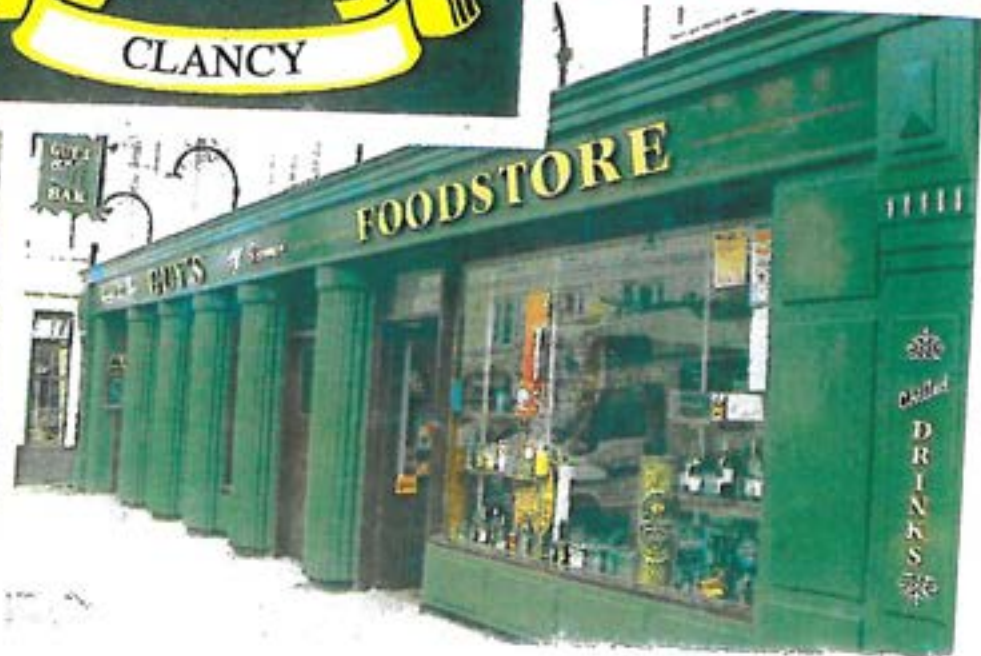




MEET THE CLANCYS

1654-1997

By Phyl Clancy R.S.M.



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Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge and express my sincere thanks to many people who assisted me in the completion and publication of this book — to all the members of my family, especially my nieces Catherine and Gráinne who encouraged me to write this book; to my sister Mary Clancy d'Arcy and my cousin Bride Clancy Cowley who have given me valuable information and have helped me in my research, to Jerry Hession, for information on the census; to Mrs. Brigid Reid (O'Rourke) for sharing her memories of the Burning of Clifden in 1921, to Eamon Guy, Rory Lavelle and all family members who sent me old photographs, to Sr. Teresa Nugent, Convent of Mercy, Collooney for proof-reading the text, to Kieran Mulrooney for his patience and professionalism in organising the production, the Michael Townsend and the staff of *The Sligo Champion*.

A special word of thanks to my sponsors for helping to finance this publication:

Liam Clancy, Olympic Amusements, Bundoran; Cummin and Maureen Clancy, Clancy and Clancy Brokerage Ltd., Garden City, New York; Mary Clancy-Curran, Boston; Cd. Liam A. Clancy, Athlone; Supt. Catherine Clancy, Garda Station, Dungarvan; Gráinne Clancy, AIB, Dublin; Pat Guy, Guy's Lounge Bar, Clifden; Norman Page, Duncarbery Lodge, Tullaghan, Co. Leitrim; Mary Clancy d'Arcy, Maryfield, Chapelizod; Sean and Dina Clancy, Bal Harbour, Florida, USA.

To Jerry and Mary McDonnell, the Lake Hotel, Oughterard, for providing a venue for the launching and to Maureen O'Grady-Clancy, Garden City, New York for accepting the invitation to launch our history.

Dedication

I wish to dedicate this book to all members of the Clancy family, living and dead. It has been a privilege for me to write this history, but they are the people who created it. I also wish to remember with gratitude my parents, especially my mother who made many sacrifices in supporting me to follow my religious vocation.

How it all began for me

ALL my life, I have had a burning desire to construct a family tree. I just never seemed to have time to get around to doing it. I always seemed to be pre-occupied with something more urgent. Then I said I will really do this when I retire from teaching. When that longed for time came around I decided to take on writing the history of the Sisters of Mercy in Swinford from its foundation in 1855 to 1994. That indeed was a prolonged study doing days and days of research. I had that published in June, 1994. The following year I decided to do some serious research on my family story.

Then it suddenly dawned on me that my grand-parents, my parents, my aunts and uncles had all gone to their final resting place, and if I did not do something about my family history there would be no one left to give me any information. I finally made up my mind to have a go at getting some information together.

At this stage too my nieces, nephews and cousins were asking me questions about their ancestors and I felt ashamed that I had no answers for them. I had no idea where to start, because like most people when I was young I found talking and listening to my aunts and uncles very boring. If only I had realised that all those old people who so loved to talk were precious mines of information. One should always listen to the aged, it costs nothing and one can learn more from those custodians of tradition than one will ever learn from books. How often I said to myself, "If only I listened more to my Aunt Bridget instead of laughing at her and mimicing her odd ways".

