

JFM RESEARCH

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Death, Institutionalisation & Duration of Stay

A critique of Chapter 16 of the Report of the Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries and related issues

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This document includes extracts from JFM's Principal Submission to the IDC

State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries

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Dedication

In August 2003 the late Mary Raftery published the results of an investigation she had carried out into the exhumations at High Park.¹ Were it not for this investigation our attention would not have been drawn to the additional remains discovered at High Park and the discrepancies in the exhumation applications. In fact, without Mary Raftery, Justice for Magdalenes Research (JFMR)² would not exist. Our country is forever in her debt and given the importance of her contribution to this subject and her work on the industrial and reformatory schools, it is disappointing that the Report the *Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries* (IDC) mentions Mary Raftery just once by name and at that, only in a footnote. Mary's collaborator Sheila Ahern (with permission from Mary's family) has generously given us access to the Mary Raftery Archive, which has been most enlightening in illuminating the gaps left in the IDC Report.

This critique is dedicated to Mary Raftery, to the women who died behind laundry walls and to those who remain institutionalised as a result of their confinement in Ireland's Magdalene Laundries.

Acknowledgement

JFMR would like to thank those who have provided assistance to us over the years in locating and obtaining photographs of Magdalene graves, particularly Fiona Sugrue. Without these volunteers, the research outlined in this document would not have been possible.

¹ Irish Times, 21st August 2003, Page 14

² The terms 'JFM' and 'JFM Research' are both used in this document – 'JFM' refers to 'Justice for Magdalenes', the organisation that existed before May 2013, at which point the group ended its political campaign and became 'JFM Research' (JFMR).

Statement from Maisie K, a survivor

Maisie is a survivor of the Sisters of Mercy laundry in Galway whose written testimony was ignored by the IDC. The following is a statement written by Maisie for inclusion in this document:

There are now new headstones on the two large graves of the Magdalene victims in the cemetery at Bohermore. Those poor souls who most of their lives worked and slaved without pay behind locked doors. They washed, scrubbed, cleaned and ironed the dirty laundry of the people of this province, of every class and creed, including those who ruled their lives with tight fisted control.

The Mass for their burial was held in the church of the nuns' convent there, attended by their victim colleagues behind locked doors. When they were young they were put into the Magdalene in secret. They died in secret. They were buried in secret. Nobody walked behind their hearse to the graveyard, not even a cross put on each of those graves with an RIP on them. Those who did that did not stop to think. They were at least worthy of that bit of dignity. The nuns in charge seemed not to think so.

No politician ever voiced a condemnation of it. The heads of the clergy ignored it. If anyone from the public died, their death notice would be read off the altar in the public church of the parish they worked and lived in. But no such thing for the women of the Magdalene. No death notice on a paper. One would not have to use 'Magdalene Laundry' as the address. Where there is a will there is a way to do things.

These poor women were seen as and treated as nobodies. I was one of them. As I walked along I thought to myself, looking at those graves, there but for the grace of God I could have been one of them. It was once said, a grave yard is no place for class distinction. For those I lived with and worked with it was. Thank God at last somebody had a conscience to give some bit of dignity to those graves.

Signed

Maisie K

Foreword

In August 2012, Justice for Magdalenes (JFM) made its principal submission, *State Involvement with the Magdalene Laundries*³ to the *Inter-Departmental Committee to establish the facts of State involvement with the Magdalen Laundries* (IDC). The submission consisted of a 145-page document which was supported by 795 pages of survivor testimony and 3,707 pages of archival evidence and legislative documentation. It outlined comprehensive evidence of State complicity in the abuses experienced by girls and women in Ireland's Magdalene Laundries.

On 5th February 2013, the IDC Report⁴ was published. As expected, it concluded that there was extensive State collusion in referring women and girls to the Magdalene Laundries, in awarding State contracts to the laundries, in ensuring that escaping women and girls were returned to the institutions by Gardaí and in failing to have the religious orders comply with State legislation relating to pay, pensions and other obligations to employees, even as the laundries were routinely inspected under the relevant Factories Acts.

However, the IDC Report completely ignores the 795 pages of survivor testimony and disregards most of the legal issues raised in JFM's principal submission. Most concerning was the Report's contention that a very small level of physical abuse took place in the laundries.⁵ This assertion is made even as the Report gives detail of: women and girls being returned by the Gardaí, being forced to wear a cup on a string for 3 days and 3 nights, being put in a padded cell, food deprivation, being made to lie on the ground and kiss the floor, being made to kneel for two hours and having a wet sheet pinned to one's back.⁶ Chapter 19 asserts that these punishments were 'non-physical'. The survivor testimony provided to the IDC by JFM clearly outlined individual instances of physical assault and similar offences, as well as a prevailing culture of abuse in these institutions. Furthermore, in alleging a small level of physical abuse, the IDC completely ignores the fact that deprivation of liberty and forced labour are grave physical abuses in themselves. In this regard, JFM pointed out to

³ http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

⁴ <http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/MagdalenRpt2013>

⁵ IDC Report, Chapter 19, Section 33 states that: *A large majority of the women who shared their stories with the Committee said that they had neither experienced nor seen other girls or women suffer physical abuse in the Magdalen Laundries.*

⁶ IDC Report, Chapter 19, Section 38

the Committee that survivors are absolutely unanimous that they were locked up against their will in the laundries and forced to work unpaid.⁷

Thankfully, the Irish public was steadfast in its support of the Magdalene women and on 19th February 2013, Taoiseach Enda Kenny honoured the wishes of the people and delivered an apology to them on behalf of the Irish State.

On 26th June 2013 the Report of the Magdalene Commission under Mr Justice John Quirke which outlined a comprehensive State redress scheme was published. The government announced that it was accepting the recommendations in full.

On the surface, the women have been vindicated. Beneath however, there is the inescapable reality that the official State record on the experiences of Magdalene women is neither accurate nor respectful of what they endured.

A month previous to the publication of the Quirke Report, on 22nd May 2013, Felice Gaer, Rapporteur for Follow-up on Concluding Observations at the United Nations Committee Against Torture (UNCAT) wrote to the Irish State as part of the follow-up process on UNCAT's recommendations in 2011.⁸ In this letter, the Rapporteur noted that the IDC inquiry *'lacked many elements of a prompt, independent and thorough investigation, as recommended by the Committee [Against Torture] in its Concluding Observations'*. The letter went on to ask the Irish State whether it *'intends to set up an inquiry body that is independent, with definite terms of reference, and statutory powers to compel evidence, and retain evidence obtained from relevant religious bodies'*.

On 8th August 2013, just months after the apology, the Irish State responded to UNCAT, asserting that ***'[n]o factual evidence to support allegations of systematic torture or ill treatment of a criminal nature in these institutions was found'*** by the IDC and ***'in light of***

⁷ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 8 (a). Available from:

http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

⁸ Letter of 22nd May 2013 from Felice D. Gaer, Rapporteur, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights, Committee Against Torture to Gerard Corr, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations Office at Geneva to. Available at: <http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/cat/docs/followup/IrelandFurtherInfo22May2013.pdf>

facts uncovered by the McAleese Committee and in absence of any credible evidence of systematic torture or criminal abuse being committed in the Magdalene Laundries, the Irish Government does not propose to set up a specific Magdalen inquiry body’.⁹

The State reiterated this position in response to a similar query by the United Nations Human Rights Committee in 2014.¹⁰ In reply, the Human Rights Committee recommended that:

The State party should conduct prompt, independent and thorough investigations into all allegations of abuse in Magdalene laundries, children’s institutions and mother and baby homes, prosecute and punish the perpetrators with penalties commensurate with the gravity of the offence, and ensure that all victims obtain an effective remedy, including appropriate compensation, restitution, rehabilitation and measures of satisfaction.

More recently, the Irish State had another opportunity to rectify its mistake. On 30th June 2014, JFM Research (JFMR) and Adoption Rights Alliance made a joint submission to then Minister for Children, Charlie Flanagan on the establishment of the terms of reference for a Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes.¹¹ In light of the failures of the IDC, Section 4 of the joint submission outlined the reasons why the inquiry should be extended to investigate the Magdalene Laundries.

On 9th January 2015, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Dr James Reilly announced the Terms of Reference for the ‘Commission of Investigation into Mother and Baby Homes and

⁹ Letter of 8th August 2013 from Gerard Corr, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations Office at Geneva to Felice D. Gaer, Rapporteur, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights, Committee Against Torture. Available at:

http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CAT/Shared%20Documents/IRL/CAT_C_IRL_CO_1_Add-2_14838_E.pdf

¹⁰ Replies of Ireland to the List of Issues in relation to the fourth periodic report of Ireland, UN Human Rights Committee, 5 May 2014, UN Doc CCPR/C/IRL/Q/4/Add.1. Available at

http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolNo=CCPR%2fC%2fIRL%2fQ%2f4%2fAdd.1&Lang=en

¹¹ Available at: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/ARAJFMR_ToR_Briefing_300614.pdf

Certain Related Matters'.¹² While the Terms of Reference make mention of the Magdalene Laundries, the document only does so in relation to the *'pathways experienced by single women and their children on leaving the different types of such institutions including the role played by other institutions (e.g. adoption societies, homes for infants or children and Magdalen laundries)'*. Crucially however, even the consideration of 'pathways' applies only insofar as a laundry would have interacted with the Mother and Baby Homes listed in Appendix 1 of the Terms of Reference. The document also directs the Commission to *'take account of relevant information and findings from previous investigations'*, including the IDC Committee's inquiry.

From the perspective of Magdalene survivors therefore, the Commission's Terms of Reference fall far short of a *'prompt, independent and thorough investigation'* of the laundries. Nonetheless, JFMR intends to engage with the Commission to present relevant evidence gathered through archival research and gathering of oral histories, all of which was ignored by the IDC.

JFMR's core ethos stipulates that we 'first do no harm', which means that we will always put the needs of survivors first and act in their best interests. The notion – as alleged by the Irish State – that the IDC Report is *'comprehensive, objective'* and that it *'established the facts'*¹³ is not in keeping with that ethos.

It is for this reason that we are now publishing this document, which is the first of a series of critiques on the IDC Report; so that the evidence gathered by JFM and new evidence compiled by JFMR can be brought to light. In doing so, we hope to contribute in some way towards ensuring that the record accurately reflects the lived experience of women who were confined in Ireland's Magdalene Laundries.

¹² Available at:

http://www.dcy.gov.ie/viewdoc.asp?fn=/documents/Mother_and_Baby_Homes/20150109DraftOrderCommofInvestigation.pdf

¹³ http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/Treaties/CAT/Shared%20Documents/IRL/CAT_C_IRL_Q_2_13042_E.doc

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Introduction

Justice for Magdalenes was established in 2003 on foot of serious questions raised by the late Mary Raftery about the exhumations at the former Magdalene Laundry at High Park. The exhumations at High Park are discussed in **Section 3**. The following is a short summary of what transpired.

In 1993 when the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge decided to sell some of their land at High Park, Drumcondra, the Magdalene women who were buried in a graveyard on that land were exhumed and reinterred at Glasnevin Cemetery. There was much criticism of the exhumations at the time; however in 2003 when Mary Raftery investigated the matter, troubling details of the circumstances surrounding the exhumations emerged. The Sisters had applied to the Department of the Environment for the exhumation of 133 women, however when the undertakers were carrying out the task of exhuming the bodies an additional 22 remains were discovered. The Department of the Environment was notified and it supplied an additional exhumation licence to allow the removal of 'all human remains' at the relevant site. It also emerged in 2003 that when they were making their application for an exhumation licence, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity of Refuge told the Department of the Environment that they could not produce death certificates for 58 women, 24 of whom were listed under quasi-religious names. While the IDC Report examines the exhumations, in our view many questions still remain.

For our organisation and for survivors, those who died deserve justice every bit as much as those who are living.

Unfortunately, the IDC Report did not answer our questions, nor did it allay our concerns for those who died behind convent walls. Instead of answering questions on the serious issues surrounding deaths in Magdalene Laundries, Chapter 16 of the IDC Report gives exclusive attention to the religious orders' version of events and completely ignores survivor testimony (both written and verbal) as well as substantial submissions from JFM raising concerns about the funeral and burial practices in Ireland's Magdalene Laundries.

Instead of affording respect to all women who died in the laundries by giving them the dignity of simply being counted, the IDC Report acknowledges just over half of those known to JFMR.

As we will discuss below, the implications of the continued shroud of secrecy around Magdalene deaths are serious and there is little doubt that the ‘official’ record is flawed.

We hope that the following will go some way towards putting it right.

Timeframe for recording of deaths

In compiling statistics on deaths, JFMR includes women whose deaths fall outside the constraints set by the IDC Report. In this regard, we have recorded the details of 1663 women who died in the Magdalene institutions between 1835 and 2014 (**Table 2**). The IDC Report on the other hand merely records the deaths of ‘legacy cases’,¹⁴ the women who died between 1922 and the closure of each laundry. The deaths of women who died in the laundries before 1922 and those who continued to live institutionalised lives in the charge of the religious orders are not counted.

In **Section 2.4** we discuss three sample ‘legacy cases’ as the IDC Report terms these women, including one woman named Maggie, who entered the Good Shepherd in Limerick before 1922 and died after the laundry closed. Maggie’s entry date and death both fall outside the remit of the IDC and therefore, she would not have been included in the data. Though there are significant obstacles impeding our data collection, JFMR has nonetheless attempted to produce comparative data for the time period set out by the IDC. However, we also include the data on those whose deaths occurred outside these parameters, because as we shall see below (particularly **Section 2.1.1**), they relate to matters of great concern that are in the public interest. We also include these women out of respect for those who, as it appears to us, have not been afforded dignity in death.

¹⁴ The IDC Report categorises the women who entered before 6th December 1922 and who remained thereafter as legacy cases. While these women are not included in the statistical data for levels of State involvement, deaths of women categorised as ‘legacy cases’ are included in the data for Chapter 6 (See **Sections 1.1 and 1.3**)

Ireland's ten Magdalene Laundries were run by the Sisters of Mercy (Galway and Dun Laoghaire), the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity (of Refuge) (High Park and Sean McDermott Street), the Sisters of Charity (Donnybrook and Peacock Lane) and the Good Shepherd Sisters (Waterford, New Ross, Limerick and Cork). The last Magdalene laundry to close was Sean McDermott Street, which ceased operations as a commercial laundry in 1996.

