

KEVIN AND EVADR R. PATRICK

This is the story of Kevin and Eva O'Doherty, two Irish rebels who became prominent Brisbane citizens in the nineteenth century.

On a cold day in early November 1848, a good-looking, well-built young Irishman stood in the dock of the Green Street Court, Dublin, whilst hearing Mr Justice Crampton pass sentence on him. "His manner and bearing displayed the same firmness, composure and dignity that marked his conduct during the entire course of the three trials to which he had been subjected. His Lordship said, "Kevin Izod O'Doherty, you were indicted for compassing the deposition of Her Majesty, The Queen, and also for compassing to levy war against Her Majesty, The Queen, in order by force and constraint to compel her to change her measures and counsels. You have been acquitted on all counts charging the former intent and found guilty of compassing to levy war against Her Majesty, The Queen." The judge continued his harangue and concluded by saying, "I fear I must add, that I cannot conceive, I have never read any publications more dangerous, more wicked, more clearly designed to excite insurrection, rebellion and revolution than those publications which have emanated from your press and of which you have been ascertained by the verdict of your jury to be the guilty publisher." A hushed court then heard these words: "Under these circumstances, the Court feels called on to pronounce upon you the sentence that you be transported for ten years."

Quite unperturbed by the sentence just passed, O'Doherty requested and was granted permission to say a few words. He said that he had hoped upon being placed in the dock a third time, after two juries of his fellow citizens had refused to find a verdict against him, that his prosecutors would have been scrupulous and taken care that in attempting to uphold their law they would not have violated every principle of justice. He pointed out that he was influenced by but one feeling, and had but one object in view. He felt deeply for the suffering and privations endured by his fellow-countrymen and desired by every means consistent with a manly and honourable resistance to put an end to those sufferings. He concluded by saying that out of twelve jurors to be sworn, there was not one Roman Catholic.

As O'Doherty was led away to the vaulted passage connecting the Court with Newgate Prison, a beautiful, raven-haired Irish colleen rushed to his side and whispered, "Have faith, I'll wait." She was Eva Kelly, already known as "Eva of the Nation".

Who were Kevin O'Doherty and Mary Eva Kelly and what led up to the position in which they now found themselves?

The O'Doherty clan had its origin in Donegal. It is not known when Kevin O'Doherty's immediate ancestors came to Dublin, but the Dublin Street Directory for 1799 lists Kevin Izod Doherty as a brewer in Watling Street, not far from where the famous Guinness complex now stands. This was the convicted man's grandfather. Grandfather Kevin's children included William Doherty who is listed in the Directory from 1812 to 1931, as an attorney. William Doherty married Anne, daughter of Timothy McEvoy, a well-known builder. The couple had four surviving children, including Kevin, the subject of the paper. Others in the family were William, who became a dentist to St Vincent's Hospital, Dublin; John, a solicitor who practised in that city; and Gertrude, who entered St Mary's Dominican Convent, Kingstown, Dublin. From records held at St Andrew's

Church, Westland Row, Dublin, it is found that Kevin was baptised at the Townsend Chapel on 23 September, 1823. A few years after Kevin's father's death in 1832, his mother's address was given as Frascati, Blackrock, on the outskirts of the city.

Eva Kelly was the daughter of Edward Kelly of Killeen, near Portumna, Co. Galway. She was a descendant of the great O'Kelly Sept of Ui Maine who were one of the dangerous Irish septs named by the Corporation of Galway. The Corporation in 1518 issued an order that "Neither O nor Mac shall strut or swagger through the streets of Galway." A more specific instruction was promulgated forbidding the citizens of the town to admit to their houses Burkes, McWilliams, Kellys or any other sept. On her mother's side, there was rebel stock also for she was an O'Flaherty. Over their gates of Galway was once inscribed: "God deliver us from the fury of the O'Flahertys." Eva was born at the village of Headford, Co. Galway, in the home of her maternal grandparents, on 15 February, 1830. She spent much of her infancy there and a lot of her childhood at Lisdonagh, also owned by her grandfather, not far away.

Kevin O'Doherty was educated chiefly by Rev Dr Cahill and also at Dr Wall's school in Hume Street, Dublin. In 1842, he commenced the study of medicine at Ledwich Medical School and the Royal College of Surgeons, Ireland. He was apprenticed to Michael Donovan, an apothecary, who was professor of chemistry, pharmacy and materia medica. At this time the Irish led the English-speaking world in the field of medicine. Cheyne was the first of a line of physicians whose names are still current today. Cheyne was followed by a famous triad of Graves, Stokes and Corrigan, each of whom was the first to identify a particular disease of clinical sign. O'Doherty's clinical experience was gained at St Mark's Hospital for diseases of the eye and ear in Park Street, Dublin, and later as practising clinical assistant at the Meath Hospital. That he took advantage of the high standard of medical training available is evidenced from certificates which have been preserved. J. Moore Neligan, oculist and aurist, as well as editor of the *Dublin Journal of Medical Science* certified that "Mr O'Doherty was much distinguished whilst my pupil, both for his diligence and talent. He obtained the certificate by distinguished answering at an examination." Dr William Stokes, one of the greatest of clinicians and teachers said, "O'Doherty was qualified to undertake the charge of a medical institution."

