Richard Fitzpatrick

Nowlan report form

Name	Richard Fitzpatrick
Date report was submitted:	Apr 27, 2022
2a. Year awarded:	2021
2b. Title of project:	St. Kieran's College, Kilkenny, Class Portraits and Student Records Digitisation Project 2021

2c. Please provide a summary of the project (minimum 100 words):

The research carried out with the assistance of the Kevin B. Nowlan Digitisation grant was conducted from October 2021 to January 2022. In that time, the surviving class portraits and student records of St. Kieran's College Kilkenny were identified, digitised and ingested into the Clericus database (www.clericis.ie). This has added an additional 2,242 new biographical entries to the Clericus database. A further 58 class portraits and over 1,000 portrait thumbnails have also been added to the system. The data added to the Clericus database was extracted from two main resources, namely the surviving class portraits of St. Kieran's College and a student list covering the period c.1782 to 1994. As the latter list of students is incomplete, several other resources were identified to help supplement and fill gaps in the data. This included data from national censuses carried out in 1901 and 1911 followed by the works of two historians of the college.

In line with data protection recommendations, only pre-1946 class portraits and student records have been made publicly available via the Clericus website. All personal data after this date will be treated in line with data protection law and regulations, specifically Chapters 2 & 5 of the Data Protection Act (2018) and Article 9 of the GDPR. As a result, a total of 20 class portraits and 1,358 biographical entries are publicly accessible via the Clericus website (https://clericus.ie/resource/96302). This data has also been deposited with the DRI. Furthermore, although the DRI does provide restricted access to deposited material, the institution's data policy prevented the post-1945 St. Kieran's data from being deposited. The reason for this is that the DRI cannot support a blanket restriction on access for any collection. Selecting the restricted data option in the repository would still make it available by request to bona fide researchers, which would not be suitable for collections containing special category personal data related to potentially living subjects. The DRI has no way of managing these requests once the collection has been deposited.

2d. Please outline the objectives of the project:

Digitisation and preservation of class portraits and student records of St. Kieran's College Kilkenny.

A greater understanding of the numbers and distribution of Irish clerical students.

Increased exposure of the Clericus project/database to users and funding bodies.

2e. Please outline the findings of your research and/or milestones achieved. (Please refer to the intended outcomes stated in your application form)

This research was successful in its objective to preserve unique artefacts and biographical data. All records were ingested into the Clericus database. Following this, all data from pre-1946, including class portraits and student records, was deposited with the DRI.

2f. Please describe the methodology used in conducting the research:

The methodology utilised as part of this project followed the description provided in my application form. This methodology followed a number of steps previously taken during the digitisation of class portraits and student records belonging to St. Patrick's College Maynooth in 2020.

The initial stage of the Nowlan project involved identifying surviving class portraits held by St. Kieran's College Kilkenny, which were then photographed. Next, software was used to edit the portraits before a parsing tool was used to extract each individual portrait and their associated information to create new biographical entries within the Clericus system.

The next step of the project involved transcribing student records into spreadsheets. These records were divided into two categories: pre-1945 records and post-1945 records. Once a de-duplication process was undertaken, an ingestion tool was used to ingest these records into the Clericus system.

During the transcription process it was found that the student records of St. Kieran's were incomplete. To help fill in these blanks several other sources were located and their data added to the Clericus system. These additional sources included data from the works of two historians of the college. Also, the census returns for the college from 1901 and 1911 added data on 192 individuals.

The final stage of the project involved writing and publishing an article on the St. Kieran's data on the Clericus website.

3a. Please provide details of the dissemination of the outcomes from this project (Publications, presentations, outreach, media etc) including details of any social media/web platforms used to publicise this project:

Several social media posts on the project were made via the Clericus project's Twitter account (https://twitter.com/ClericusDH).

The St. Kieran's data was also included as part of a digital presentation created by the Clericus team as part of Maynooth University's Love Data Week (https://sway.office.com/bT8N7ChKFG1h3DGM?ref=Link&loc=play).

Finally, an article on the St. Kieran's Project was published on the Clericus website to accompany the publication of the data (https://clericus.ie/article/students-of-st-kierans-college-kilkenny-c17821945).

3d. Media coverage (articles in newspapers/ University websites etc.:

See 3a

3f. How will you continue to communicate the results of your project?

See 3a

3g. What are your publication plans?

It is hoped this research will form part of a future article on the Clericus project and the process involved in capturing, digitising and ingesting class portraits and student records of Irish seminaries.

5c. How did the bursary enhance your professional development?

The main impact this bursary had on my professional development was that it helped me to secure a R. J. Hunter Digital Research Fellowship for 2022-23.