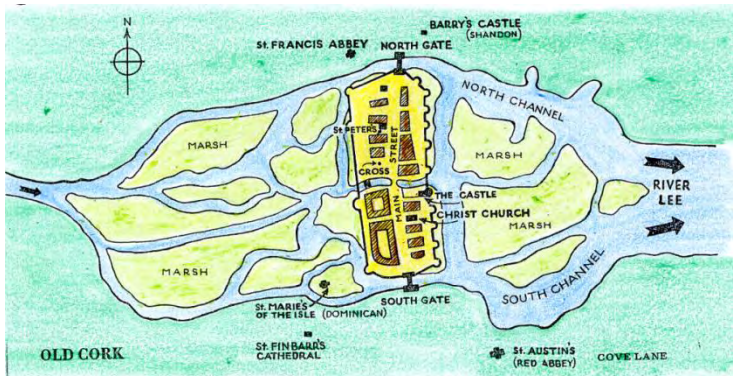


Nano's Cork



The Cork of Nano's day was a busy port with trading vessels leaving for England, India and the West Indies but side by side with the affluence of the traders was the destitution of the general populace.

The British Navy was revictualled there. Press gangs roamed the dark streets.

There was general lawlessness. There were prisons adjacent to both the North Gate and South Gate bridges. Candle making from the tallow obtained from the slaughter houses added to the unsavoury atmosphere.

The river banks were unlit and unfenced so for a woman to venture out at night with only lantern light to guide her way to the tenements she visited was a potentially dangerous undertaking.