Luckily enough for me someone did listen to her — my sister Mary and my cousin Bride Clancy-Cowley. Bride was reared by Uncle Peter, Aunt Nora and indeed, Aunt Bridget. There was no radio, no t.v. in the house and indeed no other small children to play with, so Bride got an earful of this as she listened night after night to the old people telling their story. To her I owe most of my information about the Clancys at the beginning of their history. Aunt Nora had written a lot of information about the Clancys. This was passed on to her niece Bride. Bride kept this all down through the years so with her help I began to do research into the Clancy story. So to all the Clancys I invite you to sit back and meet your family.

The recorded past is available to us to discover, but it is very difficult to trace one's roots when there is no recorded past available. No records

were kept in Ireland up to the time of the Famine and very little afterwards.

My unique family heritage is what genealogists call 'clues to our past'. As I have collected and pieced together these clues I have been so excited about my findings. As I journey back through the avenues of time it has been the most interesting adventure I have ever experienced. The clues I have learned from other members of my family have taught me the story of my origin.

I dedicate this story to the past and present generations of Clancys. Perhaps the younger people today will show little interest in this. At some future date they may wonder who are the people who gave me my family name? Where did they come from? In which parts of the country did they settle? How long did they stay? Where did they go? Did they journey to other countries? What were they like when they were here? Why did they leave their homeland? Perhaps this story will answer some of these questions. Some of course it will not answer. I have not got the stories of all the branches of our family tree. Perhaps some members of other branches will take this up and continue their stories. Tracing family stories involves a big commitment. It involves considerable amounts of time, money, a keen interest and love of family, and indeed some special skills.

In order to understand both the origins of and changes which may occur in our family name, we must remember that an individual family is always part of a larger group — a tribe, a clan, a people. I have concentrated on my branch of the family tree so I hope I will be pardoned if some stories are omitted. If this is so it is not for want of interest, but for lack of knowledge of everyone's story.

As you read through the following pages, I hope the reading of them will give you as much pleasure as the writing gave to me. As you trace your story from 1654 to 1996 you will indeed become more familiar with your origins and how you became a member of the Clancy Family Tree.



The Clancy coat of arms hereby illustrated is officially documented in *Burke's General Armory*. The original description of the arms (shield) is as follows: "Ar, two lions pass, in pale gu". When translated the blazon also describes the original colours of the Clancy arms as: "Silver, two red lions walking facing forward, placed one over the other". Above the shield and helmet is the crest which is described as: "A hand severed at the wrist placed vertically, holding a sword impaling a boar's head severed; all naturally coloured.

Our Family Tree

Great-great-great-great-great-grandfather
Charles Clancy
1654-1681

Great-great-great-great-great-grandmother
Morna Fitzgerald

Great-great-great-great-grandfather
William Clancy
1681-1727

Great-great-great-great-grandmother
Mary McNamara

Great-great-great-grandfather
Peter Clancy
1768 approx

Great-great-great-grandmother
Sheila Curtin

Great-great-grandfather
William Clancy

Great-great-grandmother
Name not known

Great-grandfather
Matthias Clancy
1800 approx.

Great-grandmother
Mary Craven

Grandfather
James Clancy
1830 approx.

Grandmother
Mary Geoghegan

Father
William Clancy
1878-1930

Mother
Grace Mongey
1888 - 1930

The Clancy History

Charles Clancy and Morna Fitzgerald 1654-1681

The name Clancy or MacFlannchadha indicates that it can be associated with the Irish meaning 'Son of Flannchadha', meaning 'Ruddy Warrior'. The name Clancy may very well have been spelled differently hundreds of years ago. Today there are several different spellings of the name. Sometimes it is spelled 'Clancey' or 'Glancey'.

Our family history starts back about the middle of the seventeenth century. We can trace our ancestors back to about the year 1654. Around that time Oliver Cromwell's agents confiscated all the lands south of the Shannon, including half of Waterford, a third of Cork, all Limerick and Tipperary. At that time County Clare was geographically in the province of Connacht.

The first ancestor of our branch of the Clancys that we can trace is Charles Clancy or MacClancy as they were then called, and indeed still are in parts of Limerick and Clare. Charles lived about eight miles north-east of Kilmallock in Co. Limerick. He married Morna Fitzgerald (or



Sarsfield St., Kilmallock, Co. Limerick

as she was known then, Garaltaigh). They had seven sons and five daughters. This was around 1654 during the time of the Cromwellian regime.

Their lands were confiscated and given to some of the Cromwellian soldiers as a payment for serving in Cromwell's army. The Clancys, who were Roman Catholics were ordered "to go to Hell or to Connacht". They chose the latter. The lands in the southern counties of Ireland were confiscated because they were the most fertile lands. A century previous to that Spenser wrote about County Clare, especially about the lands around the Burren, "its soil is not deep enough to bury a man — not enough trees to hang a man, and not enough water to drown a man".

Charles Clancy, his wife, Morna, their seven sons and five daughters, left Kilmallock and set out for County Clare. They moved bag and baggage. There were no wheeled vehicles in rural Ireland in those days. There were no tar macadam roads. There was nothing but wide open spaces and dirt tracks. The Clancy family set out in very primitive conditions with pack saddles and horses. They drove their cattle, donkeys and sheep. Their cooking utensils and bedding were packed in the saddle packs. The family walked barefooted. They crossed the River Shannon into County Clare and travelled through Kincora where centuries before the Kings of Munster held sway. Eventually they settled north of Inchiquin, in the Burren, in the Barony of Corcomroe and Kilfenora. The descendants of these first Clancys who went to Clare are there to the present day. We remember with pride Willie Clancy, the famous fiddle-player.

