

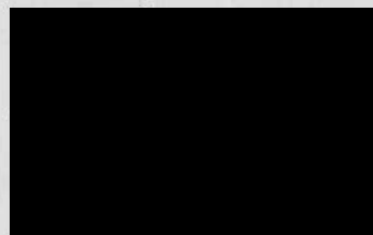
# EUGENE F. COLLINS

SOLICITORS

ANTHONY E. COLLINS  
EUGENE MURPHY  
MICHAEL W. CARRIGAN  
MARGARET BURKE-STANTON  
DAVID ENSOR  
TERRY LEGGETT  
GERARD COLL  
BARRY O'NEILL

SIMON MCCORMICK  
MARY E. BARRETT  
SUSAN RYAN  
LEONORA MALONE  
DAVID CANTRELL  
RUTH FINLAY  
JOHN COSTELLO

61 FITZWILLIAM SQUARE  
DUBLIN 2



OUR REF. MEB/GH/JK

YOUR REF.

12th May 1993

The Secretary,  
The Department of the Environment,  
Local Services Section,  
Department of the Environment,  
Custom House,  
Dublin 1.

Re: Exhumation Licence for Grave Ground at High Park Convent

Dear Sirs,

We, Solicitors for the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, hereby make application for a Licence for the exhumation of the remains of the deceased persons named in the attached Appendices from the graves in which they are interred and for their removal for purposes of reinterment or cremation and we certify that the particulars given below are true in all respects. If the application is granted, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity will agree to carry out any conditions contained in the Licence.

The grave ground in question is a private grave ground situate at St. Mary's, High Park, Drumcondra. The grave ground is vested in the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity, High Park, Drumcondra and is situate within the boundaries of land owned by the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity which is part of lands comprised in a Contract for Sale. The intended purchaser intends developing the lands at some future date and accordingly it has been decided to apply for an Exhumation Licence as it is considered that it would be inappropriate to retain the grave ground in its present location when development takes place.

1. Background to the Grave Ground at High Park, Drumcondra

The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity have been in residence in High Park for 140 years. From the late eighteen hundreds until recently, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity have, as part of their community and charitable vocation, provided a hostel/residential service to marginalised members of the community who for one reason or another were unwanted, shunned or made homeless.



The vast majority of those in residential care were placed there by their families because of mental illness, retardation or imbalance. During the late eighteenth and early to mid nineteenth century, it was commonplace in Irish society for such people to have been looked upon as an embarrassment and a stigma on their families and hence they were placed with community and religious orders.

By and large, such people were possibly better off in that they were cared for and looked after at a time when the State did not provide such services and when residing with their families might often have resulted in various forms of abuse and cruelty.

The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity felt that those residents who had made High Park their home and who had shown such devotion to the Convent and to other religious activities should in some way be rewarded after a period of time. This reward was in the form of a religious title and bestowed on the residents a quasi religious status. The title given to the residents was "Magdalen" with an appropriate Saint or religious imagery being attached to the name, hence Magdalen of the Good Shepherd and Magdalen of Saint Peter, etc.

It was seen within the Convent as an honour to be titled "Magdalen". The process involved a special ceremony and the newly consecrated "Magdalen" was allowed to wear a religious robe. The consequence of such "consecration" was that these new quasi religious figures were given additional responsibilities and tasks and were at all times respected by the various other residents due to their elevation.

Because of the special status of these residents, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity felt that they should be given a special grave ground along with the Sisters and accordingly it was decided that the "Magdalens" should be buried in the grounds of High Park Convent itself. Again, as in the case of a religious burial, the inscription on the grave stones/crosses is the religious inscription and not the Christian and surname as would appear on a lay person's headstone.

When a resident was buried and their religious title inscribed on their cross, their Christian and surnames and religious name were to be entered into a Register for the purposes of keeping accurate records.

## 2. Research undertaken to bespeak Death Certificates

Almost all of the 133 names, the subject of this application, had a quasi religious title. On researching the records in attempt to have all the relevant facts in order for the purpose of making this application, it was discovered that the relevant records from the period 1942 to 1968 could not be found and consequently it was not possible to ascertain the Christian and surname of those "Magdalens" who died during that period.

This office set about bespeaking the 133 Death Certificates in October last year. We were fully aware that it was a requirement of the Department of the Environment that a Death Certificate be furnished with each application for an Exhumation Licence. Accordingly, we set about the task of trying to bespeak 133 Death Certificates for the names shown on the attached Appendices.