South Gate Bridge and prison 1713. There has been a bridge here since 1100

North Gate Bridge and prison 1715

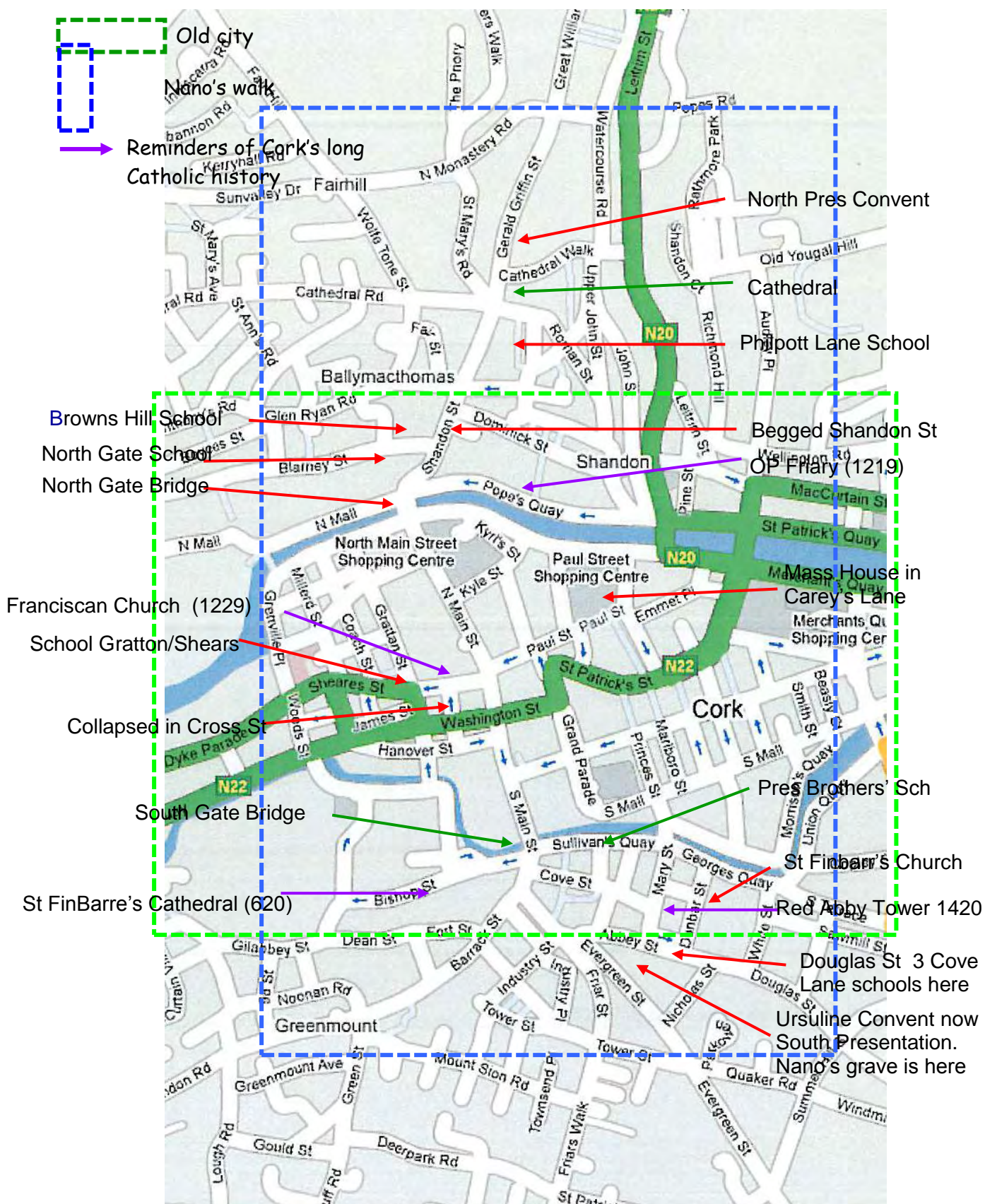


From her cottage in Cove Lane adjacent to the grounds of the Ursuline Convent (now South Presentation Convent) and close to the house of her brother Joseph and his wife Frances, she had her cottage and three schools founded about 1750

She would have gone down Dunbar Street past St Finbarr's Church, along the Quay, past the future site of the Presentation Brothers' School and over the Southgate Bridge to the Shears/Gratton Street School, along Carey's Lane to the Mass House and over the Northgate Bridge to the three schools at Browns' Hill, Shandon Street where she sometimes begged, and Philpott Lane

She collapsed in Cross Street (opposite the Franciscan Church) on her way home from the Gratton/Shears Street school.

Present day Cork





We are invited to follow in Nano's footsteps and fan into flame the gift of God in our own lives and our own time:

'The light of the soul throws sparks, can send up flares, builds signal fires, causes proper matters to catch fire.'

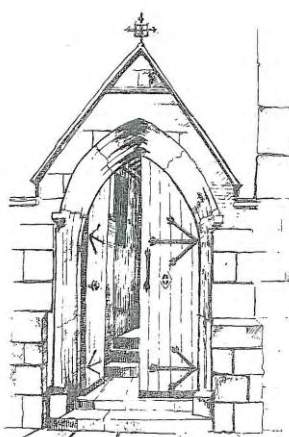
To display the lantern of the soul in shadowy times like these – to be fierce and to show mercy towards others, both are acts of immense bravery and greatest necessity.

Struggling souls catch light from other souls who are fully lit and willing to show it.'

'Do not Lose Heart' Clarissa Pinkola Estes

Retracing footsteps....

Begin in Douglas Street, visit the sites of the various schools and reminders of Cork's long Catholic history and return to visit the graves of Nano and her three companions.



The Cove Lane entrance to South Presentation Convent which can also be accessed from Evergreen Street.

This is the convent Nano built for the Ursulines in 1771



Nano's cottage and three schools were nearby.



The cottage became the almshouse for 'superannuated gentlewomen' in 1829 but she began making provision for them in 1783. Later school buildings which occupied this site until recently have been converted into social housing.



COVE LANE (now Douglas Street) is carved on the wall in Douglas Street to the left at the top of Dunbar Street. (The sign narrowly missed obliteration by the intervention of one of the Queensland Sisters who happened by when workmen were re-rendering the wall.)