Magdalene Names Project Methodology

The Magdalene Names Project (see **Section 2**) began in 2003 and at its inception it involved photographing the Magdalene graves and recording the names of those who died in the laundries so that they could be honoured and remembered. The project has since expanded into the examination of archives including digitised census records, electoral registers, exhumation orders, cemetery records and newspaper archives. After the Magdalene graves are photographed, the names are inputted manually into databases using photographs taken at the grave sites and thus far, the final resting place of 1,663 women has been recorded. The online digitisation of the 1901 and 1911 censuses opened up new possibilities for the project and simplified the creation of databases. The digitised census data also made the process of locating the Magdalene Laundries in the census archives less challenging. Ironically, searching for the 'occupation' of the women proved to be the most reliable method of finding the Magdalene Laundries entries. More often than not the women's 'occupation' was noted as 'laundress' or sometimes 'seamstress', and in some cases accompanied by the term 'inmate' in another column.

Importantly, the 1901 and 1911 census data offered a snapshot of the number of women in the Magdalene Laundries during those years at a time when this information was not known. The database format of the census and grave data enabled a comparison between the two, using the Microsoft Excel 'Sort' function to align entries side by side in alphabetical order. These comparisons revealed the length of stay (lasting up to 74 years in some cases) of some of the women incarcerated in the laundries. It was also possible to compare the 1901 and 1911 censuses with each other, suggesting the number of women who appear to have spent at least 10 years in a laundry.

Using a similar methodology, the Names Project research is currently examining electoral registers containing the names of women who were registered to vote while confined in a Magdalene Laundry (see **Section 7**). When copies of the registers are obtained, the names are inputted into a database and sorted into alphabetical order. In the registers examined by JFMR to-date where the names of Magdalene women are recorded, a distinction is made between the religious sisters and the 'inmates'. As above, the databases for each electoral year are then compared to each other and against the databases generated from the grave photographs.

More recently, JFMR has examined the online records provided by Glasnevin Cemetery. Searches of the online archive are conducted using the names in the databases generated from the Magdalene graves at Glasnevin and the names that appear on the exhumation licence for High Park. The Glasnevin genealogy service also includes an option to conduct 'extended' searches whereby it is possible to obtain the details of those buried in the same grave as the person sought. This service has been most useful to JFMR in identifying the names of women who do not appear on the headstone, as well as major inaccuracies that exist for those whose names are inscribed.

The work of the Magdalene Names Project is ongoing. More work is required to ascertain burial locations, while the remaining electoral registers also need to be analysed. JFMR hopes to build on this work by examining other records and archives so that eventually, a resource can be made freely available to family, friends, researchers and members of the public who wish to learn about the women who died in Ireland's Magdalene Laundries.

1. Issues relating to the accuracy and presentation of statistical data in the IDC Report

The manner in which statistics are presented in the IDC Report are of little assistance in understanding the Committee's findings. The following section explores the lack of clarity and accuracy around admissions, transfers and duration of stay, as well as other factors that hamper our analysis of the data. We outline the difficulties in establishing the mortality rate for each laundry because of the Report's failure to quantify all deaths, to provide the individual burial locations, or record how many women were confined in each institution. We also examine the discrepancies between the IDC Report and the data that JFMR's has been able to compile and the number of women whose burial place cannot be located because of the lack of information in the Report. The IDC returned all records to the religious orders, while the Department of the Taoiseach holds all of the State's records pertaining to the laundries that were gathered by the IDC. This means that JFMR is unable to verify or even understand much of the claims made in the IDC Report because the original data is no longer available.

1.1 Lack of clarity on admissions, number of women and duration of stay¹⁵

In relation to admissions and the number of women confined in the laundries, the IDC Report cites three principal figures. It firstly states that the total number of admissions is 14,607,¹⁶ however, this figure does not include laundries run by the Sisters of Mercy at Galway and Dun Laoghaire and the 762 'legacy cases' (discussed further below). Secondly, in terms of admissions, the Report states that the 'total available field of information' is '11,198 cases', which is 14,607 minus repeat admissions with 'no usable data' on route of entry, date of re-entry or duration of stay.¹⁷ Lastly, the Report contends that 10,012 is the number of women who spent time in the laundries, that is, 14,607 minus repeat admissions and transfers between laundries.¹⁸ However, as we will discuss below, this figure excludes the Sisters of Mercy laundries and 'legacy cases'.

¹⁵ Calculations and analysis for this subsection are adapted from a JFM Briefing Note compiled by Maeve O'Rourke, dated 11th February 2013

¹⁶ IDC Report, Chapter 7, Section 31

¹⁷ IDC Report, Chapter 8, Section 9-10

¹⁸ IDC Report, Chapter 7, Section 34

The Report states that duration of stay is known for '6,151 women', while it is unknown for '5,047 women'.¹⁹ However, this must in fact refer to the number of 'admissions' as opposed to the number of women, because the total of known and unknown durations (6,151 + 5,047) is 11,198, which is, as outlined above, 14,607 minus repeat admissions with 'no usable data'. Therefore the duration of stay is known for only 6,151 of 14,607 admissions (42%). In other words, the duration of stay is not recorded for 58% of admissions (including repeat admissions). The IDC Report makes no effort to acknowledge this fact, and crucially, it is never taken into consideration that some of the admissions for whom no exit date is recorded may be those women who never left the laundries. Instead, this data was treated as 'unusable' for the purpose of determining the average and median duration of stay. By not recording 'legacy cases' the average and median durations of stay were going to be significantly lowered.

Lastly, the Report does not collate the stays of women who were transferred between laundries or who were 'repeat' entries, which misrepresents the actual duration of stay for the 3,409²⁰ women and girls '*who entered the laundries more than once*' and for the 1,186 women and girls who were transferred between laundries. The Executive Summary of the IDC Report states that the median duration of stay was approximately 7 months;²¹ however, the average stay for the 42% of admissions for which duration of stay is known is 3.22 years. The issue of duration of stay will be discussed further below.

1.2 Statistical data in Chapters 7 and 8 of the IDC Report

Chapter 7 of the IDC Report maintains that the '*vast majority*' of women who entered the Magdalene Laundries prior to 1922 were no longer in the institutions after the foundation of the State and consequently these so-called '*legacy cases*' were '*excluded from the statistical analysis*'.²² The Report states that a total of 762²³ women entered the laundries prior to 6th December 1922 and remained after that date. Chapter 8 of the IDC Report further confuses our attempt to understand what became of women who did not leave the Magdalene

¹⁹ IDC Report, Chapter 8, Section 29

²⁰ IDC Report, Chapter 7, Section 34

²¹ IDC Report, Executive Summary, Page XIII

²² IDC Report, Chapter 7, Section 25

²³ IDC Report, Chapter 7, Section 27

Laundries by combining ‘unknown’ cases with those who stayed in the laundry. The route of exit for 2,060 women (18.4% of the total) is cited as ‘*unknown, or stayed in laundry*,’²⁴ while 420 (or 55.1% of) ‘legacy cases’ fall under the similar category of ‘*unknown and stayed in laundry*’.²⁵

1.3 Quantifying deaths

From the outset, the IDC seeks to clarify that Chapter 16 (*Death Registration, Burial and Exhumation*), ‘*applies only to the small number of women who remained in the Magdalen Laundries until their death*’.²⁶ The IDC argues that just 879 women died within the laundries ‘*between the establishment of the State in 1922 and the closure of the last Magdalen Laundry in 1996*’²⁷ or ‘*approximately 8.8% of the estimated number of women to have been admitted to the Magdalen Laundries*’.²⁸ However, it is difficult to ascertain the origin of this percentage because 879 is not 8.8% of any of the three figures mentioned above, even including the 762 ‘legacy cases’ (see below).²⁹ In fact, if 879 is equal to 8.8%, then this would imply that 9,989 represents the total number of women confined in the laundries. JFMR has not been able to locate this figure anywhere in the IDC Report.

In arriving at this figure, the IDC notes that some women who died in the laundries were taken home to be buried by their families; however it does not state how many such cases exist.³⁰ In the same context, the IDC strangely offers a clarification that some women who were buried in the laundries or plots owned by the religious orders had died in hospital receiving treatment.³¹ While there would be no reason to eliminate these women from the statistical data, there is no statement of how many Magdalene women died in hospital and we are left with the question: did the IDC Report omit to record these Magdalene women who died in hospitals in quantifying how many women died in the Magdalene institutions?

²⁴ IDC Report, Chapter 8, Section 35

²⁵ IDC Report, Chapter 8, Section 81

²⁶ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Summary of Findings

²⁷ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 38

²⁸ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Summary of Findings; this figure excludes the two laundries run by the Sisters of Mercy

²⁹ 8.8% of 14,607 = **1,285**; 8.8% of 11,198 = **985**; 8.8% of 10,012 = **881**; 8.8% of 15,369 (14,607 + 762) = **1,352**; 8.8% of 11,960 (11,198 + 762) = **1,052**; 8.8% of 10,774 (10,012 + 762) = **948**

³⁰ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 34

³¹ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 34

The Report also states that another cohort of women *‘who had in their earlier lives spent time in a Magdalen Laundry were, at their own request or at the request of their families, returned there for burial despite the fact that they died at their home-place or elsewhere’*.³² Once again, the IDC does not tell us how many women were in this position or more pertinently, what is the evidence for this assertion? The IDC goes on to note that *‘the list of deaths compiled by the Committee is likely to include some women who did not die at a Magdalen Laundry, although they had at some point in their lives been there’*.³³ No explanation is offered as to why the deaths described above are not quantified, however this omission is yet another complicating factor that impedes our efforts to ensure that all women who died in the laundries are recorded and might eventually be suitably commemorated with an appropriate headstone.

While ‘legacy cases’ are eliminated from the IDC Report’s statistical analysis for State involvement in the number of women incarcerated (even though these women were citizens of the Irish State), it does include these women in the number of deaths. However, the Committee is quick to point out that they represent 35.9% (315) of the 879 deaths. Put another way however, this tells us that 41.3%³⁴ of those who entered the laundry before 1922 and remained thereafter, died behind laundry walls and never saw the outside world again. The Report does not say how many of the remaining 447 out of the 762 ‘legacy cases’ went on to live in institutionalised settings once the laundries closed. Therefore, the percentage of 41.3% ‘legacy case’ deaths may well be higher, however we do not know because *‘[d]eaths occurring in nursing homes after the closure of the Magdalen Laundries, of women who had in their earlier lives been admitted to a Magdalen Laundry, were not included’*.³⁵ No explanation is offered as to why these deaths were excluded from the Report. JFMR data shows that at least 241³⁶ women fall into this category (**Table 1**). The plight of women in institutionalised settings is discussed in **Section 6** below.

³² IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 35

³³ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 36

³⁴ 41.3% of 762 legacy cases (315 women)

³⁵ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 37

³⁶ JFMR records are constantly being updated as new data emerges, hence this figure differs from previous op-eds and other publications.

To-date, JFMR has recorded the details of 1,663 women who died in Ireland's Magdalene Laundries, almost twice the figure cited in the IDC Report (see **Table 2** below).³⁷ This figure accounts for women whose deaths were between 1835 and 2014. We are aware of other women whose names and burial places we do not yet know and our work continues in trying to find them (see **Section 2** below). This figure accounts for the women who died between the date that each laundry opened until the present day. **Tables 6-9** below show comparisons between JFMR data and the IDC Report for the period between 1922 and each laundry's closure.

³⁷ In compiling statistics on deaths, JFMR includes women whose deaths fall outside the constraints set by the IDC Report. We include the data on those whose deaths occurred outside these parameters, because there are matters of such concern that they transcend the time limitations of the IDC's remit.

Table 1: JFMR data on deaths after laundry closures

Grave	Years Open*	Post-Closure	DOD Unknown
Sean McDermott St No 1	1860-1996	0	0
Sean McDermott St No 2	1860-1996	12	0
Unmarked Sean McDermott St Grave No 1	1860-1996	0	0
High Park 'Main' Grave**	1853-1991	17	0
High Park New Grave	1853-1991	14	0
HP Names on Exhumation Licence (not on grave)	1853-1991	0	0
HP Unmarked Graves (Combined)	1853-1991	1	0
Galway Forster St (excl. Bohermore duplicates)	1845-1984	1	0
Galway Bohermore	1845-1984	14	0
Dun Laoghaire	1880-1963	0	20
Donnybrook	1833-1992	37	1
Donnybrook (Buried in family plots)	1833-1992	2	0
Peacock Lane St Finbarr's	1845-1991	1	0
Peacock Lane Kilcully	1845-1991	28	0
Limerick Mount St Lawrence	1848-1982	0	0
Limerick Mount St Oliver	1848-1982	39	0
Good Shepherd Waterford	1858-1982	21	0
Good Shepherd New Ross	1860-1967	0	0
Sunday's Well Auxiliaries	1872-1977	9	0
Sunday's Well St Joseph's 1***	1872-1977	4	0
Sunday's Well St Joseph's 2	1872-1977	14	0
Sunday's Well Kilcully	1872-1977	27	0
Sunday's Well Unknown (pre-1922 so not in table)	1872-1977	0	0
Total		241	21

*Year taken over by religious order

**1 duplicate removed

***3 Duplicates removed

Table 2: JFMR data on Magdalene Graves (1835-2014)

Laundry/Grave Location	No. of women
Donnybrook Grave (Located at former laundry site)	312
Donnybrook (women buried in family plots)	2
Dun Laoghaire Grave (Location Unknown)*	21
Galway (Bohermore Grave)	49
Galway (Forster St. Consecrated Magdalenes Grave)	43
Sean McDermott St.Grave 1	51
Sean McDermott St.Grave 2 (including not on headstone)	42
Sean McDermott St (Names not on headstone but on Glasnevin records)	3
Good Shepherd New Ross	61
Good Shepherd Waterford (Two grave sites)	106
Good Shepherd, Limerick (Mount St. Laurence)	241
Good Shepherd, Limerick (Mount St. Oliver)	43
Good Shepherd, Sunday's Well (Auxiliaries' Grave)	30
Good Shepherd, Sunday's Well (Kilcully Grave)	27
Good Shepherd, Sunday's Well (St. Joseph's Grave 1)**	67
Good Shepherd, Sunday's Well (St. Joseph's Grave 2)	70
Good Shepherd, Sunday's Well Unknown	1
High Park Grave (Glasnevin Cemetery)***	187
High Park New Grave (Glasnevin Cemetery)	14
High Park Names on Exhumation Licence (not on grave)	87
High Park Unmarked Graves	106
Peacock Lane (Kilcully Grave)	28
Peacock Lane (St. Finbarr's Grave)	72
Total	1663

Please note

- Research is ongoing and these figures are subject to change
- There are 25 grave markers with no names inscribed at Donnybrook site
- Galway figures may be inaccurate as there are discrepancies in the records
- High Park and Sean McDermott Street records are still incomplete as research at Glasnevin is not yet concluded (further details below)
- (Sunday's Well figures may be incomplete due to a significant gap in the records available above)

**Figure obtained from IDC Report, burial location only identified for one woman*

***3 Duplicates removed*

****1 Duplicate removed*

1.4 Burial locations

Chapter 16 of the IDC Report sets out the various public and private burial grounds where there are plots maintained by the religious orders, but it does not offer a breakdown of how many sites exist in each location and how many women are in each plot.³⁸ The Report also omits public cemeteries that are used by the religious orders after the closure of the laundries, for example, Kilcully Cemetery in Cork, which has been used by both the Good Shepherd Sisters and the Sisters of Charity. In this instance, the IDC missed an opportunity

³⁸ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Sections 30-33

to provide assistance to the family and friends of deceased Magdalene women who would like to visit the graves of their loved ones. While the Report provides information in some cases which indicates whether religious sisters or Magdalene women are buried at the various plots, it fails to do so for others, thereby adding further to the confusion in understanding what became of the women who died in the laundries. **Tables 3 and 4** set out the private and public burial locations maintained by the religious orders, along with the information supplied in the IDC Report and information known to JFMR.