In the same year that O'Doherty commenced his medical course, three men started publishing a newspaper called *The Nation*. They were Charles Duffy, later Premier of Victoria, Thomas Davis and John Dillon. All three "shared certain views on the subject of patriotism, the identity of Ireland, the destiny of the Irish nation and the duties all Irishmen owed the nation." Their journal reflected the romantic nationalism they preached. They had many followers and the group became known as the Young Ireland Movement. The Young Irelanders at first threw their weight behind Daniel O'Connell, the great liberator, who had won emancipation for the Catholics of Ireland. O'Connell was now striving to have the Union of England and Ireland repealed as many of his countrymen hated its effects on Ireland. A feature of O'Connell's great movement was the holding of monster meetings in various parts of the country. The biggest meeting of all was planned to be held at Clontarf, on the shore near Dublin. The British, who were greatly concerned about these activities, banned the meeting. O'Connell, wishing to avoid bloodshed, cancelled the arrangements. This was the beginning of the Young Irelanders' detachment with O'Connell. They later left O'Connell and established a confederation to preach repeal at any cost, including force, if necessary.

Kevin O'Doherty was an ardent supporter of the Young Ireland movement and helped found the student and polytechnic clubs which were highly regarded by the leaders of the Young Irelanders. When the inevitable clash between the British and the Young Irelanders came in 1848, the first of the British actions was to arrest John Mitchel, one of

the Young Ireland leaders, and convict him of treason-felony. Mitchel made an impassioned plea for hundreds, nay thousands to take his place. O'Doherty was in court when this plea was made and was stirred with patriotism. He and Dalton Williams, another medical student, commenced the publication of *The Irish Tribune* in place of Mitchel's paper, *The United Irishman*, which had contained articles on which he had been charged with sedition by the British. The first edition of O'Doherty's paper appeared on June 10, 1848, a few weeks before he was due to sit for his final examinations in medicine. There was no mistaking the purpose of the paper. One quotation will suffice to demonstrate this: "We call on the people of Dublin, as they value their lives, their liberties and the happiness of their homes ... to take this matter into their own hands ... to tell this Royal Lady... that the crown which will stand in the way of the Irish people righting and ruling themselves ... must perish."

The British were now making a concerted drive to quell all activities of the Young Irelanders. The Habeas Corpus Act was suspended and efforts were made to apprehend the leaders of the movement. After only five issues of *The Irish Tribune*, O'Doherty and Williams were arrested and taken to Newgate Gaol.

Whilst Kevin was supporting the Young Irelander movement amongst the students, Eva Kelly was contributing nationalistic poems to *The Nation*. Her first literary stimulus came from one of her governesses, Miss Gormley. It was her uncle, Martin O'Flaherty, a Young Ireland sympathiser, who influenced her to send her first contributions to *The Nation*. Eva expressed her feelings towards the British in such poems as "Down, Britannia, Down", a verse of which reads:

Down, Britannia, brigand down,
No more to rule with sceptred hand,
Truth raises o'er thy throne and crown
Her exorcising wand.
I see the writing on the wall.
The proud, the thrice-accursed shall fall.
Down, Britannia, down.

In the great famine of 1846-7, two million Irish died from starvation of fever and a million more emigrated. Eva base one of her poems on the misery it caused. She entitled it, "A Scene for Ireland".

It as a wild and rainy day,
The last of dark December's,
A ragged "pauper", drooping, lay
Above the dying embers.
The drops fell from the rotting roof,
Marking the hours so dreary,
The hungry children stood aloof,
Pallid, and cold, and weary.

When O'Doherty and Williams arrived at Newgate Prison, they found Duffy of *The Nation* already there and John Martin, another of the movement's leaders, soon followed. The prisoners, at first, were given much freedom and allowed to gather in each other's rooms. This enabled Duffy and O'Doherty to plan an escape using a rope ladder hidden in Duffy's room. They first planned to join William Smith O'Brien, the Young Ireland's supreme leader who was in the south of Ireland testing support for a stand against the British. When the word came that O'Brien had failed to rally enough help and was on the run, Duffy and O'Doherty then decided to attempt an escape to America. Friends outside

hired a small vessel and the night was chosen for the escape. But their plans went awry. During the appointed day their rooms were searched and the rope ladder discovered. Hutchinson, a policeman on duty outside the prison, in whom the prisoners had confided, turned out to be an informer. Duffy and O'Doherty soon found themselves under tighter security. Visitors were restricted but not completely prohibited.

It was through Eva's visits to see the Young Irelanders in prison that her romance with Kevin developed. P. J. Smyth tells the story in the following words: "Like many members of the party, Kevin had been visited by Miss Kelly, who at the time was charming everyone by the sweetness of her poems. ... Tall, with dark dreamy eyes and wonderful black hair reaching to her knees, poor O'Doherty fell a victim to her charms. One visit followed another and became a weekly occurrence ... their farewell was a touching one, Eva promising to remain faithful and with a hope that he might come back to claim the promise she gave him to be his wife."

