



Comhairle Contae  
Ros Comáin  
Roscommon  
County Council

in partnership with



## **MOTE PARK SCULPTURES, ROSCOMMON, IRELAND**

**2-STAGE OPEN COMPETITION - PUBLIC ART COMMISSION**

**STAGE 1 BRIEFING FOR ARTISTS**

Deadline for Stage 1 Submissions: **3pm on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

## CONTENTS

1. PROJECT OVERVIEW .....	3
2. TIMETABLE & DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION .....	4
3. OPTIONAL SITE VISIT.....	5
4. THEMES & BUDGET .....	5
5. LOCATION MAP & FOOTPRINTS .....	6
6. GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA (APPLICABLE TO ALL SCULPTURES) .....	7
7. SCULPTURE THEMES & BRIEF .....	8
8. APPLICATION & AWARD PROCESS.....	11
9. SELECTION PANEL.....	13
10. ARTIST RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EACH COMMISSION .....	13
11. INSURANCE.....	13
12. TAX CLEARANCE .....	14
13. SUBMISSIONS & QUERIES.....	14
14. APPENDIX .....	15

## 1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Roscommon County Council (RCC) is working in partnership with Coillte to deliver an outdoor recreation scheme for Mote Park in Co. Roscommon, Ireland courtesy of funding from the Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS).

The scheme includes the delivery of –

- **Public Art – design, build and installation of 4no. sculptures inspired by the unique characteristics and themes of Mote Park**
- Play Area – bespoke design, build and installation of a new, accessible play area
- Sensory Trail – 3no. sensory ‘stations’ located along the existing Crofton Trail

Other elements of the scheme include a new brand for the site and the design and installation of signage.

Mote Park is currently owned and managed by Coillte. The role of Outscape is *Project Manager* – to deliver the scheme on behalf of Roscommon County Council, the *Contracting Authority*.

The Council now wishes to commission multiple artists to create 4no. permanent public art sculptures at pre-determined locations within Mote Park.

Each sculpture should –

- **‘Be Unique’** - inspired by and designed based on the unique characteristics and themes of Mote Park
- **‘Engage the Senses’** - incorporate a sensory experience where possible
- **‘Be Appropriate to Site’** – designed and constructed using materials in keeping with the woodland environment (e.g. wood) and historic demesne setting (e.g. stone)

Artists are invited to submit proposals for one or more commissions, responding creatively to the public space, the history, story and unique themes associated with Mote Park.

## 2. TIMETABLE & DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION

The indicative timeline for the stages of the application and award process is anticipated as follows:

Activity	Target Date	Period	
STAGE 1			
Artist Call Published	Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2024	January 2024 - February 2024	6 weeks
<b>Optional</b> Site Visit for Prospective Artists	1pm on Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> January 2024		
Deadline for Queries	Monday 12 <sup>th</sup> February 2024		
Stage 1 Submission Deadline	<b>3pm on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024 (6 weeks)</b>		
Stage 1 Assessment	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2024		
STAGE 2			
Successful artists invited to make Stage 2 Submission	Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> February 2024	February 2024 - April 2024	6 weeks
Stage 2 Submission Deadline	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2024		
Stage 2 Assessment and Award	Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> March 2024 – Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2024		
DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION & INSTALLATION			
Detailed Design Period	Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> April 2024 – Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024 (4 weeks)	April 2024 - August 2024	16 weeks
Production & Installation	1 <sup>st</sup> May 2024 – 24 <sup>th</sup> July 2024 (12 weeks)		
Handover	By Monday 5 <sup>th</sup> August 2024		
The Contracting Authority reserves the right to amend this timetable.			

### 3. OPTIONAL SITE VISIT

An optional site visit for interested Artists will take place at Mote Park at **1pm on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2024**. If you wish to attend, please notify Fiona Milne in advance via email at [fiona@out-scape.com](mailto:fiona@out-scape.com) before Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2024.

### 4. THEMES & BUDGET

The overall value for all commissions is €110,000.00 *including VAT*. Individual commissions range from €15,000 to €45,000 as outlined below.

There is no limit to the number of commissions an Artist/Artist Team can apply for.

Budget management is the responsibility of the successful Artist/Artist Team and is fully inclusive of all costs including, but not limited to, artist fees, travel, detailed design fees, any necessary research, materials, manufacture/fabrication, site preparation, installations, insurance, documentation, maintenance file and VAT.

The following table shows the theme and budget per sculpture:

Commission	Theme	Budget to a maximum of
Sculpture 1	Nature and Biodiversity	€15,000
Sculpture 2	The Woodlands & Woodland Management	€25,000
Sculpture 3	History and Heritage	€25,000
Sculpture 4	Skygazer	€45,000
TOTAL		€110,000.00



## 5. LOCATION MAP & FOOTPRINTS

The location for each sculpture has been determined. These locations are fixed and are shown on the 'Location Map' provided below.



Sculpture 1 Nature & Biodiversity (footprint = 5m x 5m / 25m<sup>2</sup>)



Sculpture 3 History & Heritage (footprint = 7m L x 5m D / Total 35m<sup>2</sup>)

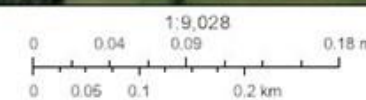


Play Area



10/19/2023

- Mote Park - Proposed Play Location
- Mote Park - Proposed Sculpture Locations
- Sensory Trail
- Mote Park Lions Gate Trail
- Bluebell Walk
- Crofton Walk
- World Imagery
- Low Resolution 15m Imagery
- High Resolution 60cm Imagery
- High Resolution 30cm Imagery
- Citations
- 2.4m Resolution Metadata



Maxar, Microsoft, Esri Community Maps Contributors, Esri UK, Esri, HERE, Garmin, FourSquare, GeoTechnologies, Inc, METI/NASA, USGS



Sculpture 2 Woodlands & Woodland Management - (footprint = 20m L x 10m D / Total 400m<sup>2</sup>)



Sculpture 4 Skygazer (footprint = 20m L x 15m D / Total 300m<sup>2</sup>)



## 6. GENERAL DESIGN CRITERIA (applicable to ALL Sculptures)

A specific theme and brief for each sculpture has been provided in Section 7, however there is also general design criteria which applies to all Sculptures.

Artists are asked to submit design proposals that fulfil both the specific themes in Section 7 and the General Design Criteria outlined below.

### **All commissions MUST –**

- Be designed bespoke to fit the specified theme
- Offer a sensory experience or interaction (being mindful of accessibility and reach heights of different ages and users, e.g. wheelchair users)
- Be made of wood, willow, stone and/or other natural materials in keeping with the woodland environment and historic demesne setting.

*Artists are permitted to use other materials such as steel where required for the sub-structure and/or for fixtures/fitting the piece(s) into the ground*

- Not exceed 10m in height
- Be durable for a minimum of 10 years
- Be robust to withstand vandalism and theft/removal

## 7. SCULPTURE THEMES & BRIEF

A specific theme and brief for each sculpture is provided here. These themes are provided to help the Artists understand the Client's aspirations.

It is up to the Artist/s, creative teams and designers to interpret these themes into an appropriate media that takes account of the setting (woodland and historic demesne) and background information, general design criteria specified in Section 7 and overall project objectives which is to create a set of sculptures which are 'Unique', 'Sensory' and 'Appropriate to Site' for Mote Park.

### 7.1. Sculpture 1 Nature & Biodiversity - €15,000

**Google Map Reference:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/Qsd5zKjYWzimgAr76>

**Type:** may be a singular piece or a cluster of pieces. *Artists are invited to create their own title for this work.*

**Inspiration/Rationale:** broadleaf woodland is a vitally important area for biodiversity. Mote Park is rich with biodiversity and provides a haven for wildlife. Mote Park is a place where people can connect with, and immerse themselves, in nature. Located at the entrance to Mote Park, and the beginning of a visitor's journey, this Sculpture should create an impressive sense of arrival and welcome to Mote Park.

**Notable animal species** – deer, red squirrel, pine marten, raven, jay and other common songbirds as well as other woodland-associated animals, e.g. badgers, long-eared owls, bats, etc.

**Notable plant species** – native, broadleaf trees – hazel, horse chestnut, alder, oak, bird cherry; wildflowers such as primrose; bluebells; wood anemone and wild garlic.