Table 3: Private burial locations at former laundries

Location	No. of plots (IDC)	Women	Sisters	Plots known to JFMR
High Park	1	Not specified	Not specified	2*
Waterford	1	0	1	Location unknown
Sunday's Well	2	1	1	2
Limerick	1	0	1	Location unknown
Galway	2	1	1	2
New Ross	1	0	1	Location unknown
Donnybrook	1	Not specified	Not specified	1
Peacock Lane	1	Not specified	Not specified	Location unknown

*One burial ground no longer exists due to exhumations

Table 4 burial locations at public cemeteries maintained by religious orders

Location	No. of plots (IDC)	Plots known to JFMR
Glasnevin Cemetery	Not specified	13
St Joseph's Cemetery, Cork	Not specified	2
St Finbarr's Cemetery, Cork	Not specified	1
St Stephen's Cemetery, New Ross	Not specified	1
Bohermore Cemetery, Galway	Not specified	1
Ballygunnar Cemetery, Waterford	Not specified	1
Mount St Lawrence Cemetery, Limerick	Not specified	1
Mount St Oliver Cemetery, Limerick	Not specified	1
Dean's Grange Cemetery, Dun Laoghaire	Not specified	1*

*To-date JFMR has managed to find the burial location of just one woman who died in Dun Laoghaire

1.5 Discrepancies between IDC Report and JFMR data

The IDC was tasked with establishing the 'facts' of State involvement with the Magdalene Laundries. It is difficult therefore to understand why the Committee failed to produce a breakdown by institution of how many women entered each Magdalene Laundry, even after

eighteen months with unparalleled access to the records of the religious orders. The exclusion of this vital information further complicates efforts to analyse the available data, making it impossible to calculate the mortality rate for each laundry. These complications, combined with the omission of information on individual burial sites (as described above) make it difficult to establish the full extent to which deaths are excluded from the Report. And indeed, yet another obstacle is posed by the lack of records for laundries run by the Sisters of Mercy, which means the IDC Report addresses these institutions separately.³⁹

Bearing these factors in mind, JFMR has nonetheless attempted to compare our research against the data produced by the IDC for deaths in Magdalene Laundries between 1922 and each institution's closure. In this regard, **Table 5** shows a breakdown of JFMR data for deaths in Magdalene Laundries by time period. For laundries other than those run by the Sisters of Mercy, the IDC Report records a total of 879 women who died in the laundries from 1922 until their closure.⁴⁰ JFMR has the details of 768 women for these 8 laundries over the same time period (**Table 5 and 6**).⁴¹ This discrepancy arises because JFMR records contain more entries than the IDC Report in some cases and fewer in others. As shown in **Table 6**, a total of 31 deaths are missing from the IDC Report between 1922 and each institution's closure. Furthermore, as **Table 7** reveals, 142 women are missing from JFMR's data, which means that for these 142 women who died between 1922 and the closure of the laundries we do not know their final resting place. **Section 2** below deals with further issues that have arisen about the burial locations of Magdalene women.

For the two laundries run by the Sisters of Mercy, the IDC Report states that according to the available records, 57 women died in the Galway Magdalene and 21 in Dun Laoghaire.⁴² JFMR has the details of 58 women who died in the Galway Magdalene and just one woman who died in Dun Laoghaire, as no locations were supplied in the IDC Report. This means that 1 woman in Galway has been omitted from the Report, while the burial place of 20 women who died in Dun Laoghaire remains unknown. The issue of unmarked graves is discussed further in **Section 2** below.

³⁹ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 37

⁴⁰ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 39

⁴¹ The total from 1922 to each laundry's closure including Sisters of Mercy laundries is 827

⁴² IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 55

As part of our various submissions to the IDC, JFM supplied all of its research materials and databases of names on Magdalene graves.⁴³ The Committee also had access to the records of the religious orders. It is difficult to understand therefore, how the IDC – with all of this information at its disposal – managed to omit certain deaths from the Report and that it did not identify the discrepancies outlined by JFMR in **Section 2** of this document.

⁴³ Emails from James Smith and Claire McGettrick to Senator Martin McAleese and Nuala NiMhuircheartaigh, dated 17th February, 2012.

Table 5: JFMR data on deaths in Magdalene Laundries by time period

Grave	Years Open*	Pre-1922	1922-Closure	Excl Srs of Mercy	Post-Closure	DOD Unknown	Total
Sean McDermott St No 1	1860-1996	0	51	51	0	0	51
Sean McDermott St No 2	1860-1996	0	30	30	12	0	42
Unmarked Sean McDermott St Grave No 1	1860-1996	2	1	1	0	0	3
High Park 'Main' Grave**	1853-1991	92	78	78	17	0	187
High Park New Grave	1853-1991	0	0	0	14	0	14
HP Exhumation Licence (not on grave)	1853-1991	16	71	71	0	0	87
HP Unmarked Graves (Combined)	1853-1991	74	31	31	1	0	106
Galway Forster St (excl. duplicates)	1845-1984	19	23	-	1	0	43
Galway Bohermore	1845-1984	0	35	-	14	0	49
Dun Laoghaire	1880-1963	0	1	-	0	20	21
Donnybrook	1833-1992	120	154	154	37	1	312
Donnybrook (Buried in family plots)	1833-1992	0	0	0	2	0	2
Peacock Lane St Finbarr's	1845-1991	0	71	71	1	0	72
Peacock Lane Kilcully	1845-1991	0	0	0	28	0	28
Limerick Mount St Lawrence	1848-1982	126	115	115	0	0	241
Limerick Mount St Oliver	1848-1982	0	4	4	39	0	43
Good Shepherd Waterford	1858-1982	40	45	45	21	0	106
Good Shepherd New Ross	1860-1967	32	29	29	0	0	61
Sunday's Well Auxiliaries	1872-1977	8	13	13	9	0	30
Sunday's Well St Joseph's 1***	1872-1977	34	29	29	4	0	67
Sunday's Well St Joseph's 2	1872-1977	10	46	46	14	0	70
Sunday's Well Kilcully	1872-1977	0	0	0	27	0	27
Sunday's Well Unknown	1872-1977	1	0	0	0	0	1
Total		565	827	768	241	21	1663

Please note: where exact date of death is known, deaths prior to 6th December 1922 are excluded from the 1922-closure category, however in all other cases, deaths occurring in 1922 are included.

*Year taken over by religious order

**1 duplicate removed

***3 Duplicates removed

Table 6: Comparison between JFMR data and IDC Report for laundries other than those run by the Sisters of Mercy. Time period: 1922-closure

Grave	JFMR Data	IDC Report
Sean McDermott St	82	141
High Park	180	231
Donnybrook	154	167
Peacock Lane	71	89
Limerick	119	93
Waterford	45	42
New Ross	29	30
Sunday's Well	88	86
Total	768	879

Table 7: Laundries where JFMR records are greater than those shown in the IDC Report. Time period: 1922-closure

Grave	JFMR Data	IDC Report	Difference
Limerick	119	93	26
Waterford	45	42	3
Sunday's Well	88	86	2
Total	252	221	31

Table 8: Laundries where JFMR records are fewer than those shown in the IDC Report. Time period: 1922-closure

Grave	JFMR Data	IDC Report	Difference
Sean McDermott St	82	141	59
High Park	180	231	51
Donnybrook	154	167	13
Peacock Lane	71	89	18
New Ross	29	30	1
Total	516	658	142

Table 9: Comparison between JFMR data and IDC Report for Sisters of Mercy laundries. Time period: 1922-closure

Grave	JFMR Data	IDC Report	Difference
Galway	58	57	1
Dun Laoghaire	1	21	20
Total	59	78	21

2. Magdalene Names Project Research

The JFMR ‘Magdalene Names Project’ examines various archives and records, including gravestones, digitised census records, electoral registers, exhumation orders and newspaper archives. By recording and analysing the data from these archives the project seeks to offer a narrative that honours the lives of those who lived and died behind Magdalene Laundry walls. JFMR plans to make these materials freely available as a resource to friends and relatives of Magdalene women, and to researchers and the general public. The information gathered for the Names Project has been helpful in quantifying the number of women who lived and died in the laundries and how long they were confined. Unfortunately, the work has also uncovered serious inaccuracies and discrepancies at Magdalene grave sites and these will be discussed in detail below. As part of its various submissions to the IDC, JFM included information gathered as part of the Names Project. All of these materials were ignored in the IDC Report.

The following sections outline some of these submissions, as well as new information that has come to light since the publication of the IDC Report. Specifically, much of what is discussed in the sections on the Our Lady of Charity burial sites is newly discovered information that was not submitted by JFM to the IDC. Given that the IDC had unfettered access to the records of the religious orders, and given that JFM made its databases available to the Committee, it is difficult to understand why the Report failed to identify these very serious errors.

2.1 Inaccuracies, unmarked Magdalene graves and unknown grave locations

To-date, JFMR has been able to record details of 1,663 women who died in Ireland’s Magdalene Laundries between 1835 and 2014 (see **Table 2** above).⁴⁴ This data is incomplete however, hindered by the complications outlined in **Section 1** above, as well as the fact that there are a number of unmarked Magdalene graves and also because of the major discrepancies in some of the data on the headstones. The IDC Report completely ignores the issue of unmarked graves and while the High Park exhumations are examined,

⁴⁴ In compiling statistics on deaths, JFMR includes women whose deaths fall outside the constraints set by the IDC Report. We include the data on those whose deaths occurred outside these parameters, because there are matters of such concern that they transcend the time limitations of the IDC’s remit.

the discussion of discrepancies on headstones is inadequate and the testimony and research of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity are accepted at face value (see **Section 3** below).

2.1.1 Inaccuracies and unmarked graves at High Park burial sites

In an effort to establish the identities of the 110 women from High Park and Sean McDermott Street who are included in the IDC Report but whose names and burial places are not known to JFMR (see **Table 8** above), JFMR is currently conducting searches of the records at Glasnevin Cemetery through its online genealogy service. This research is ongoing and the following outlines what we have discovered thus far.

JFMR would like to clarify that the following analysis implies no wrongdoing on the part of Glasnevin Cemetery. Indeed, without the online service and excellent record keeping at Glasnevin, we would not have been able to identify any of these women.

On 19th February, 2014 an RTÉ report covering the first anniversary of the Magdalene State apology featured footage of an unmarked grave associated with High Park.⁴⁵ As JFMR was not familiar with this grave, we contacted the reporter to enquire about the location. He told us that the grave had been shown to RTÉ by Glasnevin Historian Shane MacThomais and suggested that we contact him.⁴⁶ JFMR contacted Mr MacThomais who said he had recently located the grave and that he believed there was another grave with over 30 women interred there.⁴⁷ It was agreed to organise a meeting to view the graves, but sadly, Mr MacThomais died a month later, before the arrangement had been made. In an effort to ascertain the whereabouts of the grave, JFMR took screenshots from the RTÉ footage and using these we were able find the approximate location on our next visit to Glasnevin⁴⁸. We do not know how many women are buried in that location and have no names with which to search the online records for Glasnevin. We also do not know whether the second location to which Mr MacThomais referred is one of the newly discovered graves described below or if there is another grave which we have not yet located.

⁴⁵ Available from: <http://www.rte.ie/news/player/2014/0219/20529054-former-magdalene-laundry-workers-protest-at-leinster-house/>

⁴⁶ Telephone conversation with Joe Little, RTE News on 19th February 2014

⁴⁷ Telephone conversation with Shane MacThomais, Glasnevin Historian on 20th February 2014

⁴⁸ See Appendix 2, Pg 12

JFMR conducted a search of Glasnevin Cemetery's records for the 187⁴⁹ names engraved on headstones at the site where the women exhumed from High Park in 1993 are purportedly buried. These women died between 1895 and 2006. We were unable to locate records for 131 of these names and it would appear that the remaining 56 women are interred in 4 separate locations at Glasnevin. Out of the 131 women who cannot be located in Glasnevin's records, 54 died between 1922 and 1991 when High Park closed, i.e. the time period covered by the IDC Report. In fact, just 33 out of 187 women whose names inscribed on the headstone are buried at that location. Of the 56 women whose names we did find, 14 had discrepancies between the headstone and the record at Glasnevin (excluding discrepancies involving first names). 'Extended' searches⁵⁰ were carried out for these 56 names, revealing other women buried in the same graves, 13 of whom are buried in the 'main' High Park grave location but whose names are not inscribed on the headstone. These searches, along with a number of 'wildcard' attempts have thus far uncovered the names of 106 women who are buried at 7 separate locations at Glasnevin.⁵¹ These women died between 1886 and 1999, while 30 from this cohort died between 1922 and the closure of High Park in 1991.