The 1848 rebellion failed because the Young Irelanders were romantic idealists and quite impractical. No military plans were made and there were only poor attempts made to arm their followers. They failed to attract the support of the Catholic church. Whilst writing of the horrors of the great famine, no efforts were put in hand to feed their starving followers. The only encounter fought was a skirmish with police in what was called Mrs McCormack's Cabbage Patch, at Ballingarry. Their leaders were either arrested or forced to flee the country. Despite this, the Young Ireland movement left a legacy of ideals which were to have a profound influence on the thoughts and actions of later generations of Irish nationalists.

Kevin's first trial began on 9 August, 1848, before the Right Honourable Lord Chief Baron Pigot and the Honourable Baron Pennefather. The first jury disagreed, but almost immediately another trial was arranged. After the second jury also disagreed, Kevin was approached by the British authorities with a promise of freedom provided he would set an example of debasing himself. If he would plead guilty, he would not be called up for judgement. For himself there was only one answer to give to this insulting offer - to treat it with disdain. But what of Eva? If he accepted, he would be free to sit for his final medical examinations in a few weeks and marry her. When he consulted Eva, he found that he should not have had any doubt about her answer. Her advice to her lover was "be true to Ireland, and I'll be true to you". The British offer was scornfully rejected. Kevin now faced yet a third trial at the end of October, 1848, this time before a new commission of Justice Torrens and Justice Crampton. A new jury now returned a verdict of guilty.

Not long after his conviction O'Doherty was transferred to Richmond Prison, further from the centre of Dublin. Here, too, were imprisoned William Smith O'Brien, Francis Meagher, Terrance Bellew McManus and Patrick O'Donohue, all found guilty of high treason at Clonmel and at first sentenced to be hanged. An inscription over the gates of the prison read, "Cease to do evil; learn to do well". Kevin wrote in the journal he kept in Richmond Prison the following bitter words:

"Cease to do evil! " Aye - ye madmen cease!
Cease to love Ireland, cease to serve her well,
Make with her foes a foul and fatal peace,
"Learn to do well," aye learn to betray,
Learn to revile the land in which you dwell,
England will bless you on your altered way,
"Cease to do evil; learn to do well."

The prisoners were kept at Richmond for six months. Then early one morning in the middle of June 1849, a cortege consisting of a prison van in which rode O'Doherty and Martin under guard, a body of mounted police and a regiment of dragoons with loaded carbines and swords drawn, left the prison. It set off at a gallop along the deserted streets of Dublin to Kingstown. There the prisoners were placed on board the war steamer "Trident" to take them to Spike Island in Cork Harbour. At Cork, they were transferred to the "Mount Stewart Elphinstone" carrying 230 convicts to Moreton Bay in New South Wales. The "Mount Stewart Elphinstone" of 611 tons, in the charge of Captain Henry Loney and with George Moxley as surgeon-superintendent of convicts, was a far better ship than many used to carry convicts in the previous years that Britain had been transporting them to New South Wales. Special quarters had been hastily installed for the state prisoners. Four months after leaving Cork, the vessel arrived in Sydney Harbour where Martin and O'Doherty were transferred to the brig "Emma" bound for the notorious convict island, Van Dieman's Land. The "Mount Stewart Elphinstone" proceeded on to Moreton Bay, being one of only two ships to take convicts directly there. The reputation of Van Dieman's Land would have been known to O'Doherty and Martin, and despite the good treatment on board the convict ship, dark must have been their forebodings as they journeyed towards its shores. They would have worried about their future treatment when they arrived. Would they be treated as common convicts and sent to Port Arthur, the most feared of all the convict settlements on Van Dieman's Land and from where warning of attempted escape was given by dogs held at intervals across Eaglehawk Neck?

Their lot, however, was far better than they had expected. On arrival, O'Doherty and Martin were offered ticket-of-leave conditions on the understanding that they would not take advantage of the comparative liberty to escape. They accepted the offer and each was expected to observe the following regulations:

He was not to proceed out of the district within which his residence was limited;

He was to report his residence to the police magistrate and every change of residence he desired to make;

He was to report personally to the police magistrate once a month;

He was not to be absent from his registered place of residence after 10 o'clock at night;

He was not to enter any theatre or billiard room.

O'Doherty was given permission to reside at Oatlands, about fifty miles north of Hobart. The house in which he lived still stands. Ticket-of-leave conditions were also accepted by Meagher, McManus and O'Donohue who, along with Smith O'Brien, had arrived in Van Dieman's Land in the navy ship, "Swift", after sentences of hanging had been commuted to transportation. Smith O'Brien at first refused the ticket-of-leave and was confined to Maria Island penitentiary and later shifted to Port Arthur after an unsuccessful attempt to escape. (His cottage at Port Arthur is today a tourist attraction.) When John Mitchel arrived on the "Neptune" from Bermuda, the Irish rebels numbered seven.