William Clancy and Mary McNamara, 1681-1727

There are no records to tell us of the lives and fortunes of those seven brothers and five sisters except William who married Mary McNamara from Clare. William and Mary settled in Tullagh in East Clare. They had four sons, Thomas, Charles, Denis and Peter, and three daughters. we do not know the names of the daughters. But we know they married men called Callinan, Gibbons and McAuley. Around the time that William moved to Tullagh, his father Charles died (1681). He and his wife Morna are buried in Kilfenora, ten miles west of Ennistymon. We know very little about the life of Willie, his wife and family. He died in 1727.

Peter Clancy and Sheila Curtin, 1728

Around 1728 after the death of William, his youngest son, Peter crossed over Galway Bay, from Ballyvaughan with his wife, Sheila Curtin of Kilmacduach, Co. Clare. They settled in Moycullen about eight miles west of Galway City in a townland near Rineen. Sheila Curtin was a relative of Governor Curtin of Pennsylvania. He went to America with his parents in 1838 and became Governor in 1861.

Peter was the first Clancy to arrive in Galway. Rineen, where they settled was a stock farm of about two hundred and sixty acres, on the shores of beautiful Ross Lake. It is to Peter Clancy and Sheila Curtin that we owe our origins. Peter and Sheila had four sons, James, William, Charles and Thomas. They also had four daughters, Grace, Cecelia, Monica and Mary. They married men called Kyne, Hanley, Fitzgibbon and O'Malley. We have no records to tell us of the life and times of Peter and Sheila. At that time there were lots of local wars and factions among the Irish. Peter's property in Rineen fell into the hands of the O'Flaherty's of Knockbane. The family then moved to Busheypark near Moycullen.

In those days in Ireland there was the upper class, the middle class and the peasantry in society. The Clancys belonged to the middle class. The upper class were in the habit of going to France for their higher education. The Clancy family found less expensive schools in the Channel Islands, Jersey, Guernsey and Sark which lie between Land's End in England and the Brittany coast of France. Three of Peter Clancy's sons, James, Charles and Thomas went for two years to Guernsey. The fourth son, William, stayed on in the farm in Bushey Park.

It was about this time when the Clancy brothers were at school in Guernsey that they clipped off the Mac from the name Clancy. I suppose the "Mac" meaning son in Irish was omitted because for various reasons they did not want to be known as "Irish".

Thomas Clancy was known as 'Big Tom' because of his height. He returned home from Guernsey having discarded the 'cooleen'.

The 'cooleen' was the long hair worn by men which was tied at the back of the coat collar. He also discarded the knee breeches, the buckled shoes, and sadly, the Gaelic language. He spoke French fluently, and posed generally as a 'man about town'. Tom mixed with the 'upper class' in society, and he was the first Clancy who got himself linked up with the aristocracy. 'Big Tom' made a runaway match with his landlord's

daughter, Monica Lynch. Monica was the daughter of Mark Lynch of Drimcong, and sister of Col. Dominic Lynch of 1798. He lost his estate after the rising and went to America. Big Tom and his wife, Monica got a portion of the estate at a nominal rent. The estate was in Finaun, lying between the baronies of Moycullen and Ballinahinch. 'Big Tom' died in 1801 and he is buried in the old churchyard in Spiddal. The big vault can be seen there to the present day. He had two big sons called Patrick and Tom, and one daughter called Monica Óg — called after her mother and her aunt Monica (daughter of Peter Clancy who came from Clare). Monica Óg married a man called Keady. They reverted back again into the ways and customs of the Irish, and what the English writers called 'peasantry'.

Peter's son, James, moved from Moycullen to Oughterard and settled in Rusheeney, three miles south-west of Oughterard. Rusheeney is a range of foothills well adapted for grazing and raising stock, and also for flax growing and bleaching. James established an industry in Rusheeney, even although he could not weave himself. He set up a dozen looms, hired journeymen weavers, and managed flax raising. He also hired women spinners and had quite a colony around him in Rusheeney. This was about the closing years of the eighteenth century.

James married Gráinne Conneely who was a member of a famous clan in Connemara who were contemporaries of Grace O'Malley (Gráinne-wale), the famous sea queen of Connemara. James had four sons, Thomas, Patrick, Charles and William. He also had four daughters, Mary, Julia, Bridget and Sara. Mary married Walter McDonagh, who was a great-granduncle of the famous Galway preacher, Fr. Tom Bourke. Bridget married Mark Geoghegan of Woodquay, Galway. Julia married John Connolly and Sara remained single. Thomas married Margaret Geoghegan of Woodquay and his brother, Patrick, married her sister, Nora. William married Mary Naughton. Charles went to America in 1775. He served in Long Island with General Hand and spent some time in Valley Forge with George Washington. His descendants are in Illinois and Missouri. A grandson of Charles lived in Edina, Knox County, Missouri.

Thomas, who married Margaret Geoghegan of Woodquay, had four sons, John, Peter, William and Patrick. He had two daughters, Mary and Sara.

William Clancy — son of Peter and Sheila Curtin (1768 approx.)

We have now traced the fortunes of Peter's sons, Tom, James, Patrick and Charles. William, the fifth son, stayed at home and worked on the farm in Bushey Park. Unfortunately, we have no records to tell us who William married nor how many children he had in his family. Very likely some of his family stayed around Moycullen and his ancestors are there to the present day. We do know that William had a son called Matthias who was born in Tón na Bruice, Moycullen. He was born around the end of the 18th century or around the year 1800. Matthias moved to Glann, Oughterard on the shores of Lough Corrib.

