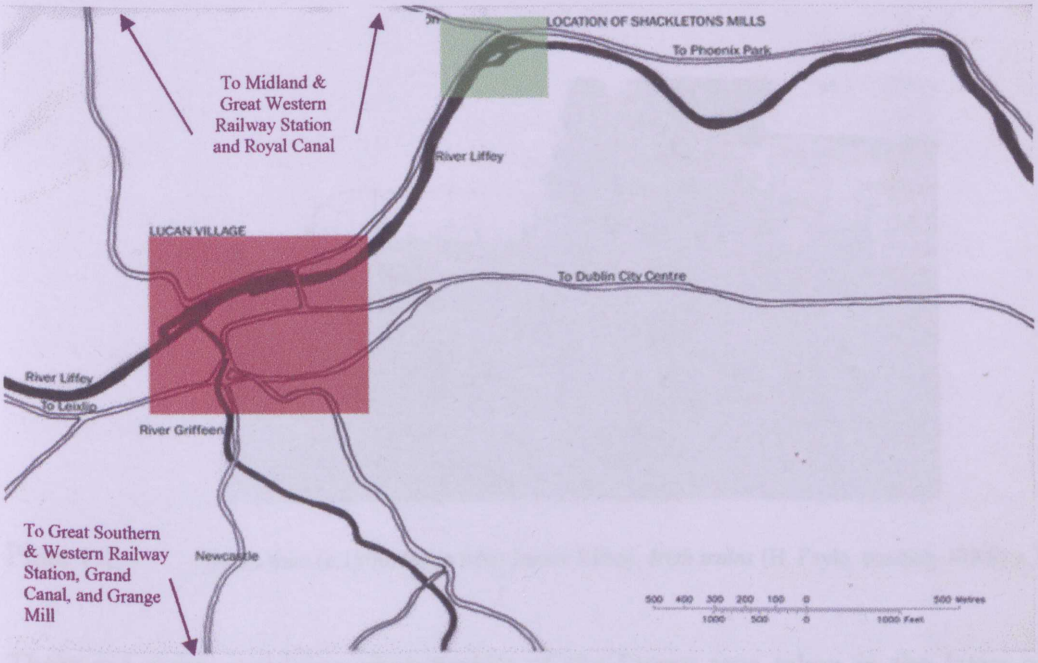

Figure 1.2 Diagrammatical map of Lucan

When the Dublin horse trams were introduced in 1872 the townsfolk of Lucan were anxious to be brought into the railway system.[53] The rationale behind the plan was that villages between the city and Lucan were not well served by either railway and it was

51 Census of Ireland, 1861.
52 Ibid., 1891.
53 James Kilroy, *Irish trams* (Dublin, 1996), p. 46.

considered that a roadside steam tramway would be most advantageous to all communities along the route to and from Lucan.[54] The Dublin and Lucan steam tramway came into being in 1881 bringing crowds from Dublin city. The starting point for the steam train was at Conyingham road beside the Phoenix park.[55] This new infrastructure was a great boon to the people of Lucan in terms of increased trade and tourism to the village and for their own personal travelling needs. The steam train ceased operations in 1900 after nineteen years when electricity replaced steam and the Dublin and Lucan Electric Railway commenced operations.[56] At the outbreak of World War I the government took control of the Irish railways.[57] The Lucan tram continued to operate for the next forty years until competition from buses accelerated in the inter-war years signalling the inevitable. The last train to Lucan ran on 31 March 1940.[58]

Plate 1.1 Lucan tram (c.1900) taken from James Kilroy, *Irish trains* (H. Fayle, courtesy IRRS) p.78

There are many surviving photographs of the Lucan area taken in the latter part of the nineteenth century and the early twentieth century. In fact, it is mainly due to the photographic skills of Jane Wigham Shackleton (1843-1909), wife of Joseph Fisher Shackleton, that so many local photographs of the period are still in existence. Jane (nee

54 James Kilroy, *Irish trams* (Dublin, 1996), p. 46.
55 Ibid.
56 Ibid., p. 77.
57 Ibid.
58 Ibid.

Edmundson) was born in Dublin into the oldest family of Quakers in Ireland who settled in the country in the 1650s.[59] She was ahead of her time as a talented photographer. She developed her own pictures in a dark room at her residence adjoining the mill. She cleverly captured flood scenes and frozen scenes of the village. and these pictures are very helpful in showing the layout of the village at the time and the mode of dress worn by the inhabitants. Jane Wigham became a member of the Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland in 1892 and travelled extensively, always taking her camera with her.[60]

Plate 1.2
Flood scene, c.1897 (by kind permission of
Mrs. Mary Shackleton, Stable house, Anna Liffey

Plate 1.3
Frozen river scene, c.1895 (by kind permission of
Mrs. Mary Shackleton, Stable house, Anna Liffey

Milling associations - 1875 and 1902

The establishment of the National Association of British and Irish Flour Millers, or NABIM, in 1875, was a great step forward for millers generally as it encouraged joint action and mutual information on the various issues that arose in the milling business.[61] The Shackletons were very involved in this association and were always interested in pooling information. Roller mills were becoming popular with millers and the Shackletons led the way in investigating this new technology. The Anna Liffey branch of the family installed a roller system in 1883 and, in 1884, Joseph Fisher Shackleton replaced a

59 Mary Mulhall and Joan O'Flynn, *Lucan and Lucanians*, p. 121.
60 Ibid.
61 Harrison, in *Irish Flour Milling – a history 600-2000*, p. 100.

waterwheel with an Alcott water turbine.[62] In 1902, reflecting the growing trend towards Irish economic nationalism, the Irish Flour Millers' Association was formed, which lasted until 1989. The Shackleton family was well represented in this association also, being listed as presidents of that body on several occasions. Belonging to these associations was very important in order to keep pace with milling technology and business trends and helped to influence macro-economic decisions. This alignment with key associations would obviously explain the Shackleton success at the Anna Liffey mill for such a long time.

Conclusion

Lucan village was undoubtedly a place of scenic beauty and popular for visitors, whether to partake of strawberries on the nearby Strawberry Beds road, or to avail of the medicinal powers of the spa water. The scenic site where the mill is situated on the river Liffey is practically unchanged from the time the Shackleton family came to Lucan in 1859 from Ballitore and Straffan (see Plates 0.1 and 0.2). It is evident that the family background in milling was a contributory factor in raising the productive standards of this comparatively small flour mill on the outskirts of Dublin. The technical advances adopted to improve milling techniques were vital to its success. The benefits to the local community in having almost guaranteed employment for many of its inhabitants helped to improve living conditions and create a climate of stability. There appears to be little doubt that bread consumption per head was increasing for much of Ireland's population and accounted for the fact that the flour-milling industry had to keep pace with new technology in order to compete. It can be seen from this chapter that the Shackleton family was well equipped to deal with this new technology in a constructive way to advance their business assets. Their involvement in NABIM and the Irish Flour Millers Association was a great advantage to their business interests. Moreover, the fact that the Shackletons owned two bakeries in the

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62 Harrison, in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000*, p. 101.

city gave them a profitable outlet for their flour along with the deliveries to towns and villages in Dublin county and other counties. The contribution to the life of the community by Jane Wigham Shackleton in recording for posterity the day to day life of the community, at play and at times of crisis, is a valuable legacy. Without these early pictures, it would be difficult to imagine the appearance of Lucan in the late nineteenth century. To this extent, the positive contribution of the Shackleton family to the Lucan community was immense, not only in terms of employment, but as historical recorders.

CHAPTER II

The next generation – 1900 to 1922

The history of the Anna Liffey mill, under the control of the Shackleton family, provides an example of an Irish industrial enterprise throughout a period of political, economic and social change. This was particularly the case at the beginning of the twentieth century against a background of the Home Rule debate and the rise of militant trade unionism. By this time, a new generation of the Anna Liffey Shackletons was in charge headed by William Edmundson, George (senior), and John Wigham. William's sons, George (generally known as 'young' George) and Thomas, were beginning their involvement in the firm. Richard and David, sons of John Wigham, became involved at a later stage. The growing nationalist movement and the intensification of the struggle for workers' rights set the tone, politically and economically, for the first two decades of the new century.

During the 1930s there was an urgent sense that valuable oral heritage had been lost in Ireland. In 1938 schools were asked by the Irish Folklore Commission to encourage the children to speak to the oldest living members of their families and record in essay form the stories and traditions handed down from generation to generation.[1] The essays lodged in U.C.D. by the children of Lucan schools provide some enlightening stories, from tales of poaching in the river to cures obtainable from taking the local spa water. There are some references to the Anna Liffey mill. One essay written by a young girl gave a detailed reconstruction of the day-to-day life at Shackletons' mill as a workplace, as told to her by her father, who began his working life in 1906:

> I, John O'Neill, began to work on 14 August 1906. I was put to wheeling flour in a truck and in 1915 was promoted to silks man. And in 1919 I was promoted to charge-hand roller man. The wheat comes from Australia conveyed in wagons to Anna Liffey mills. The wheat then goes through the screens for

[1] Essays of Irish folklore commission, 1938, Department of Irish folklore, U.C.D., Parish of Lucan, file no. IFCS794.

> cleaning, then washed and dried before grinding. There are four different brakes, 1, 2, 3, 4. Each brake goes from roller to plant sifter. This machine has silk and the flour goes through to the packer to be packed in flour bags. The outside of the grain makes bran and the next part of it makes pollard and the centre of the grain makes flour.

After he outlined the flour milling processes involved, he went on to say:

> I started work at four shillings per week from 6.00 a.m. to 6.30 p.m. My first duty was to go through all the floors to see if every machine was in perfect order. My next duty was to take a sample from each machine before 8.00 a.m. to be inspected by the head miller. I then cleaned the machinery and had my breakfast which consisted of bread, butter and tea. [2]

While this man's rate of pay of four shillings seemed low, he received a rise every three months until his weekly pay was £3. 15. 0. He began to work three shift hour periods. He said that the workers went on an excursion each year until 1937. Later, an application was made for a week's holiday and this was granted to the workers in 1938.[3] This last statement was verified by the trade union official who was familiar with the mill's industrial history.[4] One school presentation concerned the 'Coffee House', which was situated in the village beside the river Liffey bridge, where the childlike observation of it was 'so called because an old man made coffee here about forty or fifty years ago'.[5] In fact, there was a building of that name at the place mentioned by the school-child. It was built by the two Quaker families, Shackletons and Hills, in the late 1800s, in an attempt to keep their workers out of the pubs. It was also run as a commercial venture serving refreshments to the visitors who came from Dublin to visit Lucan by jaunting car on summer days.[6] It was later used as a community centre, where the Lucan Fife and Drum Band held their weekly practice.[7] Dances were also held there and these proved such an attraction that they often spilled out onto the roadside.[8] It also housed the first vocational

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2 Essays of the Irish folklore commission, UCD.
3 Ibid.
4 Michael Gannon, ex-trade union official, transcript of interview with D. Collins, 10 October, 2003.
5 Essays of the Irish folklore commission, UCD.
6 *Lucan Newsletter*, 21 December 2003.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.

school in Lucan. It featured as a meeting place for the workers involved in the ensuing 1913 lockout. Later, a section of it became the trade union office and another section of it was residential.[9] It was demolished in 1984.

