CHARLEVILLE is a busy market town in North Cork, located close to the border with Limerick. It is situated in a rich agricultural area known as the Golden Vale which spans parts of Counties Cork, Limerick and Tipperary. It is in the townland of Rath Luirc or An Ráth, indicating that the settlement here is known as Ráth Luirc. The town is the centrepoint of a vast estate owned by the Earl. The town, as it is today, was laid out in a formal plan with two parallel wide streets. It was granted a charter in the late 17th century as the Golden Vale which spans parts of Counties Cork, Limerick and Tipperary. It is in the townland of Ráth Luirc or An Ráth, indicating that the Golden Vale was plant (part of the Kerry Group), the busiest employer in the town.

SITES TO SEE (refer to map overlaid for locations)

1. OLD PARISH CHURCH AND GRAVEYARD: The fragmentary remains of the medieval parish church that was reputedly built in 1330 by Richard de Cogan and was in ruins by 1615. The associated graveyard, renamed Holy Cross Cemetery, has many interesting headstones and features including a monument to the Irish-language poet Séan Cléacúin Mac Donnghaill (1691-1754) who was a native of the Churchnown area.

2. SITE OF THE BRIDEWELL JAIL: Now occupied by the Amber service station, marked the southern limit of the Borough of Charleville.

3. FENIAN HALL: Moloney Jewellers was used as a meeting house for nationalasts and was known as the Fenian Hall. Outside the building stands an arched Republican Monument erected to the memory of those who gave their lives in the cause of Irish freedom. It was built on the spot where Pádraic Pearse addressed a meeting in 1913 and was unveiled in 1923 by David Kent.

4. ST. JAMES’ CHURCH OF IRELAND: Built in 1846 on the site of an earlier Protestant church built by Roger Boyle in 1663. It is built of limestone ashlar and is a fine example of the Neo-Gothic style so popular at the time. It was converted to a Library by Cork County Council in the 1990s.

5. BRUCE FAMILY BURIAL VAULT: A monument to the Bruce family who, in partnership with the Evans family, operated one of the first private banks in Charleville in the early 19th century.

6. AIB BANK: Built during the 19th century as a townhouse and according to local lore it was one of the first slated houses in the town. The building features a fine classical portico.

7. THE FORMER CHRISTIAN BROTHERS’ SCHOOL: Opened in 1866, past pupils included Eamon de Valera (President of Ireland 1919-1973), Daniel Mannix and Bishop Henry Murphy of Limerick.

8. MOATVILLE HOUSE: An interesting and unusual historic house built on the grounds of Charleville House. It was the birthplace of Bishop William Reeves and of Dr Marie Ryan, the owner of the painting “The Taking of Christ” by Cloyne Robert Browne, a native of Charleville, in 1898. The Gothic features, such as pointed windows, buttresses and finials give an air of an ancient building.

9. FORMER CATHOLIC CHURCH: Built in 1812 and now serves as the Community hall. It was built following the collapse of an older thatched chapel on or near the present site. The adjacent priest’s house was where an Anat Haor Peaard A Loaghna taught his extra-curricular, and much sought after, classical studies.

10. MARKET HOUSE: A distinctive building built in 1769 to accommodate and control the buying and selling of local produce. The arcaded ground floor was originally open and used for the sale of farm and meat products from the adjacent Shambles Lane. The upper floor was used as a courthouse for many years until the 1980s.

11. BRÚDAIR’S COFFEE SHOP: Has a notable traditional shopfront. The upper floor was used as a courthouse for many years until the 1980s.

12. GRAIN STORE: This substantial three storey building is one of a number of 19th century grain stores in the town, many of which were used by Morrissey Millers.

13. FEVER HOSPITAL: An imposing two-storey building built in the 1840s for Kilmallock Poor Law Union. It is now incorporated into St. Mary’s Secondary School and is known as the Mannix Block.

14. FORMER NATIONAL BANK (now the Credit Union): Officially opened by Daniel O’Connell in 1835. The Banking system developed in Ireland in the 19th century and bank buildings were usually architect designed to reflect an atmosphere of stability, prosperity and honesty.

