



If These Walls Could Talk...

A HISTORY OF CAHERNANE HOUSE



CAHERNANE HOUSE HOTEL

Cahernane House was built as the family residence of Henry Herbert in 1877 at a cost of £5,992. The work was carried out by Collen Brothers Contractors. The original plans by architect James Franklin Fuller, whose portfolio included Ballyseedy Castle, Dromquinna Manor and the Parknasilla Hotel, was for a mansion three times the present size. One generation on, the Herbert family had fallen on hard times and the property was being utilised as a hotel.



THE HERBERT FAMILY OF CURRANS AND CAHERNANE

In the mid seventeenth century, Thomas Herbert of Kilcow, agent for his cousin Edward, 3rd Lord Herbert of Cherbury, had settled in Kerry. His two sons, Edward and Arthur, founded branches of the family in Kerry: Edward at Muckross and Arthur at Currans and Cahernane.

In 1720, Arthur purchased a walled-in house at Cahernane built by Col Maurice Hussey (the site was known as Hussey's garden). One of his sons, another Arthur, established a new residence nearby in 1750. It was built in Queen Anne style at a cost of £1200. Arthur and Lucy had no children and bequeathed the property to Richard Townsend Herbert (1754-1832), a grand-nephew. The property passed through the generations to Richard Herbert, born in 1816.

In 1841, Richard's younger brothers, Henry, Edward and Thomas took part in a Killarney - Cambridge four-oared boat race on the lower lake of Killarney. They won ten pounds from Henry Herbert of Muckross for drawing such accolade on the locality. Richard Herbert died in Rome in 1875; he was unmarried. His younger brother Henry was now head of the family.



Herbert Vault at Killeagy graveyard



...has had of signs or any person or
their seals and affixed their
Richard Herbert

Herbert Seal (signature of Richard Herbert)

HENRY HERBERT OF CAHERNANE AND DUNKERRON (1818-1898)

In 1861, Henry Herbert had returned to Ireland from Australia where he had made his fortune by breeding sheep for wool. He also trained horses for export to India. With his brother Thomas, he had made £40,000.

During his homecoming, Henry met and developed an affection for Catherine Elizabeth Stewart, a Muckross cousin. Catherine did not return his interest. Henry set off again on his travels, this time to the United States where among his adventures, he crossed the Rockies with opera singer, Adelina Patti. On his return, he met Catherine again and on this occasion, his affection was reciprocated. When Henry succeeded his brother Richard in 1875, he decided to rebuild Cahernane House. On completion of his new home in 1877, Henry had also completed his family of five, one son and four daughters of whom one, Mrs Katherine Olive Everett, published a memoir, *Bricks and Flowers* (1949). She described her father's destruction of the old house as 'tragic'.

Henry, a Justice of the Peace and High Sheriff, was regarded as a good and generous landlord in the community. His tenants were attached to him but, in the midst of the Land War, belonged to the Land League and Henry soon fell into debt.

In October 1896, Henry's eldest daughter Winifred died in Dublin - one week after delivering her first child. Her body was brought to Killarney for burial. Her brother Arthur Stewart Herbert, and her three sisters Katherine Olive, Violet Ina Jane, and Gwendolen Egerton were among the mourners.

On 18th January 1898, Henry passed away at 7 Clyde Road, Dublin. At his funeral, the officiating Archdeacon spoke of Henry as an honourable man who in Australia, 'made remarkable discoveries in little known regions ... He will not be forgotten'. Henry's widow remained for some years at Clyde Road but later moved to England where she died at Sundridge Gervis Road, Bournemouth on the 2nd August 1912.



GROUND FLOOR ARTIFACTS

1. Herbert Family Crest

An image of the Herbert Family crest is depicted in stone above the front door of the hotel, along with the year the house was built, 1877. The Family Motto is *Constantia et Fortitudine*, meaning By Constancy and Fortitude.

2. Herbert Griffin

The Griffin is a legendary creature with the body, tail, and back legs of a lion; the head and wings of an eagle; and an eagle's talons as its front feet. You will see one set above the entrance to the house in stone.

3. Killarney Davenport

This desk was made on High Street, Killarney circa 1880. It is a magnificent piece of workmanship with pictures of Glenna Cottage, Ross Castle, Muckross Abbey, the Old Weir Bridge and Bricin Bridge depicted. These desks would have been popular when the Herberts resided at the house. If you open the front of the desk, you will see the Irish emblem of the harp surrounded by a shamrock. On the right hand side is a small drawer, used for storing the quill and ink. It makes a 90 degree angle when open.