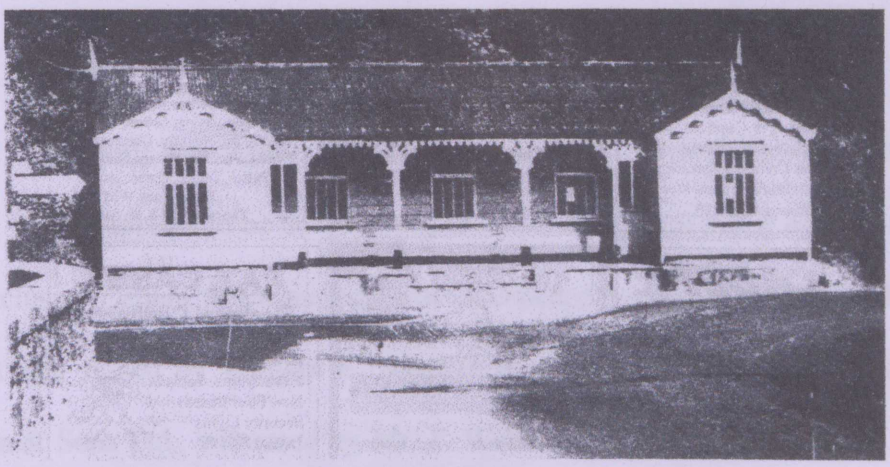

Plate 2.1 Coffee house, Lucan, c.1900 (reproduced from *Lucan Newsletter*, 21 December 2003)

Irish Industrial Development Association

In 1903, the Cork Industrial Development Association was founded to promote industrial development in Co. Cork. Similar local associations were set up in Dublin, Belfast and other counties over the next few years. The IIDA was incorporated as a limited company in 1906.[10] This Association introduced regulations for the issue of certificates for the use of the Irish Trade Mark in 1905.[11] The benefits of using such a symbol, as opposed to the full details of the maker or manufacturer, made practical sense. A mark is easier to remember and recognise and more practical to physically apply to the product.[12]

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9 *Lucan Newsletter*, 21 December, 2003.

10 Accession No. 1091, reports, agenda books, correspondence files and other records of the Irish Industrial Development Association 1904 – 1970 and agenda book of the all-Ireland munitions and government supplies committee 1916 – 1920, NAI.

11 The Irish Industrial Development Association (Incorporated) – Section 62 of Trade Mark Act, 1905, NAI.

12 Patents Office learning zone Trade marks – a brief history, http://www.patentoffice.ie/TradeMarkhistory.htm, 30 April, 2003.

Trademark, George Shackleton & Sons Ltd. Anna Liffey Mills, Lucan (July, 1885)
supplied by Patents Office, Hebron Road, Kilkenny

The Anna Liffey mill was registered under the trade mark *First flower of the earth* on 4 July 1885.[13] This appears to be the earliest trademark of the firm and it was not until 1905 that an exclusive *Déanta in Éirinn* logo was established by the newly-formed IIDA. An agreement was signed by William E. Shackleton and Mrs. W. Shackleton, for George Shackleton & Sons Ltd., witnessed by Mr. F. Webb, on 28 December, 1906.[14] This first Irish trade mark was to be used only as a mark of origin in connection with goods manufactured or produced in Ireland. A yearly payment of £2. 2s.0d. was required to be eligible to use the Irish Trade Mark in connection with goods of Irish manufacture. In the Shackleton case, this trade mark concerned flour and wheatenmeal.[15] Under provision 2 of the Regulations, it states that 'the Irish Trade Mark is the absolute property of the Irish Industrial Development Association, and cannot be used by any person except under and by virtue of a Certificate issued under these Regulations'.[16] The Anna Liffey mill had several registered trade marks over the years. The Patents Office, established in 1927, provides information relating to two trade marks of the firm, 'First Flower of the Earth' and 'Buttercup'.[17] However, in the Letter Book of 1910, reference is made to the various trade marks of the firm and their description:

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13 Declan Finlay, Patents office, government buildings, Kilkenny, correspondence to D. Collins relating to the history of the Shackleton trademark, 16 September 2003.

14 Schedule of agreement between the IIDA and George Shackleton & Sons Ltd.., NAI, file no. 1030/07, 28 December 1906.

15 Ibid.

16 The Irish Industrial Development Association (Incorporated), regulations for the issue of certificates for the use of the Irish Trade Mark, 1906, NAI, file no. 40-15.

17 Finlay, correspondence relating to the history of the Patents office, 16 September 2003.

'*Primrose*' and '*Snowdrop*' are spring wheat flours.
'*Primrose*' is similar to '*Sunflower*' though not quite equal to it in quality
'*Snowdrop*' is better than '*Sunflower*' in quality and colour, and may be taken as flour of the Hungarian type.
'*Columbine*' is a winter wheat flour, or rather better quality than '*Lily of the Valley*'.[18]

The IIDA trade mark was registered in Ireland, Great Britain, the British Dominions, colonies and dependencies, Argentina, Chile, Egypt, France and Nigeria.[19] The IIDA opposed the registration abroad of trade marks that might mislead consumers into thinking that goods branded with such marks were of Irish origin. It examined the origin of goods where this was in doubt. Moreover, it urged the enforcement of legislation authorising the examination by the customs of imported goods for wrongful markings.[20] It disseminated information about Irish trade and indicated where openings existed for new industrial enterprises. It published a 'Directory of Users' of the Irish Trade Mark and organised numerous Irish industrial conferences.[21] The Shackletons believed that belonging to the IIDA was an asset in having trade mark protection from wrongly labelled goods.[22] The family was very aware of their obligations under the regulations of the trade mark. During the subsequent troubled industrial relations period of the 1913 'lockout', the firm was forced to use flour from another source. In order to rectify any confusion, the firm wrote to Mr. E.J. Riordan, Secretary of the IIAI to the effect that:

> Owing to the present stoppage at our mill, we are getting flour made for us and packed in our own printed bags by another firm of Irish flour millers. As a trade mark is incorporated into design and label, we seek permission for their use in this manner.[23]

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18 Shackleton letter book 1910 (supplied by Mrs. Mary Shackleton), letter to Mr. Thomas F. Burke, Portumna, regarding descriptions and prices of trade mark flours, 7 March 1910.

19 Accession No. 1091, Annual reports, agenda books, correspondence, files and other records of the Irish Industrial Development Association 1904 – 1970 and agenda book of the all-Ireland munitions and government supplies committee 1916 – 1920, NAI.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 George Shackleton, taped memoirs 1981.

23 Shackleton papers, NAI, letter from George Shackleton & Sons Ltd. to Mr. E. J. Riordan, secretary IIAI, 33 Westmoreland Street, 4 August 1913.

1913 LOCKOUT

George Shackleton regarded the atmosphere between employer and employee as very 'healthy' at the Anna Liffey mill up to 1913, not too paternalistic but portraying reasonable discipline from the top.[24] This was all to change in quite a dramatic way for the Shackletons and for the workers employed at the mill. The arrival of 'Big Jim' Larkin in Dublin greatly boosted the fledgling trade union movement.[25] While some firms were only marginally involved in the lockout events, the Shackletons were the first firm to lock out their workers, thereby being drawn into the dispute at an early stage.[26] The dramatic events surrounding the 1913 Lockout, while of comparatively short duration, was a time of confusion and acrimony for the Anna Liffey mill. The local manifestation of these events was part of the wider dispute taking place due to James Larkin's action in encouraging the growth of trade unionism in Ireland in 1909 under the banner of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union.

There were special circumstances pertaining in Ireland which differed from the labour movements in Britain. The movement in Britain consisted of a gradual build-up of industrial and political power. It was characterised by cautious and moderate leadership and an alliance between middle-class socialists, intellectuals and working-class labour leaders.[27] There was a more 'explosive' movement in Ireland as it was based almost entirely on the trade union movement itself and won very little support from intellectuals. The development of a working-class consciousness in Ireland was impeded by the special circumstances which prevailed, that is, the predominance of the national question over all social questions, except that of land tenure. This discouraged the development of

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25 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.

26 John McCormack, 'The dawn of the twentieth century' in *A story of Dublin* (Dublin, 2000), p.209.

27 Padraig Yeates, *Lockout Dublin 1913* (Dublin, 2001), p.114.
E. Rumph and A.C. Hebburn, *Nationalism and socialism in 20th century Ireland* (Liverpool, 1977), p.10.

meaningful political debate along class lines.[28] Moreover, the dynamic force which Larkin and Connolly brought to labour politics in Ireland was captured by the republican wing of the nationalist movement. Arthur Griffith was to the foremost in criticising the strikers of 1913, seeing them as destroyers of the growth of Irish capitalism, which he saw as the only basis for future independence.[29]

The 'labour war' of 1913 was the biggest and most extensive struggle in the history of the working-class movement. In fact, it would not be an exaggeration to say that this struggle was one of the greatest events in the whole British Isles and was therefore a defining moment for the trade union movement.[30] No question of wages or hours was involved in the dispute but the ITGWU had been developing a new and militant defensive and offensive policy with the slogan 'an injury to one is the concern to all'.[31] The 'sympathetic strike' was the new weapon used, which James Connolly described in the following terms:

> It is the recognition by the working class of its essential unity, the manifestation in our daily industrial relations that our brother's fight is our fight, our sister's troubles are our troubles, that we are all members one of another. In practical operation it means that when any body of workers are in conflict with their employers, that all other workers should co-operate with them in attempting to bring that particular employer to reason by refusing to handle his goods. That in fact every employer who does not consent to treat his workpeople upon a civilised basis should be treated as an enemy of civilisation and placed and kept outside the amenities and facilities offered by civilised communities. In other words that he and his should be made tabu, treated as unclean, as tainted and therefore likely to contaminate all others. The idea is not new. It is as old as humanity.[32]

The two main protagonists in the 'stand-off' of 1913 were James Larkin and the chairman of the Dublin United Tramways Company, William Martin Murphy. The initial trouble began with the tramworkers and swiftly spread to other industries. Shackletons & Sons

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28 Rumph and Hebburn, *Nationalism and socialism in 20th century Ireland*, p.11.
29 Ibid., p. 13.
30 John Conroy, general president, introduction to *Fifty years of Liberty Hall – the golden jubilee of the Irish Transport and General Workers' Union*, 1909-1959 (Dublin, 1959), p. 34.
31 Ibid., p. 34.
32 Ibid., p. 35.

Ltd. informed their employees that the firm was aware that many of them had joined the ITGWU. Curiously, William E. Shackleton had affiliations to radical nationalist politics and had, in fact, served on the Sinn Fein executive from 1907 to 1909.[33] However, it seems that his interest lay more in its protectionist policies rather than the radical social policies that some members of that organisation espoused.[34] The dispute came to a head when Messrs. Jacobs Ltd. locked out almost 1,000 employees at its biscuit factory in Bishop Street, Dublin. The reason for this action was as a result of a notice had been hung up in the factory forbidding the wearing of the ITGWU's 'Red Hand' badge. Shackletons were implicated with these events at Jacobs as three workers from the latter firm were dismissed for refusing to handle flour from the mill at Lucan, which was known to be in dispute with the ITGWU.[35] On the morning of 30 August 1913, tension was high between Jacob's management and members of the ITGWU because of the workers' refusal to handle the flour from Shackletons' mill. On 1 September, Jacob's management instructed their workers that all goods, including those from the 'blacked' firm, were to be handled. This led to defiance resulting in 670 men, out of the workforce of 1,059 men and 300 women, deciding not to work.[36]

Throughout the struggle the combination of approximately four hundred Dublin employers had the support of the British forces in Ireland, armed and unarmed, law, police, military and prison.[37] The employers pledged themselves to stand together solidly in compelling their workers to sign a document stating that 'men and women who were members of the ITGWU should give up their membership of the union and that workers who were not

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34 Yeates. *Lockout Dublin 1913*, p.27.
35 Ibid.
36 Ibid., p. 79.
37 Seamus O'Mathiu, *W.& R. Jacob, Celebrating 150 years of Irish biscuit making* (Dublin, 2001), p.36. Conroy, *Fifty years of Liberty Hall*, p. 36.

members of the union should not join it'.[38] Predictably, this only inspired the workers to a more heroic resistance.