Matthias Clancy and Mary Craven (1800 approx.)

He was married to Mary Craven from Galway City. He was known as the "Fear Amhain" — the one man. He settled in Fearrowaun — the present home of Paddy Matt and his wife, Mary. Matthias had three sons, Patrick, William and James.

Patrick married Mary Sullivan. They had two sons, Patrick, Matthias, and one daughter, Margaret. Patrick married Mary King. Matthias was a member of the Land League. After the land wars he went to America. Margaret married Sgt. Morrissey of the RIC. Patrick and Mary King had four sons, John, Edward, Michael and Peter. They had three daughters, Catherine, Margaret and Breege.

William (Billie) married Bidy O'Toole. They had four sons, Matt, Martin, Eddie and one who was lost on the Lusitania — the ship that sank off the coast of Queenstown (Cobh). They had one daughter, Mary. Matt married, Annie Sullivan from Glann. They had three sons, Paddy, William (Bill) and Cummin. They had two daughters, Mary and Bridget. Martin married Mary Nee from Toombeola, a townland between Ballinahinch and Roundstone. They had no family. Eddie never married. Mary married Brian Flaherty from Curraduff. They had two sons, Willie and Padraic, and three daughters, Catherine, Bridget and Mary. Mary and Willie were twins. Mary died as an infant.

Matthias' third son, James was my grandfather. He moved to a farm on Rath Hill — the present home of Mary and John McGloin. His brother, Billie stayed on the farm in Farrawaun. Patrick had a farm beside Farrawaun. When my grandfather, James moved to Rath Hill, he married Mary Geoghegan. Mary was born in Innisheanbó — one of

the islands on Lough Corrib. The family were evicted from the island when Mary was a child. They then settled in Derralara, Oughterard. James and Mary had seven sons and two daughters. The sons were Matthias, John, Patrick, Michael, James, William and Peter. The daughters were Maria and Bridget.

James Clancy and Mary Geoghegan (1830 approx.)

My uncle Matthais was the oldest of the family. He was born around 1861. James and Mary worked on the farm in Rathhill. I do not know when my grandfather James died, but my grandmother, Mary died at the beginning of this century. She contracted fever attending to a neighbour who had the fever. Matthias married Margaret Lydon from Curnamona — across the lake from Glann. Matthias and Margaret worked the farm in Rath Hill. They had three daughters, Mary, Bernadette and Bride. They also had a son who died as an infant. The second son of James and Mary was called John and he died as an infant. The next in the family was Maria. She married Pat Sullivan from Glann who was a brother of Annie Sullivan who married Matt Clancy of Farrawaun. Pat and Maria had one son, whom they called John Andrew.

The next in the family was Patrick. He married Mary Teresa Coneys from Ballinlame near Ballyconneely, Connemara. Pat moved to Clifden as a young boy and worked as a shop assistant for John William Gorham in Main Street. He later bought the premises from the Gormans. It is now the home of his grandson, Pat Guy. Pat Clancy and his wife, Mary Teresa had three daughters and one son, Anna Mary. Matthew Joseph, Frances Celine and Eileen Joan. Anna Mary and Matthew Joseph died at an early age.

James was next in the family. He moved to Maughermore, Oughterard to a farm that was bought by his brother, Pat. Jamsey as he was known, married Mary Bridget d'Arcy from Maugheramore. They had one son, James Joseph, known as Jim Joe and one daughter, Mary Catherine.

Next came Michael. He moved to Clifden and worked in the shop in Main Street with his brother, Pat. He later married Barbra Lydon, a sister of Margaret from Curnamona who was married to Matthias in Rath Hill. Michael and Barbara had no family. 'Mike' as he was known, died young but 'Babbie', his wife, lived until she reached one hundred and four years. Mike and Babbie lived in 'Wellfield', Oughterard. Babbie's two brothers bought that place from the Salvation Army. It is now the home of Mary and Pat Rattigan. Mary is a grand-niece of Babbie Clancy.

William, known as 'Willie', was my father. He emigrated to Boston towards the end of the last century. The diary he wrote on board the ship will be included in this history. Willie returned from Boston about ten years after going out. He had intended that his trip back to Ireland was just a holiday but as things turned out he stayed at home.

He met my mother, Grace Mongey from Mullagha, Stackallen, Navan, Co. Meath, in Clifden when he was visiting his brother, Pat. My mother worked on the catering staff on the Great Southern Railways. She started her career at the Broadstone Station in Dublin and kept moving west until she arrived in Clifden. She worked in the Railway Hotel there. The young Willie Clancy had returned from Boston and I believe it was 'love at first sight' between himself and Grace Mongey. Connemara was foreign territory to a County Meath farmer in those days. Grace was forbidden by her parents to marry this Connemara man. Love knows no obstacles. They married in the Convent Chapel in Clifden after the 7.30 a.m. Mass by Rev. Canon McAlpine in 1908. Fintan Kavanagh was best man and a friend of my mother's who worked with her in the hotel was bridesmaid. They spent their honeymoon in Wynne's Hotel in Dublin. Later they went to Mullagha, my mother's home where my father was greatly accepted.

My parents had hoped to return to America. My father had their passage booked to Boston. My uncle Pat coaxed them to stay in Clifden. A public house called Brennan's was for sale on the other side of the street in Main Street. They bought it. It was known as 'W.A. Clancy's — Grocer and Vintner'. It was there that they lived and raised their family.