When Nano returned from France she lived with her brother Joseph and his wife Frances somewhere in this street before moving to her cottage c. 1769 (three rooms and a garret) where she received the Ursulines on 9 May 1771 because the convent was not completed until September of that year.

In this cottage Nano and her three companions, Mary Anne Collins, Elizabeth Burke and Mary Fouhy lived and, with the making of their vows on Christmas Eve 1775, began the Society which was to become the Presentation Congregation. Nano's first school – a mud cabin with two earthen floored rooms, a garret and thatched roof was rented about 1754. A similar cabin to the left became her second school. The third school – the one in which the Ursulines taught – was inside the enclosure.

This wall is all that remains of the 1777 Convent. Nano and the founding Sisters moved in after a long delay at 3:00am (to avoid detection) on 16 July 1780 (Letter to Miss Mulally 29 July 1780). They had been living in Nano's cottage until then because part of the wall in the back yard had been broken down so that stones could be brought in for the Ursuline's garden wall and Nano deemed it unsafe to have the back part of her house exposed though classes were held there. Nano lived here until her death in 1784



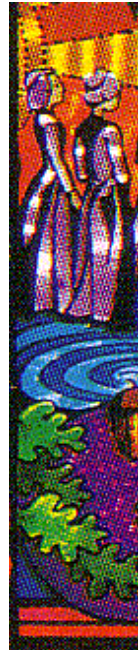
First extensions: The Sisters lived here 1810 – 27 when they moved to the house the Ursulines had vacated in 1825(now South Presentation).



This building was occupied by the Presentation Brothers and parish clergy until 1972 when the Sisters moved back and used it for a hostel for university students. The Sisters are once again in residence.

Proceed down Dunbar Street to St Finbarr's Church which was built in 1766 and is Cork's oldest Catholic Church. Nano worshipped here for the last 18 years of her life.

Desmond Kine's Icon is in the Lady Chapel



At the end of Dunbar Street turn left into Sullivan's Quay. Pass the Nano Nagle footbridge and move on to the South Gate Bridge.

You will pass the Presentation Brothers' 1828 school building on your left and see St Fin Barre's Protestant Cathedral - built in 1865 on the site of Finbarr's Monastery 620 - ahead of you.

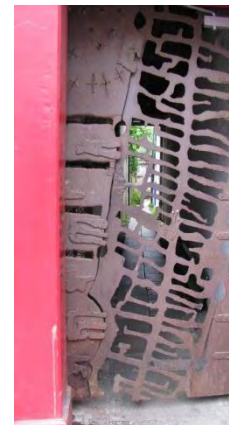


Cross the bridge into South Main Street and turn left into Washington then right into Little Cross Street. This is where Nano collapsed on her way home on 21 April 1784. She died on April 26

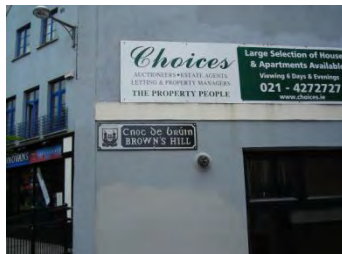


Ahead is the Franciscan Church in Liberty Street built in 1831 on the 1229 site of an earlier monastery. Turn left here to the Shears Street/ Grattan Street intersection where a school was located.

Retrace your steps to South Main Street which becomes North Main the Shandon Street and continue to the North Gate Bridge where, Nano claimed, the cold wind coming off the river as she crossed this bridge cured her bad eyes (Letter to Miss Mulally July 1780)



You may notice the 'map' of old Cork's alleyways in a door way and pass some of them.



There were schools near the North Gate Bridge, in Brown's Hill and Philpott Lane. Subsequently four Sisters lived in Philpott Lane until they moved to North Presentation Convent in 1799



This panel, depicting Nano begging, was designed for the Icon but not incorporated.

She begged outside a shop on this corner

Continue along Shandon Street to Cathedral road and visit the Catholic Cathedral built on the site of the Mass Houses of 1635, 1700 and 1730 attended by the Philpott Lane Sisters. There are records of baptisms and marriages here dating back to 1748.