**Footprint:** 5m (L) x 5m (D) = Area 25m<sup>2</sup>

**Site Description:** compacted stone and gravel area located at the main entrance to Mote Park. Here, this sculpture should create an impressive sense of arrival and welcome.



### 7.2. Sculpture 2 The Woodlands and Woodland Management - €25,000

**Google Map Reference:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/SVb4zMzBUstQ5MEMA>

**Type:** may be a singular piece or a cluster of pieces. Artists are invited to create their own title for this work.

**Theme Inspiration/Rationale:** Mote Park is first and foremost a woodland, and it is home a diverse mix of native, broadleaf trees which emanate their own beauty and display throughout the seasons. It is also a working commercial forestry serving the function of timber production and harvesting of every green species such as Norway Spruce and Sitka. It is hoped that this sculpture celebrates the beauty and importance of the woodland, a tree's lifecycle, the role our woodlands play in society and the responsibility of those who care for and manage out woodlands.

**Notable features and characteristics:** native, broadleaf trees; commercial timber production; lifecycle of woodland and/or trees; forest managers; woodlands can also be working landscapes.

**Footprint:** 20m (L) x 10m (D) = Area 400m<sup>2</sup>

**Site Description:** existing hardcore area located 350m after Sculpture 1. This location is a popular seating/stopping area at the junction between the Crofton Trail and the 'branch road' leading to the new Playscape.

### 7.3. Sculpture 3 History & Heritage - €25,000

**Google Map Reference:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/p29ziNtGNnTMA87f6>

**Type:** may be a singular piece or a cluster of pieces. Artists are invited to create their own title for this work.

**Theme Inspiration/Rationale:** Mote Park has been 'home' to many different people, tribes, clans and families for thousands of years. It is hope that this sculpture pays homage to the cultural heritage and history of Mote Park. You may wish to focus on a notable character, architectural features or particular story from Mote Park's past, to symbolise Mote Park's human occupation and connection.

**Notable features and characters:** Lady Crofton, Lion's Gate Archway, Derrydonnell Bridge, O'Kelly Chieftain, Kings of Connaught

**Site Description:** corner location, positioned at the end of 'branch road'. Grass surface at edge of compacted gravel trail. This location is a popular seating/stopping point, particularly for young people, at the edge of the Crofton Trail. This Sculpture will be positioned opposite the entrance of the new play area.

**Footprint:** 7m (L) x 5m (D) = Area 35m<sup>2</sup>

#### 7.4. Sculpture 4 Skygazer - €45,000

**Google Map Reference:** <https://maps.app.goo.gl/ybMAYHSfSQuQWCmEA>

**Footprint:** 20m (L) x 15m (D) = Area 300m<sup>2</sup>

**Type:** must be one singular piece

**Site Description:** existing hardcore surface, compacted gravel and stone beside existing trail. Skygazer will be an 'outlier' to the other sculptures, deliberately positioned to encourage people to walk further for a quieter, skygazing and forest bathing experience. It is also strategically placed to provide a resting point halfway up this uphill section of the Crofton Trail.

**Theme Inspiration/Rationale:** Mote Park is a place where people can get away from the pressures and high pace of everyday life. Seating is critical to not just accessibility, but also to provide a place where people can stop, sit and take a moment to breath in the forest, and immerse in nature and the outdoors.

Designs are welcomed for a sculptural seat that encapsulates the above, and further creates a social seat for individuals and groups. It is deliberately located in a quieter place but still a manageable distance from the main entrance. It is hoped that this will become a focal point within Mote Park where people can forest bath, sky gaze and enjoy the company of nature.

**Expected features** – upright and reclining backrests that alternate to allow people to face each other, capacity for up to 15 people, curving design, option for wheelchair/mobility scooter users to join in

**Inspiring Examples:**



## 8. APPLICATION & AWARD PROCESS

This is a two-stage, open competition. Stage 1 is an open call for expressions of interest. A selection panel will shortlist up to 3 Artists who will then be invited to further develop their proposals at Stage 2.

At Stage 2 a proposal development fee will be paid to shortlisted Artists. This fee will range from €150 to €450 dependent on the sculpture value.

### 8.1. Stage 1

Artists should provide the following information **for each sculpture application**:

1. **CV:** please submit an up-to-date curriculum vitae, including **current contact information** (please limit to 3 pages)
2. **Documentation of Work:** please submit 3-5 examples of relevant, previous work, including written descriptions, photographs, and where relevant links to videos.
3. **Artistic Design / Concept:** a plan suggesting the general direction you would take with the sculpture and the artistic concept of the chosen sculpture. Please limit your response to 2000 words and 3 images. Your plan should include reference to the following –
  - a. Title
  - b. Artistic vision for the chosen commission(s)
  - c. How your vision relates to/interprets the specified theme for your chosen commission(s)
  - d. Scale/size of piece(s) and footprint
  - e. Materials used
  - f. Sensory elements/experience

Please ensure your Plan(s) are clearly marked with the Artist/Artist team name and sculpture number applied for.

Format of submission – your submission should be in a format which can be viewed by standard software – e.g. Microsoft Word or Powerpoint, JPEG, PDF and/or PNG.

**PLEASE NOTE:** ARTIST'S CAN CHOOSE WHICH COMMISSIONS THEY SUBMIT A PROPOSAL FOR, HOWEVER IF APPLYING **FOR MULTIPLE COMMISSIONS, A SEPARATE SUBMISSION IS REQUIRED FOR EACH COMMISSION.**

Applications will be assessed using the following criteria which should be **used as headings** in your submission:

Criteria	Score
<b>Previous Experience</b> of similar projects / commissions	50/100
<b>Quality of Artistic Design / Concept</b> , artistic merit and fulfilment of the general design criteria and specific themes of Mote Park, including 'Be Unique', 'Engage the Senses' and 'Appropriate to Site'	50/100

## 8.2. Stage 2

Shortlisted Artists/Artist Teams will be invited to develop their original Artistic Design/Concept. Artists will be required to submit the following information, which should be used as headings in your Stage 2 submission:

Criteria	Score
<b>Quality of Developed Artistic Design / Concept</b> – detailed specifications and information clearly explaining your design and the rationale behind it for your chosen commission(s), including <b>the provision of</b> digital images or scaled drawings. <b>Further information will be provided.</b>	30/100
<b>Method Statement</b> outlining how you propose to deliver the works anticipated in your chosen commission(s) including, but not limited to, reference to your team and any sub-contractors (if applicable), working in a public space, use of materials, fabrication, construction and installation	40/100
<b>Budget Detail</b> – value for money based on an itemised breakdown of costs to deliver your design proposal(s).	20/100
<b>Programme</b> for delivery and completion, inclusive of any research period, detailed design, consultation, collaboration with the Contracting Authority and Project Manager, fabrication, installation and handover. Please note the deadline for installation and handover is end of August 2024.	10/100

## 8.3. Opt-Out Clause

Roscommon County Council reserves the right to commission at Stage 2 or not to commission from entries received and to re-advertise, directly invite, directly commission or to select more than one submission and to divide the budget accordingly.



## 9. SELECTION PANEL

The Selection Panel will consist of representatives from some or all of the following:

- Outscape
- McAdam Design (Principal Supervisor for the Design Process)
- Roscommon County Council including Arts Officer
- Coillte
- Mote Park Conservation Group
- Girl Guides Group

## 10. ARTIST RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EACH COMMISSION

All artists must comply with the necessary Health and Safety Legislation in the design, manufacture, supply, delivery and installation of the work paying particular attention to the challenges created by a public outdoor setting. It is the responsibility of the artist to deliver the work on time and on budget. One artist will be commissioned as the 'Lead Artist' who may sub-contract other creatives. The installation must be completed by end of August 2024.

## 11. INSURANCE

Artists will be required to have Public Liability insurance cover for the work they have to undertake on site and Employers Liability insurance cover for any person that they undertake to bring on site as part of the design or implementation phase of the project. Insurance to be extended to indemnify the client Roscommon County Council and Coillte as an additional insured. If successful, Artists will be required to submit evidence of insurance cover.

## 12. TAX CLEARANCE

Upon successful appointment, the successful artist must provide the Council with a tax clearance certificate.

## 13. SUBMISSIONS & QUERIES

Stage 1 submissions must be submitted electronically via email to [fiona@out-scape.com](mailto:fiona@out-scape.com)

Incomplete submissions or submissions in any other format will not be accepted.