Shackletons were to the forefront in the employers' confrontations and, having already issued an ultimatum to their workers resulting in a lock-out at the mill, they announced that they were resuming business with new staff. This produced nightly processions in Lucan village, with the Royal Irish Constabulary having to stand guard at the mill.[39] Shackletons' flour was now considered 'tainted' and ITGWU workers refused to deliver supplies which affected some of the bakeries. The weekly *Freeman's Journal* gave a detailed account of a baton charge by the police with several persons being injured on 25 October 1913:

> The disturbances in connection with the labour troubles at Lucan, which commenced on Thursday, culminated in a fierce riot, in which several people were seriously injured during a baton charge. The demonstration took the form of a procession, headed by the Lucan Fife and Drum band, which at 10.15 p.m. halted outside the premises of Shackletons & Sons Ltd. Anna Liffey mill. There was no trouble then, although there was a large police presence. Next morning, Friday, it was discovered that windows at the Shackletons house were broken. Police were alerted. The Lucan band did not turn out that night but the Leixlip band marched at 9.00 p.m. As they passed the barracks they were joined by head constable Phillips and twenty five police. At the Liffey bridge, police would not let them pass. Altercations followed and ten policemen fell down, several civilians also, and groups of women and children trampled on. The big drum was confiscated by the police. Three people were seriously injured and a number of people had minor injuries. Sergeant Lyons received the most serious injury and Mr. John Wigham Shackleton was hit by a lemonade bottle while cycling through the village.[40]

There are numerous letters of congratulations from firms all over the country, many unrelated to milling interests, in the Shackleton Papers housed in the National Archives of Ireland. The Royal Irish Constabulary was praised by the Shackleton firm in a letter sent to Mr. N. Chamberlain, Inspector General, Dublin Castle, on 14 March, 1914, for 'the services rendered by the Royal Irish Constabulary in Lucan District during the recent

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38 Conroy, *Fifty years of Liberty Hall*, p. 36.
39 Yeates. *Lockout Dublin 1913*, p. 258.
40 *Weekly Freeman's Journal*, 25 October 1913.

labour troubles'.[41] It is obvious that the distaste for Larkin and the ITGWU ran very deep with employers generally and galvanised them in their determination to win out in this dispute. In his taped memoirs, George Shackleton said that his father, William, was a friend of both Arthur Griffith and Douglas Hyde, even sharing the latter's interest in reviving the Irish language, but when the milling business was affected by trade union-led policies, he allowed his membership of Sinn Fein to lapse.[42] The fact that the Shackletons were so quick to respond to the call to lock out any of their workers who would dare to become members of Larkin's union was appreciated by William Martin Murphy when he wrote to congratulate them on their stance saying 'a few more men of spirit like you and we'd wipe this "blackguard" off the face of Dublin'.[43]

As already outlined, the 'hard line' attitude against the workers was favoured by many employers. Mr. Murphy unveiled a strategy to defeat the ITGWU to almost 400 employers at the Chamber of Commerce. The two-motion document stated that 'the position created by the ITGWU is a menace to all trade organisation and has become intolerable' and 'all employers should bind themselves to adopt a common line of action by signing the agreement presented herewith'. An obligation was placed upon them:

> to pledge ourselves in future not to employ any persons who continue to be members of the ITGWU and any person refusing to carry out our lawful and reasonable instructions, or the instructions of those placed over them, will be instantly dismissed, no matter to what union they belong.[44]

This covenant was proposed by a Mr. H. McLoughlin, whose ironworks had been involved in a dispute with the ITGWU over the sacking of a worker, and the seconder was George Shackleton, the Lucan miller, whose firm had been the first employer to lock out his

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41 Shackleton papers, NAI, letter from Messrs. George Shackleton & Sons Ltd., to N. Chamberlain, Dublin Castle – 14 March 1914.

42 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.

43 Shackleton papers, NAI.

44 Yeates, *Lockout Dublin 1913*, p.113.

workers.[45] A statement made on behalf of Messrs. George Shackleton & Sons Ltd. at the end of the dispute gave a detailed explanation of the sequence of events, which led to them being regarded as a 'tainted' firm (see Appendix B).

The management interviewed their employees individually to inform them that the firm refused to recognise the Transport Union. They had the choice of resigning from the union or to receive a week's notice to leave the firm. When the workers went out on strike as a body, the mill had to close down until new staff could be acquired.[46] George Shackleton explained in his memoirs that the trouble they experienced in trying to have their goods handled necessitated the family having to do a lot of the work themselves, both in the mill premises and driving to Dublin port in an attempt to receive deliveries. He said that his uncle John brought a .38 revolver with him to the port on one occasion in case of trouble. When they re-opened the mill with sufficient new men to carry on, there was a riot in Lucan, caused by the police stopping a band and crowd from coming to the mill.[47]

The workers looked upon these events from a different perspective. Although they were only a small body of men, unlike Jacobs' large staff, they were ushered into the 'limelight' by being the first workers to be locked out. There are numerous letters in the Shackleton papers from some of the villagers who worked in the mill, some defending their militant stance and very critical of the firm, and others who sounded almost apologetic for the trouble that was being experienced by the Shackletons. A few wives of workers wrote to the Shackletons to assure them that they were trying their best to dissuade their husbands from joining this 'abomination called a union'.[48] The fact that many of the workers lived in Shackleton-owned houses added to their plight as job dismissal would almost certainly mean eviction. In fact, there is correspondence from Messrs. Harris & Greene, Solicitors,

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45 Yeates, *Lockout Dublin 1913*, p.114.
46 Shackleton papers, NAI.
47 Ibid.
48 Ibid.

in the Shackleton papers regarding eviction proceedings against several employees dated 5 March 1914.[49]

On 11 October 1913, notice was given by Shackletons concerning terms of employment, whereby the workers had to undertake not to belong to the union. A list is recorded in the Shackleton papers of all the men who undertook to resign from union membership. This escalated the problem as those who passed the picket to go to work were labelled as 'scabs'. As Lucan was a small community at the time, everybody knew who was on strike and who was at work, and it was some time before memories of the troubles of 1913 were forgotten. George Shackleton acknowledged in his memoirs that the strike of 1913 was 'bitter'.[50]

In the final analysis, the 'lockout' appears to have been an unnecessary tragedy for all concerned. Like all intractable industrial disputes, it was not primarily about money or working conditions, but more about power. The employers felt threatened by the twin-headed 'monster' of socialism and syndicalism. The union saw the dispute as being about fundamental trade union rights.[51] Nevertheless, although the lockout was brought to an end by the employers in 1914, it proved to be a 'pyrrhic' victory for them. With the advent of the First World War, bringing labour shortages, the trade union movement began to recover from its earlier defeat, and by 1920 the ITGWU had a membership of 120,000 workers. An interesting situation arose in 1923 for the Anna Liffey mill workers when a general strike occurred in the milling industry. All mills went out on strike, with one exception – Shackletons mill, Lucan. The general strike was called when the mill owners tried to reduce wages. Shackleton, however, summarily reduced the wages of the workers and they accepted this situation. George Shackleton's view of this turn of events was that the workers at the Anna Liffey mill would be fearful of a repeat of the 1913 labour troubles

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49 Shackleton papers, NAI.

50 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.

51 Yeates, *Lockout Dublin 1913,* p. 582.

and would now be amenable to accept a drop in wages.[52] In the event, the Lucan mill workers did accept reduced wages three months before the national mill workers, who had tried strike tactics, had relented and followed suit.

The immediate post-lockout period coincided with the outbreak of World War I (1914-1918). The Anna Liffey mill continued to operate successfully throughout the war years. At the beginning of the twentieth century, over-capacity became a problem in the British flour-milling industry which made the Irish market highly competitive.[53] The outbreak of the war, however, provided an opportunity to strengthen the business position of Irish flour millers. During this period, the Irish industry enjoyed temporary protection, but when the war ended, over-production resumed in Ireland and Britain, and an influx of cheaper flour, largely from Britain, weakened the position of the Irish industry.[54] George Shackleton commented that successive British governments had little regard for the promotion of industrial growth in Ireland, going so far as to claim that the British government regarded this country merely as a good exercise training ground for their army.[55]

George Shackleton learned the technical end of the milling business at the Carlow mill before joining the Royal Air Force during World War I.[56] At the end of the war, he worked at Jacobs factory laboratory as a cereal chemist and stayed there until 1925. It was suggested to him that he should try experimenting with Manitoba wheat, a strong Canadian flour, to try something different in biscuit making.[57] This he did and, using an impact grinder, he produced an original biscuit called 'Goldgrain', which is still a popular up to the present.[58] Imports of flour to Ireland and Great Britain continued to concern the

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52 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.

53 Akihiro Takei, 'The political economy of the Irish flour-milling industry' in Andy Bielenberg (ed.). *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000* (Dublin, 2003), p.133.

54 Takei, in *Irish flour-milling – a history 600-2000*, p. 134.

55 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.

56 Ibid.

57 Ibid.

58 Mrs. Anne Buchanan (daughter of George Shackleton), transcript of interview with D. Collins, 20 June 2003.

NABIM after World War I. The need for rationalization and the necessity for improving technology were now seen as the way forward if small independent mills were to survive. William E. Shackleton, one of the leading members of the Irish Flour Millers' Association, stated that the forty-three members of that association comprised almost the entire milling trade in Ireland.[59]

Conclusion

From a business viewpoint, it would be reasonable to conclude that the Shackleton family was well prepared to deal with the political, economic and social changes that dominated the early decades of the twentieth century. Their association with the foundation of the IIDA was a great asset to business in regulating trademarks and facilitating new industrial enterprises. However, the events of the 1913 Lockout was a problematic period for all concerned in Lucan. It was a difficult time for the workers, many with large families, to cope with minimal strike pay. Moreover, it was an added pressure for those living in Shackleton houses for fear of eviction. Enmity between the opposing sides was caused in the community by the fact that some passed the picket, while others tried to stand firm against the Shackletons in order to remain in the ITGWU and to improve their working pay and conditions. As already stated, George Shackleton acknowledged that it was a 'bitter' time in the history of the mill, in view of the fact that relations had been very good up to that time. However, time passed and many of the problems of industrial relations at the mill were 'teased out' to the satisfaction of all concerned. The Quaker network facilitated this success for the Shackleton family. The encouragement by the Religious Society of Friends to aspire to a high standard of probity among its members led to a business style that attracted people to deal with them.[60] It is therefore plausible to assume that the Lucan mill workers were bound to their employers and to each other by ties of dependence,

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59 Glynn Jones, 'The introduction and establishment of roller milling in Ireland, 1875-1925' in *Irish Flour Milling – a history 600-2000,*, p.130.

60 Richard S. Harrison, 'Irish Quakers in Flour Milling' in *Irish Flour Milling – a history 600-2000,* p.105.

neighbourliness and respect such that they did not want to make trouble for trouble's sake. Nevertheless, the seeds had been sown in 1913 for a new era of fair play for workers. Trenchant views held by people like William Martin Murphy were discredited at the Tribunal of Inquiry into the Dublin disputes of 1913 (see extract of speech by James Larkin on Appendix C).

