

## HIDDEN GEMS AND FORGOTTEN PEOPLE

### NAAS LOCAL HISTORY GROUP



### BENCHMARKS

On the west side of the Moat of Naas there is an Ordnance Board stone with a benchmark. Benchmarks were a system for height control used in the first ordinance survey mapping of Ireland. The first datum was the level of low water of spring tides observed at Poolbeg lighthouse on the 8<sup>th</sup>. April 1837, which was 8.22 feet below sea level. This datum plane was referenced to a benchmark on the base of Poolbeg lighthouse. The Ordnance Survey was established in 1824 to provide a precise measurement of the townlands as a precursor to nationwide valuation of buildings and land. The original six inch mapping of Ireland was commenced in 1824 and Co. Kildare was mapped by 1839, with the rest of the country being completed by 1841. The majority of the maps were published in 1846. The printing plates for this map series were copper on which map details were all hand engraved. Of the one hundred and thirty or so original benchmarks in Naas only twenty-three have survived.