Please reference the subject of your email as 'Stage 1 Submission - Mote Park Sculptures'

The return deadline for Stage 1 submissions is **3pm on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024.**

Queries can be emailed to Fiona Milne at the same email address.

Please reference the subject of your email as 'Query - Mote Park Sculptures'.

The deadline for all queries is Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

## 14. APPENDIX

### 14.1. Mote Park's Unique History & Themes

Mote Park has a long and layered history extending well beyond its current use as a commercial and recreation forest owned and managed by Coillte. Dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, the forest was once part of the Crofton Estate and home to Mote Park House, the residence of the Crofton family. The house was demolished in the 1960's but remnants of the historic demesne are still visible today, including architectural features such as the Lion's Gate (1787) archway, the railway, open parkland and other designed landscape views, the stables, specimen trees, e.g. Pumpkin Tree, etc.

Prior to the Crofton's, the lands at Mote Park were owned by the O'Kelly clan. The site has links to the King's of Connaught and prior to that, the well-intact ringforts allude to a more ancient history of Irish settlement.

Today, the forest is a well-loved resource by the local community, used for recreation, exercise and socializing. It is an important outdoor resource for groups too, including those with disabilities – physical and neurological.

Further information about Mote Park:

- Landed Estates Database (<https://landedestates.ie/property/354>)
- The following is the link to the Mote Park Interactive Heritage tour which gives a good overview of the area: [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfz11nR\\_UxKRJAy0lKPL34g](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCfz11nR_UxKRJAy0lKPL34g)
- Mote Park Conservation Group – Facebook page
- History Information (see Information Pack)

Specific features of Mote Park include –

#### **Historical Themes / Characters**

- Crofton Family, and in particular Lady Crofton
- Clans, in particular the O'Kelly Clan
- Kings of Connaught

#### **Natural Heritage**

- Notable animal species – deer, red squirrel, pine marten, raven, jay and other common songbirds as well as other woodland-associated animals, e.g. badgers, long-eared owls, bats, etc.
- Notable plant species – native, broadleaf trees – hazel, horse chestnut, alder, oak, bird cherry; wildflowers such as primrose; bluebells; wood anemone and wild garlic.
- Pumpkin Tree

### Built Heritage Features

- Landscape – combines both native woodland, commercial plantation with open parkland and design landscape views synonymous with the historic demesnes
- Architectural features, and ‘folies’ – Lion’s Gate Archway, Derrydonnell Bridge, avenues, etc

### 14.2. Mote Park Historical Timeline of Land Ownership

Meaning of name:

The website [www.logainm.ie](http://www.logainm.ie) provides a possible translation as moat or earthen embankment. The Crofton memoirs states that the meaning of the name Mote comes from “folk moot” or “meeting place”.

- Archaeological remains in the area such as ringforts and fulacht fiadh (ancient cooking pits) indicate early settlers who were involved in farming. A number of ringforts are located within the forest with one being accessible from the walking trails.
- Prior to acquisition by the Crofton family, the O’Connors owned the lands north of the River Hind in Mote Park while the O’Kelly’s were chieftains of the land to the south of the river<sup>1</sup>. Kilmeane the parish in which Mote Demesne is situated translates as Church of Ui Maine (Uin Maine or Hymany was the territory owned by the O’Kelly chieftains)

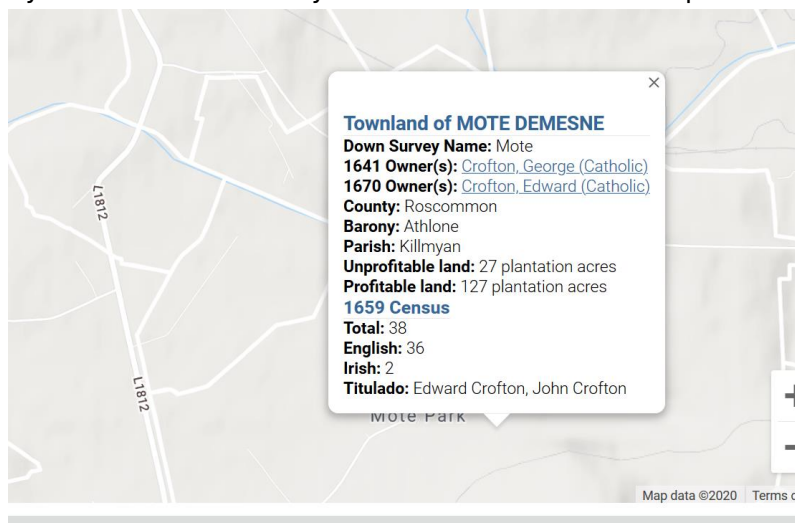
Among the castles built by the O’Kellys, and which are all situated in this district, are those of Moate, near Roscommon; Galy, on the borders of the Shannon, near Knockcroghery; Athleague, Corbeg, and Skryne, in the county Roscommon, and Garbally, Aughrim, Monivea, Gallagher, Mullaghmore, Moy-lough, and Aghrane, now Castle Kelly, in the county of Galway. The Abbey of Kilconnell was also reconstructed by William O’Kelly, and Knockmoy, Clonmacnoise, and Clontuskert, experienced the liberality of the chiefs of Hy-maine. Sir Richard Cox, in his explanatory index to his *History of Ireland*, has the word ‘Imanya;’ to which is added as explanation, ‘O’Kelly’s

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://celt.ucc.ie/published/G105007/text001.html>



- Much of the land in Mote Demesne to the south of the river was owned by the monastic settlements in Roscommon town. (Townlands such as Derrydonnell, Martinstown and Lisbride). Derrydonnell (Donnell's Oak Wood) and Martinstown were names after successors to Coman. Part of the forest trails through Derrydonnell Wood are over an old road which was formerly known as the Monk's Walk.
- By 1641 the Down Survey shows the Crofton ownership of the townland of Mote Demesne<sup>2</sup>.



According to Crofton histories (Story of Mote & Crofton Memoirs) the family may have arrived in Ireland as early as the thirteenth century. However the Story of Mote states that the first Crofton to settle in the area was John Crofton Auditor & Escheator General for Ireland<sup>3</sup>.

---

<sup>2</sup> <http://downsurvey.tcd.ie/landowners.php#mc=53.605934,-8.167008&z=14>

<sup>3</sup> The Story of Mote

We now commence the *story of Mote* with John, who was called John of Ballymurry, and also John of Connaught.

On April 13th, 1572, he was directed to obtain provisions in Athlone for a special fleet collecting in Ireland.

He was appointed Auditor and Escheator-General to Queen Elizabeth in 1579, and later on was made Commissioner of Thomond and Connaught, in 1588, a high post in those days.

He married Jane, daughter of Sir Henry Duke, of Castle Jordan, Co. Meath, and had four sons and three daughters.

He was not only a man of influence, but must also have possessed considerable property, as he was able to give each of his four sons estates and houses in different counties. Each of them eventually became heads of families.

His eldest son, Edward, succeeded him at Mote.

The family first lived at the Castle of Mote (which is believed to be the old O'Kelly castle which was located near Derrydonnell Bridge).

Throughout their reign in Roscommon the family carried out many improvements to the estate at Mote Park. The iconic Lion's Gate which was the main entrance to the demesne was constructed in 1787. Further improvements took place in the early to mid 1800s with the Ballymurray, Tremane and Roscommon entrances and gatehouses constructed.

Mote Park House was built by the Crofton family in the later half of the eighteenth century, preceding the Castle of Mote erected by the family in 1620.<sup>[10]</sup>

Crofton House (at Mote Park, shown) was clearly an imposing structure and reflects the influence neo-classicism prevalent at this time. This style emphasises for the first time a sense of permanence and security among the landowning class. The house was the most impressive of its type built in Co. Roscommon, the others of this period being located at Runnamoat near Ballymoe and Sandford House in Castlerea.<sup>[11]</sup> The house was originally an irregular two-storey-over-basement house, which the architect Richard Morrison more than doubled in size by adding six bays and an extra storey. It had a deep hall with a screen of columns, beyond which a door flanked by niches led into an oval library in the bow on the garden front. These gardens contained many fine architectural features, some of which are still intact. Perhaps the most splendid surviving feature is the original entrance gate consisting of a Doric triumphal arch surmounted by a lion with screen walls linking two identical lodge houses. In 1865 a fire destroyed the entire house at Mote Park, as another had destroyed their castle a century previously. While the house was being re-built in 1866, the family occupied the old barrack room in the farmyard. Following the death of Lord Henry, his nephew, Arthur Edward Crofton became the last of the Croftons to reside at Mote, but moved to England in the 1940s.<sup>[12]</sup>

Lord Edward Crofton, 9<sup>th</sup> Baron Crofton, was responsible for bringing the railway line through Roscommon. This opened in 1860 and traverses through the Mote Park estate.