Back in Ireland Eva suffered months of despair. She couldn't lift a pen or play the harp - her second love - as she feared for Kevin's safety. This unhappy mood was only lightened by news from Kevin that he had not been shipwrecked or treated as a common convict as she was sure would be the case, but that he was living with a Tipperary man, John Ryan, at Oatlands. When she did pick up the pen again, she wrote of her lover and their separation in:

The Path Across the Sea

My love, my hope, my longing,
 Make a path across the sea,
 I can reach thee, I can clasp thee,
 Although parted we may be,
 Naught can come between us,
 Naught can hold thee back from me!

Under ticket-of-leave conditions, the Irish exiles were certainly far better off than the convicts incarcerated at Port Arthur, but they were separated by thousands of miles from their loved ones, and progress in their careers had been stopped. Mitchel, in his gaol journal, revealed the longing for Eva that was always in Kevin's heart. He wrote, "St Kevin (note the kindly and well-deserved prefix of saint), St Kevin is sometimes gloomy and despondent and the mood is on him now for a few minutes. There dwells in Ireland - I should have known it well though he never told me - a dark-eyed lady, a fair and gentle lady, with hair like blackest midnight; and in the tangle of those silken tresses she has bound my poor friend's soul; round the solid hemisphere it has held and he drags a lengthening chain."

Although ticket-of-leave held some advantages there was one great disadvantage. The holder was expected to support himself in the community to which he had been allocated. Kevin was unable to find suitable employment in Oatlands. In desperation he wrote to the authorities and applied to have his ticket-of-leave revoked so he could "eat the government bread" at one of the convict stations in order to exist. He was appointed at Saltwater River Penitentiary at one shilling a day and convict rations. However, his friends, including Bishop Willson of Hobart, prevailed on him not to accept the offer. Shortly afterwards, he was allowed to transfer to Hobart to work with Dr Crooke. Then for two years, he was assistant surgeon at Dr Bedford's hospital and medical school of St Mary's. During this time, he accompanied McManus and O'Donohue to see Smith O'Brien at New Norfolk after he had accepted a ticket-of-leave. This town was outside the boundaries of their districts and unfortunately they were apprehended. They were brought before a magistrate and reprimanded. The Lieutenant-Governor of Van Dieman's Land, Sir William Denison, dissatisfied with this sentence, changed it to three months at a penal settlement. In O'Doherty's case it was later reduced to three weeks. O'Doherty spent that time in a convict gang preparing roof-shingles. This is how he described the experience: "Treated as a common convict, obliged to sleep with every species of scoundrel and to work in a gang from six o'clock in the morning to six o'clock in the evening - being all the while next to starved, as I find it wholly impossible to touch their abominable skilly which is the breakfast offered me."

Later, although not qualified, he was allowed to practise as a doctor in a small village, Cygnet, south of Hobart. But the hundred souls at Cygnet were not enough to support a doctor. He was getting desperate again when, in the middle of 1854, news came of a conditional pardon for Smith O'Brien, Martin and O'Doherty. By this time, the four other Irish exiles, Meagher, Mitchel, McManus and O'Donohue had escaped to America. The condition in the pardon prohibited the exiles from returning to the United Kingdom, which included their native Ireland.

Imagine Eva's feelings when she learnt that Kevin could return to Europe. After six long years of suffering and separation she would be reunited with her lover. But would this miracle of miracles happen? Would Kevin's ship return safely in an age when shipwrecks were common? How would they overcome the obstacle of Kevin's exclusion from England and Ireland? All these thoughts and countless fears and many others must have passed through Eva's mind.

The three exiles accompanied by P. J. Smyth, who had come from America to engineer an escape for Smith O'Brien, left the island quickly and went to Melbourne. There the Irish-born citizens, led by John, later Sir John O'Shanassy, feted the former state prisoners. Smith O'Brien was presented with a gold cup, and O'Doherty and Martin received 200 sovereigns each. Smith O'Brien and Martin left for Europe soon afterwards, but O'Doherty and Smyth decided to try their luck on the recently discovered Victorian goldfields. This was the period of the Eureka Stockade in which many Irish participated. There is no direct evidence that O'Doherty contacted Peter Lalor, the hero of that event, but it is suggested that he did, as Peter Lalor's brother, James Fintan Lalor, was a prominent figure in the Young Ireland movement. Indirect evidence points to the probability that O'Doherty was at Ballarat at some time during his stay in Victoria. Dr Alfred Carr, a medical practitioner in Ballarat, gave evidence at the magisterial enquiry into the death of Scobie, one of the events that preceded the Eureka Stockade. Correspondence in the *Ballarat Times* shows that Dr Carr was no friend of Lalor and his followers. A subsequent report of Carr's points to his having met O'Doherty at Ballarat.

O'Doherty's efforts on the goldfields to raise enough money for his future with Eva were unsuccessful, and he had to return to Europe almost empty-handed. Despite the prohibition in the conditional pardon he decided to risk going to Ireland to see his sweetheart. He made secret arrangements with Captain McDonnell of the "James Baines", an American-built gold clipper which had just arrived in Melbourne after a record run from Liverpool in sixty-three days. In almost as fast a return trip via Cape Horn, the ship berthed at Liverpool. Dr Carr's name can be seen in the passenger list but not that of O'Doherty. When he arrived in England, Dr Carr wrote to the British Authorities, "Dr Alfred Carr feels it his duty to communicate to Sir George Grey that Mr Kevin Izod O'Doherty, a state prisoner, who received a pardon conditionally that he should not return to England was a first-class passenger by the "James Baines", at Liverpool on Sunday 20th ult.