CHAPTER III

Protectionism, rationalisation and new markets – 1922 to 1939

Independence from Britain introduced a new barometer to test the fortitude of the Irish flour millers. New thinking had to go into how business interests could best be served by this changed situation. A fledgling Irish parliament now had the responsibility to make fundamental decisions which could have far-reaching affects on so many business interests. Cumann na nGael was the first political party to take on this responsibility and the flour millers generally were not too pleased at the way the government was dealing with milling business priorities. Meantime mill workers suffered unemployment as a result. The Anna Liffey mill did not escape this downturn and it was a common occurrence for the workers to have to survive on 'short time', perhaps being employed only one week out of two.[1] This caused hardship for families of mill workers in the Lucan area and many were pleased when a change of government occurred in 1932 when things began to improve.[2] A protectionist policy was introduced in an effort to encourage more self-sufficiency. The economic situation improved for the millers and Shackletons began to profit substantially from 1932 onwards.[3]

Protectionism

When national independence occurred in 1922, Irish flour millers were experiencing a period of economic stagnation.[4] Irish millers, with memories of prosperity during the war years, hoped that the new Irish government would protect them from British competition. In 1926, the Irish Flour Millers' Association, of which the Shackletons were members, looked to the government to recognise and alleviate the critical situation in the national

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1 Sheila Corrigan, daughter of former worker John Flanagan, Anna Liffey mill, transcript of interview with D. Collins, 18 May 2004.

2 Ibid.

3 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.

4 Akihiro Takei, 'The political economy of the Irish flour-milling industry' in Andy Bielenberg (ed.) *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000* (Dublin, 2003) p. 134.

industry. However, the Tariff Commission, in its report of 1928, recommended that the application should be refused. There were two reasons for the refusal. Firstly, the imposition of the tariff would result in an increase in flour and bread prices which were very important items in the cost of living. Secondly, having regard to the relatively low labour content of flour milling, the increase in employment which would ensue from the tariff would be insignificant.[5] The estimated number then employed in flour milling was 1,792 persons and the likely increase was approximately 153.[6] On the other hand, Jacobs, the principal firm then manufacturing biscuits in Ireland, employed 3,000.[7] This latter firm had informed the Commission that the increased flour prices which would result from the tariff might compel them to transfer their business to Britain. It was envisaged that the mills which would benefit from the tariff were the more efficient ones and these should survive without protective measures. However, it was thought that the tariff would not prevent the disappearance of the mills which were not competitive.[8]

The annual average produce in the Irish Free State of wheat, oats and barley per cwt. from 1924 to 1926 was:

	Wheat	Oats	Barley
1924	554	9,641	2,469
1925	402	11,711	2,645
1926	619	12,775	2,868

TABLE 3.1
Source: NAI, Statistical abstract 1931, p. 26

	Per. Cwt.
1924	6,087,976
1925	5,278,813
1926	5,414,783[1]

TABLE 3.2
Source: NAI, Trade and shipping statistics, 1924 and 1926, pp. 10-18.

Table 3.1 shows that the wheat average was much lower than for oats and barley while Table 3.2 shows the imports of wheat per cwt. in the same period.

5 Tariff Commission, *Report on application for a tariff on flour* (No. 3) April 1928.
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.

When the Fianna Fail government came to power in 1932, a transformation occurred in the economic and political circumstances of the country. One promise of the party's manifesto was to encourage native manufacturing industry more effectively through self-sufficiency. The government advocated tillage in place of cattle farming, and greater state intervention in the economy, especially in the industrial sector. This was at variance with the last government of Cumann na nGaedheal, which had a more *laissez faire* attitude to trade. However, the new Fianna Fail government's determination to have greater state intervention in the economy benefited the flour-milling industry particularly, as by encouraging more wheat growing, more flour could be produced.[9] Naturally, this was good news for millers and the advantages to the Anna Liffey mill were soon to be realised when, as a result of a more promising business era, they were enabled to remodel the mill entirely in 1936. A new generation of Shackletons had entered the business in the 1920s, George (1899-1983) and Thomas (1902-1972). After World War II, they were joined by John's sons Richard and David. There was no shortage of Shackletons on board to look after the affairs of the mill and to take up the challenges of the new era. It must be assumed that the advantages of family control were that firstly, their Quaker background kept them in close touch with other Quaker milling business associates, and secondly, family members were willing to look after all aspects of the business in good times and bad. For instance, during the 1913 lockout, it would have been impossible to hold the business together without the direct involvement of family members who took part in every aspect of the milling processes, from looking after production to delivering the sacks of flour.

Prior to 1933, a very small proportion of native wheat was milled into flour. In evidence given before the Tariff Commission in 1928, members of the Irish Flour Millers' Association were stated to have used 875 tons of Irish wheat in 1925/6 and 2,125 tons in

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9 Takei. in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000*, p. 141.

1926/7.[10] These figures compare with a native wheat production of 20,000 tons in 1925 and 31,000 tons in 1926, that is, only 4.5 per cent and 7 per cent respectively of the native crop was used in flour mills in those years.[11] The Commission's deliberations gave little weight to protecting the flour milling industry in the interests of wheat growers. Neither the government nor the farming organisations were as yet committed to a policy of encouraging greater production of Irish wheat.[12] The millers decided to make the best terms they could with their cross-channel competitors and thus ensure for themselves some definite share of the home market.[13]

The millers' response - 1931

Negotiations with the British firms involved resulted in a joint organisation, The Flour Millers' Economic Association, being formed in May 1931.[14] This cartel fixed each miller's share of flour production, and this proved advantageous for Irish millers. With the drop in wheat prices and the restriction of competition, the profitability of flour milling in the Irish Free State began to improve dramatically.[15] Imports of flour, which had increased by nine per cent between 1929 and 1931, declined from 1,350,837 sacks in 1931 to 1,185,969 sacks in 1932, or by twelve per cent.[16] This quota scheme may be considered to have marked a turning point. This ended sixty years of decline and determined the structure and location of the industry for the next thirty years.[17] Not all millers benefited from this improved situation and many mills were forced to cease production. The mill owned by the Shackletons' cousin, Ebenezer Shackleton, at Co. Kildare, was bankrupted and his mill ceased production in 1927. Other Quaker-owned mills met with a similar fate,

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10 *Report on application for a tariff on flour* (no. 13) April 1928.
11 Ibid.
12 Ibid., (no. 3).
13 Report of survey Team, Dept. of Agriculture & Fisheries, re flour milling in Ireland up to 1922 from *Survey of industries based on grain milling and flour milling up to 1933* (Dublin, 1965) p.14.
14 Ibid.
15 Takei, in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000*, p. 139.
16 *Survey of industries based on grain milling and flour milling in Ireland up to 1933* (Dublin, 1965) p.14.
17 Ibid.

but the Anna Liffey mill continued successfully in business. They attributed their survival to finding niche markets when competitors closed their businesses.[18]

Implementation of protectionist policy

Seán Lemass, the new Minister for Industry and Commerce in 1932, initiated the policy of expanding the flour milling sector as part of a wider programme of industrial expansion as committed to in the manifesto for government:

> To negotiate trade agreements that would secure for our products preferences in foreign markets, always subject to the condition that the protection required for the maintenance and development of our own agricultural and manufacturing industries will not be lessened.[19]

George Shackleton (senior) appeared to have little faith in De Valera at the time and articulated the view that 'nobody would listen to De Valera' and that 'this government cannot last, Cosgrave will be back in the new year'.[20] He later had to admit that he was wrong, especially when the milling trade developed significantly under this new government policy.[21] The government proceeded to launch its protectionist policy for Irish flour with the introduction of a tariff on imported flour. Industrial relations were also improved when the Joint Industrial Council was formed to settle matters relating to working conditions.[22] While this new policy did not solve all the ills of the milling industry, it did result in less business risk and less competition than previously and issued in a new era of prosperity. At this juncture, Fianna Fail's economic achievement between 1932 and 1936 was impressive, helping to halt the slide into the economic abyss that appeared to threaten in 1931 and blunting the potential appeal of political extremism.[23] Despite the supposition that the tariff on imported flour would only require approximately

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18 Richard S. Harrison. 'Irish Quakers in flour milling' in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000,* p.104.
19 Fianna Fail manifesto, 9/2/1932 in Alan O'Day and John Stevenson (eds.), *Irish Historical Documents since 1800* (Dublin, 1992), p. 189.
20 George Shackleton, taped memoirs 1981.
21 Ibid.
22 Takei, in *Irish flour milling-a history 600-2000,* p.143.
23 J.J. Lee. *Ireland 1912-1985 politics and society* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 195.

one hundred and fifty extra workers, the real number of employees increased from 1,979 to 2,739 between 1931 and 1936.[24]

Agricultural Produce (Cereals) Act, 1933

The Agricultural Produce (Cereals) Act, 1933, represented the initiation of the policy of encouraging the maximum production of home-grown wheat. This Act covered wide-ranging controls on wheat and other cereals production with a view to developing this business in the national interest.[25] The Minister for Industry & Commerce had the power to grant milling licences and to oversee rates of wages and conditions of employment at mills. Other requirements were the need to keep records of home-grown wheat and imported wheat and for the entitlement of the Minister for Industry & Commerce to arrange inspection of mills.[26] Shackletons appeared to have mixed feelings over these new rules and regulations. While George Shackleton agreed that the tax regime was favourable in the 1930s, ninety per cent of the raw material, wheat, was under government policy.[27] He criticised the bureaucracy involved in the milling business. In his opinion, the government wanted cheap bread and more people employed in the industry. He considered that the millers' cause was much weaker than the farmers' needs, but sadly, there were very few votes in milling.[28]

Complete renovation - 1936

The next milestone in the history of the Anna Liffey mill was in 1936 when remodelling was introduced. The old 1884 rollers were replaced by new machinery by Miag of Braunschweig, Germany. New elevators, conveyors and ancillary machinery were also installed. George Shackleton explained that the mill had made a great deal of money from

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24 *Census of industrial production* (1932-5 pp. 26-7 (1936), pp. 46-8, 51; *Irish industrial year book* (1937) p. 99 in Takei, 'The political economy of the Irish flour milling industry' in *Irish flour milling*, p. 143.

25 The Office of the Attorney General, http://www.irishstatutebook.ie/1933-7.html, 9 April 2001, p. 3.

26 Ibid., p. 18.

27 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.