- In the early 1700s a congregation of Quakers settled in the area and became tenants of the Crofton estate. They built a meeting house in Ballymurray in 1721 on land donated by the Crofton family. Many of the families lived in and around Mote Park (particularly on the farms near the Lion's Gate and adjoining the woods (Names such as Fairbrother (This is the family from whom Quaker Island gets its name), Lewis, Lynch, Alexander and Siggins appear on the early estate maps)
- In the early 1950s following the sale of the estate to the Land Commission, the lands were divided into viable farming units and a new generation of farmers moved to the area.

Link to Story of Mote:

<http://www.roscommontownheritage.com/uploadedfiles/story-of-moate-park1398889316.pdf>

# **Mote Park Through the Ages**





*“Mote Park, the seat of lord Crofton is a magnificent demesne, and the hanging woods on the hill in front of the house afford the broadest expanse of woodland scenery I can call to recollection within the county...”* - Isaac Weld, 1837

# Layers of History in the Mote Park landscape:

Archaeological features: raths, fulacht fiadh

O'Kelly Castle site

Townland names: Togherfin, Glantober, Farbreagues,  
Kilmeane etc.

Kilmeane Graveyard

Old Demesne Landscape

Architectural features: Lion's Gate, Derrydonnell  
Bridge, Mill, Coach house

Quaker Meeting House











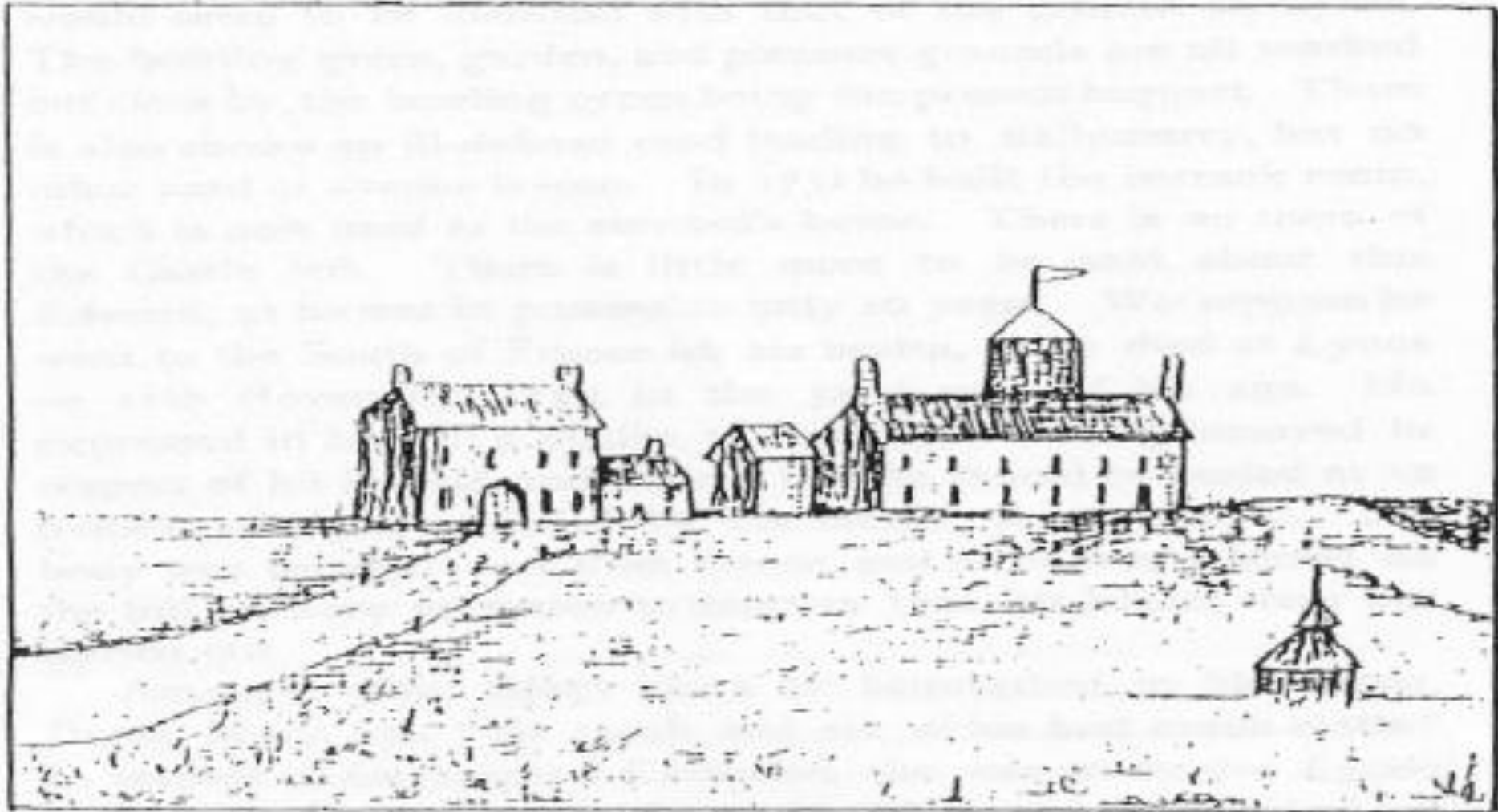




# The Crofton Family

- Family in Mote Park from the late sixteenth to mid twentieth centuries
- Left a lasting imprint on the local landscape
- Family history states original seat of family was in Cumberland
- John Crofton Escheator General
- Estates in Sligo, Mohill and Roscommon
- 11,000 acres
- Strong family connections with British royalty and aristocracy through marriage
- Considered benevolent landlords
- Heavily involved in national and local politics
- Responsible for bringing railway through Roscommon
- Augusta Crofton Dillon OBE, born Mote Park, early female photographer
- Capt. Francis Crofton - Crofton Road in Dun Laoghaire





*The Mote of other days  
(from an old Map - 1730)*



**Front Elevation of Mote Park House Built 1777 - 1787 - Undated but Prior to  
Fire of 16<sup>th</sup> May 1865**





Mote Park House - Front Elevation with Two Ladies Standing on Driveway - c. 1920.  
Irish Architectural Archive.





Mote Park House - Garden Front Watercolour Sketch by Honourable Ursula Crofton - Undated. Irish Architectural Archive.

Mote Park House - Garden Front Watercolour Sketch by Honourable Ursula Crofton - Undated. Irish Architectural Archive.





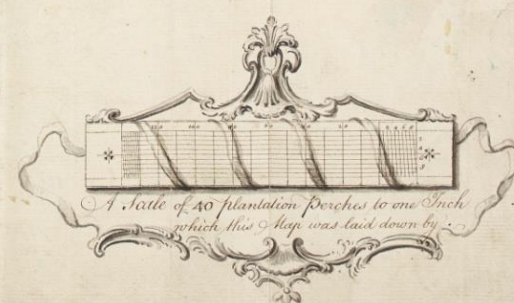
Mote Park - Ballymurry Gate - 1863. Irish Architectural Archive.