"Dr Carr had just ascertained that the name of this person is not to be found in the official list of passengers given by the master of the ship to the government officials, a copy of which has been forwarded to Dr Carr by the ship's agents in Liverpool. Evidence also exists that the master of the ship was cognisant of O'Doherty being on board either entered under a false name or not entered upon it. The recent agitations in Hyde Park induce Dr Carr to think Sir George Grey should be immediately acquainted with this fact."

Despite this, Kevin was able to slip into Ireland and spend a few days in a wonderful reunion with Eva. Again, action was taken to notify the authorities of Kevin's presence. The sub-inspector of police at Galway advised Dublin Castle that "it was whispered abroad that a strange gentleman was staying with the Kelly family" and asked for instructions. Of course, by the time the authorities in Dublin received the police officer's letter, Kevin was gone. One wonders whether the police inspector was sympathetic to the plight of the young couple. Anyway, a second time Kevin was able to slip away without any action being taken against him. The couple were secretly married in London at Moorlands Chapel by Cardinal Wiseman in the presence of Eva's father and Kevin's uncle. They went to Paris, where another wedding ceremony was conducted at the British Consul's office. Knowledge of the first in London would have been sufficient evidence to take action against Kevin for breaking his conditional pardon. Kevin studied for several months in Paris at the Hôpital Pitie and the Paris anatomy school, then in 1856, a full pardon was granted. The young couple returned to Dublin, where the first of eight children was born. In 1857, after sixteen years' study and medical experience, and nine years later than anticipated, Kevin at last graduated from the College of Surgeons. Then he added qualifications in medicine and midwifery from the King's and Queen's College of Physicians.

A busy practice in Hume Street, Dublin, followed and two more sons were born. He often visited St Vincent's Hospital in Dublin, and there he met a man with whom he made friends and to whom he was staunchly loyal for twenty years. This was the Rev James Quinn, who was president of the St Lawrence O'Toole Seminary in Harcourt Street. Despite the success of the Hume Street practice, O'Doherty always had ideas of migrating and when his new-found friend, James Quinn, was appointed the first bishop of Brisbane in the young colony of Queensland, Australia, a firm decision was made.

Kevin and Eva, with three sons and a servant girl, arrived in Australia in 1860 on the "Ocean Chief". Another son was born in Geelong, Victoria, and for several months the Irish doctor practised in Sydney. When Quinn took up his position as bishop of Brisbane, the O'Doherty family moved to Queensland. Kevin was registered in Queensland on 3 March, 1862. He set up practice in Ipswich at Forbes Terrace, one door from "Claremont" which was then owned by Mr Panton. It was in Ipswich that O'Doherty first demonstrated his loyalty to the bishop. For several years before the arrival of the bishop in the colony, Fr William McGinty had cared for the Catholics in Ipswich. He had built a church and had in hand a considerable sum to build a convent and buy an organ for the church. Quinn believed, as head of the church in the colony, that he had a perfect right to become a trustee of McGinty's fund. The latter, strongly supported by most of his flock, resisted such a move. O'Doherty had only arrived in Ipswich when the incident arose, but he spoke at a meeting of priests and laity in support of the bishop. He said that unless Catholics were prepared to support the bishop in preference to Fr McGinty, they might as well turn Protestants, and he urged the people to assist the bishop to carry out measures he may deem necessary to vindicate his authority as chief pastor and administrator of the church in the district.

Soon after his arrival in the town, O'Doherty offered his professional services in an honorary capacity to the newly established hospital, and he actively supported many local charitable institutions. It was in Ipswich that Kevin and Eva were saddened by the death in infancy of two more children born there. The doctor and his family shifted to Brisbane in August 1865. For the next twenty years he was to be prominent in many fields - medical, political, church and public affairs.

In Brisbane, O'Doherty first lived and practised in George Street, first at the corner of Turbot Street, then at the corner of Mary Street, and later at No 6 Harris Terrace. He soon built up a busy practice and there is ample evidence to show that he was a very sound doctor. Over a hundred years ago, he gave a report of an autopsy he had performed which any present-day pathologist would be proud to present. The original cause of death was quite evident from O'Doherty's report, but the coroner for which it was prepared gave a verdict of "visitation from God".

In 1866, he was appointed an honorary surgeon to the Brisbane Hospital when it was situated in George Street on the site of the present Supreme Court. He held this position for several years after the new hospital was built, the next year, at Bowen Bridge Road. He was an honorary consulting surgeon to the Hospital for Sick Children when, in 1878, it first functioned in a rented building in Leichhardt Street on the site of the present St Paul's Presbyterian Church, and later when a new hospital was built at Herston in 1883. He pioneered two operations when surgery was just developing, and one reads of operations being delayed until the respected surgeon arrived. He was always willing to travel into the bush to see patients, going on one occasion on horse-back to the Tweed River to attend a timber-getter seriously injured by a falling tree. But he was a leader in other aspects of medicine besides the clinical field. The medical profession indicated its esteem by electing him president of the Queensland Medical Society in 1882. The government appointed him

a member of the Medical Board of Queensland and of the General Board of Health.