The building was begun in 1799 and the holy water font of the 1771- dated 1799 - Mass House is here. This is a Pugin building built by Bishop Francis Moylan – a great friend of Nano. It was opened in 1802 and partially destroyed by an arson attack in 1820.

Continue along Gerald Griffin Road to North Presentation Convent and school built in 1813.

For the return journey recross the Bridge and turn left into Kyril's Quay which becomes Lavitt's Quay. From the footbridge you can look across the river to the Dominican Church built between 1839 and 1861 on the site of the 1229 priory confiscated by Henry VIII. Continue on one block to St Paul's Ave on your right and at the intersection do a left/right dogleg into Carey's Lane. This was on the marshes and a Mass House was located here around 1780 where the Church of Sts Peter and Paul – another Pugin building – stands.

Continue along Carey's Lane to St Patrick's Street turn right then left into Grand Parade. This will take you to the Nano Nagle footbridge.



The plaque reads:

Presented to the Presentation Sisters
on the occasion of the 225 anniversary
of the death of Nano Nagle 24 April 1784
in appreciation of your great work in
Catholic Education for the people of Cork.

Walk back along Sullivan's Quay to Mary Street where the Red Abbey Tower is located.

This is Cork's oldest piece of architecture. It is on the site of the Augustinian Friary founded in 1420. The Friars were banished in 1641.

During the Siege of Cork in 1690 the Duke of Marlboro placed cannon on the top of the tower to batter the walls and houses of the old city of Cork.



Make your way back along Douglas Street to South Presentation. Here the heritage centre is located and 'Miss Nagle's parlour' is within the original Ursuline Convent building.



Finally, visit the cemetery. Here are the graves of Nano and Mary Anne Collins, a memorial plaque commemorating the other two founding Sisters Mary Fouhy and Elizabeth Burke and the graves of 124 Presentation Sisters, twenty Ursulines and two of their pupils from their

boarding school, a Sister of the Annunciade Order who found a home with the Ursulines during the French Revolution and a Sister of the Rule of St Brigid who lived in South Presentation for some time before her death.

When Nano died on 24 April 1784 the Hiberian Chronicle of the day carried this obituary:

Last Wednesday the indisposition of Miss Nagle was announced in the sorrowing countenances of the poor of this city to whom she was the best of benefactors and patronesses. She died this day about noon and truly indescribable is the universal lamentation for the departure of a lady possessed of all that merit which for many years rendered her the object of unexampled admiration and acquired her the most unlimited esteem of all ranks of people.

The Ursulines suggested that she and, subsequently her community, should be buried in their cemetery. Under the Penal Laws the licence of the Protestant Bishop of Cork was required to conduct a Catholic burial ceremony. The permission was not sought. An opening was made in the wall between the two convents and very quietly Nano was laid to rest. Her original tomb stone stands against the south wall. The inscription reads:

Here lie waiting, 'tis hoped, a glorious resurrection the remains of Miss Honora Nagle, daughter of Garret Nagle, Esquire, of Ballygriffin and Venerable Foundress of this monastery of S Ursula, and of the Institute of the Charitable instruction: whose life and fortune were always devoted to the service of God & of the poor: whose piety, humility and self-denial made the most salutary impressions on an admiring Public & whose charity & zeal were most singularly & successfully exerted for more than thirty years in the instruction of multitudes of poor children, rearing them true servants of God & useful members of society. She departed this life, envied by many & regretted by all, on the 26th day of April, 1784, aged 65 years. R.I.P. Moriatur anima mea morte justorum & fiant novissima mea horum similia. Num 23:10

As we pause in this hallowed place let us pray:

Come original guardians of this place
Come with the heart you bore as you stood on this hallowed ground.
Come Nano Nagle, Woman of Light,
Come Mary Ann Collins, Elizabeth Burke, Mary Fouhy and all those people who have
lived the spirit of Nano over 230 years.
Come with your spirit of compassion, courage and daring as we gather in this sacred
place.