After my father in James Clancy's family came Bridget. She never married but lived all her life in the homes of her brothers and her sister, Maria. The youngest of James's family was Peter — my uncle Pete. Pete joined the RIC and while he was stationed in Limerick he married Nora O'Regan from Askeaton. Pete and Nora had no family but they reared their niece Bride, who was a daughter of Matthias and Maggie of Rath Hill.

Before I leave that generation of Clancys in Glann who were the descendants of Matthias 'the fear amháin' I would like to mention that nicknames were very common in the West of Ireland. My uncle Michael was known as 'Gluintú'. When serving a drink in Clifden to an Englishman, a local kept shouting for his drink. He said in the Irish

language, 'An gluin tú me', meaning 'do you hear me'. The Englishman added, 'Mr. Gluintú may I have my whiskey'. From that on he was known as 'Gluintú'.

My uncle Pat Clancy was known as 'The Flogger' because he had a habit of saying 'we will flog the change' or 'we will flog the drink'. My father 'Willie' was known as 'Boston' because he spent years in Boston.

PATRICK CLANCY AND CATHERINE KING (son of Patrick)

We will now return to the family of Patrick (son of Patrick) and Catherine^{Harv} King. Their son, John, never married. Edward married Josie Brown from Clare. They had no family. Michael never married. He died young. Peter married Cassie Sullivan from Glann. They have four daughters, Margaret, Patricia, Eileen and Annette.

Catherine married Denis Foran. They adopted two children, Mary and Michael. Margaret married an Englishman — Bill Corcoran. They had two sons, Craig and Michael, and four daughters, Susan, Patricia, Cathy, and Johanna. Breege never married.

Margaret Clancy (Patrick's^{father} daughter) married Sgt. Morrissey. Margaret was a teacher in Glann National School. She had one son, Joseph, who was also a teacher in Glann. He married Mary Staunton from Tourmakeady. She was a poultry instructress — or as we called them 'the hen woman'. Tessie Morrissey (daughter of Margaret Clancy) married Pat King (brother of Mary King). The second daughter, Mary, married Jack Muroney (a teacher from Clare). Eileen married Michael Hurley. Michael was a native of Cork and worked in the Land Commission. They lived in Clare Road, Drumcondra, Dublin.

ACHILL

MATT CLANCY AND ANNIE SULLIVAN (son of Billie)

Matt who was a son of Billie and Bidy O'Toole as already stated, married Annie Sullivan from Glann. Their eldest son Paddy, affectionately known to all the Clancys as 'Paddy Matt', stayed on in the old home in Farrawaun. He married Mary Joyce from Shanavagh, Glann. They worked on the farm, ran a first class guest house and participated in fishing on Lough Corrib. Paddy was also a builder and built many houses in Glann. Paddy and Mary had three sons, Patrick, Kevin and Stephen, and two daughters, Nora and Frances.



1921 Glann, Oughterard: Matt Clancy, his wife Annie Sullivan (Clancy). Their sons Paddy (5 years), Bill (3 years), daughter Mary (6 months).



The home of Matt Clancy and his wife Annie Clancy (Sullivan), Farrawaun, Glann, 1921.

Paddy's brother, Bill, married Nancy Curley. They had one son, Tony and two daughters, Patricia and Frances. Bill, his wife and family spent most of their lives in England.

Matt and Annie's youngest son, Cummin, joined the Garda Síochána and having spent a short period as a member of the force went to America where he married Maureen O'Grady. Cummin and Maureen had three sons, Seán, Brian and Brendan who were twins, and two daughters, Maura and Sheila.

Mary Clancy, sister of Paddy, Bill and Cummin married Gordon Busby. They had two sons, Patrick and Sean, and two daughters, Frances and Mary. Mary's sister, Bridget never married.



Home and farm of James Clancy and Mary Geoghegan—passed on to his son Matthias and Margaret Leydon. (1920).

MATTHIAS CLANCY AND MARGARET LYDON

(Matthias, son of James/Mary Geoghegan)

As already stated Matthias and Maggie ran the farm in Rath Hill, Glann. Their eldest daughter, Mary, married John McGloin, from Beleek, Co. Fermanagh. They spent a short period in England and then they returned to Glann where they inherited the farm in Rath Hill. They had four sons, Ciaran, Johnnie, Emmet and Denis, and two daughters, Teresa and Mary.

Bernadette, the second daughter of Matthias and Maggie, spent some time in Bangor, Co. Down, during the 1939/'45 war. She married Kenneth Page, who was born in England. They moved to Bundoran around 1950. There they opened a shop at 'Ocean View' and also ran an Amusements Arcade. Bernadette and Ken had two sons, Richard and Norman, and two daughters, Anne and Patricia.

Matthias and Maggie's youngest daughter, Bride, who was reared by her Uncle Pete and Aunt Nora, married Kevin Cowley from Ballina. Kevin worked in the Dept. of Lands. They lived in Ballina, Castlebar and Galway. They had three sons, Jerry, Kevin Rossa and Matthias. They also had six daughters, Angela, Noreen, Bernadette, Joan, Monica and Mairéad.



Fr. Coleman King, Joe Morrissey, Matthias Clancy, Bridget Clancy, Mary Catherine Clancy, Mrs. Maggie Clancy, Glann. (1940).

