

Freemans Journal

CURRAGH CORONATION BONFIRE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE FREEMAN'S JOURNAL.

Sir—With reference to the report in this day's issue of your paper on the above mentioned subject, I take the earliest opportunity of informing you that when the committee selected the Gibbet Rath as the site for this bonfire, it was done for no other reason than that it was the highest ground on the Curragh.

At a meeting held on the 11th inst. the committee were informed that the Rath had been used in olden times as a burial ground, and, in consequence of this, it was unanimously decided to change the site of this bonfire to the high ground some distance to the south of the Rath.

It will, therefore, be seen that the committee had no intention of offering offence to any person. —Yours, etc.,

J. S. McELVEEN
Hon. Sec and Treasurer.
Bernard Lodge, Curragh Camp
13th June, 1902

Freemans Journal, Saturday, June 14, 1902

THE CORONATION' BONFIRES

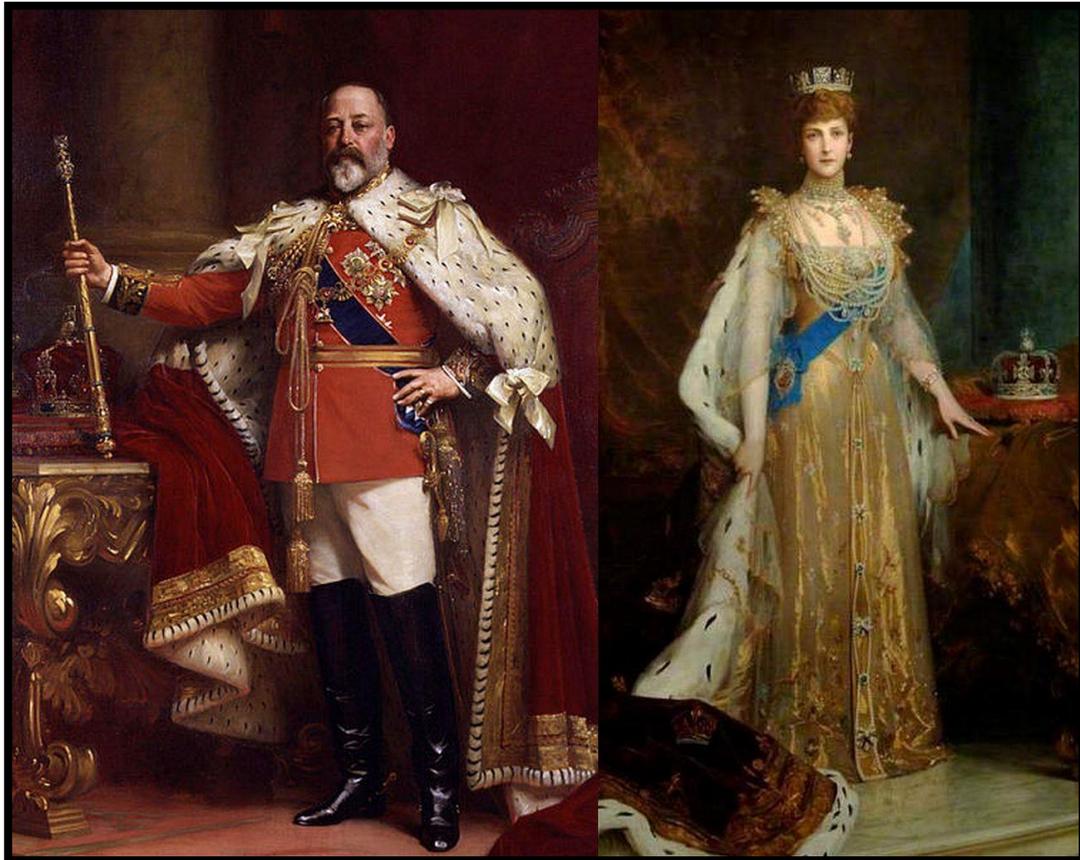
**Cowran Grange, Naas,
17th June 1902.**

Dear Sir, -As there has been a sight inaccuracy as regards the signal for the lighting of Coronation bonfires in County Kildare, please put in this week's publication as follows:— Coronation Bonfires, 26th June, 1902: Signal for lighting: A Bengal light, and fire a rocket from the top of the Water Tower, Curragh Camp, 9.35 p.m.

Faithfully yours, ROBECK.
Leinster Leader, Saturday, June 21, 1902

Coronation of Edward VII and Alexandra

The coronation of Edward VII and his wife Alexandra as king and queen of the United Kingdom and the British Dominions took place at Westminster Abbey, London, on 9 August 1902. Originally scheduled for 26 June of that year, the ceremony had been postponed at very short notice, because the King had been taken ill with an abdominal abscess that required immediate surgery.



Edward VII and his wife Alexandra, Coronation Day.

Edward VII and The Curragh

The eldest son of Prince Albert and Queen Victoria, the future Edward VII was born Albert Edward on November 9, 1841. Known as "Bertie" within the family, he was subjected to a strict regimen to prepare him for the throne. As was customary for members of British royalty, Prince Edward attended Oxford and Cambridge universities and soon after declared his desire to pursue a career in the military.

In August 1861, the Prince of Wales, later King Edward VII, came to the Curragh of Kildare to spend a period with the garrison. He arrived at Kingstown, now Dun Laoghaire, aboard the Connaught and as the steamer rounded the pier head salutes were fired simultaneously from the Ajax man-of-war and the Pigeon-house Fort. The Illustrated London news of August 13, 1861 describes how "On Tuesday the Prince proceeded to the Curragh Camp, where he was received by the Commander-in-Chief, Sir George Brown and a Royal Salute was fired by a field battery of Horse Artillery. A grand review took place on Wednesday and yesterday week there was a brigade review.

The quarters of the Prince of Wales, which are those formerly occupied by Lord Seaton, when Commander of the Forces in Ireland, can be seen by anyone passing on the road through the Curragh to the encampment, from which road they are only a few yards distant. Two men of the Grenadier Guards are placed on sentry outside the entrance and on the grounds inside, which are tastefully laid out, two small tents have been erected. His Royal Highness goes through the routine of military duties every morning with as much exactness as any other officer in the camp. When his morning exercises are over, he usually, after lunch, plays games of racket."



The visit of HRH Albert Edward

The Prince of Wales

The Curragh Camp - August 1861



Prince of Wales, seated centre of photograph, at The Curragh Camp.

However, it was the Prince's brief relationship with Nellie Clifden that made the headlines during his time at The Curragh Camp.

Nellie Clifden was a nineteenth-century actress, believed to be of Irish extraction. She is known for her brief relationship with the 19-year old Albert Edward, Prince of Wales, prior to his marriage to Alexandra of Denmark. She met him at a party in England and again when the Prince was spending 10 weeks at Curragh Camp in Ireland with the Grenadier Guards in the late summer of 1861.



On March 10, 1863, the future King Edward VII of the United Kingdom married Princess Alexandra of Denmark.