It says much for O'Doherty's popularity as a citizen that within two years of his coming to Brisbane the former Irish rebel was asked to nominate as a candidate for election as one of three representatives for the electorate of North Brisbane in the colony's Legislative Assembly, at a time when the colony was still very loyal to the British throne. There were no clear-cut political parties, and election results depended very much on the personality of the individual candidates. The number of electors was not large and counting was complete an hour or so after voting closed. On the election day, O'Doherty was called out of town on a professional visit just as counting commenced. He told the story, as how, on returning to the town, he asked a passer-by how the voting went. Back came the answer in a north of Ireland brogue, "Bad enough, that bloody papist, O'Doherty, got in".

Bernays describes the doctor's entry into politics in this way:- "The third parliament met on 6 August, 1867, and here we find for the first time the genial medico, Kevin Izod O'Doherty, as Member for Brisbane. No man was better known in his day." For twelve months after he entered parliament, which was still meeting in the old Military and Convict Barracks in Queen Street, O'Doherty voted as an independent. But when a new election was called in 1868, there was no doubt as to what his position would be in the future. In a campaign letter he came out strongly against the squatters who, so it is held, dominated the colony's early parliaments. O'Doherty said that the electors should "rejoice in the prospect of escape from the positive evil of squatting rule." He had thrown in his lot with the "town liberals" who looked to Charles Lilley for leadership. However, in the political climate of the day, alliances were not lasting nor leaders followed with a blind faith. Lilley, while premier in 1869, took squatters into his ministry. This, plus a poor performance in office, brought him into disfavour. O'Doherty, Fraser and Edmonstone called a public meeting and bitterly criticised Lilley and the weakness of his government.

It was only natural that Dr O'Doherty was to the forefront when debates on health matters were being held. He introduced the first Health Act to be passed by the Queensland parliament, and was either a member of or gave evidence before select committees on health subjects. He took part in many other debates which occupied the time of the legislators in the developing colony - land bills, building of railways, education and goldfield legislation. In the debates on education he reflected Bishop Quinn's desire to have state aid for denominational schools continued. When the battle was lost, O'Doherty, in protest, declined to serve on the government's Board of Education to which he had been appointed. In 1873, O'Doherty declined to renominate for parliament which had been meeting in the new houses in George Street.

However, he was back in 1877, this time being appointed to the Legislative Council. Soon after, he was involved in a bitter debate with Dr William Hobbs in the Upper House. In 1876, O'Doherty had written a letter to *The Telegraph* with reference to the death of a patient who had died in the Brisbane reception house, for which Dr Hobbs was the medical officer. When the report of a subsequent Royal Commission into the Woogaroo Lunatic Asylum and reception houses was made public, Hobbs accused O'Doherty of unduly influencing the Commission. He said, "throughout this report, I recognise the 'fine Roman hand' of the writer of a letter in *The Telegraph*." When O'Doherty raised the matter in the House, the rest of the members no doubt enjoyed the verbal battle between the two medical members. In 1881, the Irish doctor courageously introduced a Pharmacy Bill to give the chemists their own board despite strenuous opposition by his colleagues on the Medical Board and the profession generally.

Bishop Quinn's autocratic manner brought him many enemies among his priests, his laity and the community generally. He needed the support of a staunch ally and

never did he find O'Doherty lacking. As the doctor was prepared to speak in the bishop's favour, no matter what the occasion, he shared the criticism levelled at the bishop. At a function to open the Brisbane Grammar School by Governor Blackall, O'Doherty, a trustee of the school, in a speech from the dais, remarked on the absence of the Catholic and Anglican bishops, who were not invited. He told the audience that he himself would not have come if he had known the bishops were not to be asked. Denis O'Donovan, an erudite scholar and parliamentary librarian, supported the Sisters of St Joseph to whom Quinn had suggested that they pursue their educational programme elsewhere. In a bitter dispute that followed, O'Donovan wrote privately to Archbishop Vaughan in Sydney criticising not only Bishop Quinn but also his supporters. He alleged that O'Doherty had been censured publicly for being drunk in the course of his duties.

Despite the anti-Quinn faction and the idiosyncrasies of the bishop, O'Doherty became and remained the leading Catholic layman for twenty years. It was the Irish doctor who responded on behalf of the laity at all important functions. He was in the official party when the new St Stephen's Cathedral was consecrated in 1874. He had strongly supported its building and gave generously to the funds for its erection.

