



*The 1967 Censorship Act, which restricted the powers of the Republic's Censorship Board, released 5,000 previously forbidden tomes to the Irish book buying public.*

A notorious money lender by the name of Bruce, who operated in Limerick in the 1770s, had an iron leg which he would tap when debtors begged for mercy, telling them, 'That's the softest part of me'.

CATHERINE Kelly (1756-85) was known as 'the Irish Fairy'. She was only 34 inches tall and never weighed more than twenty-two pounds.

QUATERNIONS, the numerical formulae upon which quantum mechanics are based, and without which Einstein could not have calculated the Theory of Relativity, were the brainchild of Irish mathematician Sir William Rowan Hamilton.

THE obscure German writer who created the compulsively boastful Baron Munchausen is buried in Killarney, where he died while prospecting for copper in 1794.

ALTHOUGH born with only the rudiments of arms and legs, the extraordinary Carlowman Arthur Kavanagh became one of the first Europeans to explore central Asia, a feat which he accomplished in the company of a Russian dwarf. He rounded off his career by becoming MP for Carlow.

GALWAY-born Robert Burke walked the 1,500