Mote Park - Seat on Hill Inscribed "George Crofton - 1632 Probably a Fire Place from the Castle of Mote Erected Between 1627 and 1632 According to the Crofton Memoirs - Elizabeth Crofton - Undated - The Crofton Memoirs



*A Map  
of Moate Demesne  
part of the Estate of Edward Crofton  
Esq<sup>r</sup> in the County of Roscommon  
Containing as expressed in the Reference making  
together 1280. 0. 6 plantation measure laid  
down by the annexed scale in December  
1777. By Jas. Kirk*





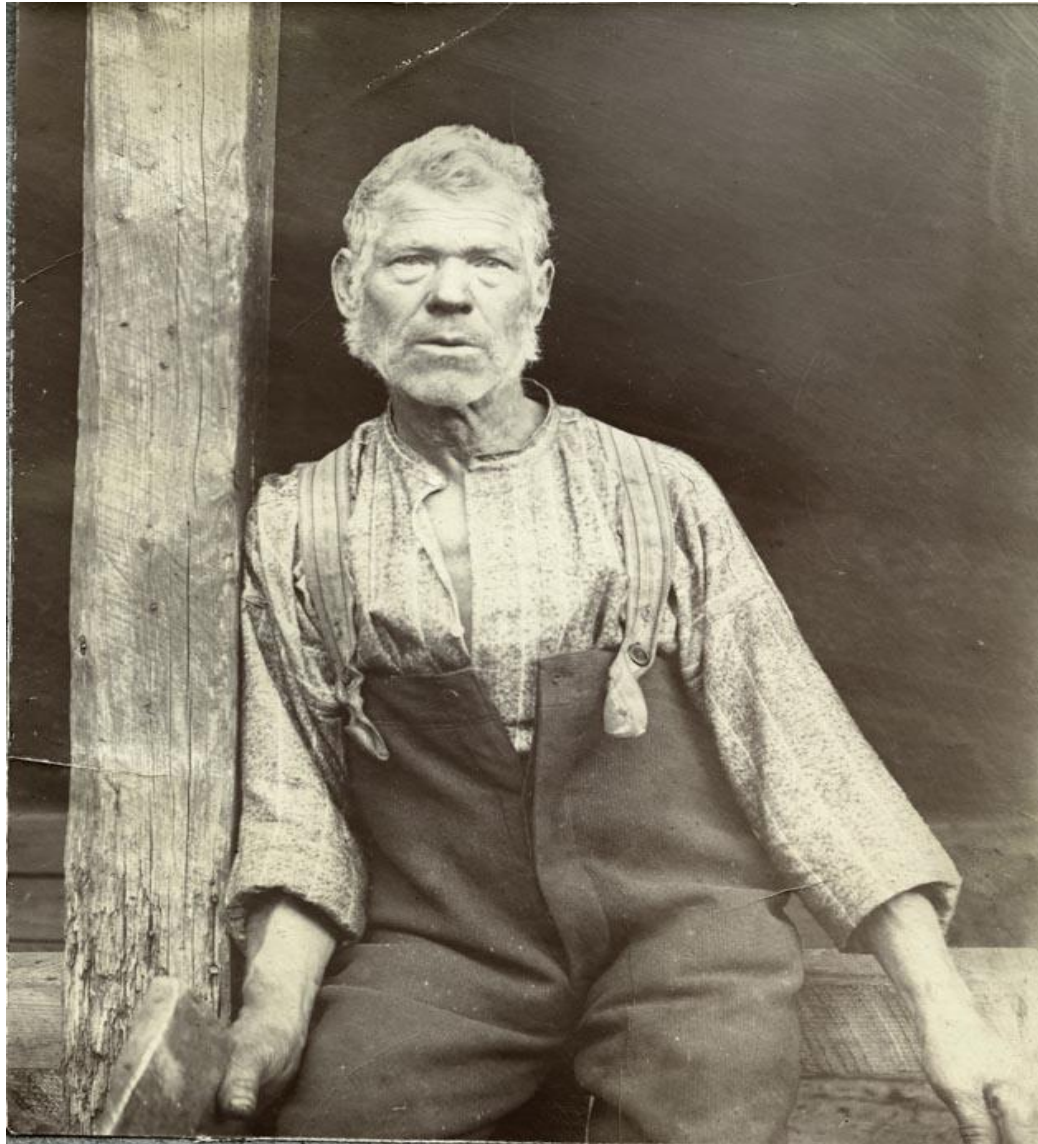


Augusta Crofton Dillon seated outside the photograph house, Mote Park, Co.Roscommon, 1865, CLON21, Clonbrock Collection, National Library of Ireland



Lord Crofton 3<sup>rd</sup> Baronet  
Edward Henry Churchill Crofton  
Born Mote Park, 1834  
Died Clonbrock House 1912  
Buried Crofton Family Vault, Kilmeane Graveyard





Mote Park - Killeen Carpenter (Probably Edward Killion, Master Carpenter, Tromaun 1901 Census) - Early 1900's Source: Salt Spring Island Archives Pat Crofton



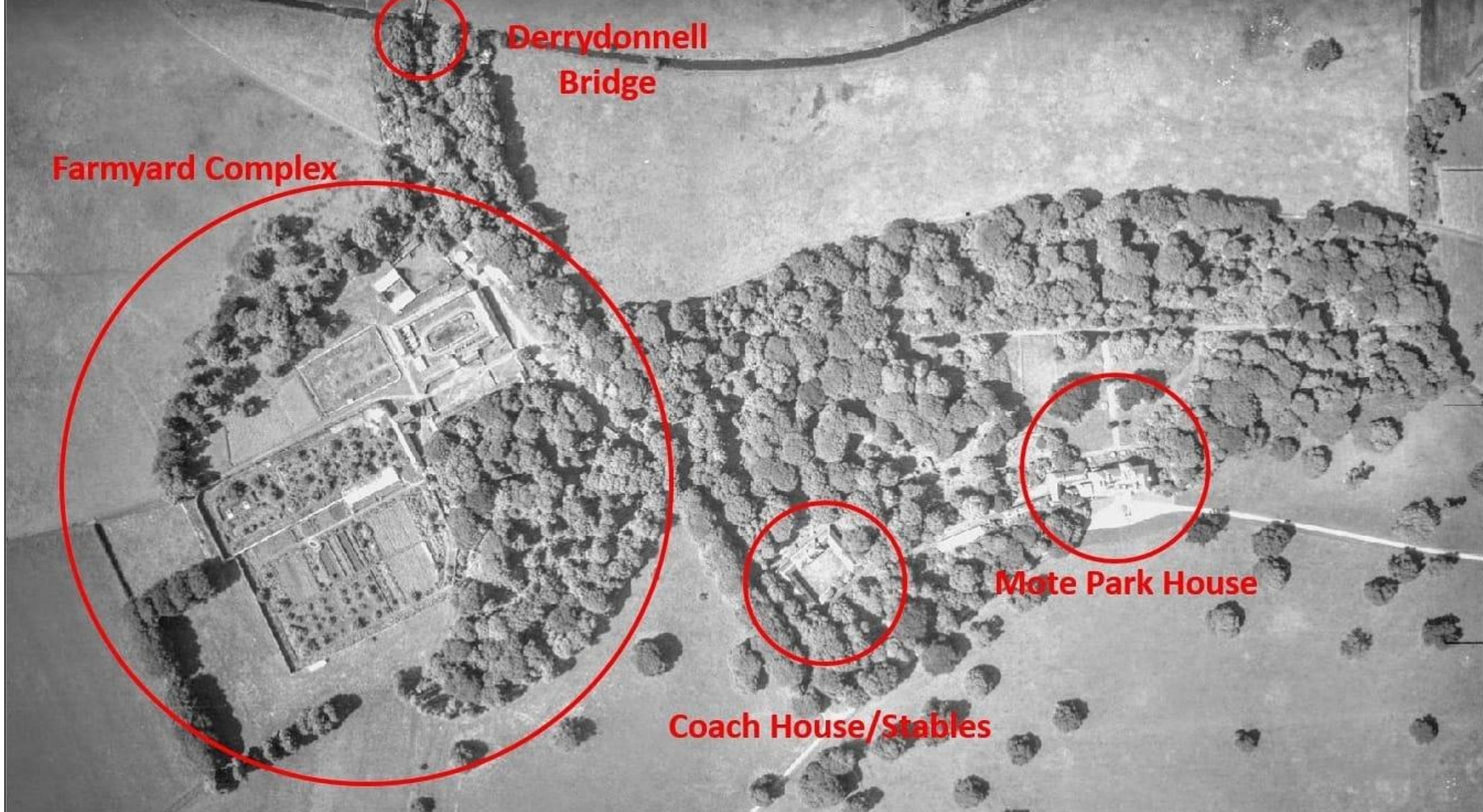
Extract from Tromaun townland map GV 1857