JFMR also searched Glasnevin's records for the available names from Appendices 1-3 and the list of 'other women' supplied by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity to the Department of the Environment as part of the order's application for an exhumation licence in 1993. A total of 87 of these names do not appear on the headstone (See **Section 3**). It was only possible to search for 63 of the 87 names as 23 women are listed under quasi-religious names (Magdalen of...) and one woman is listed by first name only. Of the 63 available names, JFMR could find only 5 of these women in Glasnevin's records and they are buried in 3 separate locations. These women are purportedly buried at the 'main' High Park grave at

⁴⁹ The headstone has 188 names engraved, but one name is duplicated

⁵⁰ It is possible to conduct an 'extended' search of Glasnevin's genealogy records whereby one can obtain the details of those buried in the same grave as the person sought – for further info visit:
<http://www.glasnevintrust.ie/genealogy/historical-records/>

⁵¹ See Appendix 2, Pages 2-14

Glasnevin; however in actual fact just 3 of them can be found at that location.⁵² Therefore, the burial place of a total of 213 women from High Park is unknown (see **Table 10** below).

Photographs of the grave locations with (redacted) lists of names and a corresponding map are available at **Appendices 1 and 2**.

Table 10: Women not located in Glasnevin records for High Park Magdalene Laundry

Source	Total	Located	Missing
Appendices 1-3/list of 'other women'	87	5	82
Headstone at 'main' High Park grave	187	56	131
Total	274	61	213

2.1.2 Inaccuracies and unmarked graves at Sean McDermott Street burial sites

JFMR also searched Glasnevin's records for the names of 51 women from the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity Laundry at Sean McDermott Street who died between 1943 and 1980. On this occasion JFMR was able to locate all of the women in Glasnevin's records, however none of them appear to be buried at the location of the headstones.⁵³ According to the records at Glasnevin, these 51 women are buried at the location of another Sean McDermott Street grave, which bears a headstone with 40 other names of women who died between 1981 to 2008. While 3 of the women found are not on the headstone, all 40 women are buried at the same location.⁵⁴ Finally, using 'wildcard' searches, JFMR has to-date uncovered the names of 3 other women who died between 1908 and 1930 who are buried in an unmarked grave in the same area as the headstones bearing the names of the 51 women who died between 1943 and 1980.⁵⁵ The vast majority of these women died within the time period covered by the IDC Report.

2.1.3 Inaccuracies at Sunday's Well grave sites

The following section concerning inaccuracies at Sunday's Well burial sites was brought to the attention of the IDC but ignored. In April 2012 Fiona Sugrue, a Cork-based adoption activist, assisted JFM in locating the grave at the old Good Shepherd laundry site at Sunday's Well in Cork. Ms Sugrue provided JFM with a number of photographs, indicating that 30

⁵² See Appendix 2, Pg 6

⁵³ See Appendix 2, Pg 16

⁵⁴ See Appendix 2, Pg 17

⁵⁵ See Appendix 2, Pg 15

women and girls are recorded as buried in this grave. JFM was concerned by a large gap from 1896 – 1928 during which period there are no names recorded. In May 2012, a JFM representative visited the grave with Ms Sugrue and discovered that gaining access to the grave was (and still is) an extremely difficult process, involving two steep descents which required ropes, while the entire route was severely overgrown. The only way to view the grave was by climbing on top of a ten-foot wall (which is covered in razor wire) as all gates were locked. Flowers which had been brought to lay at the burial ground had to be thrown onto the grave rather than placed there. Of deepest concern was the discovery that the grave had been disturbed and vandalised in the few days that had passed since Ms Sugrue's first visit and the razor wire moved so that any attempt to get inside the grave area was not possible.

JFM subsequently discovered from survivor testimony that the 30 women buried at Sunday's Well were 'auxiliaries' – women who were promoted in status within the laundry system to help the nuns maintain order on foot of their declared intention to volunteer to spend the rest of their lives in the institution. With assistance from Ms Sugrue, it was established that there are two other Good Shepherd grave sites at St Joseph's Cemetery in Cork where a total of 137 women are buried. A further 27 women who died at the Good Shepherd are buried at Kilcully Cemetery in Cork. All names were inserted into databases and it became apparent that a similar gap existed between 1891 and 1922. The analysis also revealed a number of apparent errors, where names are duplicated between graves and it is therefore unclear which grave some women are buried in. There was also one case where the same (relatively unusual) name is on the grave with two different dates.

As shown in the documentaries *CBS 60 Minutes*⁵⁶ and *Les Blanchisseuses de Magdalene*⁵⁷, a Sunday's Well survivor campaigned to have names retrospectively inscribed on the Good Shepherd graves. It is unclear whether there is another grave location and/or if the Good Shepherd Sisters are no longer in possession of all records for women and girls incarcerated in their institution. JFM raised these concerns about Sunday's Well with the IDC, however

⁵⁶ <http://www.cbsnews.com/videos/magdalen-laundries-women-confined-in-convents/>

⁵⁷ Produced by France 3/Sunset Presse, 1998.

http://sunsetpresse.fr/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=41&Itemid=53

Chapter 16 of the IDC Report ignores these issues completely, making no mention at all of the graves for Sunday's Well, other than amalgamating them in the statistics.

JFM also brought to the IDC's attention one particular case of a woman who is interred in the auxiliaries' plot at Sunday's Well. *The Irish Times* dated 27th April 1932 contains a report concerning Margaret G, described as a 'young woman', who was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment for the 'concealment of the birth of her illegitimate child'. The judge said the sentence 'would not come into effect of the court to the effect that [sic] she should remain in the Convent of the Good Shepherd, Cork, and be subject to the supervision and direction of the Superioress there for a period of two years'.

A Margaret G is buried in the Good Shepherd grave located at Sunday's Well in Cork (which is currently inaccessible), having died on 11th February 1978. If the Margaret G referred to in the article is the same woman who is buried at Sunday's Well, she spent a total of 46 years in Sunday's Well, 44 years on top of her original sentence for concealing the birth of what was then termed an 'illegitimate' child.

JFM asked the IDC: a) to ascertain if the Margaret G referred to in the Irish Times article and the woman buried at Sunday's Well are the same woman; b) if this is the case, to confirm whether the Probation Service followed up to ensure that the Good Shepherds obtained informed consent regarding Margaret's continued stay at their establishment and c) to confirm when Margaret made her decision and if she would have been considered institutionalised at the time. The IDC completely ignored this case in the Report and failed to answer any of the questions raised by JFM.

Following on from JFM's research, *The Irish Examiner* newspaper raised the issue of duplications with the Good Shepherd Sisters,⁵⁸ however, the order refused to answer any questions on the issue. It emerged subsequently that the Good Shepherds had amended the gravestone at St. Joseph's Cemetery, with asterisks noting that three of the women

⁵⁸ <http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/order-refuses-to-offer-explanation-on-burials-221538.html>

were buried at Sunday's Well.⁵⁹ After the State apology in 2013, a relative of a woman who died at Sunday's Well discovered that the woman's name was not recorded on the grave at St. Joseph's. The woman's relative successfully appealed to the Good Shepherd Sisters to have her great aunt's name put on the headstone.⁶⁰

JFMR's research into Sunday's Well has been ongoing and we recently searched Frances Finnegan's *Do Penance or Perish*⁶¹ for names of women who lived and died in Sunday's Well. We found 8 women, 6 of whom matched our records for Sunday's Well and 2 of whom did not. The first, Mary C, died during the time period where there is a gap in years and therefore it is not possible to ascertain where she is buried. Margaret C meanwhile, is buried in the auxiliaries' plot, however her name is inscribed on a headstone at St. Joseph's Cemetery.

Taking the above into account, and the fact that the gap in the records remains unexplained, even further questions must now be asked about the accuracy and completeness of the records for Sunday's Well. It is also difficult to understand why these very serious matters are omitted from the IDC Report. The auxiliaries' grave at Sunday's Well remains inaccessible to the public and thus there is no way for relatives, friends or members of the public to pay their respects to these women who died at this location.

2.1.4 Other discrepancies and unmarked graves

The IDC Report states that there are 21 women who died at the Sisters of Mercy laundry in Dun Laoghaire between 1922 and 1963 buried at Deansgrange Cemetery; however the whereabouts of all but 1 burial location remains unknown. Using census records, JFMR has been able to determine the burial location of this woman, and although the grave has a headstone, no names are inscribed and those buried with her appear to have no connection to the Magdalene Laundry. It would also appear there are discrepancies between the two grave sites⁶² maintained by the Sisters of Mercy for their Galway laundry, for example, there

⁵⁹ <http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/religious-order-amends-headstone-after-magdalene-burial-duplication-222402.html>

⁶⁰ <http://www.irishexaminer.com/ireland/magdalene-name-finally-added-to-headstone-226885.html>

⁶¹ Finnegan, F. (2001) *Do Penance or Perish*. Kilkenny: Cosgrave Press.

⁶² At Bohermore and Forster Street

are a number of duplicated names.⁶³ JFMR's research on the Sisters of Mercy graves is currently incomplete and this issue will be discussed in greater detail at a later date. JFMR is also aware of 25 grave markers with no names inscribed at the site of the former laundry run by the Sisters of Charity laundry at Donnybrook. We do not know why these graves have no names inscribed or if indeed the plots are occupied.

2.2 Discrepancies between exhumation licence and High Park headstones

The exhumations at High Park are discussed in full in **Section 3** below. This section deals with the discrepancies between the exhumation licence obtained by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity and the headstones erected at Glasnevin Cemetery, as well as other inaccuracies on the headstones themselves.

In 2003 on foot of Mary Raftery's reports about the High Park exhumations, representatives from JFM visited the High Park grave at Glasnevin Cemetery and recorded the 178 names that were engraved on the headstones at that time. JFM also obtained a copy of the exhumation licence via the Freedom of Information Act. At that time JFM was not made aware of the timeframe in which the graveyard was in operation⁶⁴ and the exhumation licence did not include dates of death and thus our analysis was not as accurate or as detailed as we would have wished. Nonetheless, an initial analysis of both revealed the following:

Table 11: 2003 comparison between High Park grave and exhumation licence

Matches between grave and exhumation licence	54
Names from exhumation licence not appearing on the gravestone	80
Names from the grave not appearing on the exhumation licence	125

Errors

- An incorrect date of '31st April' was engraved on one headstone
- One name appears to have been duplicated

⁶³ Some corrections have been noted by volunteers assisting JFMR

⁶⁴ The land being sold in 1993 included a graveyard (St. Mary's) which had – according to the Sisters at that time – been used between 1886 and 1986. This is contradicted by the IDC Report, which states that the graveyard was used from 1889 to 1976. It is unclear which is correct and the Report does not clarify the issue.

The IDC Report states that all 155 women who were exhumed from High Park have now been identified and matched to their names and dates of death.⁶⁵ The Report reveals that when the Department of the Environment's attention was drawn to the discrepancies between the exhumation licence and the headstone at Glasnevin in 2010, the Department stated that *'it would appear reasonable to expect that all the remains identified as part of the exhumation would be commemorated at the place they were re-interred'*.⁶⁶ The unnamed researcher⁶⁷ who had reviewed the archive of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity provided:

*a full schedule including the names and burial details of all persons identified, as well as confirmation that the Congregation had commissioned a memorial for Glasnevin Cemetery "which will correct the discrepancies on the earlier memorial and in addition will add the individual names, and dates of all those women who were buried from High Park in Glasnevin Cemetery".*⁶⁸

The IDC Report states that the Sisters were (at that point) at *'an advanced stage in making arrangements for the full and accurate details relating to these women (birth names and dates of death) to be recorded in Glasnevin Cemetery'*.⁶⁹

On 14th August 2014, JFMR revisited the High Park grave at Glasnevin Cemetery and re-photographed the gravestones for the purpose of ascertaining if any changes had been made. Despite the IDC Report's assertion that the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity were at *'an advanced stage'* of rectifying the headstones, just 10 new names have been added to the gravestones. Four of these deaths were post-1993 and five were post-2003, while one new name has a date of death in 1965. None of the new names match any of those on the exhumation licence. The incorrect '31st April' date has been corrected, but the duplicated

⁶⁵ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 108

⁶⁶ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 111

⁶⁷ The Report states that as a result of Garda enquiries in 2003, the Sisters appointed researchers to catalogue and archive their records but it does not disclose that one of these researchers is a member of a religious order (see Section 3 for further details)

⁶⁸ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 112

⁶⁹ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 113

name is still there. JFMR also discovered a new grave for High Park, with 13 women's names recorded, whose dates of death range from 2008 to 2014.

As well as obtaining the up-to-date list of names from the grave, the Mary Raftery Archive has provided JFMR with copies of documents known as Appendices 1, 2 and 3 (which were submitted to the Department of the Environment in support of the exhumation licence application) and a copy of a handwritten list of 'other women' which was apparently compiled by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity. These materials contain the dates of death for the women and thus a more detailed comparative analysis between the grave and these documents was possible. For the purpose of this analysis we have assumed that the graveyard was in operation between 1889 and 1987, as per the application for the exhumation licence.⁷⁰ Thus, the names of women who died before 1889 and those who died after 1987 were eliminated from the list, leaving a total of 137 names. Appendices 1, 2 and 3 and the list of 'other women' comprise a total of 150 women. The errors outlined below do not include discrepancies in first names.