We take time to remember these and all people whose lives were stirred and
transformed by faith; those who became bearers of light, hope, healing, justice and
peace for us and for our world.

We hold them in our hearts.

We remember their stories of life and faith.

We pray too that we may be bearers of light, love and faith to our communities and in
our corner of the world.

For: Here is a Bethlehem
From here went ringing far across the world
the singing news of God.
The poor who waited in the frozen dark
saw life offered in the radiant Word,
and came with eager haste to find
Christ born for them.

Here is a Bethlehem:
A woman pierced by the Spirit's light,
 waiting in stillness on the Spirit's strength,
 empty of aught but the Spirit's gift.
A woman faithful to the Word received,
 whole in her heart and her hands to raise
 a house built leaning on the breath of God.

A Song for Two Hundred Years. Cork Christmas 1775
Raphael Consedine, Melbourne, Christmas 1975

From this place, from this day, the shared story, the listening journey goes on.

Who will light the lantern and keep it burning bright ?
Who will search the Darkness where shadows seek the light ?
Who will find the courage to sing a Different song ?
Who will light the Lantern and go one step beyond ?



Some Cork Connections

Presentation Brothers. Edmund Rice – a businessman of Waterford - inspired by the work the Presentation Sisters in that city were doing for girls, after a lot of soul-searching began to work in a similar way for boys and in 1802 gathered round him like-minded men to carry on the work. On 15 August 1808 this small group met in the chapel of the Presentation Convent, Waterford to take their religious vows. They adopted the Presentation Sisters' Rule and became the Society of the Presentation, the first congregation of Brothers founded in Ireland.



In January 1822, the various communities came together, chose a Superior General and formed a Pontifical Congregation under the Holy See rather than under the jurisdiction of the diocesan bishop. They adopted a new rule and took vows as Christian Brothers but Bishop Murphy of Cork invited his friend Br Augustine Riorden to remain under his jurisdiction and continue to live according to the Presentation Rule. These are the Presentation Brothers. For some years – until 1972 - the Brothers in Cork lived in the Presentation Sisters 1810 house in Douglas Street.

Their Heritage Centre in Mardyke House, Mardyke Street is well worth a visit

In the grounds you will find the 'spiral' – inspired by the Edmund icon - which has been designed to take you on two journeys: the story of Edmund Rice and the seven women who had a significant influence on his life – his mother, his wife, his daughter, his friend, Nano Nagle, Teresa of Avila and Mary of Nazareth - and the two hundred year history of the Presentation Brothers.



The spiral takes you on the first journey and the water flowing from the centre leads to the second and symbolises that this is a journey with Christ and that Christ is present in each part of the story.

Inside the Centre there is a beautifully constructed wall of carved medallions also illustrating the history and links with the Christian Brothers and the Presentation Sisters.

The East Cork Town Cobh (cove) of Cork.



This monument of Annie Moore – the first Irish emigrant to be processed on Ellis Ireland in America symbolises the hundreds of thousands of mostly hungry and penniless Irish men and women who left to build a new life, especially in the Famine years of 1844-48. Many thrived and prospered, but many died on the journey in the terrible travelling conditions of the time.

Some of the founding Sisters who went to Australia would have departed from here – probably the last thing that disappeared from their sight was the spire of St Coleman's Cathedral on the hill. It has a carillon of 47 bells.

Cobh is situated on Great Island, one of the three large islands in Cork harbour which are all now joined by roads and bridges - Little Island and Fota are the other islands. On the quayside there is a memorial to the victims of the Lusitania, many of whom are buried in Cobh's Old Church Cemetery. The ship was sunk off Kinsale in 1915 by a German submarine, an action which was responsible for bringing the United States of America into the Great War, the survivors were brought back here. Another unhappy association is with the Titanic, 'the safest liner in the world'. Queenstown (as Cobh was formerly known until reverting to its old Irish name in 1922) was her last port of call on her fateful maiden voyage.