Satellite image of Tromaun townland today





Aer Corp image from 1938 of part of Mote Demesne





Satellite image Mote Demesne today

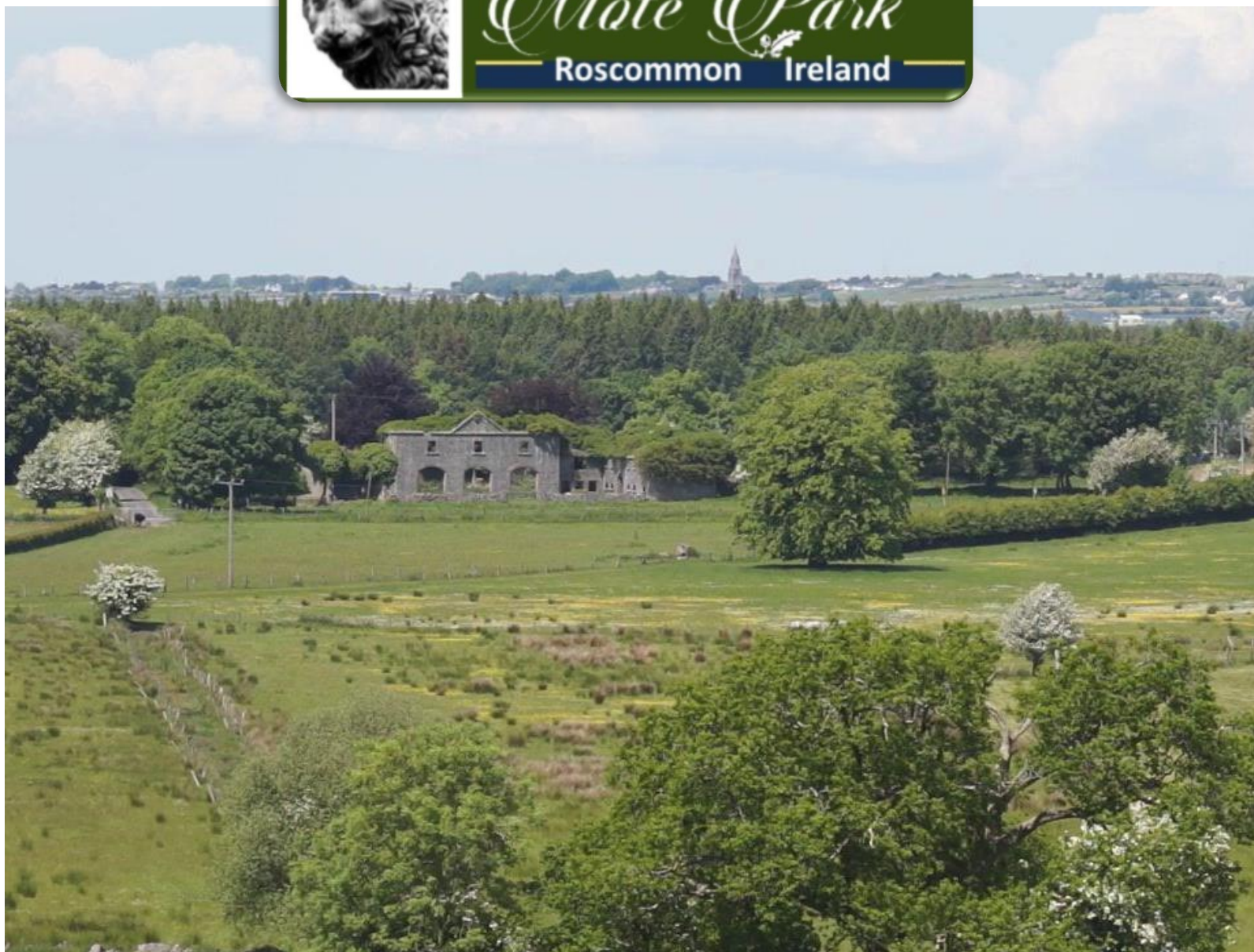


Mote Park House - Shell of Building Prior to Demolition. C. 1958/59. Roscommon Heritage Group



## Further Reading & Information:

- Roscommon County Library: Mote Park Estate Maps  
<https://bit.ly/CroftonMaps>
- Roscommon County Library: Crofton Estate Rent Books
- Crofton Memoirs - online
- Story of Mote - online
- John Kerrigan's Book - "Mote Park Revisited"
- Chapter on Mote Park in Paul Connolly's book "Landed Estates of Co. Roscommon"
- Shane Gilleran's MA Thesis on Demise & Demolition of Mote Park
- Jacqueline Towey's MA Thesis on Ballymurray Quakers
- Contact us at Mote Park Conservation Facebook page - large archive of material collected incl. large collection of photographs.
- Forthcoming publication on Kilmeane Graveyard by Mary Timoney MA
- "Mote Park a Time & A Place" documentary by Mimar Media
- Mote Park Interactive Heritage Tour



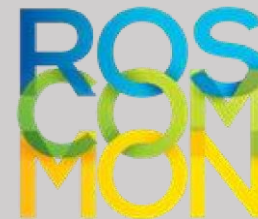
# ***Mote Park Project***

***By Lea Farrell***

***With the help of Mote Park Conservation Group, Marcus Crofton, and local people***

***Supported by Roscommon County Council Creative Ireland Programme through the Creative Communities Job Stimulus Measure 2020***

Clár Éire Ildánach  
*Creative Ireland*  
Programme  
2017–2022



Comhairle Contae  
Ros Comáin  
Roscommon  
County Council

Lea Farrell is a Hungarian visual artist and educator based in Roscommon. She was born in Transylvania where she started her fine art training at a very early age. After coming to Ireland, she trained as an animator and this still informs her artistic work. Currently, she is undertaking practice-based art research at the Burren College of Art. Her work is mainly large scaled drawings, but she is known to use a myriad of mediums to convey a message. Lea's oeuvre uses gestural pulsating marks created with high contrast to portray a dramatic experience and to represent rhythm and time. Lea – "uses rhythm in the sense of layering and repeating forms, creating a two-dimensional image which unfolds in time, full of anticipation and suspense." Matt Rota 2022

'The ways I am working allow me to immerse myself in the work and become a participatory element in the discussion. I am particularly interested in the capturing real and unreal in the form of gestural lines. I explore and question time in a nonlinear manner to play with the static and active dissimilitude within my lines.'

*Website: [leafarrell.com](http://leafarrell.com)*

*E-mail: [farrelllea@Hotmail.com](mailto:farrelllea@Hotmail.com)*

## **The Mote Park Project**

This series of oil paintings were created with the hope to highlight the fusion of nature and local heritage in the eyes of a newcomer. The *Mote Park project* consists of 12 paintings representing the months of the year. Every month I revisited a place based on a photograph or painting created in the past on the ground of Mote Park, County Roscommon.

My journey took me around a year and a half. The inspiration came from long walks that I took at the very beginning of the Covid 19 lockdowns. As Mote Park is close to my house the walks naturally took me through the grounds of this once large estate. During the first lockdown, Mote Park became deserted. This usually very popular recreational area was only visited by a few locals living in the nearby vicinity. Sometimes I went for a long walk without encountering a single person. This absence of humans allowed the animals to surface despite usually being rather shy. I met a large amount of wildlife during those outings. However, the most surprising element of these walks was the silence. This was like no other silence that I ever experienced. It was still. No noise in the distance, no tractors, cars, or any other sign of human activity. It felt strangely calm and content.

It made me think of the people that once lived and owned this estate. Remains of their past we can see all around Mote Park in the form of ruins of buildings in various stages of decay. I travelled with my thoughts through time wondering whether the people that lived here heard the same kind of silence that I did. Wondering if they foresaw the future in any way? Did they predict the perishing of their estate? I wondered what is left to showcase the memory of the once affluent past, a few images in the form of photographs or maybe paintings?