Table 12: Revised comparison between grave and exhumation licence

Matches between grave and exhumation licence	63
Names from Appendices 1-3 and list of 'other women' not appearing on the gravestone	87
Names from the grave not appearing on Appendices 1-3 or list 'other women'	74

Errors

- Of the 63 matches, 24 have different dates of death
- Of the 63 matches, 5 have different surnames
- One name still duplicated
- An incorrect date of '31st April' was engraved on one headstone, now corrected

2.3 Implications of unmarked graves and discrepancies

For the relatives of Magdalene women (including adopted people whose mothers died in the Magdalene Laundries or remain institutionalised in nursing homes under the control of the religious orders), it is imperative that each woman's final resting place is accurately recorded. The F_____ family, whose testimony was ignored by the IDC, located their

⁷⁰ The land being sold in 1993 included a graveyard (St. Mary's) which had – according to the Sisters at that time – been used between 1886 and 1986. This is contradicted by the IDC Report, which states that the graveyard was used from 1889 to 1976. It is unclear which is correct and the Report does not clarify the issue.

grandmother with assistance from Names Project material made available by JFM.⁷¹ This would not have been possible were it not for the efforts of John Gilligan, a local councillor in Limerick who campaigned to have the names inscribed on the Good Shepherd grave at Mount Saint Laurence Cemetery.⁷²

The discrepancies outlined above in relation to burial sites owned by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity are serious and it is in the public interest that answers are obtained. It is difficult to understand why the sisters have not rectified the errors, particularly since the order has commissioned research of its own archive. It is surely not too much to ask that each woman is honoured with a simple inscription on a headstone.

2.4 Legacy cases

As noted above, 'legacy cases' were not included in the Report's statistics for levels of State involvement.⁷³ That is, the women entered the institutions when Ireland was under British rule and consequently the IDC disclaimed any responsibility for their fate, even after the foundation of the State. In ignoring this research the IDC dismissed many women whose experiences reveal a very different reality to that depicted by the Committee. JFM brought 141 examples of women who were recorded in the 1901 and/or 1911 census and who died in the laundries to the attention of the IDC. The majority of these women spent between 11 and 74 years in the laundries (**Table 13**), but the IDC ignored this data. Three examples are discussed in greater detail below (names have been redacted to protect the confidentiality of the women concerned).

⁷¹ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 361. Available from:

http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

⁷² An interview with Mr Gilligan is available via the artist Evelyn Glynn's website 'Breaking the Rule of Silence': <http://www.magdalenelaundrylimerick.com/johng.html>

⁷³ With the exception of women who entered the laundries before 6th December 1922 and died in the institutions after that time

Table 13: Sample cases of women from 1901 and/or 1911 census who died in the Magdalene Laundries

Years spent in laundry	No. of women	%
1 – 10 years	30	21.3%
11 – 20 years	31	22%
21 – 30 years	30	21.3%
31 – 40 years	22	15.6%
41 – 50 years	18	12.8%
51 – 74 years	8	5.7%
Inconclusive	2	1.4%
Total	141	100%

(Percentages are rounded)

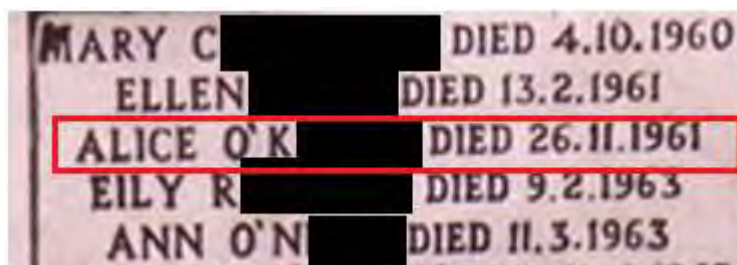
Alice K____/O'K____

Alice K. appears in the 1911 census record for Peacock Lane (**Fig 1**). The record states that she was twenty-nine years old, could read and write and was from Cork. Her 'occupation' is recorded as 'laundress'. An Alice O'K is interred in the Peacock Lane grave site at St Finbarr's Cemetery in Cork. She died on 26th November, 1961. If this is the same woman who appeared in the 1911 Census, this data reveals that she spent a minimum of 50 years at Peacock Lane.

Fig 1: Image of 1911 Census Record for Alice K____



Fig 2: Image of Peacock Lane headstone at St Finbarr's Cemetery, Cork



Agnes D____

Agnes D. appears in the 1901 Census record for High Park Laundry (**Fig 3**). Her age is noted as twenty-eight and the record shows that she could read and write and was from Dublin

(Fig 4). Her relationship to the head of the house is noted as 'inmate', while her 'occupation' is recorded as 'laundress'. The 1911 Census was recorded differently at High Park, with only initials used for each woman. An 'A. D.' is recorded (Fig 5) as aged thirty-four and from Dublin City (Fig 6). Her 'occupation' (like all others on the form) is recorded as 'domestic'. An Agnes D. is interred at the High Park burial site at Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin (Fig 7). She died on 4th August, 1967. Agnes's name does not appear on the exhumation licence and it is unclear whether or not she was one of those exhumed from High Park in 1993. If this is the same woman who appeared in the census records, she spent at least 66 years at High Park.

Fig 3: Image of 1901 Census Record for Agnes D_____

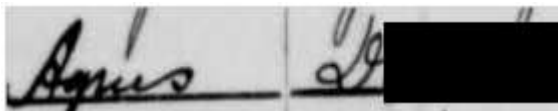


Fig 4: Image of 1901 Census Record showing Dublin as location of birth for Agnes D_____



Fig 5: Image of 1911 Census Record for A. D.



Fig 6: Image of 1901 Census Record showing Dublin City as location of birth for A. D.

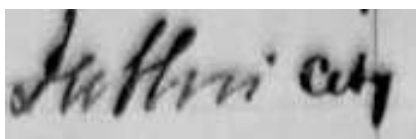
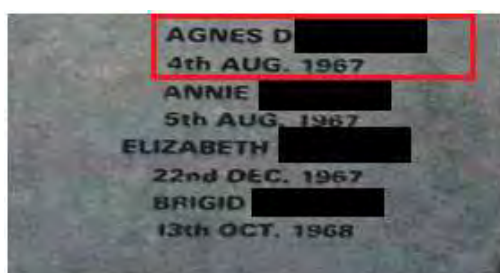


Fig 7: Image of High Park headstone at Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin



Maggie/Margaret M_____

Maggie M. is recorded in the 1911 Census record for the Good Shepherd Laundry in Limerick (**Fig 8**). Maggie's age is stated as eighteen years and the record shows she was from Carlow and could read and write. Her 'occupation' is noted as 'laundress'. A Margaret M. is interred at the Good Shepherd Laundry site at Mount St Oliver Cemetery in Limerick (**Fig 9**). She died on 2nd December 1985. If this is the same woman, she was confined for her entire adult life, a minimum of 74 years in the Good Shepherd Laundry in Limerick. The Limerick laundry closed in 1982, while Maggie died in 1985. This means that Maggie is doubly excluded from the IDC Report as she entered before 1922 and died after the laundry closed. Maggie's situation is a poignant example of the grave implications of imposing time limitations on the recording of Magdalene deaths.

Fig 8: Image of 1911 Census Record for Maggie M_____

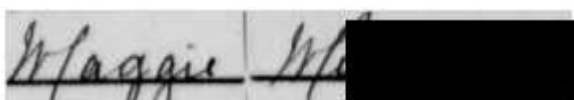
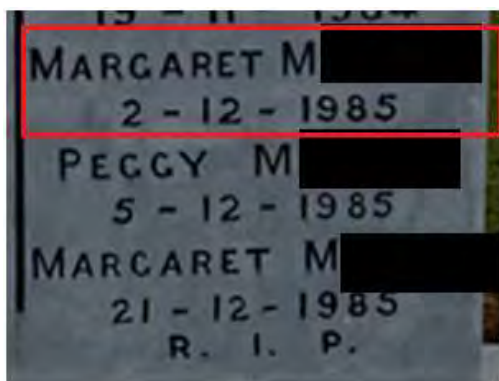


Fig 9: Image of Good Shepherd headstone at Mount St Oliver Cemetery, Limerick



In its principal submission to the IDC (*State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries*) JFM drew further attention to the issue of women and girls who were never released and died in the laundries.⁷⁴ The census records were corroborated by survivor and witness testimony, which describes older women who had spent most of their lives behind laundry walls. The Committee was also supplied with testimony regarding funeral and burial practices at some

⁷⁴ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 8(m-n). Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

laundries.⁷⁵ Chapter 16 of the IDC Report completely excludes survivor and other witness testimony, as well as JFM's research on census and grave data. The issue of duration of stay is discussed in greater detail below.

3. Exhumations and development at High Park, Drumcondra

While the IDC Report outlines some of the facts in relation to the exhumations and development at High Park, it completely ignores others. The following seeks to offer a more complete picture of the circumstances surrounding the High Park exhumations and we conclude the matter is far from closed. Again, we are indebted to the work of Mary Raftery and to Sheila Ahern, as this section would not be possible without access to the Mary Raftery Archive.

To ask informed questions about the exhumation of 155 women at High Park, it is necessary to understand the circumstances that led to this event. Hence, this analysis begins in 1989, when the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity embarked on a series of property developments.

In May 1989, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity applied for planning permission to demolish their *'existing institutional buildings...which [had] reached the end of their useful lives'* and to erect 340 two-storey houses, as well as an *'infirmary unit to re-house old and infirm women and for seven two-storey dwellings to re-house other occupants of St. Mary's at High Park'*.⁷⁶ Dublin Corporation was urged to turn down the application because of *'traffic problems'*⁷⁷ however in December 1989 the Sisters were granted the planning permission.⁷⁸ After the permission was granted *The Irish Times* reported that the Sisters were selling their land in portions, and while permission was granted for a 5.7 acre section of land, it was refused for another section of land near Griffith Avenue. The Sisters said they would concentrate *'on the portion for which we have received planning permission...we will have to see where we go from here'*. A spokesperson for the Sisters confirmed to *The Irish Times* that 5.7 acres of land at the corner of Collins Avenue and Grace Park Road would be put on

⁷⁵ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 8(o). Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

⁷⁶ Irish Press, 4th May 1989, Page 26

⁷⁷ Irish Press, 11th October 1989, Page 8

⁷⁸ Irish Independent, 8th December 1989, Page 20

the market the following year.⁷⁹ This area of land now incorporates a development known as 'The Court' which is discussed further below.

In 1991, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity purchased 5,200 shares (worth \$110,000) in Guinness Peat Aviation (GPA)⁸⁰. In August/September 1993 when GPA collapsed, the Sisters, along with other shareholders, incurred substantial losses.⁸¹ In the same year, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity 'concluded a deal' to sell 11.5 acres of land at High Park, Drumcondra. The Sisters said they '*needed to alleviate debts incurred by the order's current shelter and nursing facilities for 40 women at the site*'.⁸² An *Irish Press* report in August 1993 stated that the Sisters had '*recently accumulated heavy debt after building a new centre for women in need*'.⁸³ These reports would appear to indicate that the Sisters needed to sell this land because of recent debts that were incurred.

When the property development at The Court is taken into account however, the Sisters' assertions are seriously undermined. On the same day of the signing of the exhumation licence in May 1993, a showhouse viewing was advertised for The Court, indicating that this development had already been completed at High Park.⁸⁴ It is difficult to believe that the Sisters (with the benefit of counsel from their advisers⁸⁵) who sold these 5.7 acres of land to fund new accommodation for women in their care, did so at such a loss that it could be described as '*heavy debt*' just a few years later. Moreover, the Sisters told Mary Raftery in 2003 that '*[i]n 1989 we needed to build suitable accommodation for our own ageing sisters and those women still in our care and to provide this we had to dispose of some of our property of which the cemetery was a part*'.⁸⁶ If the land on which The Court was built was the same land sold to fund the new accommodation, then the Sisters' statement cannot be correct, as St Mary's graveyard was located in a completely different area of their property, as shown in **Fig 10** and **Fig 11**, using Martanna House as a reference point. Furthermore, the

⁷⁹ Irish Times, 7th December 1989, Page A1

⁸⁰ Irish Times, 8th September 1993, Page 10

⁸¹ Irish Times, 30th August 1993, Page 1

⁸² Irish Times, 8th September 1993, Page 4

⁸³ Irish Press, 24th August 1993, Page 6

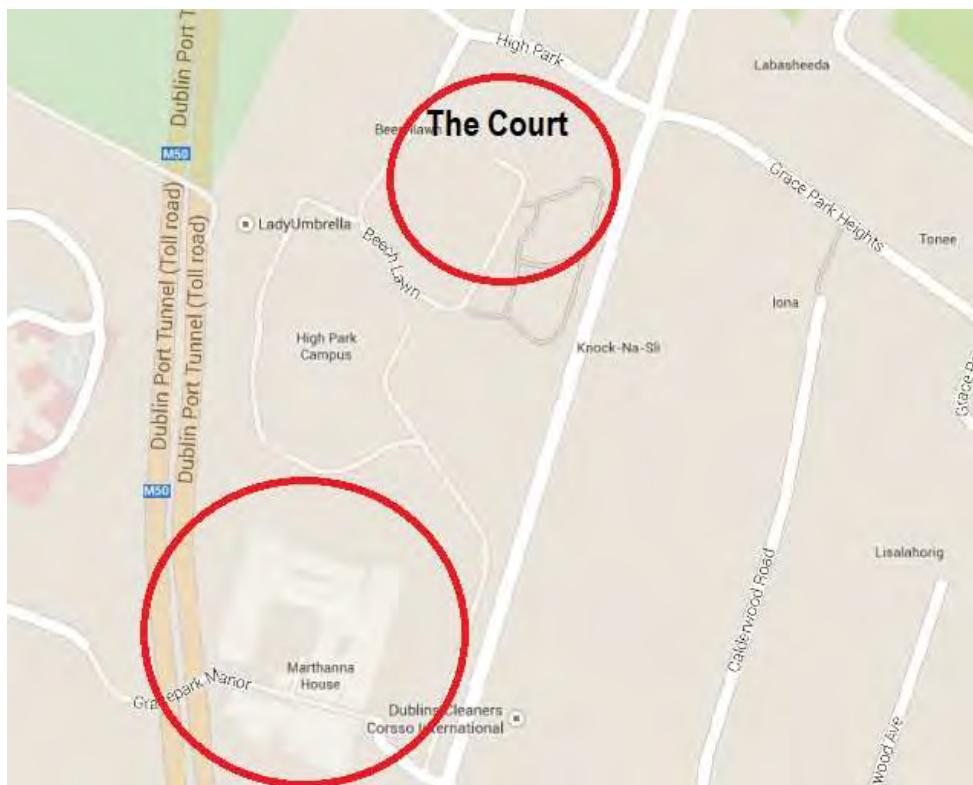
⁸⁴ Irish Independent, 25th May 1993, Page 20

⁸⁵ Irish Times, 7th December 1989, Page A1

⁸⁶ Mary Raftery Archive: Statement from the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity

exhumation licence was not applied for until 6th August 1992⁸⁷ and the development at The Court was advertising showhouses around the time of the signing of that document. Additionally, reports from the Health Information and Equality Authority (HIQA) note that Beechlawn Nursing Home which is located on the former laundry site, was established in 1992.⁸⁸ Thus, it seems reasonable to conclude that the 1989/1990 sale and the 1993 sale were two separate transactions and questions must be asked about the Sisters' claim that the land sold in 1993 (from which the women were exhumed) was to pay the debts incurred from building new accommodation for the women still institutionalised by their order.