PATRICK CLANCY AND MARY TERESA CONEYS

(Patrick, son of James/Mary Geoghagan)

Patrick Clancy and his wife Mary Teresa Coneys ran a very thriving business in Clifden. Pat was the best business man of the Clancys. He had a grocery shop, bakery, hardware, bar, undertaker's and farm in Clifden. He also built many houses around the Connemara coast in the vicinity of Ballyconneely, Roundstone and South Connemara. He built the house in Loch Gannon on the Galway Road for his brother Pete. Pete never lived there. It was given to their sister, Maria and her young son, John Andrew Sullivan.

Pat also bought the small farm and house in Maughermore where his brother, Jamsey and his wife, Mary Bridget lived. This farm was greatly extended by Jamsey's son, Jim Joe.

Pat and Mary Teresa had only two daughters, who lived to adulthood. The others died as very young children. Frances Celine married Eamon Guy, a building contractor from Letterfrack. They had two sons, Peter and Patrick, and two daughters, Eileen and Mary. The second daughter, Eileen Joan, married Kevin Stanley, a shopkeeper from Market Street. They later moved to South Hill in Faul outside Clifden. Eileen and Kevin had four sons, Gerard, Robert, Kevin and Peter, and five daughters, Marian, Frankie, Lynda, Eileen and Noelle. Gerard died as an infant.



Newbridge, Galway Road, Clifden. (1925).



Pat Clancy, Main Street, Clifden. (1904).



Mrs. Mary Teresa Clancy (Coneys) with infant daughter Ann Mary. (1923).

JAMESEY CLANCY AND MARY BRIDGET D'ARCY
(son of James and Mary Geoghegan)

Jamsey moved from Glann to Maugheramore, Oughterard where he married Mary Bridget d'Arcy, a native of Maugheramore. They had one son, James Joseph, and one daughter, Mary Catherine. James Joseph, or as he is known 'Jim Joe', stayed on his father's farm. He made great improvements there and bought a lot more land around Maugheramore.

He married Delia Conneely from Rosmuc, Connemara. They had four sons, Gerard, Seamus, Pearse and Joseph and four daughters, Mary, Bridie, Una and Josephine, and they lost one as an infant, a little baby boy.

Mary Catherine went to Boston where she married Joe Curran from Spiddal. They had one son, Joseph, and three daughters, Mary Anne, Julie and Joan.



Mrs. Mary B. Clancy (centre) with daughter Mary Catherine and son James Joseph (Maugheramore).

MICHAEL CLANCY AND BARBARA LYDON
(Son of James and Mary Geoghegan)

Michael, known as 'Mike' married Barbara Lydon from Currnamona. They lived in Wellfield. They had no family. It is now the home of Babbie's grand-niece, Mary Rattigan. Mary and her husband, Pat run a guest house there.



Mrs. Barbara Clancy (104 years), Wellfield, Oughterard with her great-grand niece Mary Molloy (1985).

WILLIE CLANCY AND GRACE MONGEY
(Son of James and Mary Geoghegan)



Willie went to Boston as a young man. When he returned he married Grace Mongey in Clifden. They lived in Clifden where they ran a business in Main Street. They had eight children — five sons and three daughters. The sons were called James Joseph, Thomas Matthew, Padraic Finian, Liam Augustine, Furseay Francis, the girls, Mary Josephine, Gráinne Nora and Philomena Patricia. James Joseph died as a young boy in 1928. Gráinne Nora died as an infant in 1914. Mary Josephine married Tony

d'Arcy from Maugheramore, Oughterard in 1933. Tony was a Sergeant in the newly founded Garda Síochana. They had no family. Thomas Matthew never married.

Padraic Finian married Emma Allen from Belfast. Padraic was a member of the Garda Síochana. They had no family. Padraic died as an acting Garda/Sergeant in Monaghan on the 20th January, 1980. Liam Augustine married Ivy Donnelly from Aughoo, Pulltomas, Co. Mayo. Liam was a Colonel in the Irish Army. They had two of a family, one boy, Liam Gearoid and one daughter, Corla Martina.

Fursey Francis married Kitty McDevitt from Glenties, Co. Donegal. Fursey was also a member of the Garda Síochana where he served as Sergeant in Ballyshannon, Castlebar and the Garda Depot in Dublin. When he retired from the Garda Síochana he was office manager in the newly founded office of the Director of Public Prosecutions.

Fursey and Kitty had five children in the family, two boys, Liam Joseph and Fursey Anthony, three girls, Mary, Catherine and Gráinne. Fursey died on the 9th March, 1994.

Philomena Patricia entered the Convent of Mercy in Swinford, Co. Mayo, on the 1st April, 1949.



Clifden

Co. Galway

Market Square, Clifden, 1935.

MARIA CLANCY AND PAT SULLIVAN
(Daughter of James and Mary Geoghegan)

Maria and Pat lived in Glann after they were married. They had one son, John Andrew. Later they lived in Loch Gannon on the main Galway Road between Oughterard and Moycullen. John Andrew married Sara Anne Walsh. They had four sons, John, Patrick, Michael and Matt, and three daughters, Mary, Sheila and Anne.



Nora Clancy (Pete's wife), Glann and Mary Bridget Clancy (Jamsie's wife), Maugheramore. (1928).