This office was in constant communication and contact with Joe McDonald of the Office of Births, Marriages and Deaths from early October of last year to the end of January of this year. After making every search possible, both this office and we believe the Office of Births, Marriages and Deaths, are satisfied that out of the 133 names submitted, no more than 75 Death Certificates can be produced from the office of Births Marriages and Deaths (see Appendix 1) because of lack of information or insufficient data available.

In respect of those names where it was not possible to obtain a Death Certificate (Appendix 2) and in the case of the "Magdalens" (Appendix 3) every effort was made in trying to ascertain in what way and in what manner these names may have been registered at the time of their death. Again, we are confident that the 34 names submitted (Appendix 2), which are names for which we cannot trace a Death Certificate, is the absolute minimum. At the outset of this task, there were over 50 names for which we could not trace a Death Certificate but due to the help and cooperation of the Office of Births, Marriages and Deaths, we were successful in reducing this number to 34.

In the case of the "Magdalens" (Appendix 3), the Office of Births, Marriages and Deaths have confirmed that such people would not have been registered under their religious title. Regardless of that, searches were conducted in order to ensure same was the case. Unfortunately, the searches produced nothing. It is unfortunate that the records from 1942 to 1968 are not available. The absence of those records is the sole and prime reason why no Death Certificates can be furnished for those who died between 1942 and 1968 (save in the case of three of the deceased who were presumably not consecrated to the rank of "Magdalen" and therefore their Christian and surnames appear on their grave stone).

3. Current Services in St. Mary's Convent, High Park

The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity are still continuing with this type of community work and presently have approximately forty residents staying with them in High Park Convent. Since 1986, all those residents who died at High Park Convent have been buried in Glasnevin Cemetery.

The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity for various reasons now no longer take in such residents - attitudes to mental illness and indeed state services have much improved since the early twentieth century. Out of the forty residents now in High Park, 13 are located in the new infirmary of the Convent which has only been recently constructed and was opened by the President, Mary Robinson, in which she paid a personal tribute to the work that the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity have done in the past with the mentally ill, and marginalised in our community.

4. Reason for sale of land at High Park

The Sisters of Our Lady of Charity have entered into a Contract for the sale of twelve acres approximately of their lands at High Park - these lands include the grave ground.



The sale is subject to the issuing of consent from the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland. Such consent will only issue when it is set out in an application to the Commissioners how it is intended to deal with the proceeds of sale.

It is the intention of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity to set off the nett proceeds against the large and substantial debt incurred when infirmary and other purpose built houses were constructed for the remaining forty residents.

The nett proceeds of the sale itself will not be enough to clear this debt - so it is anticipated that such consent will issue.

5 Conclusion

Because of the various facts we have outlined above, we do not believe that any relatives of the deceased would object to the exhumation of the remains of the deceased.

It should be noted that in most cases these residents were left with the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity by families who chose to ignore their very existence because of their mental illness/retardation. Therefore, the deceased's were for most of their lives in the care of the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity and consequently, the Sisters of Our Lady of Charity now make this application.

It is intended that the remains of the deceased will be either reinterred in Glasnevin Cemetery or cremated in the Crematorium at Glasnevin Cemetery. As of yet, there is not a registered number or other means of identification of the grave space in which it is proposed to reinterr the remains.

Accordingly, we now furnish you with the following:-

- i) Death Certificates (75).
- ii) No Trace Forms (34).
- iii) Letter from the Office of Births, Marriages and Deaths dealing with the "Magdalens" (24).
- iv) Appendix 1.
- v) Appendix 2.
- vi) Appendix 3.

We lodge the above and make this application believing a bona fide attempt has been made by ourselves to extract as many Death Certificates as possible and in the case of the Death Certificates not being available, to furnish as much information as is at hand.

We look forward to the issuing of the requested Licence.

Yours faithfully,

  
Eugene F. Collins

Encls.

APPENDIX 1List of 75 names for whom Death Certificates are available

Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
1	Margaret [REDACTED]	20/06/1889	Paralysis	Single
2	Mary [REDACTED]	17/02/1891	Abdominal Tumour	Single
3	Mary [REDACTED]	24/04/1891	Acute Bronchitis	Single
4	Mary Anne [REDACTED]	21/02/1892	Phthisis Pulmonales	Single
5	Mary [REDACTED]	17/07/1892	Acute Bronchitis	Single
6	Catherine [REDACTED]	21/07/1893	Bronchial Asphyxia	Single
7	Margaret [REDACTED]	06/09/1894	Apoplaexy	Single
8	Teresa [REDACTED]	19/10/1894	A weak heart	Single
9	Mary Anne [REDACTED]	01/01/1895	Mitral Valve Disease	Single
10	Catherine [REDACTED]	14/09/1897	Paipura Haemorrhage	Single
11	Esther [REDACTED]	28/05/1898	Phthisis Pulmonales	Single
12	Mary [REDACTED]	20/11/1898	A weak/dilated heart	Single
13	Mary [REDACTED]	03/07/1899	Senile decay	Single
14	Annie [REDACTED]	20/05/1900	Phthisis Pulmonales	Single
15	Mary Ann [REDACTED]	28/10/1900	A weak heart	Single
16	Catherine [REDACTED]	14/11/1900	A weak heart	Single
17	Elizabeth [REDACTED]	22/04/1901	Phthisis Pulmonales	Single

Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
18	Elizabeth [REDACTED]	22/09/1902	Hemiplegia	Single
19	Frances [REDACTED]	19/12/1902	Cancer of Uterus	Single
20	Esther [REDACTED]	13/11/1904	Cancer of Rectum	Single
21	Bridget [REDACTED]	06/06/1905	Phitosis	Single
22	Margaret [REDACTED]	10/08/1905	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	Single
23	Ellen [REDACTED]	04/10/1906	Intestinal Obstruction	Single
24	Catherine [REDACTED]	06/04/1907	Influenze/Pneumonia	Single
25	Annie [REDACTED]	06/02/1907	A weak heart	Single
26	Mary [REDACTED]	04/03/1908	Influenza	Single
27	Ann [REDACTED]	17/04/1908	Hemiplegia	Single
28	Elizabeth [REDACTED]	28/01/1909	Phthisis Pulmonales	Single
29	Catherine [REDACTED]	17/04/1911	Phsthesia	Single
30	Anne [REDACTED]	01/03/1912	Carcinoma of throat	Single
31	Annie [REDACTED]	22/06/1912	Mitral Valve Disease	Single
32	Margaret [REDACTED]	13/12/1912	A weak/dilated heart	Single
33	Mary Ann [REDACTED]	08/11/1912	Phthisis Pulmonales	Single
34	Hanna Sophia [REDACTED]	16/11/1914	Asthma	Single
35	Sarah [REDACTED]	11/03/1915	Mitral Vascular Disease	Single
36	Margaret [REDACTED]	26/12/1916	Pneumonia	Single

Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
37	Elizabeth [REDACTED]	21/06/1918	Mitral Stenosis	Single
38	Eliza [REDACTED]	15/02/1919	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	Single
39	Alicia [REDACTED]	21/02/1919	Aortic Valvular Disease	Single
40	Joanna [REDACTED]	28/02/1919	Influenza/Bronchial Pneumonia	Single
41	Margaret [REDACTED]	07/08/1919	Carcinoma of stomach	Single
42	Catherine [REDACTED]	26/12/1919	Carcinoma of stomach	Single
43	Mary [REDACTED]	23/05/1920	Cancer of Oesophagus	Single
44	Elizabeth [REDACTED]	13/06/1921	Chronic Endocarditis	Single
45	Elizabeth [REDACTED]	27/04/1922	Anaemia	Single
46	Julia [REDACTED]	29/09/1923	Cancer of stomach	Single
47	Elizabeth [REDACTED]	18/10/1924	Valvular Disease	Single
48	Margaret [REDACTED]	08/12/1924	Pulmonary Tuberculosis	Single
49	Kate [REDACTED]	05/09/1925	Mitral Stenosis	Single
50	Emily [REDACTED]	18/08/1926	Phthisis Pulmonales	Single
51	Margaret [REDACTED]	15/08/1927	Gastric Carcinoma	Widow
52	Julia [REDACTED]	22/11/1927	Cancer of liver	Single
53	Margaret [REDACTED]	06/05/1928	Mitral Disease/ Cancer of Duodenum	Widow
54	Anne [REDACTED]	01/04/1930	Senile decay	Widow
55	Mary Ann [REDACTED]	07/06/1930	Senility	Single

Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
56	Angus [REDACTED]	23/07/1930	Senile decay	Widow
57	Mary Morgan	12/01/1933	Asphyxia	Widow
58	Anne [REDACTED]	06/04/1934	Bronchial Pneumonia	Single
59	Margaret [REDACTED]	26/12/1935	Protracted Septicaemia	Single
60	Mary [REDACTED]	13/04/1937	Senility/Septicaemia	Single
61	Mary Ann [REDACTED]	07/09/1938	Cancer of breast	Single
62	Isabella [REDACTED]	08/04/1966	Influenza/cardiac respiratory failure	Single
63	Mary [REDACTED]	22/09/1974	Respiratory failure/ Septicaemia	Single
64	Bridget [REDACTED]	20/08/1974	Heart failure	Single
65	Julia [REDACTED]	09/12/1974	Bronchial Pneumonia/ Senile Dementia	Single
66	Edith [REDACTED]	21/04/1975	Carcinoma of stomach	Single
67	Mary Ellen [REDACTED]	25/08/1977	Mio-cardial infraction	Single
68	Christina [REDACTED]	23/05/1979	Cardiac failure/ senility	Single
69	Lucy [REDACTED]	26/02/1980	Bronchial Pneumonia	Single
70	Rosemary [REDACTED]	13/12/1980	Pulmonary Embolism	Single
71	Mary [REDACTED]	24/07/1981	Cardiac Arrest	Single
72	Kate [REDACTED]	28/01/1983	Cerebral Thrombosis/ Hypertension	Single



Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
73	Bridget [REDACTED]	18/04/1987	Cardiac Arrest	Single
74	Mary [REDACTED]	09/10/1985	Cardiac Failure	Single
75	Jane [REDACTED]	22/08/1986	Cerebrovascular accident	Single

APPENDIX 2

List of persons buried in High Park for whom we have no Trace Form  
on the basis that a Death Certificate was unobtainable

Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
1	Bridget [REDACTED]	02/05/1896	Not known	Presumed Single
2	Mary Grimes	22/10/1899	Not known	Presumed Single
3	Susan [REDACTED]	08/03/1903	Not known	Presumed Single
4	Margaret [REDACTED]	28/01/1909	Not known	Presumed Single
5	Catherine [REDACTED]	11/02/1911	Not known	Presumed Single
6	Frances [REDACTED]	27/01/1914	Not known	Presumed Single
7	Jane [REDACTED]	26/03/1923	Not known	Presumed Single
8	Mary [REDACTED]	08/12/1925	Not known	Presumed Single
9	Isabelle [REDACTED]	18/10/1926	Not known	Presumed Single
10	Catherine [REDACTED]	/1933 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
11	Margaret [REDACTED]	/1934 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
12	Eileen [REDACTED]	/1934 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
13	Catherine [REDACTED]	/1934 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
14	Margaret [REDACTED]	/1936 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single

Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
15	Elizabeth [REDACTED]	/1937 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
16	Catherine [REDACTED]	/1937 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
17	Brigid [REDACTED]	/1937 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
18	Mary Graves	/1937 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
19	Mary Jane [REDACTED]	/1938 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
20	Margaret [REDACTED]	/1938 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
21	Philomena [REDACTED]	/1938 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
22	Mary [REDACTED]	/1938 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
23	Margaret [REDACTED]	/1938 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
24	Alice [REDACTED]	/1938 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
25	Ellen [REDACTED]	/1938 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
26	Sarah [REDACTED]	/1939 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
27	Margaret [REDACTED]	/1940 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
28	Margaret [REDACTED]	/1940 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
29	Mary [REDACTED]	/1941 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single

Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
30	Mary [REDACTED]	/1941 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
31	Margaret [REDACTED]	/1943 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
32	Bridget [REDACTED]	/1944 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
33	Margaret [REDACTED]	07/06/1973	Not known	Presumed Single
34	Mary [REDACTED]	12/03/1976	Not known	Presumed Single

APPENDIX 3

List of people buried in High Park for whom we have only their  
quasi religious name with no way of identifying their Christian name  
and henceforth no way of producing a Death Certificate

Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
1	Magdalen of St. Cecilia	1942 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
2	Magdalen of Lourdes	1943 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
3	Magdalen of St. Pascal	1945 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
4	Magdalen of St. Bernadine	1946 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
5	Magdalen of The Good Shepherd	1947 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
6	Magdalen of St. Peter	1948 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
7	Bertha	1948 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
8	Magdalen of The Immaculate Heart	1948 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
9	Magdalen of St. De Pazzi	1950 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
10	Magdalen of St. Elizabeth	1951 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
11	Magdalen of St. Anne	1951 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
12	Magdalen of The Assumption	1954 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single



Number	Name	Date of Death	Cause of Death	Marital Status
13	Magdalen of Dolours	1955 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
14	Magdalen of St. Anthony	1955 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
15	Magdalen of The Sacred Heart	1957 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
16	Magdalen of St. Finbar	1958 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
17	Magdalen of Dolours	1959 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
18	Magdalen of The Sacred Heart	1963 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
19	Magdalen of St. Paul	1964 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
20	Magdalen of St. Angela	1967 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
21	Magdalen of St. Therese	1967 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
22	Magdalen of St. Ignatius	1968 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
23	Magdalen of Our Lady Help of Christians	1968 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single
24	Magdalen of St. Teresa	1968 (Specific date not known)	Not known	Presumed Single