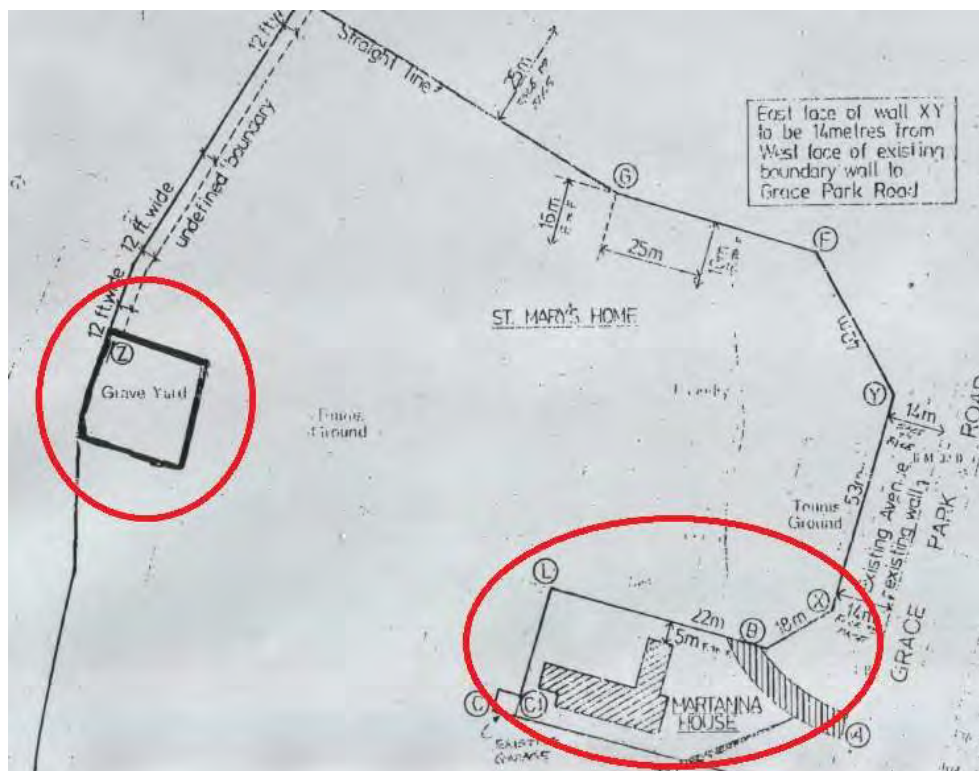
Fig 10 – Image taken from Google Maps showing location of Martanna House and The Court



⁸⁷ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 78

⁸⁸ <http://www.hiqa.ie/social-care/find-a-centre/nursing-homes/beechlawn-house-nursing-home>

Fig 11 – Map from exhumation licence showing Martanna House and graveyard



The land being sold in 1993 included a graveyard (St. Mary's) which had – according to the Sisters at that time – been used between 1886 and 1986.⁸⁹ This is contradicted by the IDC Report, which states that the graveyard was used from 1889 to 1976.⁹⁰ It is unclear which is correct and the Report does not clarify the issue. The Report also notes that St. Mary's was the burial place for 'consecrates' in High Park, i.e. those women who allegedly chose to spend the rest of their lives there.

On 6th August 1992, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity applied to the Department of the Environment for an exhumation licence to relocate the remains of women buried in St. Mary's graveyard.⁹¹ The Department's response to the application was to request death certificates for the women who were to be exhumed and thus a further application was submitted on 28th January 1993 '*requesting an exhumation licence for 133 named women*'.⁹² The application included three Appendices which contained details about the 133 women. Appendix 1 contained the names of 75 women for whom death certificates were provided.

⁸⁹ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 16th June 1993 from Eugene F Collins Solicitors, Ref MEB/GH/JK

⁹⁰ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 74

⁹¹ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 78

⁹² IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 80

Appendix 2 contained the names of 34 women for whom no death certificate and no cause of death was given. The General Registrar's Office furnished 'No Trace' forms for these women. Appendix 3 contained the names of 23 women who were identified by quasi-religious names (Magdalen of...) and one woman who was identified by first name only.⁹³ The IDC Report notes that the *'internal view in the Department, as demonstrated on the file, was that the application had been filled in carelessly'*.⁹⁴

The Department contacted the Sisters again via their solicitors requesting death certificates for 58 women on the application.⁹⁵ According to the IDC Report, a *'revised and more detailed application'* was submitted by the Sisters on 12th May 1993. This application provided *'an explanation of the history of burials at High Park'* and details about the Sisters' inability to locate burial records for the period from 1942 to 1968.⁹⁶ The IDC Report notes that after this *'extensive correspondence'* between the solicitors representing the Sisters, the Department and the General Registrar's Office, the Department of the Environment granted an exhumation licence to the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity on 25th May 1993.⁹⁷

On 16th June 1993, Eugene F Collins Solicitors, acting on behalf of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity wrote to Patrick Massey Funeral Directors seeking a tender for the work of exhuming the remains at St. Mary's graveyard.⁹⁸ The letter sought a quote for i) exhumation and subsequent burial or ii) exhumation and subsequent cremation. The solicitors noted that *'[i]t is vital for our clients that prices are quoted in respect of the above as our clients wish to keep costs to a minimum'*. Indeed, the issue of cost is further discussed on four other occasions in the letter. Patrick Massey Funeral Directors responded to the request with a quotation of £30,000.⁹⁹ In breaking down the costs the letter noted that the *'coffins will be simple with no embellishments and suitable for cremation'*. The funeral directors also noted that *'[t]he difference in cost between earth burial for all and cremation is so great that, bearing in mind that your clients wish to keep costs to a*

⁹³ Mary Raftery Archive: Department of the Environment response to press query made by Mary Raftery

⁹⁴ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 81

⁹⁵ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 82

⁹⁶ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 83

⁹⁷ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 79

⁹⁸ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 16th June 1993 from Eugene F Collins Solicitors, Ref MEB/GH/JK

⁹⁹ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 13th July 1993 from Patrick Massey Funeral Directors

minimum, the former is not really on the cards'. It is interesting to note that according to Canon Law 1176 (3), *'[t]he [Catholic] church earnestly recommends that the pious custom of burial be retained; but it does not forbid cremation, unless this is chosen for reasons which are contrary to Christian teaching'*.¹⁰⁰ The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity accepted the tender according to the terms outlined on condition that no further costs would be incurred.¹⁰¹

According to the IDC Report, the exhumation process commenced on 23rd August 1993.¹⁰² The Report notes that the undertakers became aware that additional remains were buried in the graveyard that had not been accounted for on the exhumation licence. On 30th August 1993 the Sisters (via their solicitors) made another exhumation licence application to the Department of the Environment and the following day the Department granted a licence for *'the exhumation of all human remains'*.¹⁰³ On 1st September 1993 Patrick Massey Funeral Directors submitted a tender of £9,350 to the solicitors representing the Sisters for the exhumation and cremation of the additional remains. The letter noted that the *'tender is based on a maximum number of 24 [additional remains] and any further numbers will involve a further charge of £380 each'*.¹⁰⁴ It would seem reasonable to assume that at this point it was not known how many additional remains were buried at St. Mary's. Indeed, 10 years later in 2003, the Department of the Environment seemed to be aware of just *'14 additional persons'*.¹⁰⁵

On 1st September 1993 Patrick Massey Funeral Directors also wrote to Sr Ann Marie Ryan of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity.¹⁰⁶ The letter outlined a difficulty with the original tender for the cremation of the exhumed remains which had allowed for the accommodation of two to three women per coffin. The letter states that *'this was not achieved in practice due to the attending Dublin Corporation observers insisting on more coffins being used'*. It would appear from this correspondence that it was originally anticipated that 60 coffins would be

¹⁰⁰ The Code of Canon Law, Collins Liturgical Publications: 1983.

¹⁰¹ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 11th August 1993 from Eugene F Collins Solicitors, Ref MEB/GH/EM

¹⁰² IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 90

¹⁰³ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 91

¹⁰⁴ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 1st September 1993 from Patrick Massey Funeral Directors to Eugene F Collins Solicitors

¹⁰⁵ Mary Raftery Archive: Department of the Environment response to press query made by Mary Raftery

¹⁰⁶ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 1st September 1993 from Patrick Massey Funeral Directors to Sr Ann Marie Ryan

used, however 100 were ultimately required. On 9th September 1993 Patrick Massey Funeral Directors wrote to Sr Ann Marie Ryan of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity to submit the total charge in relation to the exhumations at High Park, which amounted to £41,350.¹⁰⁷ On 20th September 1993, Patrick Massey Funeral Directors wrote again to Sr Ann Marie Ryan submitting an invoice for the same amount.¹⁰⁸ On 1st November 1993, the solicitors acting for the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity wrote to Patrick Massey Funeral Directors enclosing a cheque for £20,675 which was the '*purchasers' contribution*' to the costs.¹⁰⁹ This sum is half of £41,350, indicating that the order had got the land purchasers to cover half of the costs.

The circumstances outlined above cast considerable doubt on Provincial Superior Sr Angela Fahy's assertions in September 1993 that '*the graveyard site was small and worth about £9,000, while the exhumation cost £45,000*'.¹¹⁰ However, it is clear from correspondence between the Sisters' solicitors and the undertakers that the order was 'selling part of their lands at High Park Convent which lands include an old grave ground'.¹¹¹ It is also of note that the same land (which included the graveyard) sold for an estimated £1.5 million just one year later.¹¹²

After media reports that 133 women were being exhumed at High Park, JFM's predecessor organisation, the Magdalene Memorial Committee (MMC) was founded. The group sought a public funeral for the exhumed women¹¹³ and successfully campaigned for a memorial to be instated for the women, in the form of a plaque on a bench at St. Stephen's Green in Dublin, which was unveiled by then President Mary Robinson in 1996.¹¹⁴

¹⁰⁷ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 9th September 1993 from Patrick Massey Funeral Directors to Sr Ann Marie Ryan

¹⁰⁸ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 20th September 1993 from Patrick Massey Funeral Directors to Sr Ann Marie Ryan

¹⁰⁹ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 1st November 1993 from Eugene F Collins Solicitors, Ref MEB/RD

¹¹⁰ Irish Independent, 13th September 1993, Page 4

¹¹¹ Mary Raftery Archive: Letter of 16th June 1993 from Eugene F Collins Solicitors, Ref MEB/GH/JK

¹¹² Irish Independent, 6th May 1994, Page 30

¹¹³ Irish Times, 21st September 1993, Page 10

¹¹⁴ Irish Times, 22nd April, 1996, Page 4

On 11th September 1993 the cremated remains of 154 of the 155 women were reburied at Glasnevin Cemetery¹¹⁵ as one family took the remains of their relative to be buried in a family plot.¹¹⁶ Anger was expressed at the time at the refusal of a public funeral and that the ceremony committing the ashes to a plot in Glasnevin had taken place without notifying the families of the women or the general public.¹¹⁷ Margo Kelly of the MMC said that *‘the Catholic Church had an opportunity to make amends...[b]ut the same veil of silence that put those women away in the first place was still there’*. Because they were contacted by a journalist, the members of the MMC managed to arrive at Glasnevin just in time to look into the grave to view the urns and see the grave being filled in.¹¹⁸

The IDC Report states that a number of examinations of the circumstances surrounding the exhumations at High Park have taken place. The Report notes that at the time of the exhumations, the Dublin Cemeteries Committee asked the Dublin City Coroner to ‘ensure that the conditions of the exhumation licence were adhered to.’¹¹⁹ The Coroner confirmed that all remains were adult and female, that they were buried correctly and that the condition of the remains was *“in keeping with what one would expect to find” in the circumstances*.¹²⁰ The Report also says that the Gardaí ‘carried out enquiries’ in relation to the exhumations in both 2003 and 2012 and that *‘[t]hese enquiries concluded without any suggestion of criminal action or wrongdoing’* and that on the basis of research carried out (see below) *‘no further action on the matter was deemed necessary’*.¹²¹

In relation to the absence of death certificates, the IDC Report states that:

legislation does not require that death certificates are furnished in the course of an exhumation application – indeed, it is possible for applications to be made for

¹¹⁵ Irish Times, 13th September 1993, Page 4

¹¹⁶ Mary Raftery Archive: Statement from Sisters of Our Lady of Charity

¹¹⁷ Irish Times, 13th September 1993, Page 4

¹¹⁸ Irish Times, 21st September 1993, Page 10

¹¹⁹ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 94

¹²⁰ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 116

¹²¹ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 118

*unknown remains or for exhumations in an area where there is reason to believe that unknown remains may be found.*¹²²

The Report further notes that a 1990 Circular from the Department of the Environment stated that exhumation applications should be accompanied by death certificates, but that *'it should not be insisted upon where a death certificate would be inordinately difficult to obtain'*.¹²³ In 2003 Mary Raftery asked the Department to explain what was meant by *'inordinately difficult to obtain'*. The Department responded that *'[r]easons, other than passage of a fixed number of years since the death of the person(s) to be exhumed, could give rise to difficulty in obtaining a death certificate'*.¹²⁴ The IDC Report concludes that the absence of death certificates did not prevent the Department from issuing the exhumation licence.¹²⁵ While this may be the case, the IDC Report still ignored a fundamental question and offers no critique of the fact that the Sisters failed to register all deaths, irrespective of whether or not they were a requirement for the exhumation.