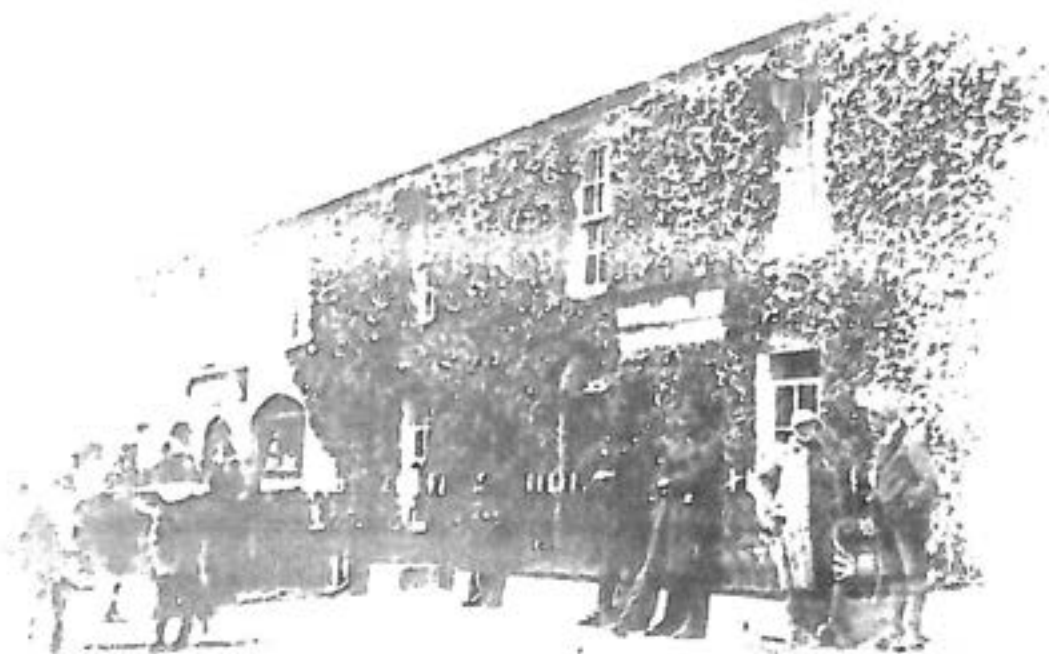
PETER CLANCY AND NORA O'REGAN

(Son of James and Mary Geoghegan)

Peter Clancy joined the RIC. He married Nora O'Regan from Asketon, Co. Limerick. It was indeed a coincidence that Peter returned to Limerick where his ancestor, Charles Clancy was evicted from his lands. Pete, as he was known, married Nora O'Regan. They lived in Clifden with Pete's brother Pat after they were married. They had no family, but they reared Pete's niece Bride, youngest daughter of Matthias and Maggie. They moved to 'Island View', Glann where they lived until Bride married Kevin Cowley. Peter did very little farming but spent most of his time fishing on Lough Corrib.

Bridget Clancy never married but lived with her brothers and families.

This ends the genealogical study of the Clancy family from 1654-1996. I do hope that some younger member of the present generation will take up our family history from the present day into the future. There are some parts of this study where there is some repetition but I have left it as it may make the history a bit clearer for some branches of our family.



Fair Day, Bank of Ireland, Oughterard, 1924, featuring the new Irish Army.



The Hill of Doon, Lough Corrib, Oughterard, Co. Galway.

Census 1901 and 1911

For those interested in census and statistics, I am including here a copy of the 1901 and 1911 census taken in the townland of my ancestors.

Farrawaun (1901)

Census taken by William McMahon, Constable in the RIC, Oughterard, 1901.

Three Clancy households in 1901: 1, Mary Clancy (Geoghegan) (My grandmother); 2, Patrick Clancy (Known as Patsy); 3, William Clancy (Known as Billie).

1, Mary Clancy (1901): Head of Household. Roman Catholic. Read and writes. 60 years old. Female. Proprietor of farm. Widow. Born in Co. Galway. Spoke Irish and English. Head of a household of seven. Mary does not appear in the 1911 Census.

Maria Sullivan: Daughter. RC. Reads and writes. 37 years old, female, farmer's wife. Married for ten years. Spoke Irish and English. In the 1911 census, Mary's name appear again. Has one child, a son.

Matthias Clancy (1901): Son. RC. Reads and writes. 36 years old, male, farmer's son, not married. Born Co. Galway. Speaks Irish and English. In the 1911 census Matthias' name appears again as head of the household.

Michael Clancy: Son. RC. 30 years old, male, farmer's son, not married. Born Co. Galway, spoke Irish/English. In the 1911 census, Michael is not registered.

James Clancy (1901): Son. RC. Reads and writes, 26 years old. Male, farmer's son, not married, born Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English. Not registered in the 1911 census.

Willie Clancy (1901): Son. RC. Reads and writes, 23 years old, male, farmer's son, not married, born, Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English. Not registered in the 1911 census.

Bridget Clancy (1901): Daughter. RC. Reads and writes, 20 years old, female, farmer's daughter, not married. Born Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English. In the 1911 census Bridget's name appears again, 30 years old and single.

John Andrew Sullivan (1901): Grandson. RC. Reads and writes. 8 years old, male, schoolboy, not married, born Co. Galway, spoke Irish/English. In the 1911 census, he appears again, 18 years old, single.

This family lived in a stone house with a thatch roof with two front windows. The house had three rooms, one kitchen and two bedrooms as on 2nd April, 1901. The same structure appears in the 1911 census. **Patrick Clancy (1901):** Head of family. RC. Reads and writes, 74 years old, male, farmer, married, born Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English. He does not appear on the 1911 census.

Catherine Clancy (King) (1901): Wife. Reads and writes, 66 years old. Female, married, born Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English. In the 1911 census Catherine appears as head of the family. 76 years old, widow and had five children in 1911.

Margaret Morrissey (1901): Daughter. RC. Reads and writes, 29 years old, National School teacher. Spoke Irish/English. Margaret appears again in the 1911 census, 39 years old, teacher, widow.