28 Ibid.

1933 to 1936, albeit working 'flat out'. The management decided that the mill would not stand much more 'shaking itself to bits' and it was now time to remodel.[29] Quotations were sought from three British engineering firms and the German firm Miag and, after much consultation, the German firm seemed to meet with the necessary requirements, both in design and in price.[30]

Plate 3.1 Miag Machinery, Anna Liffey Mill, Lucan (photographed by D. Collins, April 2004)

The Shackletons were initially reluctant to give the contract to a German firm, as Germany was at this time 'flexing its muscles' for European domination. However, the late Alexander Birnie, an ex-commander of the British Royal Navy and at this time employed by the Shackletons to look after the machinery, experienced trouble with the present turbine being 'clogged up' on a regular basis. Consequently, it was the considered opinion of management that there was urgency in getting the job done and it was decided that the German firm of Miag should get the contract.[31] The cost of the remodelling was £6,500

29 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.
30 Ibid.
31 Ibid.

for the Miag machinery and the total cost of the whole refurbishment, including new floors, sprinklers and so on, came to £17,000.[32] The extent of the protectionist policy on the fortunes of the Anna Liffey mill meant that this installation was financed by cash, with no borrowing required.[33] An added bonus to the venture was that the mill's insurance premium was reduced from 23.1 per cent to 3.4 per cent.[34] A 130 h.p. diesel engine had also been installed to supplement the turbines. The installation of the engine was particularly timely as the river's flow was reduced with the construction of a reservoir on its headwaters at Poulaphouca in 1943.[35] The effect of the refurbishment of the mill resulted in more workers being employed as extra production was now possible. Two surviving time books show this to be the case. The 1924 Book shows a workforce in the mill of fifty workers. The 1935/36 book shows an increase in the last three months of 1936 of thirty, bringing the total to eighty.[36]

Shackletons' mill advertised their remodelling of a 'historic enterprise' with a spread-page in the *Irish Independent* of 26 April 1937.[37] Some of the firms associated with the refurbished mill were listed together with a summary of how the Shackleton family had kept abreast of new developments in technology over the years. The newspaper article said that, due to the complete renovation, 'the mill is able to stand comparison with any in the British Isles in appearance and equipment'.[38] At the time of this complete refurbishment, the directors of the firm were Mr. George Shackleton, Mr. John W. Shackleton and Mr. George Shackleton, Junior. The secretary was Mr. Thomas S. Shackleton, and the head miller was Mr. W.H. Freeman.

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32 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid.
35 Fred Hamond, commissioned conservation plan, p. 3.
36 Time books, Anna Liffey mill - 1924 and 1935/6.
37 *Irish Independent*, Monday 26 April 1937.
38 Ibid.

The extended Shackleton families were now living in Lucan and surrounding areas and, as already mentioned, other kinds of employment were opened up at their residences and farms. William E. Shackleton lived at Cannonbrook House in the centre of Lucan from the early twentieth century and farmed the adjoining land. This was once the retirement home of the eminent architect James Gandon from 1808 until his death in 1823.[39] Other Shackleton family members lived in other key areas of the village and hinterland contributing to the community life of the village. For instance, the gardens of David Shackleton of Beech Park, Clonsilla, were noted in *The Hidden Gardens of Ireland* as a 'plantspersons garden with a truly magnificent collection of herbaceous plants'.[40] After David's death, his son, Jonathan continued to care for the gardens, which were described as possessing one of the finest collections of plants to be found in Ireland.[41] An early contribution to the enjoyment of the local children in Lucan was provided in the 1930s by the Shackletons in the form of magic lantern slide-shows presented in the Church of Ireland school which proved a welcome diversion in the pre-cinema days.[42] Moreover, the children of the mill workers were treated every year to a party in the Shackleton residence beside the Anna Liffey mill (see Plate 0.2). This was organised by the Shackleton sisters, Christine and Rebecca, and memories of these parties and the gifts given to them on their departure home are still vivid.[43] Roger Shackleton (1931 – 1987), son of George, was a talented artist who contributed thirteen works to the RHA. He taught at the NCAD from 1980 until 1987.[44]

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39 Mary Mulhall and Joan O'Flynn, (eds.), *Lucan and Lucanians, a revised history of Lucan* (Kildare, 1996), p. 117.

40 Marianne Heron, *The hidden gardens of Ireland* (Dublin, 1995), p. 204.

41 Students of M.Arch.Sc. course, U.C.D., examination of historic buildings and areas of architectural importance in and near Lucan, Architectural Archives, file no. 04303650.

42 Michael Gannon, ex-trade union official, Transcript of interview with D. Collins, 23 October 2003.

43 Sheila Corrigan, interview with D. Collins, 17 May 2004.

44 Theo Snoddy, *Dictionary of Irish artist of the twentieth century* (Dublin, 1996), p. 452.

Economically, the Shackleton tradition of keeping up with new technology advances and cornering niche markets kept the firm 'afloat' when other less progressive mills were forced to close, was successful up to at least 1939.

Pattern of distribution

Distribution by train and canal was made comparatively easy by the closeness of the mill to both these points of transport. Shackletons had a steam lorry and later a diesel lorry delivering the flour to shops and markets. Shackletons' flour sale deliveries were generally conducted in the counties surrounding county Dublin, for example, Meath, Kildare, Wicklow and Westmeath. Travellers, or commercial representatives, were constantly on the road seeking business wherever they could. New markets came on stream in Mayo and Galway when George Shackleton (Junior), on holiday in the west of Ireland, went around with an agent to shopkeepers to seek orders for flour.[45] A wagon of flour from the Anna Liffey mill held approximately six tons, comprising 140lbs. and 112 lbs. cotton bags of flour. It was now a common occurrence according to George Shackleton, in the west of Ireland, for every ass-cart going home from a market to have an eight stone or ten stone bag of flour on board.[46] These efforts in developing small market needs proved an invaluable addition to a now thriving concern.

Shackletons' trade in Dublin was minimal as there were several mills in the city catering for the population there. The Lucan mill tended to concentrate on neighbouring country markets where their one-ton truck and three-ton truck were constantly engaged in delivery services. Moreover, local shops in Lucan and surrounding villages sold Shackletons' flour under their famous 'Lily of the Valley' trade mark, in varying size bags. Local tradition holds that the larger strong cotton bags used in the Anna Liffey mill had other uses when emptied of flour. These used bags went on to make excellent bed sheets for households

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45 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1983.
46 Ibid.

and were sought after for this purpose. Women were employed at the mill to pack the smaller bags. Others were employed to test-bake the bread in order to ensure that the quality of the flour was up to standard requirements.[47] The mill bakery was an important focal point for this procedure. (see Plate 0.2)

Plate 3.2 Some day workers at Shackletons, *c.*1902 (by kind permission of Mrs. Mary Shackleton)

Workforce of the period

The number of flour mills in Ireland increased from twenty-eight to thirty-seven between 1932 and 1936, resulting in an increase in workers being employed.[48] Despite the supposition that the tariff on imported flour would only require approximately one hundred and fifty extra workers, the real number of employees increased from 1,979 to 1,729 between 1931 and 1936.[49] As already mentioned, one surviving time book of Shackletons' mill shows an increase in the last three months of 1936 from fifty to eighty workers. Evidently, due to government intervention at this stage, the milling business was in a healthy state as far as providing employment was concerned. The population of Lucan

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47 May Birnie (nee Matthews), transcript of interview with D. Collins, 11 November, 2003.
48 Takei. in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000,* p.143.
49 Ibid.

village for 1926 was 849 persons, and by 1936 it showed a small increase to 867.[50] Therefore, Lucan village in the 1930s still consisted of a small community and it was not until 1951 that the census figure reached over 1,000 persons.[51]

Rationalisation plan

The Agricultural Produce (Cereals) Act of 1933 had been introduced in an effort to rationalise the milling industry. As already stated, the intention of this Act was to 'make provision for the control and regulation of the businesses of milling wheat and other cereals with a view to the development of those businesses in the national interest, and also to make provisions calculated to promote and encourage the growing of certain cereals'.[52] This Act placed rigid regulations on the milling industry and the government now had the power to refuse or revoke licences. However, due to a multiplicity of problems relating to drying and storing native wheat, the net effect was that millers' costs rose. Eventually, the rationalisation plan was substantially suspended. The government appeared to overlook the cartels, which had existed in the milling industry for several years previously, as long as the millers used native wheat.[53] Two major groups were beginning to re-organise the flour-milling industry in the 1930s.[54] One was Ranks Ltd., who began to acquire a controlling interest in the Munster area mills. The other group was the Dublin Port Milling Co. Ltd., the most modernised mill in the state, who had an alliance with Odlums, Ltd.[55] By 1937 these groups accounted for roughly seventy per cent of the total flour production in the State. These developments did not augur well for the small family-owned flour mills such as Shackletons.

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50 Census of Ireland, 1926 and 1936.
51 Ibid., 1951.
52 Agriculture Produce (Cereals) Act, 1933.
53 Takei. in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000,* p. 147.
54 Ibid., p. 144.
55 Ibid., p. 146.

Conclusion

The essential findings so far are the benefits which accrued to Shackletons' mill arising from the protectionist policy introduced by the Fianna Fail government. The difficulties relating to the quota system for flour millers meant the demise of many small mills but Shackletons managed to cope with the new challenges. The good business practices of the Anna Liffey mill enabled them to completely renovate the mill in 1936. A period of stability in the trade was enjoyed by employer and worker alike. The abandonment of the proposed rationalisation policy helped, for a time, to ward off the possibility that small independent mills were now in a descending spiral of inevitable closure. However, the Anna Liffey mill held on longer than most due to the ingenuity of the Shackletons to keep pace with modern trends in relation to markets and technology.

CHAPTER IV

Final years of the Shackleton era – 1940 to 1978

The Anna Liffey mill was still a profitable business in the period up to 1939 when World War II began and a third generation of Shackletons was about to join the firm, Richard (1916-2000) and David (1923-88). In the late 1940s, the mill was linked to the ESB grid and electric motors were installed to back up the diesel engine and turbines, adding greatly to the smooth running of milling operations.[1] The resulting stability which this created for the workers in general promoted a 'knock on' effect in the economic life of the village community in terms of spending power. The fact that many workers' families lived in Shackleton houses gave them security in two of the most basic elements of life, steady employment and rentable accommodation.

The Emergency and rationing 1939 - 1949

When war broke out in 1939 in Europe, Ireland's decision to remain neutral did not automatically provide immunity from the economic impact of the conflict. Ireland was still a young state trying to make inroads into foreign markets, while at the same time promoting self-sufficiency. The Taoiseach of the day, Eamonn de Valera, moved Seán Lemass from the Department of Industry and Commerce to a new Department of Supplies at the beginning of the war.[2] This new department assumed a central role in sourcing and distributing agricultural and industrial products in co-operation with the Departments of Industry and Commerce and of Agriculture.[3] The government was obliged to impose rationing, price and wage controls. As already discussed in chapter III, compulsory tillage

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1 Fred Hamond, commissioned conservation plan, p. 3.

2 J.J. Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985, Politics and society* (Cambridge, 1989), p. 233.

3 Akihiro Takei, 'The political economy of the Irish flour-milling industry 1922-1945 in *Irish flour milling - a history 600-2000* (ed.) Andy Bielenberg (Dublin, 2003), p.148.

orders more than doubled wheat output between 1939 and 1944. Ireland was able to indulge the luxury of expanding wheat acreage by far more than the European average.[4]

Debates over the price of flour and bread took over a substantial amount of time in Dail Eireann from the day that Seán Lemass first brought in the Emergency Powers Act in 1939. In relation to the price of flour in Dublin, an opposition spokesperson, Mr. P.S. Doyle, asked Mr. Seán Lemass, Minister for Supplies, on November, 1939, if he would state the price charged for bakers' flour in the city of Dublin immediately before September 1, 1939, and the present price. The answer he received was 'the price charged for bakers' flour in the city of Dublin immediately before 1 September, 1939, was 39/6d. per sack of 280 lbs. and the current price is 45/- per sack'.[5] Consternation was expressed by Mr. James Dillon of Fine Gael that while the fixed price for flour in Dublin was now 45/-d., it was costing 49/-d. to deliver in the west of Ireland.[6] The debate between Seán Lemass and James Dillon became very heated, which illustrates the important position the whole subject of flour milling had assumed. These debates regarding flour and bread continued throughout the Emergency with opposition and government trading insults backwards and forwards across the Dail chamber.