The IDC also considered the discovery of additional remains at St. Mary's graveyard in High Park. Citing a Garda statement to the Committee, the Report maintains that the original figure of 133 remains had been calculated *'from a physical counting of the crosses and graves. Enquiries established that the graveyard had been subject over time to incidents of vandalism, resulting in the removal of some crosses'*.¹²⁶ The assertion is that the records belonging to the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity were not catalogued at that time and thus the order was not in a position to identify the additional 22 remains or the 24 women who had been identified by quasi-religious names.¹²⁷ The Report goes on to say that as a result of Garda enquiries in 2003, the Sisters appointed researchers to catalogue and archive their records.¹²⁸ The Report says that:

¹²² IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 99

¹²³ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 100

¹²⁴ Mary Raftery Archive: Press Query of 28th March 2003 to Department of Environment

¹²⁵ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 103

¹²⁶ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 104

¹²⁷ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 105

¹²⁸ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 106-107

A researcher on this topic had, in 2010, indicated to the Gardaí a view that the absence of death certificates for certain of the women involved was “down to the lack of a single historical database of all residence” [sic] and the need for full and accurate information to secure death certificates from the GRO.¹²⁹

The Inter-departmental Committee accepted this ‘*administrative reason*’¹³⁰ as an explanation for the anomalies surrounding the exhumations. While the Report extensively quotes the legislation surrounding exhumations and death registration, it does not include the research conducted by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity and the same research is not available in the public domain. And, despite the existence of this research, as outlined in **Section 2** above, serious errors remain at the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity burial sites.

4. Testimony from survivors about past burial practices

The IDC Report completely ignores survivor and witness testimony concerning the funeral and burial practices of the religious orders. Most of the survivors and witnesses interviewed by JFM did not know each other at the time and yet each testimony corroborates the other. Sara W who was in the Sisters of Charity laundries at Donnybrook and Peacock Lane said the women and girls were not allowed to attend funerals.¹³¹ Mary C, who was a paid hand at the Magdalene Laundry in Galway said that not all women were given funerals.¹³² This testimony is consistent with that of Mary W, a survivor from the Good Shepherd laundry in Limerick who said:

I think people died when I was in there because they wouldn’t be in their beds they next morning, but there was no funeral! There’s no funeral, there’s nothing. And you would ask where is so and so and you would be told to mind your own business and don’t be asking.¹³³

¹²⁹ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 109

¹³⁰ IDC Report, Chapter 16, Section 110

¹³¹ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 364. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

¹³² State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 365. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

¹³³ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 366. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

Attracta M offered valuable insights into burial practices at High Park, all of which was excluded from the IDC Report. She states that burials took place *'at the end of the green'* where the women and girls used to walk around. Attracta says the graves were not marked: *'There were no markings – there was nothing in the graveyards'*. She says that the women were buried *'in some sort of cloth or something'* with *'no priest, no ceremony ... they were just buried there.'* She went on to say *'I was at a few funerals now with them women put down there in them graveyards, and not even a priest there to bless the graveyard or anything, you know'*. Attracta was also punished for laying flowers on the women's graves: *'Then I spread daisies on the graves, the old people's graves, and had me hair cut and put down because I wasn't supposed to do it, which I didn't know.'*¹³⁴

Finally, the Committee also ignored the testimony of Maeve S, a relative of B___ D___ who spent her entire adult life in a Magdalene Laundry.¹³⁵ There are hundreds of women buried in the grounds of the laundry where B___ has spent most of her life and in this regard Maeve explained:

*[T]hat was always B_____'s fear, that she would be buried there [in the grounds of [location redacted] Magdalene Laundry]. So my husband, Lord have mercy on him, died 20-odd years ago, and when he died we got a double grave for that purpose. So we said 'B_____, your grave is there, you don't have to worry anymore.' And I mean, even that took a load off B_____'s mind, didn't it?*¹³⁶

5. Present day burial practices

On 6th September 1993, Sr Angela Fahy, Provincial Superior of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, wrote to the Irish Independent in response to reports about the exhumations at High Park. In the letter she said:

¹³⁴ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 346. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

¹³⁵ Location not disclosed to protect the survivor

¹³⁶ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 367. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

*We released the cemetery for the very serious reason that we were convinced of the inevitability that in due course it would become isolated and inaccessible. The preferable choice, therefore, was to have the remains exhumed and reinterred in a public place which would be well maintained and readily accessible to visitors. We had the choice of placing the remains in our own convent cemetery or in our plot in Glasnevin. We opted for the latter because of the uncertainty of the long-term future of the convent cemetery. The names of those interred in Glasnevin will be engraved on a headstone at the grave. ... Your report described the women as abandoned or unwanted. The reality is that these women have made their home with us; we know them; we want them and we care for them. The labelling or categorising of them in your report is [sic] an attempt to explain why they are living here has caused pain and anguish to all of us here and to the families concerned.'*¹³⁷

Sr Fahy's sentiments are at odds with the testimony of Teresa B, which was excluded from the IDC Report. Teresa's natural mother, Anne McD died at 51 years while still institutionalised at the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity laundry at Sean McDermott Street, having been raised in the industrial school at High Park. Because the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity failed to make sufficient efforts to contact Teresa and her twin sister after Anne's death, she learned of her mother's death through the RTÉ Liveline radio programme. Teresa, who was pregnant at the time, describes her severe distress: *'I was just so upset, I was actually afraid that I might lose my baby with the upset'*.¹³⁸

The contentions in Sr Fahy's letter above are also contradicted by the present day funeral and burial practices of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity. JFMR has conducted a search of death notices for the 14 women who died in recent years and are buried in a newly discovered grave maintained by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity in Glasnevin Cemetery. Death notices were available for just 8 of the women and in all but 2 of those we found, the announcements were factual and completely devoid of emotion. For example:

¹³⁷ Irish Independent, 6th September 1993, Page 19

¹³⁸ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 358. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

The death has occurred of [name, location]. Peacefully. Reposing in [location] today, Monday, from 4pm. Funeral Mass tomorrow, Tuesday, at 11.45am followed by burial in Glasnevin Cemetery.

JFMR also conducted a search for past death notices for the Sisters themselves and the difference between the two are stark. The Sisters' death notices state how much the deceased will be missed, the work they did in life and what age they were at death. For example:

The death has occurred of Sr [name, location] Formerly of [location] In her [age] year. A woman of wisdom, love and integrity. A great loss and very sadly missed by her community, nephews, nieces, grandnephews, grandnieces, family, relatives and a large circle of friends. Rest in Peace. Reposing in [location, time]. Removal on Tuesday morning from [location] to the [church location], arriving at 11.15am for funeral Mass at 11.30am. Burial afterwards in the Community Cemetery, Beechlawn.

The announcements also reveal that the Sisters are buried in their 'community cemetery', while the former Magdalene women are sent to Glasnevin to be buried separately. In the section above, we discussed the exhumation of 155 women from High Park who were reinterred at Glasnevin to make room for a property development. In contrast to this and despite Sr Fahy's contention that they were unsure of its long-term future, the Sisters' 'community cemetery' was left intact.

One cannot help but question whether the Sisters' actions reflect the sentiments they expressed in 1993: *'we know them; we want them and we care for them'*.

6. Women in institutionalised settings

While the IDC Report states that the Committee spoke to *'58 women currently living in nursing homes or sheltered accommodation under the care of the Religious Orders'*,¹³⁹ we had to wait for the Quirke Report to learn that at least 115 women remain institutionalised

¹³⁹ IDC Report, Chapter 19, Section 16

as a result of their time in the Magdalene Laundries. According to that Report, 47 women remain in the charge of the Good Shepherd order, 29 with the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity and 39 with the Sisters of Charity.¹⁴⁰ At no point in the IDC Report is there any level of scrutiny or criticism of the life-long institutionalisation of these women. JFM brought testimonies (discussed below) in this regard to the attention of the Committee, but these were ignored and the only testimonies in the Report that refer to institutionalisation are those of professionals and members of the religious orders. For example: *'In the words of one Sister, "There were a lot of things you would do differently if you had it again. But sure, we were institutionalised too"'*.¹⁴¹

As well as the relevant section in our Follow-Up submission to the United Nations Committee Against Torture (UNCAT),¹⁴² which was provided to and ignored by the Committee, JFM also submitted testimony to the IDC on behalf of Maeve S (referred to above). Maeve's relative B_____ D_____ is now in her eighties, having been incarcerated in a Magdalene Laundry since the age of fourteen. Maeve's testimony regarding B_____'s maltreatment at the nursing home is worth reiterating:

A lot of her clothes would go missing, her good stuff would go missing, and then she'd turn up in a ragged old tracksuit...When we got to the room door we looked in, and there was another carer inside, and every stitch of clothes B_____ had was either on the floor, on the chair, on the bed. Everywhere. You could get nothing. And B_____ was crying her eyes out...The nurse came down, and I said 'It's disgraceful', I said. And she said –that's when it was said to me that, 'Well B_____ has two chests of drawers, and everyone else only has one.' Now, the wardrobe was only that size, tiny wardrobe and the chest of drawers that height. I said 'That's all her life's belongings', I said.

Yeah, she had no glasses and it was, oh it was early November, something like that. And I said to the girl, one of the care staff there, when I went back with her, I said

¹⁴⁰ Magdalene Commission Report, Chapter 4, Section A, 4.04

¹⁴¹ IDC Report, Chapter 19, Section 77

¹⁴² JFM Follow-Up Submission to UNCAT. Available from:
http://magdalenelaundries.com/JFM_UNCAT_Follow%20Up_Complete.pdf

'B_____ needs her glasses', I said. And, yeah late November it was. 'B_____ needs her glasses', I said...She didn't have them for Christmas. And it was after Christmas she still didn't get them, and I was on to them – I wrote to Mary Harney, I've the emails... Oh you're talking 3 or 4 months. And for someone who really — Yeah, for a pair of glasses. And to this day, she's 4 months waiting with no teeth, bottom teeth.

Her teeth – must be nearly 3 months ago now – her teeth, she has got diabetes. And she must have lost 3 stone now since the teeth went. She lost her bottom teeth, and I went in and I said it to the girl. And the girl said to me, 'Oh well she's not due another set of teeth.' And I said it to her, I said, 'I'll pay for another set of teeth', I said. 'She needs her teeth, I'll pay for it.' 'Oh well I'll see, I'll make a report.' That's the last we've heard of it. Yeah. It's shocking.¹⁴³

Maeve's testimony was not acknowledged at all by the IDC Report.

In JFM's Follow-Up submission to the UNCAT, Teresa B's testimony also illustrates the reality for women who remain institutionalised because of their time in the Magdalene Laundries. The following is an extract from the UNCAT Follow-Up submission. The IDC was provided with a complete unredacted copy of Teresa's testimony, but it was neither included nor acknowledged in the Report:

4.1.20 Teresa describes her impressions of [her natural mother] at their reunion in 1995, when Sean McDermott Street Magdalene Laundry was still in operation and [Anne] was still working there:

...[W]e could not believe that she was only forty-two because she looked so old fashioned ... She was wearing one of those polyester dresses. That was her good clothes, ...and she had a handbag, this is one of the poignant things, she had a handbag and when she opened it, there was nothing inside. It was just a

¹⁴³ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 184. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

handbag that was empty, just for decoration because, when you're going to something fancy you should have a handbag. ...She looked like a pensioner. I couldn't believe she was forty-two, I kept looking into her face to find a forty-two year old and I couldn't, because she had the face of hard work, that face that you see in so many women that have just had to work too hard and have never had a rest and have never had anyone to take care of them or tell them to put their feet up, and who have just worked too hard. [S]he was just lovely, and she was asking extremely innocent questions ... it was the first time she ever had coffee and it was very exciting for her to have coffee and she hadn't seen brown sugar before either - obviously in the Gresham there was brown and white sugar cubes on the table and it was all very fancy to her. And she was just overjoyed to be there and absolutely wowed by everything.¹⁴⁴

In relation to Beechlawn Nursing Home, which is on the site of the former laundry at High Park, a 2010 Health Information and Quality Authority (HIQA) report observed that:

... some institutional practices were observed which require to be reviewed these include empowering residents to make decisions and choices in their daily lives, reviewing forms of address used and ensuring the confidentiality of residents [sic] information.¹⁴⁵

A subsequent HIQA report thankfully noted that practices had improved: *'Improvements were also found in care practices specifically in the area of institutionalised practice such as terminology, residents returning to bed early and confidentiality of information.'*¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ JFM Follow-Up Submission to UNCAT, Section 4.1.20. Available from: http://magdalenelaundries.com/JFM_UNCAT_Follow%20Up_Complete.pdf

¹⁴⁵ <http://www.hiqa.ie/social-care/find-a-centre/nursing-homes/beechlawn-house-nursing-home>

¹⁴⁶ HIQA Report of 2nd March, 2011: Available at: <http://hiqa.ie/system/files/inspectionreports/0115-Beechlawn-House-Nursing-Home-02.03.2011.pdf>

As part of its principal submission to the IDC, JFM drew the Committee's attention to a 1985 book written by Sr Stanislaus Kennedy entitled *But Where Can I Go?*¹⁴⁷ JFM pointed out Sr Kennedy's comments on the mental health of the women and how this tallied with the first hand testimony of survivors.¹⁴⁸ In this regard JFM quoted the following text from Sr Kennedy's publication:

*According to staff, there is a very high incidence of mental handicap among the women. In Group 1 [the Laundries] 40 per cent were said to be suffering from mental handicap alone, while 28 per cent had some mental handicap along with a physical illness or handicap and 12 per cent were mentally handicapped and had a mental and a physical illness as well. In all, 80 per cent of the women in this group were deemed mentally handicapped. However, only 4 per cent of women in Group 1 became homeless because of a mental handicap and 1 per cent because of a mental illness ... The very large discrepancy between these two statistics for Group 1 can, perhaps be explained by the fact that the staff in these hostels may have defined mental handicap in a much broader sense than is normally the case. They may use the term 'mental handicap' to describe symptoms of severe institutionalisation.*¹⁴⁹

This too was ignored by the Committee.

Taking into account the testimony above, the concerns flagged by HIQA and the fact that some of the nursing homes concerned are administered through the Health Service Executive, it is deeply concerning that the IDC ignores the institutionalisation of these women in the Report and, as discussed above, to exclude their deaths from the statistical analysis.