4. Queen Anne Fireplace

This fireplace was in the Herbert's Queen Anne style house which stood on the same lands as the Cahernane House Hotel. When the current house was built, the fireplace was inserted. Lord Browne did visit Henry Herbert to plead with him not to tear down the old house, but his pleas went unanswered. The fireplace was built circa 1750.

5. Corbals in our Lobby

When Henry Herbert built his house in 1877 for his wife Catherine Stewart, he had the first initial of his first four children (Violet, Katherine, Winifred and Arthur) inscribed in the 4 pillar tops in the lobby. Two are located over the front door in lobby and two others directly across. A fifth child, Gwendolyn, was born in August 1877 but unfortunately did not get her name inscribed.

6. Imposing Bronze Statues

These statues were brought from Italy by Vincent & Min Albericci who bought the hotel from the Herberts in 1940. An identical pair is located in Dublin Castle presently.

7. Original Paintings of Queen Victoria

Official Artist, Charles Frederick Buckley, captured two original paintings of Queen Victoria on the Lakes of Killarney, during her visit to Kerry in 1861. These can be seen hanging in our Library.

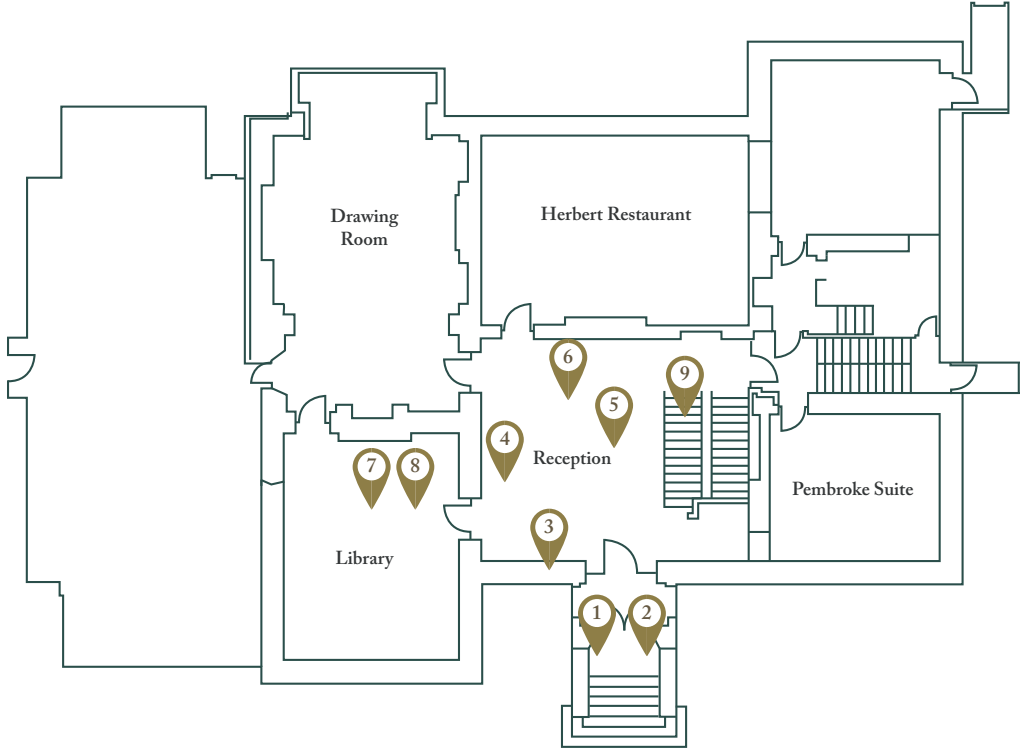
8. Victorian Fireplace

The Victorian Fireplace you see in the Library was erected in 1877. Note the detail on the tiles surrounding the hearth, the white tiles depict a variety of people at work – Architect, Painter and Musician. The red tiles contain words such as Evening, Day and Night.

9. Original Staircase

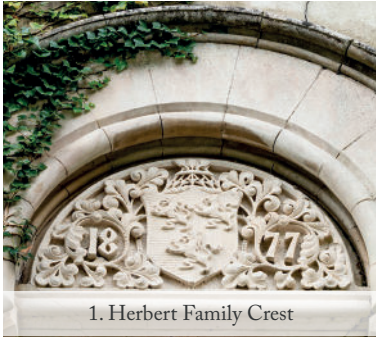
The wooden Staircase was designed by Henry Herbert in 1877. At the base of the staircase you note the intricate designs of sunflowers, thistle and shamrock.