During O'Doherty's time, St Patrick's Day was a great occasion for all citizens in the colony. It was a public holiday enjoyed by the Irish and the non-Irish alike. To the official dinners Scots and English were invited. Often an organiser and spokesman, O'Doherty frequently remarked on the tolerance amongst the colonists to one another, no matter what their origin. However, when testing time came he demonstrated a strong Irish nationalism which was first seen in his student days and which never left him. It was O'Doherty who in 1875 suggested that a centenary celebration in honour of Daniel O'Connell be held in Brisbane. At an enthusiastic function, it was O'Doherty who delivered the oration in memory of the great liberator. When the news of the 1879 famine reached Queensland, O'Doherty convened the first meeting to organise a relief fund. Working with John Flood, a Fenian rebel, transported to Western Australia in 1867 but then in Queensland under a conditional pardon, he initiated a campaign which raised 12,000 pounds to send to his native land to help his starving countrymen. During these years the colony's newspapers always prominently featured news from the British Isles. A new leader in Ireland, Parnell, was campaigning for Home Rule for his country. The *Brisbane Courier* adopted a strong anti-Parnell attitude. Despite this, and while some prominent Irishmen held back, O'Doherty displayed his mettle. He chaired not only the Queensland Branch of the Irish National League but when the Irish members of parliament, the Redmond brothers, visited Australia to raise funds for Home Rule, he presided over a national convention in Melbourne.

During her life in Australia, Eva was less prominent than she had been in Ireland. Of course, the stimulus to write the nationalistic poems she had contributed to *The Nation* in Ireland was no longer present. She was a busy housewife with a husband and five children to care for. However, her pen was not completely idle. When she did compose new verse, the subjects indicated her adopted country as is seen in her poem "Queensland" -

Thou art in sooth a lovely land
As fair as ever fancy painted,
In virgin freshness calm and bland,
By shadows dark untainted.
But ah! Upon that bright expanse

The glory of a dim Elysian,
Tis but a cold and soulless glance
That meets the gazer's vision.

Eva travelled a lot, and in 1877, returning to Australia from Ireland through America, she had a volume of her poems published in San Francisco. She dedicated them to two of Kevin's exile companions in Van Dieman's Land. Two more children had been born when the couple moved to Brisbane, with one, a daughter, Gertrude, surviving. Of the four boys, William qualified as a dentist in America and worked for a while with his uncle in Dublin. He returned to Australia with his brother, Edward, who had just graduated from the Irish College of Surgeons. The third boy, Vincent, was a bank officer and the fourth son, Kevin, managed his father's sugar plantation on the Johnstone River in north Queensland. In 1882, Dr O'Doherty built a fourteen room house, which he called "Frascati" after the area in which his mother lived in her later years, in Ann Street. There were three consulting rooms on the ground floor, two occupied by himself and son Edward in their medical partnership, with William the dentist using the third. The house later became the nurses' home for St Martin's Hospital.

Kevin's efforts on behalf of the Home Rule cause and the fact that he was a member of the Queensland Parliament attracted Parnell's attention, and in 1885 he was invited to Ireland with the idea of becoming a member of the Irish Party at the next election. He saw an opportunity to help once again in the cause which had failed in 1848 and he readily accepted the invitation. On his return to Ireland he was treated as a hero. On 1 September, 1885, the freedom of the city of Dublin was bestowed on him. At the Meath convention on 8 October he was selected as a candidate for North Meath which seat he later won at the general election. This was followed by an invitation to give a public lecture at the rotunda. During a brief visit to Australia before parliament opened in the House of Commons, to put his affairs in order, he was guest of honour at numerous banquets and functions in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne. In Brisbane, the banquet was boycotted by most of the establishment who were anti-Parnell. This action delighted the *Brisbane Courier* which had promoted such an attitude. Returning to Ireland he took up his place in the Commons with the Parnell Party. His maiden speech in the Home Rule debate was received by much acclaim by his Irish colleagues. He was riding the crest of a wave.

Alas when the vote was taken on 8 June, 1886, the Bill was lost and Prime Minister Gladstone resigned. This marked a turning point in O'Doherty's career. From then on, there was great sadness in the lives of Kevin and Eva. He declined to be renominated in the ensuing election. In his letter of resignation from the party, he stated that "only imperative private reasons" prevented him from accepting. It is most probable that these were financial difficulties. Returning quietly to Brisbane which he left in a blaze of glory, he soon went to Sydney where for a while he was a member of the honorary staff of St Vincent's Hospital. Then in 1887, at the age of 64 years, he was appointed as Government Medical Officer at Croydon in north Queensland, where gold had recently been discovered. It is suggested he chose the position to try to balance his account by a lucky strike. In this he was unsuccessful and he returned to Brisbane in 1890 with the coffers empty.

For the next fifteen years until Kevin's death in 1905, the fates were very cruel to the Irish doctor and his wife. He made an attempt to enter private practice again but this too failed. A government, remembering how well he had served the community in the past, alleviated the couple's plight by appointing Kevin to a part-time position. In a few years, blindness prevented him from carrying out these duties. Three colleagues, John Thomson, Espie Dods and John Flynn, who held the aging doctor in high esteem, performed his work

while he received the salary. The estimates for the Home Department list him in these positions until he was 77 years of age. The fine home in Ann Street had to be sold and the couple retired to Bayswater Road in Rosalie, but other sadness was heaped on them. Their four sons, so full of promise, died one by one in the last decade of the nineteenth century.