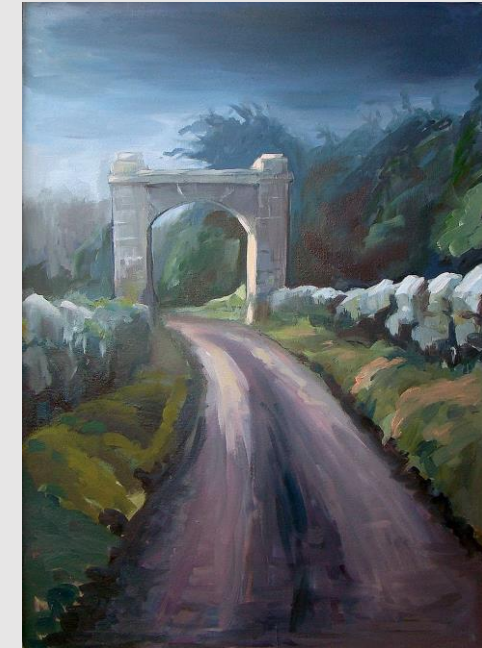
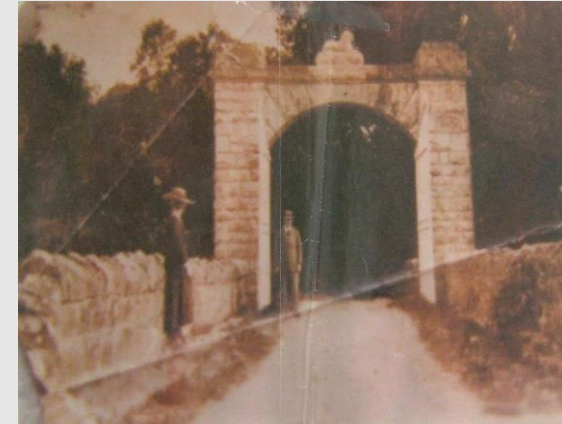
Presently, the estate is divided and is owned by different families. Some of the once luxurious and prosperous grounds are re-written into new necessities. This made me contemplate the importance of local communities in maintaining local heritage and the responsibility that falls on all of us in caring for our surroundings even if we are just passing by.

As a newcomer, I can relish the richness of the local forest and the abundance of local heritage and truly appreciate it for what it is because I am not yet acclimatized to the location.



**Painting 1 based on a photograph of Derrydonnell Bridge  
Revisited in June**

Mote Park Conservation Group allowed me to access a stock of old photographs. I thought carefully about what should serve as the first painting knowing that this painting will have to set the tone for the style and symbolism of what's to come. I wanted to start the series with an arch-like shape symbolizing a right of passage and fusion between concepts, modern people, legacy, and the power of nature. One morning, while I walked around looking at the arch-shaped monuments on the grounds of the demesne, like the Lion's Gate, the site of the Ballymurray entrance, and the Stone Gate entrance, I arrived at Derrydonnell bridge. The sun was just about to rise fighting with some morning fog. It all looked rather mystical with a touch of exaggerated dramatism. I chose this location to serve as inspiration for the first painting because I believe that the bridge and arch forms as a unity are strongly representative of my idea of the fusion between past and local narrative. The bridge also leads the path between two forests divided by houses and roads.

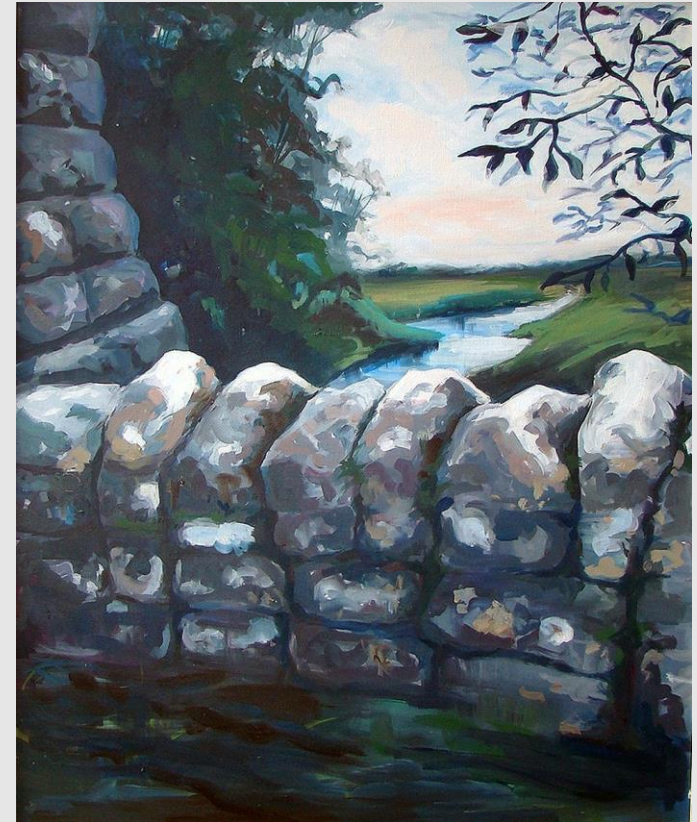


**Painting2**  
**Symbolic extension of the first painting – July**

The first painting showcased a recognizable representation of Mote Park.

I decided to look at the arch from a less obvious angle. The view over the raised sidewall tied up with my line of symbolism. It guides the viewer's eyes into the "future" leaving the observer to augur over its outcome.

I originally intended to have this as the finishing piece of the series. However, I changed my mind over time.



### **Painting 3 based on a painting of Salter's House revisited in early August**

After the Derrydonnell Bridge I felt that even though there are many great representations of Mote Park, I wished to stay away from the most popular sites. That is because, while the popular easy to recognize plots and monuments are great to paint and maybe they give a better recognition amongst locals, I was striving to maintain my point of view, and this is harder if local creative consciousness has a very biased idea of what a monument/ place looks like. The fact that I am not born in Roscommon is a major part of this project.

I came across this painting of Salter's House. It is painted during a summer day with bright skies and lots of sunshine. I went for a walk to visit it. It took me by surprise that Salter's House presently stands as the most modern and still in-use building from the estate.

The day I visited it with the purpose of research (although I passed it many times before and since), it was raining and the summer was hanging on by a thread. The trees were still green and somewhat lush but you could feel the autumn approaching. The image of the one still functional building couldn't be grimmer, especially since a shower had just passed. This had a taste of ironic premonition in it, like the passing of time somehow froze the past on its way.



## The House

Most of the old images and paintings left behind were of the main Mote Park House and its immediate surroundings. The house was demolished, and the land it stood on is now owned by different families. I was lucky enough to be granted access to see the tunnels and the site of the old house.

The lapse of time and the overwriting of history by modern necessity was nowhere more evident than during the research of this setting.

What is left from the past is repurposed. Walking around a person can see medallions of old life but the only reuniting force seems to be nature.

It is easy to be sanctimonious and pretend that I could do better than what I observed. But it couldn't be further from my aim. Nourishing a fine balance around us for our future while remembering the past has to be a joint effort. We are all accountable and therefore we are all responsible.



During my research, I got in contact with Marcus Crofton. He was kind enough to send me a few images of paintings that the family painted and cherished to this day. These paintings showcase the house in a rather romantic and utopic light. They represent an idealistic scenario of human existence. They show how cared for the house once was.

I decided to create a few paintings of what I saw on the grounds of the old house.

All the paintings are aiming to array a part of the present reality and the paintings discuss the fine balance between legacy, locals, and nature.



#### **Painting 4 – House grounds entrance – September**

Where the Mote Park house used to be a sign signals the historical importance of the grounds. The day I visited it was sunny, but as it was late autumn rain was never far away. The sun was strong and created a lot of contrast. I used this contrast to paint the first image of the grounds of the old house. In the background, the trees are in a chaotic and ominous mood. I darkened the sky and lightened the sign plaque for maintaining it as a focus point. I decided that to paint this with dynamic brush strokes, with very little blending. This way I can keep up and magnify the instant dramatic feel.



## **Painting 5 The Farm Yard -October**

The 5<sup>th</sup> painting of the grounds of the old house is showing the farm yard of the current occupant. Not much is left of the past. Some old stone walls perhaps, but they have been repurposed into modern practicalities.

The day I visited, the owner was generous enough to let me onto the grounds of his property I was grateful that he showed me around and told me all about the history of the place he now owns. The old tunnels and cellars are still there partially, although most are decayed by time. Some have been recently rediscovered.

On the surface none of it is visible. It looks like any other farmyard around the area.

The passing of time is very overbearing. The outcome of neglecting the local narrative is conspicuous. I decided that I will create a painting that has an exaggerated menacing feel to display our nepotism towards the present. As a metaphor, I darkened the sky and created a more vibrant colour scheme to give the impression of an approaching storm. I also used very animated brush strokes to create the feeling of precariousness.



## **Painting 6 Tunnel - November**

This painting was created in the middle of the winter Covid 19 lockdown. It started to feel isolating and closed in around us. The series of measures that limited our movements were getting to me. This might be sipping through this painting a bit.

I aimed to capture a micro image of the big house in its current state. The old tunnels and cellars still existent partially, although most are decayed by time. Some have been recently rediscovered.