GROUND FLOOR



Written and researched with the aid of Janet Murphy. Herbert history adapted from *The Herberts of Currans and Cahemane* (2011) by Janet Murphy and Eileen Chamberlain. Other sources consulted: recollections of Richard M Hilliard (1974) held at Muckross House Research Library; Parish Hall Theatre, *The Role of the Church in County Kerry Drama* (2009, unpublished thesis); Michael O'Donohoe Collection, Castleisland.

ARTIFACTS



1. Herbert Family Crest



3. Killarney Davenport



5. Corbals in Lobby



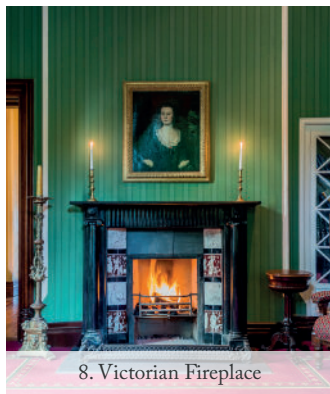
2. Herbert Griffin



4. Queen Anne Fireplace



6. Imposing Bronze Statues



8. Victorian Fireplace



10. Wine Cellar



7. Queen Victoria Portrait



9. Original Victorian Staircase



11. The Duck

ADDITIONAL ARTIFACTS

10. Wine Cellar

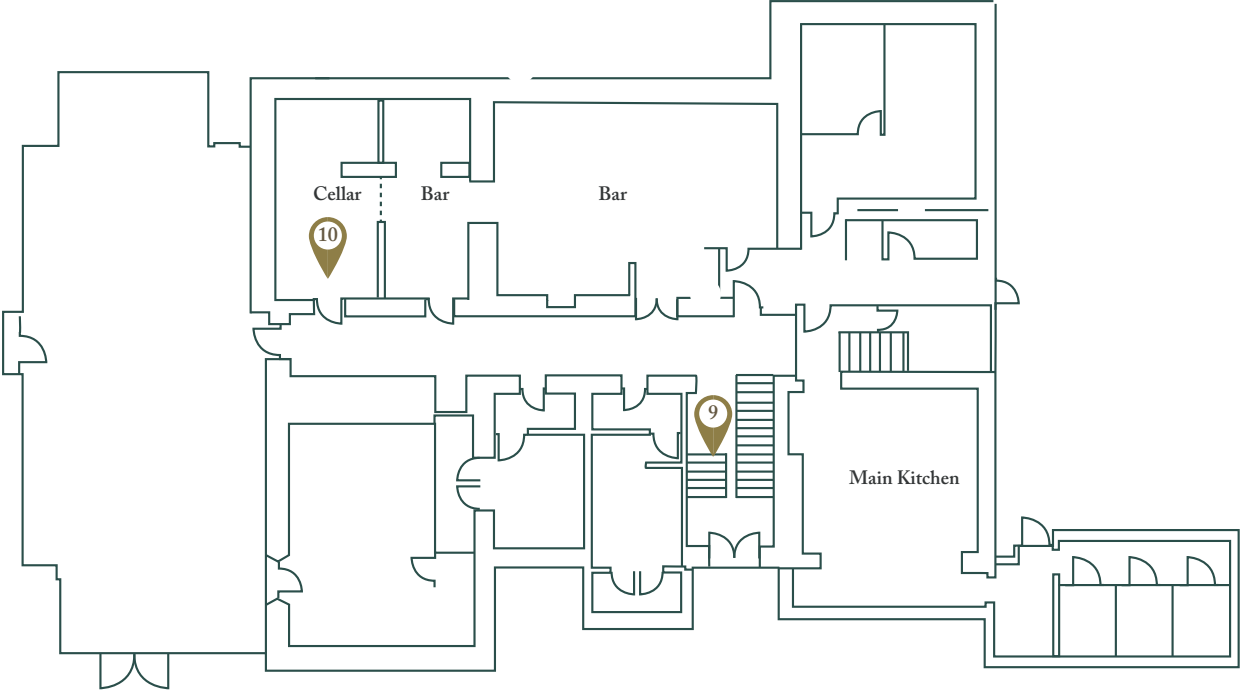
This original wine cellar, with its whitewashed walls and ample space, is very similar to the one the Herberts of Muckross had. You can still see this in the basement of Muckross House when you take the tour of the house.