The general public was faced with having to feed families with less available bread, which had long since replaced the potato as the mainstay of the family diet. Moreover, the bread now on offer was unlike what they were used to. A coarse brown flour was now used in the bakeries, with the resulting loaves disparagingly called 'black bread'. The reason for this appearance was the fact that 100% extraction of fine flour was taken from the finished product.

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4 Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985, politics and society*, p. 233.

5 Houses of the Oireachtas Parliamentary debates, 1919-2003, vol 78 http://historical-debates.oireachtas.ie 22 April 2004.

6 Ibid..

There were strict regulations required by the Emergency Powers (manufacture of bread) Order 1943 in relation to the quality of flour to be used in bread-making and the price deemed appropriate for 'fancy bread'.[7] The term 'fancy bread' described bread other than:

(a) bread commonly known as batch bread
(b) bread of proprietary brands (for instance, *Procea*)
(c) bread of special brands (for instance, *Perfection* – produced by Johnston Mooney & O'Brien)
(d) sliced pan loaves sold in wrappers
(e) bread commonly known as soda bread[8]

Throughout the Emergency, the provision of grain was of such great concern to the government, that Seán Lemass broadcast an appeal in February 1942 for self-denial in the consumption of bread.[9] An allowance of seven ounces per person per day was suggested, and from May onwards it was illegal to serve bread or wheaten flour at public events.[10] The government was warned by the Department of Agriculture that the position in relation to wheat was so critical that Ireland might have to produce its full requirement of wheat or go without bread altogether.[11] The Irish Flour Millers' Association formed the Millers' Control Committee under the direction of the Department of Supplies.[12] As members of the Irish Flour Millers' Association, the Shackletons were very up-to-date with what was happening in the milling industry at this time and political and security matters generally. In fact, George Shackleton was a district leader of the local Defence Force in the Lucan area during the Emergency.[13] He had served previously in World War I. His cousin Richard served in the British army during World War II. Although the Shackletons were living in Ireland for several generations, they seemed to look to Britain in terms of identity and showed a marked preference towards anyone with a background in the British army. It

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7 Emergency Powers (manufacture of bread) Order, 1943, Statutory rules and orders, 1943, No. 388, fancy bread (prices) Order, 1943.
8 Ibid.
9 Tony Gray, *The lost years, the emergency in Ireland* 1939-1945 (London, 1997), p. 184.
10 Ibid. p.185.
11 Ibid.
12 Takei, in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000.* p. 150.
13 *Irish Times*, George Shackleton interviewed by Maurice Liston, 15 December 1965.

was noticed by Anna Liffey workers that if an ex-British army person came looking for a job at the mill, they were taken on immediately.[14]

Effects of World War II

The Irish Flour Millers' Association set up the *Wheat Reserve Committee*, which would buy, store, and control a reserve of wheat. It was becoming more difficult to import wheat and so it became imperative that native wheat supplies were encouraged. To this end, the Department of Agriculture introduced Compulsory Tillage Orders in 1941, to increase the acreage of home-grown wheat.[15] Therefore, Ireland at least had the good fortune to be self-sufficient in basic food. The Lucan community suffered the effects of the war in terms of general shortages and rationing like every other village community but by this time leisure activities in the village had improved to lessen the hardship. Sporting enthusiasts were well catered for with golf, football, hockey and boxing clubs providing recreation for those enthusiasts. The old tram sheds in the village were converted to a ballroom called *The Lucania* and a new cinema named *The Premier* was opened in 1945.[16] Apart from regular employment supplied by Shackletons and Hills woollen mills, other firms opened up in the village creating job opportunities in other industries.

Post-war difficulties

The ending of the war in 1945 did not signal any significant change in the flour and bread rationing. In fact, the Emergency Powers (No. 173) Order, 1943, continued under various amendments until 1949. In 1948, a new inter-party government had taken over and James Dillon was now the Minister for Agriculture. He signed an order in 1949 relating to bread rationing every bit as draconian in many respects as the previous government.[17] The Millers' Control Committee was having difficulties in obtaining applications from traders

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14 L. Birnie, former mill worker, transcript of interview with D. Collins, 21 November 2003.

15 Ibid., p. 149.

16 Mary Mulhall and Joan O'Flynn (ed.), *Lucan and Lucanians, a revised history of Lucan* (Kildare, 1996), p. 66.

17 Statutory Instruments, Flour, wheatenmeal and bread order, 1949, file no. 226.

for deliveries of flour complete with the necessary indents and requisitions for which they were held accountable. They wrote to the Minister for Industry & Commerce and they were assured that no subsidised flour could be delivered to any trader whose applications were not accompanied by the necessary indents and requisitions.[18]

Wage rates and conditions of employment assumed importance in the post-war period. Now that prices had risen sharply compared to wages since 1939, workers now sought compensation.[19] Under the Industrial Relations Act, 1946, workers' pay was determined by the Joint Industrial Council.[20] The workers were represented by their unions and the agreed wage rates for mill workers, forty two and a half hour week for regular workers and forty hour week for shift workers, were fixed to the sack capacity of the mill and its location:

	Class 1 (45 sacks and over)		Class 2 (23 – 45 sacks)		Class 3 (10 – 15 sacks)		Class 4 (under 10 sacks)	
City Mill	**s.**	**d**	**s.**	**d**	**s.**	**d**	**s.**	**d**
Rollerman	273	3	266	6	263	0	250	0
Screensman	256	3	246	0	243	3	240	6
Purifierman	251	6	246	0	243	3	240	6
Silksman	246	0	243	3	240	6	237	9
Flour packer	229	6	229	6	229	6	229	6
Labourer	216	3	216	3	216	3	216	6

	Class 1 (10 sacks and over)		Class 2 (5 – 10 sacks)		Class 3 (under 5 sacks)	
Country Mill	**s.**	**d**	**s.**	**d**	**s.**	**d**
Rollerman	222	0	220	3	214	3
Screensman	217	6	212	6	207	3
Purifierman	217	9	212	0	207	3
Silksman	213	9	210	0	207	3
Flour packer	202	9	200	6	196	3
Labourer	192	0	189	9	185	0
Lorry helper	192	0	189	9	185	0

Source: Industrial Relief Act, 1946, rates of pay for flour-milling workers, determined by J.I.C..[21]

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18 A.S. Whitney, Secretary, Millers' Control Committee, letter to millers re indents and requisitions ruling received from the Minister for Industry & Commerce, July 4, 1949.

19 Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985 Politics and society*, p.189.

20 Summary of conclusions and recommendations, Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, chapter XI.

21 Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, Remuneration and conditions of employment determined by the Joint Industrial Council , under the Industrial Relief Act, 1946, on which the workers are represented by their unions, Chapter X, p. 72.

Workers at Shackletons were always assured of receiving the 'going' rate of pay and union officials found the firm open to discussion on union issues, including pay rates.[22] However, times were not economically good for workers generally in the post-war years, although it was appreciated that having secure employment was an advantage not available to everyone. Seán Lemass, who relied heavily on working-class votes in his Dublin constituency, always projected himself as a friend of labour.[23] However, the need to keep a firm hold on bread supplies led him to persuade the cabinet in 1947 to extend the Special Powers Act to prohibit strikes or lock-outs in order to counter a threatened strike in the flour mills.[24] In the end, this action did not prove necessary as Mr. De Valera met with the trade union representatives and a conciliatory line was adopted.

Further rationalisation

George Shackleton maintained that Seán Lemass had over-licensed the milling in the 1930s industry in order to ensure competition.[25] It was also his opinion that the needs of millers were much less important than the needs of farmers for the simple reason that 'there were fewer votes in milling'.[26] The industry was more production-driven than market driven in the post-war years. As a result of bread shortages during the emergency period, the tradition of home-baking accounted for almost forty-three per cent of the total market for flour by the end of the 1940s.[27] A new situation arose after the war for Irish millers when 'battles' arose with the government to try to increase the price of flour.[28] It became much harder for small independent mills to survive, resulting in pressure being put on them to accept rationalisation schemes. In the 1930s there were thirty-six small flour

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22 Michael Gannon, ex-trade union official, transcript of interview with D. Collins, 23 October , 2003.
23 Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985 Politics and society*, p.289.
24 Ibid.
25 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1983.
26 Ibid.
27 Norman Campion, 'Irish flour milling since the second world war' in *Irish Flour Milling – A History 600-2000*, p.155.
28 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1983.

mills in Dublin but by the early 1960s, there were only three.[29] The rest of the country suffered the same fate, with only two mills in Cork, one each in Enniscorthy, the midlands, Limerick and Donegal.[30] The trend towards large-scale enterprise in the Irish milling industry continued in the post-war years and, as already outlined, the wisdom of Shackletons in cornering niche markets was the driving force that ensured their survival for so long when other less market-driven companies were forced to close.

Lucan suffered the same unemployment problems as the rest of the country in the 1950s. While Shackletons still provided valued employment in the locality, many people in the village were forced to take the emigrant boat to England to seek a livelihood. In fact, the census of 1946 for the village of Lucan showed a figure of 736 persons, which was a drop on the 1936 census figure of 867 persons.[31] It is not certain why the village population decreased so much in ten years except to assume that emigration to England and other places had begun even earlier than the 1950s. The loss of so many young people from the community helped to make Lucan a bleak place economically and socially throughout the 1950s as, generally speaking, a young vibrant workforce is the measure of prosperity and stability in any village or town. The fact that Shackletons continued to hold firm, in spite of the depressed state of milling at this time, was a positive 'plus' for the community.

The frugality of the 1950s nationally meant that nothing went to waste. For example, the cotton bags used for packing flour were of reusable material and few were dumped. As already mentioned many eight and ten stone cotton flour bags were made into sheets and smaller bags were used to make pillow cases and dishcloths.[32] Shackletons always requested the return of their jute bags and a record was kept of them.[33] A popular legend

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29 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1983.
30 Ibid.
31 National census of Ireland, 1936; 1946.
32 Campion, 'Irish flour milling since the second world war' in *Irish flour milling – a history 600-2000*, p.155.
33 Mrs. Mary Shackleton, transcript of interview,16 April 2004.

grew up in Lucan concerning their large cotton bags. It concerned the story of how the Kildare Gaelic football team came to be known as the 'Lily Whites'. Apparently, the team was passing along the Strawberry Beds road on their way to Croke Park and realised that they were short of gear for some of the players. As they were approaching the Anna Liffey mill, they called into the factory to acquire white sacks from which they improvised some team jerseys. Consequently, the Kildare team became known as the 'Lily Whites' echoing one of the well-known trade names of the mill, 'Lily of the Valley'.[34]

The Industrial Development Authority (IDA) was founded in 1949. Its brief was to 'investigate the effects of protective measures and to 'initiate proposals and schemes for the creation and development of the Irish industry'.[35] This, in turn, led eventually to the introduction of the Economic Development document, which formed the basis for the Programme for Economic Development. The latter was usually referred to as the First Programme. The content signalled a shift from protection towards free trade.[36]

Over-capacity in the flour milling industry became more acute in the 1960s and many mills were taken out of production. This initial rationalisation programme was introduced by the Flour Millers' Association from 1952 to 1961 and a further scheme introduced in 1962 led to additional closures. This resulted in the surviving independents being reduced to seventeen by the end of 1965.[37] Despite rationalisation, overcapacity continued to be a problem as the consumption of flour still declined. George Shackleton had a view on why bread consumption had declined. While pointing out that bread was one of the cheapest foods that one could buy, he maintained that as there was now a higher standard of living, with other foods becoming popular, it was inevitable that people would begin to decrease