¹⁴⁷ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 58. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

¹⁴⁸ State Involvement in the Magdalene Laundries, Section 67-68. Available from: http://www.magdalenelaundries.com/State_Involvement_in_the_Magdalene_Laundries_public.pdf

¹⁴⁹ Kennedy, S. (1985) *But Where Can I Go?* Galway: Arlen House

7. Duration of stay

As discussed above the duration of stay is known for just 42% of admissions to the Magdalene Laundries. In addition, the IDC Report does not appear to collate the stays of women who were transferred between laundries, or those who re-entered the laundries, for example, after an escape attempt. Additionally, the Executive Summary of the Report uses the median length of stay (7 months), stating that 61% of known entries spent less than a year in the laundries, whereas the mean duration is actually 3.22 years. As the IDC chose to return records to the religious orders and destroy all copies, it is not possible to verify these figures. The manner in which the statistics were recorded by the Committee and subsequently presented in the IDC Report has resulted in a distortion of the lived experience of Magdalene women and the duration of their confinement. The initial findings from the Magdalene Names Project support this contention and cast serious doubt on the IDC's claims.

Comparisons between Magdalene grave records and census data were discussed above in relation to so-called 'legacy cases', however, the analysis of electoral registers offers an even greater insight into lengths of stay for groups of women who were in the laundries for a particular time period. Chapter 17 of the IDC Report discusses the practices of the religious orders in registering the Magdalene women to vote. According to the Report, under the 1923 Electoral Act, a person who was an 'inmate' or 'patient' of an institution was not eligible to be registered to vote as that person would not have been considered to be 'ordinarily resident' there.¹⁵⁰ The Report goes on to note that after the legislation was amended in 1963, long-term 'inmates' or 'patients' in institutions could be registered to vote.¹⁵¹ Four laundries only registered the Magdalene women after 1963, in line with the legislation,¹⁵² while another four had registered Magdalene women prior to that time.¹⁵³ In the case of two other laundries (New Ross and Galway) the IDC states that insufficient information was available in order to establish the position.¹⁵⁴ The Report sets out how many registers were available for the other eight laundries; however, with just one

¹⁵⁰ IDC Report, Chapter 17, Section 9

¹⁵¹ IDC Report, Chapter 17, Section 12

¹⁵² IDC Report, Chapter 17, Section 18

¹⁵³ IDC Report, Chapter 17, Section 31

¹⁵⁴ IDC Report, Chapter 17, Section 47

exception, it fails to state how many women were registered there for each year. If it is the case that *'[a]fter 1963, women in Magdalen Laundries considered to be there for an indefinite period could under the law be registered to vote at that address'*,¹⁵⁵ it would be instructive to include such information in the Report by way of insight into how many women were considered to be long-term 'residents' in the Magdalene Laundries during these years. This omission is particularly troubling when it is considered that the data revealed by the electoral registers does not tally with the IDC's assertions regarding duration of stay.

Thus far, JFMR has been able to obtain electoral registers for High Park and Donnybrook laundries for some of the years between 1954-1964. The average number of women who were registered to vote during this time in High Park was 137, with an average of 102 for Donnybrook. The registers for 1963-64 reveal that for that time period, 132 women were registered to vote at High Park, and 102 in Donnybrook. Therefore, if the IDC is correct that only those who were 'ordinarily resident' could be registered to vote after 1963, this means that over 100 women in these two laundries were considered to be long-term during that time period. This casts serious doubt over the IDC's assertion that most women spent less than a year in the laundries.

The electoral data offers an opportunity for two types of analysis. JFMR was able to conduct a comparison of the electoral registers from 1954-55 against the electoral register for 1963-64, revealing the number of women who appear to have spent at least nine years in the laundries and a comparison of the electoral register for 1955-56 against the electoral register for 1963-64, showing how many women appear to have been confined for a minimum of eight years.

In the case of High Park, 63.4% of the women who appear on the electoral register in 1954-55 also appear on the electoral register for 1963-64, revealing that they spent a minimum of nine years confined and 61.4% of the women from 1955-56 were there for a minimum of eight years. The electoral registers for the Donnybrook laundry reveal similar results with

¹⁵⁵ IDC Report, Chapter 17, Section 14

63.1% in 1954-55 incarcerated for a minimum of nine years and 67.9% of those in 1955-56 incarcerated for a minimum of eight years.

The second type of analysis involves a comparison of the names on the electoral registers against the grave records for the same laundries. In the case of Donnybrook the available electoral registers for 1954-64 indicate that over half of these women are buried in the graveyard at the old laundry site. These findings are shown in greater detail below. JFMR is aware of at least two other women who died in Donnybrook, each having spent over 50 years confined, who are now buried in family plots.

Table 14: Comparison between electoral registers and graves data for Donnybrook Magdalene Laundry

Electoral Register	Names on gravestone
1954-55	54.4%
1955-56	55.6%
1956-57	57.1%
1962-63	56.7%
1963-64	53.9%
Average 1954-64	55.5%

Because of the lack of a complete list of names for High Park, this analysis has required a more creative approach. In this instance, we have conducted a comparison between the names on the electoral register against the names on the gravestones, the appendices supplied to the Department of the Environment for the exhumation licence, the list of 'other women' compiled by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity and the names we have obtained from the Glasnevin Genealogy Service. The data shows that an average of 47.5% of those who were in High Park between 1954-64 died there.¹⁵⁶ **Table 15** shows the breakdown of figures in greater detail.

¹⁵⁶ JFMR records are constantly being updated as new data emerges, hence this figure differs from previous op-eds and other publications

Table 15: Comparison between electoral registers and graves data for High Park Magdalene Laundry

Electoral Register	Names on gravestone/appendices/Glasnevin data
1954-55	46.3%
1955-56	46.4%
1962-63	46.5%
1963-64	50.6%
Average 1954-64	47.5%.

8. Conceptions within Magdalene Laundries

JFMR is aware of a number of cases where women and girls became pregnant while they were confined in Magdalene Laundries. JFMR brought testimony from a daughter of one such woman to the attention of the IDC, however this material was ignored. In the following extract from her testimony Teresa B¹⁵⁷ expresses her feelings about her mother and her conception:

*She was ashamed of her work, because, I think when she met us she saw us as better than her. We didn't feel better than her, we thought she was fabulous. And we were very proud of her – as women – we were very proud of her. And we were proud that she made us, even though we assume or know that we were conceived of abuse. That doesn't make us feel ashamed, nobody asked to be born. It makes me feel proud of the fact that I'm educated enough to speak like this now and I'm grateful to her and I'm grateful to my adoptive parents for making me who I am.*¹⁵⁸

JFMR Advisory Committee member Judy Campbell, who has conducted research on births within Mother and Baby Homes, has found a number of birth certificates where the mother's address is cited as a Magdalene Laundry. Two examples are shown below in **Fig 12** and **Fig 13**. This evidence was brought to Minister James Reilly's attention in the context of the upcoming Commission of Investigation; however, as discussed above, the Magdalene Laundries were excluded from the inquiry's Terms of Reference with the exception of 'pathways' to and from Mother and Baby Homes. Unfortunately

¹⁵⁷ See also Section 6 above

¹⁵⁸ Testimony of Teresa B, Tranche 1 of testimonies submitted to IDC

'pathways' will be of little assistance in understanding how vulnerable women and girls became pregnant while in the charge of the religious orders.

Fig 12 – sample birth certificate showing mother as resident in a Magdalene Laundry

COAHNEAR AN CHAONN-CLÁRADÓRA } <i>Dublin</i> (Superintendent Registrar's District)				COAHNEAR AN CLÁRADÓRA } <i>Castletown</i> (Registrar's District)						
19. <i>50</i>		breithe cláruite i gCOAHNEAR } <i>Castletown</i> (Births Registered in the District of)		i gCOAHNEAR AN CHAONN-CLÁRADÓRA } <i>Dublin</i> (in the Superintendent Registrar's District of)						
		i gCONNDÁE } <i>Dublin</i> (in the County of)								
Uimh. (No.)	Dáta 7 áit Úrúis. (Date and Place of Birth).	Ainm. (NAME (If any)).	Íompar (Físicéir no bairceán) (Sex)	Ainm 7 Siompa 7 áit Cóm- naíste an ára. (Name and Surname, and Dwelling-place of Father).	Ainm 7 Siompa na Máthar. (Name and Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother).	Famh Úrúis an ára. (Rank or Profession of Father).	Siompa, Cúirteáir 7 áit Cónaíochta an tAinmíoch. (Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant).	Dáta Cláruite. (When Registered).	Siompa an Cláradóra. (Signature of Registrar).	Ainm Dáta na má- eugab 7 dáta cláruite na Dáta 7 Dáta. (Baptismal Name, if added after Registration of Birth and Date) (11).
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)

1952.7.15		F					Bridget Governor Occupier St Patrick's Home Navan Rd Dublin	Twenty Seventh July 19.50	<i>B. Lavelle</i> CLÁRADÓIR (Registrar.)	
	<i>Navan Rd Dublin</i>			<i>Gloicester St Dublin</i>						

Research conducted by Judy Campbell

Fig 13 – sample birth certificate showing mother as resident in a Magdalene Laundry

COAHNEAR AN COAHN-CLÁRADÓRA } <i>Dublin</i> (Superintendent Registrar's District)			COAHNEAR AN CLÁRADÓRA } <i>Castletown</i> (Registrar's District)						
19... <i>49</i> ... breite clárúite i scoannear } <i>Castletown</i> (Births Registered in the District of)			i scoannear an coahn-cláradóra } <i>Dublin</i> (in the Superintendent Registrar's District of)						
i scoonndao } <i>Dublin</i> (in the County of)									
Uim. (No.)	Dáta 7 áit breite, (Date and Place of Birth)	Ainm, (Name (if any)).	Áit (Páirc) no baincainn (Age)	Ainm, Sloinne 7 áit naíote an aca. (Name and Surname and Dwelling place of Father)	Ainm 7 Sloinne na Máthar. (Name and Surname and Maiden Surname of Mother)	Sainm, Dteas an aca. (Rank or Profession of Father)	Sainm, Cúlúac 7 áit Comhairle an Cláradóra. (Signature, Qualification, and Residence of Informant)	Dáta clárúige. (When Registered)	Sainm an Cláradóra. (Signature of Registrar)
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)
	<i>St Patrick's Home Navan Rd Dublin</i>	<i>M</i>		<i>Magdalen Home Donnybrook</i>			<i>Bridget Governor Occupier St Patrick's Home Navan Rd</i>	<i>Eleventh November 1949</i>	<i>M. Lavelle Assistant CLÁRADÓIR (Registrar)</i>

Research conducted by Judy Campbell

Conclusion

It was our hope in JFM Research that the IDC Report would help to restore dignity to the women and girls who died behind laundry walls and that at the very least each woman would be accounted for. However, the Report leaves more questions than answers. The religious orders' version of events is allowed to go unchallenged, while survivor testimony is completely ignored.

Our more recent research has brought the IDC's failings into sharp relief and shows the absolute need for openness and transparency in all future investigations.

The message from the IDC Report is clear: As far as church and State are concerned, the Magdalene women matter as little in death as they did in life.

We in JFMR hope that this first publication of our series of critiques is the beginning of redressing that balance.

Key findings

- To-date, JFMR has recorded the details of 1,663 women who died in Ireland's Magdalene Laundries, almost twice the figure cited in the IDC Report. JFMR's data accounts for the number of women who died in the Magdalene institutions between 1835 and 2014. The IDC Report on the other hand does not count the deaths of women who died in the laundries before 1922 and those who continued to live institutionalised lives in the charge of the religious orders.¹⁵⁹
- For the period covered by the IDC Report (1922 until the closure of each laundry), JFMR has recorded 768 deaths, while the IDC states that 879 women died during this time. The reasons for this discrepancy are complex and are discussed in Section 1.5 of this document.

¹⁵⁹ JFMR has included the data on those whose deaths occurred outside the parameters set in the IDC Report, because they relate to matters of great concern that are in the public interest (see **Section 2.1.1** in particular). We also include these women out of respect for those who, as it appears to us, have not been afforded dignity in death.

- The IDC Report omits public cemeteries that are used by the religious orders after the closure of the laundries and thus the IDC missed an opportunity to provide assistance to the family and friends of deceased Magdalene women who would like to visit the graves of their loved ones.
- The IDC failed to produce a breakdown by institution of how many women entered each Magdalene Laundry, even after eighteen months with unparalleled access to the records of the religious orders. The exclusion of this vital information makes it impossible to calculate the mortality rate for each laundry.
- These complications, combined with the omission of information on individual burial sites also make it difficult to establish the full extent to which deaths are excluded from the Report.
- JFMR does not have the details for 142 women whose deaths are recorded in the IDC Report. This means that for these 142 women who died between 1922 and the closure of the laundries we do not know their final resting place.
- As part of our various submissions to the IDC, JFM supplied all of its research materials and databases of names on Magdalene graves. Despite having this information and access to the records of the religious orders, the IDC nonetheless managed to omit certain deaths from the Report and did not identify the discrepancies outlined by JFMR in **Section 2** of this document.
- For 131 women who died in High Park, no trace of their whereabouts can be found in Glasnevin Cemetery's archives. Out of these 131 women, 54 died between 1922 and 1991 when High Park closed, i.e. the time period covered by the IDC Report. Just 33 out of 187 women whose names are inscribed on this headstone for High Park laundry are actually buried at that location.

- Similar research into the Sean McDermott Street records reveals that 51 women whose names are inscribed on three headstones at a particular location in Glasnevin are not buried at that location, but are interred elsewhere. The vast majority of these women died within the time period covered by the IDC Report.
- JFMR has discovered the names of 106 women previously unknown to us who died at High Park and are buried at 7 separate locations at Glasnevin. These women died between 1886 and 1999, while 30 from this cohort died between 1922 and the closure of High Park in 1991.
- Despite the IDC Report's assertion that the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity were at '*an advanced stage*' of rectifying the headstones, just 10 new names have been added to the gravestones. None of the new names match any of those on the exhumation licence.
- So-called 'legacy cases' were not included in the Report's statistics for levels of State involvement. That is, the women entered the institutions when Ireland was under British rule and consequently the IDC disclaimed any responsibility for their fate, even after the foundation of the State. In ignoring this research the IDC dismissed many women whose experiences reveal a very different reality to that depicted by the Committee.