11. The Duck

When a refurbishment was taking place, under layers of paint and wallpaper sat this duck. We know this floor was originally the children's nursery and that Katherine Herbert was an excellent painter. A legend is told that many people have painted over the duck but that its image keeps appearing out.

To visit The Duck's location from the Cellar level, take the lift to Level 4. The Duck drawing is located across from the entrance to Room 20.

BASEMENT FLOOR



ARTHUR STEWART HERBERT OF CAHERNANE (1866-1954)

Henry's son, Arthur Stewart Herbert, succeeded his father but debt seems to have been his main inheritance. In 1899, Arthur married Theresa Selina Boyle. The couple appear to have spent little time at Cahernane and in the early part of the twentieth century, the house was in a poor state of repair. It was at this period that Cahernane House took on its new identity as a hotel, when Arthur leased (and ultimately sold) to hoteliers and associations.

He had two sons but neither lived a long life. Geoffrey Richard Arthur Herbert was born at Cahernane in 1902 and Christopher Reginald Courtney Herbert in 1906. Geoffrey was educated at Cambridge and worked for the Diplomatic Service in Bulgaria. He was transferred to the Foreign Office and then to Cairo where, following promotion in 1929, he contracted typhoid fever and died on the 22nd May 1930.

Christopher, a pilot officer in the Royal Air Force, was Killed in Action over Holland in June 1941 shortly after marrying Celia Winifred



Roundell of Dorfold Hall, Cheshire. A plaque to the memory of Geoffrey and Christopher is erected in St Mary's Church of Ireland, Killarney.

Arthur's youngest unmarried sister, Gwendolen Egerton Herbert, who had studied art and had travelled widely, retained a small portion of what remained of family land. In her later years she returned to Cahernane and took up residence in a renovated gardener's cottage. There her brother Arthur, in poor health, returned to spend his last years with her.

Arthur died at Cahernane on the 28th October 1954. His widow, Lady Theresa Selina Herbert of 83 Queens Gate, London, died two years later, on the 29th June 1956.

Gwendolen lived in the cottage and enjoyed the occasional visit from the family of her sister Katherine (Katherine died in 1951, the same year in which *Walk with Me*, her second book, was published).¹

The death of Gwendolen's surviving sister, Violet Ina Jane (wife of Frederick Alexander Kirkpatrick) occurred in 1959.²

Gwendolen passed away in a Cork nursing home on the 20th May 1966 when the last Herbert link to Cahernane was severed.³

¹ Katherine (or Kathleen) married artist Herbert Barnard John Everett (1877-1949). Sons Henry and Anthony Blaze were born in 1902 and 1906 respectively. For further reference see her memoir, *Bricks and Flowers* (1949).

² Violet Ina Jane Herbert married Frederick Alexander Kirkpatrick (1861-1953), son of Alexander Richard Kirkpatrick (1814-1891) of Donacomper, Co Kildare and Catherine Louisa Trench (1832-1910). Frederick's nephew was diplomat Sir Ivone Augustine Fitzpatrick (1897-1964) author of *The Inner Circle* (and who also married a 'Violet', Miss Caulfield Cottell). In her will, Violet left estate valued at over £10,000, after personal bequests she left the residue upon trust for Cambridge University.

³ Gwendolen was buried in the Herbert tomb at Killeeg graveyard, Muckross. The tomb is inscribed with the names of her sister Winifred and brother Arthur and the following lines from scripture: There are, it may be, so many kinds of voices in the world, and none of them is without signification/What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God?

CAHERNANE HOUSE: OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS 1900-PRESENT DAY

Census records of 1901 reveal that 34-year-old Arthur Stewart Herbert was resident at Cahernane with his 29-year-old wife Theresa and domestic staff. Their son Geoffrey Richard Arthur was born there in 1902. After this, Cahernane House was leased (and ultimately sold) to hoteliers.

GILMOUR

In 1902, William Andrew Gilmour, a tenant of Mr Herbert's, was running a licensed premises at Flesk House opposite the hotel (built by the Herbert family in the 1860s and today known as the Gleneagle Hotel). He was assigned to the Polytechnic Touring Association who intended 'carrying on hotel business there in future under their own management'. Gilmour was declared bankrupt and the following year, the Flesk Hotel was auctioned off.

The Polytechnic Hotel operated until about 1939 in which year a seven night sojourn cost from £3-15-6. It was perhaps a drowning tragedy the preceding year coupled with the onset of the Second World War that ended the company's association with the Cahernane.