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34 Famous people, Joseph Shackleton, http://www.iol.ie/-geof/people.htm, 18 April 2004.
35 Lee, *Ireland 1912-1985 Politics and society*, p.310.
36 Ibid, p. 344.
37 Campion, 'Irish flour milling since the second world war' in *Irish flour milling - a history 600-2000* p.158.

their consumption of bread.[38] However, he maintained that the Irish were still relatively one of the largest consumers of flour, each year eating about 210 lbs. of flour per head.[39] He appears to have been correct in that assessment as the table shows:

Country	Flour consumption (lbs)
Ireland (Republic)	210
United Kingdom	168
Denmark	89
Belgium	180
France	213
F.R. Germany	110
Switzerland	165
Norway	126
Sweden	112
USA	115
Canada	140
Australia	185
New Zealand	159

Table 4.2 Taken from Department of Agriculture and Fisheries, 'Report of the Survey team established by the Minister for Agriculture on the flour-milling industry (Dublin, 1965)' in *Irish flour milling, a history 600-2000* (Ed.) Andy Bielenberg, p.157

The table shows a comparison of per capita of flour consumption in a number of European, North American countries, Australia and New Zealand in 1959. It clearly shows that Ireland comes only second to France in per capita consumption of flour.[40]

The 1950s were generally perceived to have been a bleak decade for consumers. However, Shackletons' order books showed no sign of reduced customer orders. The alphabetical order book for 1957 shows a substantial list of customers, mainly retail outlets, generally centred on county Dublin areas and surrounding counties. Monaghan was the furthest county to be included on the list.[41] This was at a time when smaller bags were used for selling in shops, being more convenient for customers. Moreover, the new supermarkets found that it was a more efficient and hygienic approach to sell off the shelves in pre-

38 George Shackleton, *Irish Times article*, 3 December , 1965.

39 Ibid.

40 Department of Agriculture and Fishers, 'Report of the Survey team established by the Minister for Agriculture on the flour-milling industry (Dublin, 1965) in *Irish flour milling - a history 600-2000* , p.157.

41 Customers book, Anna Liffey mill, 1957.

packed bags.[42] Frank Corrigan began working at the Anna Liffey mill in 1965 as a lorry driver.[43] Even at this stage of the mill's imminent decline under the Shackleton ownership, the deliveries he undertook were widespread throughout the country. He often left Lucan at two o'clock in the morning in order to fulfil the orders to bakeries and grocery shops. Some of the bakeries to which he delivered, such as Crottys' of Kilkenny, and McCanns' of Dundalk, have since closed. He enjoyed his time at the mill, later continuing working for Roma Foods Ltd. He maintains he was the last person to leave the premises at the time of the Fingal County Council takeover.[44]

Labour costs began to escalate in the 1950s, making it unviable to carry the same number of employees at the Anna Liffey mill, which now stood at seventy. During the early 1960s efforts were made by the firm to reduce manpower and diversify into other products besides flour.[45] The installation of bulk grain intake equipment in 1960 automatically conveyed the grain from the delivery lorry to storage bins without the need to manhandle sacks. In 1966, flour conveyors and an automatic packer were also installed. In 1969, a bulk out-loading shed was erected to enable the flour to be distributed without the need for bagging.[46] Another enterprising idea introduced in the mill in the late sixties was to make a calf milk replacer called *Calolac* which proved very popular with customers throughout the country to assist with cattle feeding.[47] Shackletons were the original makers of this product but other companies eventually began making the same product under different names.[48] While these changes helped for a time to keep the firm afloat, it was the 'death-knell' for continued employment for many of the workers, whose jobs were becoming progressively obsolete by new automation.

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42 Campion, 'Irish flour milling since the second world war' in *Irish flour milling - a history 600-2000*, p.160.
43 Frank Corrigan, transcript of interview, 21 June 2004.
44 Ibid.
45 Fred Hamond, commissioned conservation plan, 2000.
46 Ibid.
47 Walter McDonagh, former Anna Liffey mill foreman, transcript of interview with D. Collins, 22 June 2004.
48 Ibid.

Takeover by Roma Foods Ltd.

Roma Foods Ltd. was one of Shackletons main customers since the early 1970s. Pasta products are made from semolina, which is an intermediate product in the reduction of wheat to flour. It was therefore relatively straightforward to modify the milling process in order to produce a greater proportion of it relative to flour.[49] As far back as 1960, when George Shackleton attended a conference in Baden Baden, Germany, he met a person who suggested that instead of using Manitoba wheat (a product from Canada) he should concentrate on durum wheat. On arrival back in Ireland he exchanged Manitoba for durum and this proved to be more suitable for making semolina, as making other types of flour was now proving unprofitable. Because of the close business association with Roma Foods Ltd., the latter firm suggested that if Shackletons ever thought of giving up milling, they would be interested in purchasing the mill. Consequently the Shackletons, fearful of going into liquidation and on hearing stories of other mills being forced to do so, completed a deal with Roma Foods Ltd. which met with general satisfaction.[50] The orders for which Shackletons dealt with for so long were handed over to the Dock Milling Company, for which they received ample reward. However, now there was a redundancy package to be negotiated for the remaining workers. Naturally, the union was looking after the interests of the workers in seeking as much as they could in redundancy pay. George Shackleton regarded the demands as 'blackmail'.[51] In fact there was such a risk of a clash of interests reminiscent of the 1913 troubles, albeit on a much 'lower-key' basis, that the union implied that Shackletons should consider themselves lucky not to have a picket outside their residences.[52] Compared to the fledgling union movement of earlier periods, unions were now vibrant organisations growing in stature and influence as the twentieth

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49 Hamond, commissioned conservation plan, 2000.
50 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.
51 Ibid.
52 Ibid.

century moved along. Although strikes were not unknown at other flour mills, there were no strikes from that memorable 1913 period at the Anna Liffey mill. On the rare occasion when trouble would erupt, a trade union official would meet with George Shackleton and an amicable solution to the problem was achieved.[53]

By the time that Roma Foods Ltd. had taken over the mill in 1978, George Shackleton had retired and the two remaining Shackletons involved in the mill, Richard and David, became shareholders of this new company. The Grange mill at the 12th Lock was closed at this time and Richard was appointed manager of the mill operations under the auspices of Roma Foods Ltd.[54] While the mill did not close its doors for another twenty years, to all intents and purposes, the Shackleton family had now relinquished ownership of the business after over one hundred years of successful milling. For the workers, a chapter had ended as the workforce was reduced to about a dozen employees. The houses which Shackleton owned in the village were offered for sale to the residents from the late seventies onwards, an opportunity to which almost all took advantage of.

Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to show that, despite the Shackleton tradition of maintaining good business standards throughout the time that they were fully in control of operations from 1859 to 1978, it proved too difficult to continue with the same degree of economic confidence due to competition from large consortiums. The fact that they endured for so long is a testament to their resilience in overcoming obstacles. Their long-time involvement in the Irish Flour Millers Associations, the Irish Industrial Development Association, and other bodies was instrumental in keeping them informed of current thinking on the whole milling business. Other mills of similar size had long since closed down by the time the Shackletons were faced with the commercial pressures facing the

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53 Michael Gannon, ex-trade union official, transcript of interview with D. Collins, April 18, 2004.
54 George Shackleton, taped memoirs, 1981.

rationalisation policies. These pressures, together with decreasing bread consumption, were the final arbiters in determining the fate of small independent mills. Local employment began to be served in the 1960s by other businesses coming into the Lucan area and the village began to thrive. Now that private car ownership was becoming the norm and public transport was more readily available, employment outside the confines of Lucan itself became a realistic option for the growing population. An important factor for the former mill workers was the opportunity which presented itself to buy their houses from the Shackletons from the late 1970s. This gave them the freedom of movement which they formerly lacked and brought in a new era of optimism.

ANNA LIFFEY
Shackletons

JOSEPH FISHER SHACKLETON = JANE WIGHAM EDMUNDSON
1832 - 1908 1843 - 1909

(From Sheet 2)

APPENDIX A

William Edmundson of Cannonbrook, Lucan
b. 26.5.1867
m. 25.9.1895
d. 6.10.1935
= Edith Anne Smithson
b. 24.4.1869
d. 25.2.1958

Mary Edmundson
b. 4.3.1870
m. 27.9.1894
d. 30.6.1955
= Frederick Carr
b. 3.6.1867
d. 17.10.1949

George
b. 27.6.1872
d. 6.8.1956

Rebecca Harvey
b. 17.3.1874
d. 4.3.1955

John Wigham of Beech Park, Clonsilla
b. 28.6.1875
m.14.5.1914
d. 31.3.1947
= Rhoda Beattie
b.31.12.1884
d.21.2.1955

Jane Christine
b. 25.12.1878
d. 4.4.1971

George
b. 1.11.1899
m. 6.10.1927
d. 16.4.1983
= Sylvia Euphemia Rutherford Healey
b. 9.2.1904
d. 29.12.1981

Thomas Smithson
b. 5.7.1902
m. 4.4.1934
d. 15.11.1972
= Rita Olive Vera Odbert
b. 31.8.1906

Richard
b. 20.7.1906
d. 25.5.1961

Joseph Fisher
b. 25.2.1909
m. 4.10.1939
d. 31.5.1977
= Bertha Petersen Duthie
b. 27.9.1913

Brian Richard
b.14.7.1951

Katherine Rhoda
b.30.1.1915

Richard John of Anna Liffey House, Lucan
b. 14.5.1916
m. 29.4.1950
= Mary Frances Jonet Chaloner
b.16.12.1925

Jane Wigham
b. 4.5.1921
m. 30.12.1943
= Guy Brown
b.12.11.1914

David Copeland Beattie of Beech Park Clonsilla
b.30.10.1923
m.8.7.1950
= June Stella Rickards
b.16.6.1921

Ann Rebecca
b. 9.9.1930
m. 4.9.1957
= Gerard Buchanan
b. 27.8.1926

Roger Coryndon
b. 14.12.1931
d. 18.9.1987

Christine Mary
b.10.5.1951

Richard Chaloner
b.13.10.1953

Jonet Rhoda
b.2.7.1956
m.19.5.1984
= Thomas Mary Egan
b.10.3.1958

Michael Beattie
b.22.1.1959

John Reginald
b.28.1.1942
m.1.11.1974
= Helen Fitzgerald
b. 4.3.1947

Anthony Thomas
b. 13.6.1945
m. 14.3.1971
= Anthea Barrow
b.2.12.1942

Jonathan Joseph
b.19.4.1951
m.1.9.1979
= Daphne Elaine Sybil Levinge
b.19.1.1950

Arthur David
b.22.1.1953
m.30.5.1987
= Mary Veronica Case
b.30.9.1960

Charles Ricardo
b.23.6.1958
m.25.5.1986
= Miranda Josephine Thomas
b.6.2.1959

Lydia Katherine
b.27.1.1961

Rita Anne
b.17.3.1977

Edith Elizabeth
b.12.2.1979

Thomas James
b.16.5.1981

Nicola Frances
b. 25.8.1972

Christopher Thomas
b. 7.1.1975

Peter James
b.5.1.1977

David Levinge
b.23.6.1981

Jane Hester
b.8.2.1984

Hannah Lydia
b.7.8.1987

Viola Mary
b.3.2.1988

Sophia Ann
b.26.12.1987

APPENDIX B

Statement of George Shackleton, Miller, Lucan, *Evening Herald*, 6 December, 1913.
Shackleton business papers, NAI, 999/644/71.