I was drawn to the closed-down space because of the challenges I faced at that particular time. I tried to choose a cluster of elements that represent my point of view on the passing of time. The elements like the tyre in the old cellar tunnel are perfectly illustrating the very fragile existence of the local saga. The branches overhanging are embodying a sort of hierarchy in which nature regenerates over time.

Despite its closed down and slightly stern feel, I intended to add a positive outcome to this painting with the presence of vibrant leaves





### **Painting 7 House grounds December**

The final painting of the house grounds is looking at a field. It is the field that the house's main entrance was facing.

I chose the field to close the tale of the four paintings. I decided to close it in a positive stance. In the distance, if looking carefully, we can see the remembrance of the past and the present as it is all washed together by nature. I kept the fluctuating brushstrokes but created a sunnier day





## **Painting 8 based on two photographs The Gate Entrance-January**

This painting in many ways was different from the rest. I came across these images from Mote Park Conservation Group. The pictures are rather faint. However, while walking around and looking at the gate I found that is a representative part of local history that is a bit forgotten. As I did not have access to the gate I decided to look at it from the road.

The perspective I painted the gate was stylistic decision as I didn't want to create an equal arch-like painting as the Derrydonnell Bridge (painting from the beginning of my series).

Looking at this gate I played with the idea of local identity and belonging and its place in time. The gate is disappearing from local consciousness.

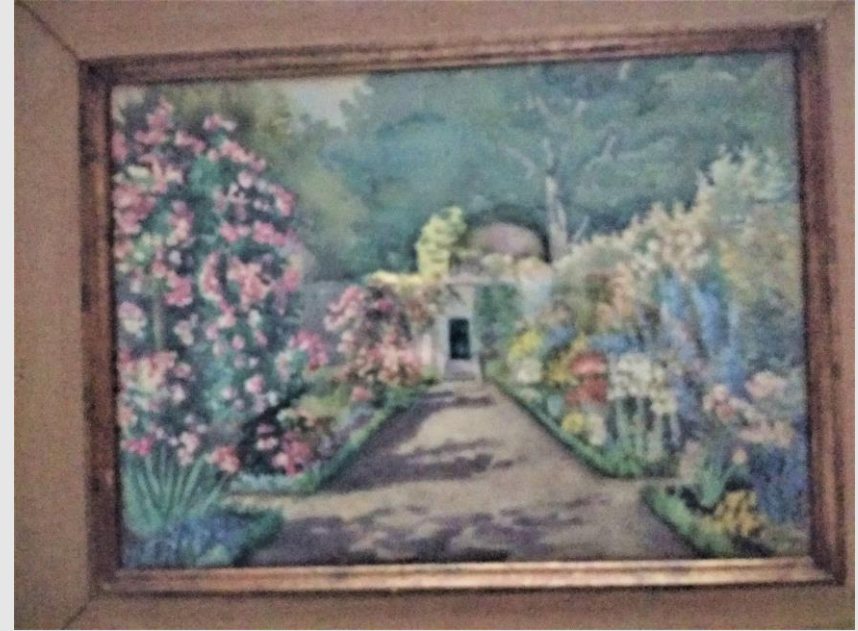
The unsettling tilted perspective is meant to symbolize the alarming idea of forgetting the past. As a newcomer, I am exposed to this from a very different angle, as I am no longer surrounded with my past. It is something I have to account for on my journey. Time, in this case, is part of the forces that work against us in maintaining our identity.



### **The orchard grounds and the walled garden**

I created 3 paintings from my visit to the grounds of the once lush orchard. Marcus Crofton sent me an image of a painting done at this site by one of his ancestors. The image is of poor quality. However, it speaks of beautiful grounds and prosperous people.

The reason this place captured me is lying in the harsh contrast between past, heritage, and present. The passing of time exaggerated nature's growth. It is in harsh contrast with the site of the big old house where over time nature is tamed by human activity. Nevertheless, both ways of passive overlooking can lead to the same result for local historical grounds.



### **Painting 9 of the grounds of the orchard and gardens - February**

As I walked around it was clear to me that nature overtook everything. Trees were hugging walls that were not so long ago lived in and used by locals. Everything was overgrown and the level of decay overpowered any imagination.

Only locals dared to walk on these grounds as they are not open to the public. This part of local belonging is only cherished by the few. It is a matter of time for all of this to fade into the future.

I chose to paint one of the trees hugging and overtaking a building. I gave the tree centre stage. I wanted to make it into “the star of the show”. I aimed to paint it as a tree that is victorious over any human accomplishment symbolizing nature in its glory.





### **Painting 10 Gate - March**

As before in the House ground paintings, I wished to add a micro image of a cluster of my ideas. While walking around I discovered an old gate/ door leading to the gardens.

It was boarded up. But behind the boards became visible a beautiful cast iron motif-rich gate. It is an emblem of the past.



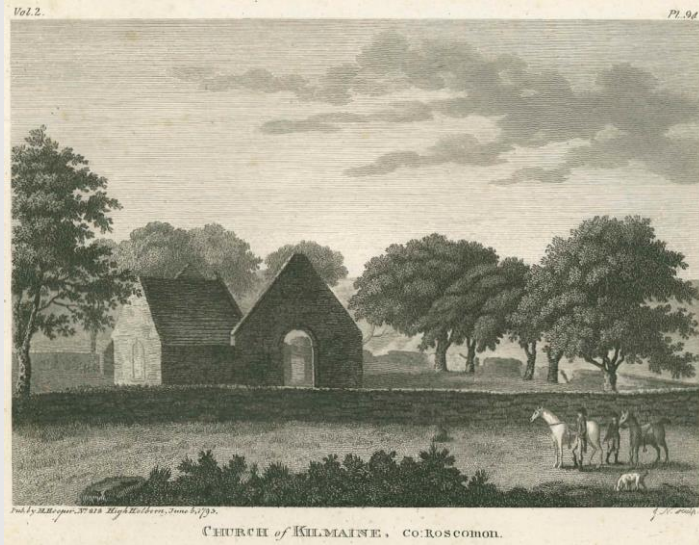
### **Painting 11- April**

For the final painting of the orchard, I painted the trees. They were everywhere on the orchard grounds. Nature exorbitantly overtook the area.

The trees I chose to paint, however, were windy and bendy and I aimed to create a tint of restlessness with them.

This representation of nature overtaking human existence and washing away the past in my mind is equally as ambiguous as the representation of the human subsistence overtaking the past. I believe that finding the balance is the solution for the present.





## Painting 12 The final painting - May

The final resting place of the Crofton family is in Kilmaine cemetery.

I always loved visiting old cemeteries. To me they are peaceful and full of beautiful old gravestones showcasing the history and craftsmanship of the past.

Choosing this cemetery as a subject matter to close my twelve paintings became a natural pick. The only obstacle was that I didn't want to paint graves. I felt that painting graves would be breaching a strange privacy etiquette.

I also wished to close my paintings with an arch shape to tie up the final painting with the first.

The window arch of Kilmaine Chapel looked suitable. I also aimed to suggest a feeling of peace and a tint of hope with this last painting. As the cycle concluded, the final painting was created on a late spring day. The sun shone through the metal bars and the green leaves were hugged by the sunny air.

I settled my brush strokes. I blended a bit more than before and derived a more obvious harmony in my style. This painting aims to represent the conclusion in the balance of local heritage, nature, and locals in the face of time. It desires to evoke an emotion of hope for what's to come if this balance is gained.



The subject matter of maintaining local heritage while striking a fine balance between present circumstances and nature is a very contemporary one.

I wanted to create this series of paintings to highlight the richness of Mote Park in history and nature and to call out a more general magnitude about this balance that is easily overlooked. I always loved forest walks. They were part of my growing up. The fresh air and the sound of nature provided a clear mind that is hard if not impossible to get from any other source.

Before moving to Roscommon, for a few years, I lived in an area that was lacking this liberty. For the first time in my life, I understood how it is to miss nature. During lockdown hearing the silence of nature I understood (although I always knew) deeply that our life is impossible without it.

The fact that local history is present on the walks is a bonus. However, this is only treasured by a few. History and what the past left us are part of us. As an immigrant, I had to leave all my heritage behind. I can only wish to surround myself with medallions of the past. It is another aspect of human continuity that most of us only miss when it's no longer in reach.

Achieving a balance between history, nature, and present reality is a modern-day challenge and it is our job as modern people. There's a hierarchy in the way we set up our scale of mondain importance. The present comes first then the future and last is the past.

Only when you cannot breathe you will understand the importance of air.