ALBERICCI

Cahernane House was sold c1940 to Vincent Albericci (1886-1965) former proprietor of the Continental Cafe, 23 Patrick Street, Cork. The death of his wife Mary (Foley) in May 1945 may have caused him to withdraw from the business.

NEWLING

Hotelier Mrs Patricia A Newling, neé O'Shea, was the next proprietor. Mrs Newling was born at Gleninchaquin, Tuosist, Kenmare in 1897. She was a member of Irish Tourist Association, Irish Hotels Federation, Kerry Hotels Federation and Killarney Tourist Association. Patricia Newling passed away at the Cahernane House Hotel on the 14th October 1960 after which the property was then sold.

KILLARNEY

7 NIGHTS

from **£3 - 15 - 6**

P.T.A. RESIDENT HOST DURING THE SEASON.

WHY not enjoy a holiday in fairy-land? Killarney offers you the opportunity. Here are the enchanted lakes, the waterfalls, mountains, forests and ancient castles of romance and legend. Can you resist such names as the "Oak Wood of the Rabbits," "Meeting of the Waters," "Bridge of Little Trout," or "Valley of Good Fortune"? Is it possible not to enjoy a symphony of placid waters studded with green islands, and surrounded by pine and oak-clad mountains?

EXCURSIONS

1. **The Ring of Kerry—The Grand Atlantic Motor Tour.** A magnificent whole day excursion, embracing some of the finest coast scenery in the world. The route is from Killarney to Beaufort and Cahirciveen, and thence past Valentia Island to Waterville. After passing the mouth of the Kenmare river the route continues over Blackwater Bridge, through Windy Gap, and so home. This part of the tour affords delightful views of the Upper Lake, Long Range and Muckross Lake. Cost, 14s. 0d.

Cahernane Mansion (44 beds), Polytechnic Headquarters. This mansion was originally the great house of the district, and is now owned and managed by the Polytechnic Touring Association. It stands in three hundred acres of private grounds bordering the largest of the three Killarney Lakes, on the opposite side of which the mountains rise sheer from the water's edge. The grounds are delightful, and hidden away in a most bewitching manner are rose bowers, rockeries overgrown with lichen and mosses, and miniature flower gardens.

For the entertainment of visitors, a miniature golf course has been laid out on a site adjoining the house, and is always extremely popular.

Salmon nets are hauled up on the shore of the lake, and splendid lake and river fishing with trout and salmon can be obtained by visitors at a nominal fee.

Nearly all the rooms have a splendid view over the lake and the situation is by far the best in Killarney. Superior rooms, 1st floor, 5s. a week per person extra.



DRAGGING THE MIDDLE LAKE FOR THE VICTIMS OF THE KILLARNEY BOAT DISASTER: CIVIC GUARDS AT THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT.

Summer houseparties

AT OUR OWN HOTELS



THE HIGHLANDS OF SCOTLAND



THE LAKES OF IRELAND



THE COAST OF CORNWALL

CAHERNANE HOUSE: OWNERS AND OCCUPANTS 1900-PRESENT DAY CONT.

CONSORTIUM

In 1960 'Hotel Cahernane' was purchased by 'a newly formed local company for a figure thought to be in the region of £20,000'. Parties involved were International Hotels Ltd, solicitors Charles Creagh Downing and his brother Henry J Downing, Mr Michael J Tattan snr and Mr Michael Tattan jnr (manager), Dr W O'Sullivan and Dr J Ivo O'Sullivan. They sold the hotel and surrounding lands c1974.

HALLISSEY

Purchaser Martin Hallissey, a local cattle dealer, used the lands for grazing but did not hold the property for long, selling in the late 1970s.

GAENSSLER

Albert Gaenssler, a barrister from Munich, was the next proprietor of the Cahernane Hotel. Albert and Antonia Gaenssler retired in 2000 after more than twenty years in business, and the property was put up for sale with a price tag of 'over £3 million'.

BROWNE

In 2000, Jimmy Browne, proprietor of the White Sands Hotel, Ballyheigue, the White Gates Hotel, Killarney and Browne's Pub, and Ardferth purchased Cahernane House Hotel.

PREM GROUP

In 2016, the Browne family put the property on the market and it was acquired by International Hotel Management Company PREM Group. The hotel has been lovingly revived and offers national and international guests a unique and experiential stay in a magical environment, rich with history and elegance.





C
CAHERNANE
HOUSE HOTEL

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