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16. CLANCHY TERRACE: A terrace of fine early 19th century townhouses. The middle house was occupied by the Mercy Nuns when they first came to Charleville in 1836 at the invitation of Ms Mary Clancy. The corner house is the birthplace Eliza Lynch (1835-1880) whose family fled to Paris to avoid the famine. A woman of renowned beauty she had an intriguing life as a Paris courtesan and later in life was known as the ‘Beauteuse’. She was revered and is still regarded as a national heroine.

17. THE OLD PAVILION CINEMA: Built by local business men in 1925. It was a popular venue. Rebuilt again following a fire in 1942 and finally closed its doors in the 1970s.

18. THE FORMER POST OFFICE: Known locally as Corny Graham’s Post Office, it has an elegant fanlight door with a key stone bearing the date 1823.

19. NATIONAL SCHOOL: Built in 1833, it opened in 1837 with boys on the first floor and girls on the ground floor. In the 1940s the girls moved to St Anne’s School, and the present building continued as the boys’ school until 1972. The building is now the home of the Schoolyard Theatre.

20. CONVENT OF MERCY: Built in 1839 for the Mercy Nuns who were part of a wide-scale religious movement at the time to provide education for all levels. The former convent chapel now houses the Mercy Order Provincial Heritage Museum which presents interesting information on the history and heritage of the Order. Access on request.

21. FERRY CROSS CATHOLIC CHURCH: An outstanding example of a late-19th century Neo-Gothic church. The style and scale of the building reflect the growing confidence of the Catholic Church in late-19th century Ireland. The foundation stone was laid by the Bishop of Cloyne Robert Browne, a native of Charleville, in 1898. The Gothic features, such as pointed windows, buttresses and finials give an air of an ancient building.

22. MOATVILLE HOUSE: An interesting and unusual historic house built on the grounds of Charleville House. It was the birthplace of Bishop William Reeves and of Dr Marie Ryan, the owner of the painting “The Taking of Christ” by Cloyne Robert Browne, a native of Charleville, in 1898. The Gothic features, such as pointed windows, buttresses and finials give an air of an ancient building.

23. SITE OF CHARLEVILLE HOUSE: Built by Roger Boyle in 1668 as his main residence, it was regarded as one of the finest houses in Ireland at the time. It occupied one side of a large walled court and could be defended with 16 guns. The house was burnt in the 1690s for the Jesuits by the Duke of Berwick after he dined in it! The house was subsequently demolished. All that remains of the ‘notable gardens and fine park’ today are symmetrical tree, masonry walls and earthworks including four fish ponds.

24. CHURCH PARK HOUSE: Originally known as St. John’s Park after the family who built it in the late-18th century. The house is currently in ruins. An unusual octagonal gate lodge is located near the original entrance to the house.

25. DEER PARK HOUSE: The birthplace of Daniel Mannix (1864-1963), Archbishop of Melbourne 1917-53 and one of the most influential public figures in Australia at the time.

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CHARLEVILLE
Historic Town founded 1661

- Weavers' Cottages
- Clanchy Terrace
- Brúdair's Coffee Shop
- Mercy Convent
- Charleville Park (reconstruction)
- Former Catholic church
- Market House
- O'Sullivan's Butchers
- Former fever hospital
- Holy Cross Catholic Church
- Moatville House
- Grain Store
- Former National School
- Pavilion Cinema
- Old Post Office
- Former National Bank
- Christian Brothers' School
- Bruce Family Vault
- Former Fenian Hall
- Monument to Seán Clárach Mac Domhnaill, Holy Cross Cemetery
- St James' Church of Ireland
- AIB Bank
- 17th century arch
- 18th century church
- Former Presbyterian Church
- Former Presbyterian School
- Former Church of Ireland
- Former Free Church
- Former Old Rectory
- Former Mater Dei
- Former Fea's Bank
- Former Narrow Gauge Railway Station
- Former nurse's house
- Former St. Mary's Convent
- Former St. Mary's Hospital
- Former St. John's Hospital
- Former Royal National School