I am a member of the firm of Messrs. George Shackleton & Sons Ltd. who carry on an extensive milling business at Lucan, Co. Dublin.

We purchase our grain from the Corn Merchants of the city either "ex store" or "ex Ship" and usually send our own carters and lorries to the particular warehouse or ship out of which we are advised by the merchant from whom we have purchased that delivery will be given to us. We also on some occasions take delivery ex ship into canal barges owned or hired by us and by these means transport the grain per the Grand Canal to Lucan where it is again loaded into lorries and carried to the mills, a distance of about two miles from the canal bank.

Up to about the beginning of August, 1913, none of our carters (or boatmen) had belonged to the Irish Transport Workers Union. About the time of the strike of farm labourers the Transport Union had been gradually extending its influence beyond the limits of the city. Our men were induced to become members and most of our men were enrolled.

We were beginning to feel the effects of the methods of the Irish Transport Union and while our men were outside the union our goods would not be delivered to our non-union men but were left on the quay where our men took them instead of taking them direct from the union men. Seeing the evil effects that had ensued in other mills and factories by reason of the tyrannical domination of this union we decided to call on our men to retire from the union.

Consequently towards the end of the month of August 1913, when it became evident that the Irish Transport Union had determined to wage war on all employers who refused to countenance the doctrine of "tainted goods" i.e. that no employee should be required to handle any goods produced by belonging or consigned to a firm whose employees were on strike or to recognise "sympathetic" strikes my firm determined to strike a blow to free itself and its dependents from all connection with this union.

Accordingly in the month of August 1913 we took an opportunity of speaking to our employees in most cases individually and not at a meeting and told them that as the firm refused to recognise the Transport Union or to have any dealings with it we required them to resign or that on next pay day we would give them a week's notice. They did not wait to get this notice but went out on strike in a body. The result was that we had to close down our mills until we obtained a fresh staff of workers.

We published a statement in the press of 17 August 1913 explaining our reasons for closing down the mills and stating that we were making arrangements to fulfil our customers' orders with as little delay as possible. By taking these steps we became of course in the eyes of the Transport Union a "tainted" firm.

On 12 September 1913 there was lying in transit sheds on the North Wall a quantity of wheat belonging to us in sacks branded with our name. We had instructed the Merchants Warehousing Company to bring this wheat into their warehouse for us. The carters of the Merchants Warehousing Company refused to handle these sacks on the ground that they were tainted. The men were dismissed and thereupon all their carters and other employees who were members of the Transport Union went out on a sympathetic strike. The store men of the Merchants Warehouse Company went on strike shortly afterwards when some of our men went to get delivery of goods.

On the 16th August 1913 my firm purchased through Messrs. R.& H. Hall Ltd. 125 quarters of yellow La Plate Maise to be delivered "ex the S.S. Twilight. We were therefore interested to this extent in her cargo when she arrived in Dublin on the 11th September 1913 and we were notified thereof accordingly by Messrs. Hall. My brother W.E. Shackleton, on the 16th of September, attended at the ship with a cart to get delivery but there was no one on the ship to deliver.

We also purchased part of the cargo of the S.S. "Antiope" which arrived in Dublin on the 17th September with a cargo of maize consigned to Messrs. W. & R. Barnett. This purchase was after the general strike and I attended on the 18th September with some non-union carters to take delivery of our portion of the cargo. The stevedores who were doing the ships' part of the discharge refused to fill our sacks and when this was insisted on they immediately struck work and I saw them coming up out of the hold and leaving the ship in a body.

On the 16th September 1913 we offered to purchase 100 quarters of the maize in the "Mariston" from Messrs. Figgis and they booked the order but as they were unable to arrange for us to get delivery the sale fell through. On the 13th October 1913 we were able to re-open our mills at Lucan having engaged sufficient new men to allow us to carry on.

There was a riot in Lucan on October 17th caused by the police stopping a band and crowd from coming to our mill. This occurred in the village a mile from the mill and none of the men working for us were present. My brother J.W. Shackleton was struck by a bottle thrown at him in the dark while riding on his bicycle through Lucan on night of October 16th. The strike came to an end as far as we were concerned on Saturday the 15th October 1913, the majority of the men deciding to abandon the Transport Union and applying for reinstatement which we did in as many cases as we could find room for.

After the discharge of the "Antiope" was resumed (work being re-commenced on the 28th November 1913) delivery was made to rail for us on December 1st and although the discharge was being undertaken by Transport Union labour the men did not on this occasion make any difficulty about filling the grain into our sacks. We did not attend at the "Antiope" on this occasion but our maize was sent on to us by rail in our branded sacks. The stevedores men filled our sacks in the hold of the ship. They had objected on previous occasions to fill our sacks at all.

APPENDIX C

Extract of a speech by James Larkin to the Tribunal of Inquiry into the Dublin Trades, October 1913, as published in the *Freeman's Journal:*

.....The first point I want to make is that the employers in this city, and throughout Ireland generally, have put forward a claim that they have a right to deal with their own; that they have a right to use and exploit individuals as they please; that they have duties which they limit, and they have responsibilities which they also limit, in their operation. They take to themselves that they have all the rights that are given to men and to societies of men, but they deny the right of the men to claim that they also have a substantial claim on the share of the produce they produce, and they further say that they want no third party interference. They want to deal with their workingmen individually. They say that they are men of such paramount intelligence and so able in their organising ability as captains of industry, who can always carry on their business in their own way, and they deny the right of the men and women who work for them to combine and try to assist one another in trying to improve their conditions of life. There must be fair play between man and man. There are rights on both sides, but these men opposite assume to themselves certain privileges, and they deny to the workingmen, who make their wealth and keep them in affluence, their rights When the position of the workers in Dublin was taken into consideration, was it any wonder that there was necessity for a Larkin to arise, and if there was one thing more than another in my life of which I will always be proud it was the part I have taken in rescuing the workers of Dublin from the brutalising and degrading conditions under which they laboured. My suggestion to the employers is that if they want peace we are prepared to meet them, but if they want war, then war they will have.

(This extract is taken from Michael McLoughlin, *Great Irish speeches of the twentieth century* (Dublin, 1996), p. 18.

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CONCLUSION

The consequences of the outward spread of the city has meant that many of the villages of west county Dublin have taken on a completely different appearance in the past few decades. Villages such as Lucan, Clonsilla, Blanchardstown and Castleknock are now part of a wider complex of housing estates and industrial developments. Although the road to the west by-passes Lucan village, bus corridors are now in operation in the precincts in an effort to transport commuters to and from the city. Many landmarks which epitomised the character of Lucan are no longer in existence. For instance the Coffee House, which this thesis reveals was an important centre of activity, was demolished to make way for a road to a new housing estate. At one time Lucan village possessed the only full-sized picture-house in the west Dublin area but apartment blocks now stand on the site. One could transverse the village to specify other places of noteworthiness which are now gone forever. Nonetheless one area where change is less apparent is the Strawberry Beds road where the former flour mill of Shackletons is situated just outside Lucan village. A preservation order imposed by Fingal County Council on the whole Liffey valley area ensures that this small section, wherein the Anna Liffey mill lies, retains its uniqueness. The mill could therefore be said to be a monument to the small-scale industrial past of the town.

One important objective of this study was to examine why the Anna Liffey mill began to flourish under the Shackletons. The mill buildings had been in existence since the 1820s and had even gained notoriety before that time, as 'the Devil's Mill' tag would indicate. William Delany of Stradbally, Co. Laois appeared to be the first tenant to build a sizeable mill complex in 1825, which is the basis for the present mill. Subsequent frequent changes in ownership would lead one to believe that either bad management was the reason for its initial failure or that the economic climate at the time did not justify such an expensive operation.

The new Shackleton owners who invested in the mill in 1859 were, as a large extended family, collectively dependent on its financial success. Their Quaker tradition helped them to take advantage of the social networks made available by the Society of Friends to improve their business opportunities. They embraced new technology with enthusiasm and were thereby in a better position to stay afloat when other like-sized mills were forced to close their doors. Regular adaptation of progressive ideas was considered very important and the Shackletons constantly kept in touch with their colleagues in the Irish Flour Millers' Association in order to keep up to speed in every conceivable way possible.

The study also focuses on the importance of the mill to the local community of Lucan. As pointed out in this thesis, Shackletons' mill was once a key centre of employment and economic activity. While it was not a particularly large concern, the small population of the village of Lucan in the late nineteenth century valued the sustainable employment on their doorstep at a time of fluctuating job prospects in this small corner of west county Dublin. Another aspect of their dependency was the fact that so many of the workers lived in Shackleton houses. The Anna Liffey mill was therefore not just a building. It signified stability and a sense of purpose for many families. The Shackletons were looked up to on that account and one can detect a paternalistic approach adopted by that family in the early years of their control. Despite this, the working community of the mill was disposed to interact socially and the annual outing arranged for the workers proved a welcome respite for everyone although it was 1938 before the workers were officially awarded one week's holiday.

The dramatic events surrounding the 1913 Lockout at the Anna Liffey mill, while of short duration, were an important indicator of the employer versus employee relationship at this period. The centre stage that the Shackletons assumed in being the first firm to lock out their

workers would indicate that they were determined to maintain control at all costs. This would probably explain the firm's comparative ease in reducing workers' wages in 1923 three months before other mill workers, following an abortive strike, followed suit. There is no doubt that Shackletons won the 'war' in 1913, and the dependency that the workers had on being employed at the mill and, more especially, their occupancy of Shackleton houses, may possibly have weighed heavily on their decision to relent without a fight when wage reductions were introduced in 1923. However, like many historic moments in time, the bitterness on both sides of the industrial divide at the Anna Liffey mill gradually subsided and good relations were resumed to the benefit of all. The fact that the later workers interviewed for this project were generally high in their praise of the firm and that they had fond memories of working in the mill is testament to a new era of understanding.

Very few of the original Shackleton family now live in the Lucan area and many of the workers who were employed at the mill are now either deceased or have left the area. The only tangible evidence of this working community lies in the empty environmentally protected mill on the Strawberry Beds Road. The structure of the thesis has been an attempt to chronologically record the important events from the time the Shackleton family first came to Lucan in 1859 from their roots in the Quaker village of Ballitore, Co. Kildare, to their eventual hand-over to Roma Foods Ltd. in 1978. To sum up the question posed in the introduction as to why the Shackletons succeeded in milling into the late twentieth century when other like-sized mills were forced to close, a big factor was their willingness to adapt to change. Moreover, their concentration on niche markets in the post-war decades had a beneficial effect in their continuing success. The Anna Liffey mill was a focus of community identity for over one hundred years and many extended Lucan families were employed by the firm. The well-worn road from the village to the workplace was synonymous with uniformity and a sense of belonging. The decline in the mill's fortunes

coincided with other businesses opening up in the area which lessened the impact of its eventual closure. Any nostalgic element of regret at its passing was therefore cushioned by the fact that alternative employment was now a reality.

Ultimately the primary aim of the thesis is to keep alive the history of the mill and the community it served under the control of its most successful owners from 1859 to 1978. Written and oral sources have been of great importance in building upon the chronological order of events. The records stored in the various repositories, the artefacts stored at Mrs. Mary Shackleton's house and the items stored in the mill premises carry with them a genuine record of a viable flour-milling enterprise.