On 15 July, 1905, the great man breathed his last, his address then being Huessler Terrace, Milton. Many tributes were paid to Dr O'Doherty both during his life-time and on his death. During the public debate, when he courageously introduced the Pharmacy Bill in the face of strong opposition from the rest of the medical profession, a correspondent to the *Brisbane Courier* said "the genial Dr O'Doherty, a man whose good deeds done in his professional capacity will, I venture to predict, be gratefully remembered and enthusiastically spoken of in the by-and-by which is the future for doctors as well as other poor mortals." On his death the *Brisbane Age* said "there was nothing that was not large, generous and open-minded in the character of the well-known doctor. In truth, it was this generous freedom from hypocritical restraint which caused him the troubles of his life."

Eva lived another five years in straitened circumstances. Her only surviving child, Gertrude, and only grandson lived with her. Her letters to Father Hickey in Yorkshire tell of her loneliness and her great sadness at being neglected by the Irish for whom she and her husband had attempted so much. Fr Hickey managed to have another volume of her poems published in Dublin, but the return was negligible. It was during this period that, at the age of 76 years, she wrote the poem which depicts that great sorrow that was hers when one after another she lost her four sons and her beloved husband.

Tenebrae

Night's solemn hour! Upon the holy fane,
 The mystic lights upon the altar burn,
 And voices chanting in a sad refrain,
 Unceasing seem to mourn -
 When lo! With sudden smite
 Is quenched one shining light,
 One light had vanished from the holy fane.
 Thus one by one in gathering fear and gloom
 The phantom voices murmuring low between,
 Each light goes out with fatal stroke of doom,
 Until upon the scene
 A dismal darkness falls,
 A silence that appals,
 The darkness and the silence of the tomb!

In 1910, Eva died at the age of 80 years. The only grandson was killed in France during World War I, fighting with the Australian forces. There was no male heir to carry on this line of the O'Doherty name. Gertrude, the only child to survive her famous parents, married Inspector O'Sullivan of the Queensland Police Force. Gertrude's step-daughter, the late Mrs A. G. Melhuish of East Brisbane, generously allowed me to study the original material bequeathed to her, for the preparation of this paper. Mignon O'Doherty, a granddaughter, went to London and as an actress was a member of the original cast of Agatha Christie's play, "The Mousetrap". During a discussion about Kevin and Eva with officers at Queensland House in London, an ardent theatre-goer suggested to me a way of tracing any of their descendants through a theatre journal which ran a column entitled "Whatever Happened To?" I followed his advice asking the editor to place a par in the column which started with the words "Whatever Happened to Mignon O'Doherty?" hoping any descendants would write to me. About twelve months later I received a letter from

Caroline Nesbitt of New Hampshire in America. Caroline is the granddaughter of Mignon and thus the great-great grand-daughter of Kevin and Eva. Among other things, she has the engagement ring Kevin gave to Eva on their betrothal. Colleen Melhuish has been able to send Caroline more material than her mother, Mrs A. G. Melhuish, held hoping that one day a true descendant would be found. And so the Irish medico and his poetess wife were laid to rest. Theirs was no ordinary life. They survived many hardships - Kevin's transportation with its heart-breaking separation; the nine years' delay in his graduation as a doctor; emigration to a new land; the loss of their children; the financial difficulties; and finally Kevin's blindness, but they were made of sterner stuff. They lived to 80 years despite all these vicissitudes and enjoyed many triumphs. Their lives were lived on a higher plane than most and they lifted to that plane many who lived around them. Tom McBride, the Caloundra poet, epitomised their lives in a sonnet he wrote after their story was told him. He entitled it "So Much for Love":

So much for love! Two spirits rare, conjoined -
 Emancipators, aye, - glory foregone!
 Life's sweets by sullen grief so oft purloin'd!
 Far distant tracks, and strange to journey on!
 Exponent was he of the healer's art
 Of tremendous use to his fellow man
 In other spheres he played an equal part.
 Suchwise as only true philosophers can.
 And she, the sparkling light of his life
 To record it so by the power of the muse,
 Was ever man bless'd with a dearer wife
 Than would sing his praises as the gods would choose?
 Bricks both, glazed in the fires of tribulation -
 Bright keystones in the building of our nation.

Admirers of O'Doherty and his wife erected a monument to their memory in the Toowong cemetery. The inscription reads:-

Sacred
 To the Memory of
 Kevin Izod O'Doherty
 The Irish Patriot
 Died 15 July 1905, aged 80 years
 Whose name will live in Irish history
 and whose memory ever remains enshrined
 in Irish hearts at home and abroad
 Also his gifted wife
 Eva of the Nation
 Died 22 May 1910, aged 80 years.
 Physician and muse, man and wife!
 They came from Ireland's shores.
 Though adversity their light shone brightly,
 Inspiring all on whom it shone.
 Their like never die but live into eternity.

Dr Ross Patrick, former Director General of Health in Queensland. In 1987 he published "The History of Queensland Health, 1824 - 1960", and is currently writing the biography of Dr K. I. O'Doherty.