Patrick Clancy (1901): Son RC. Reads and writes, 21 years old, male, farmer's son, not married, born Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English, Patrick appears again on the 1911 census, still single.

Mary Catherine Clancy (1901): Grand-daughter. RC. Cannot read, 10 months old, born, Co. Galway. 1911 census, reads and writes, 10 years old, schoolgirl. Spoke Irish/English, single.

THE 1911 CENSUS

Joseph Menrey Morrissey: Grandson. RC. Reads and writes, 9 years old, schoolboy, single, born Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English.

Margaret Teresa Morrissey: Grand-daughter. RC. Reads and writes, 7 years old, female, schoolgirl, single, born Co. Galway.

Eileen Agnes Morrissey (1911): Grand-daughter. RC. Reads, schoolgirl, single, born, Co. Galway.

This family lived in 1901 in a stone house with a thatched roof, and two front windows. There were three rooms in the house. According to the 1911 census there were four rooms with three front windows.

William Clancy (1901) (Billie): Head of family. RC. Reads and writes, 71 years old, male, farmer, married, born Co. Galway. . Spoke Irish/English. His name appears again in the 1911 census, 81 years old.

Bridget Clancy (O'Toole) (1901): Wife. RC. Reads and writes, 64 years old, female, married, born Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English. In the 1911 census, cannot read (blind), 74 years old, married 40 years, five children born alive, four living in 1911.

Matt Clancy (1901): Son. RC. Reads and writes, 25 years old, male, farmer's son, not married. Spoke Irish/English. 1911 census shows Matt as 35 years old, still single.

Edward Clancy (1911): This son appears on the 1911 census but not on the 1901. In 1911 he was 31 years old, reads/writes, farmer's son, single, born Co. Galway. Spoke Irish/English.

1901 Census: This family lived in a stone house with a thatched roof, had two front windows, three rooms in the house. The same structure appears in 1911 census.

The same census of 1901 and 1911 gives an account of the Clancy families in the townland of Barrnagorteny, Parish of Kilcummin, Barony of Moycullen. There were three Clancy households there: 1, Michael Clancy; 2, William Clancy; 3, Michael Clancy.

I will leave the history of those families to a member of their own family. Information can be got from the Census Office in Dublin.

THE CLANCY BROTHERS



Matthias Clancy, Rathill, Glann, Oughterard. (1936).



Pete Clancy, Island View, Glann, Oughterard. (1940).

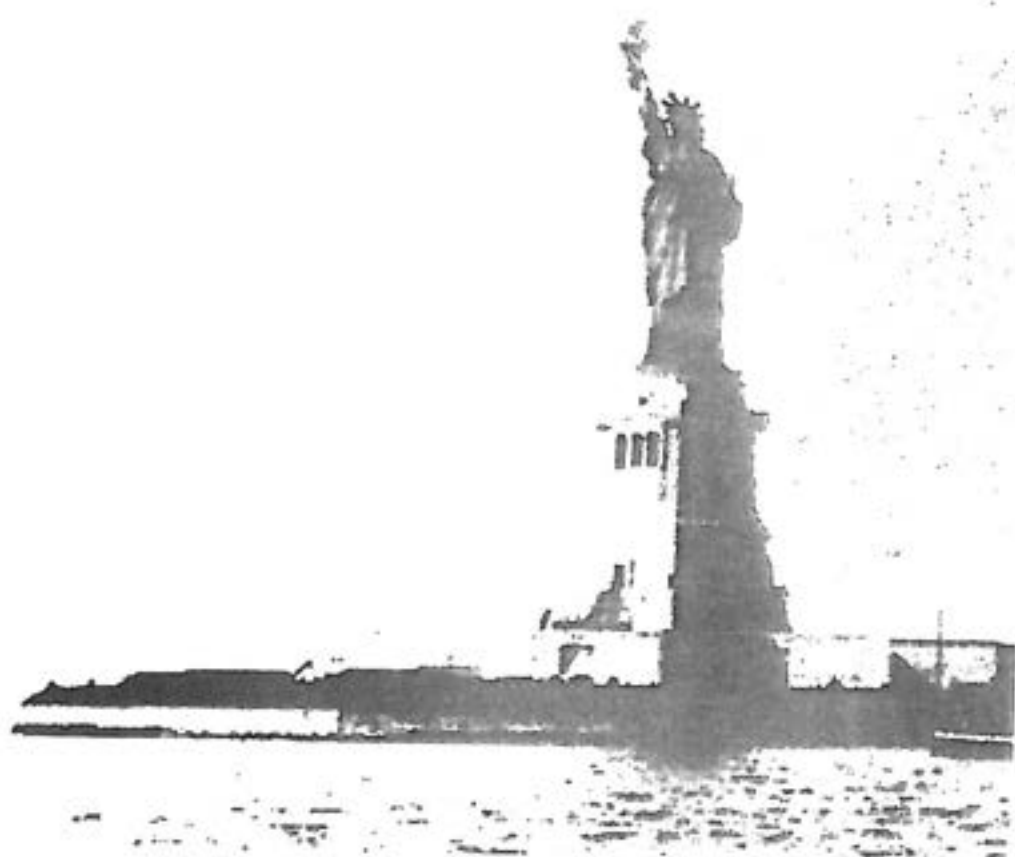


Willie Clancy, Main St., Clifden. (1908).



Jamsie Clancy, Maugheramore, Oughterard. (1910).

First sight of America



Most immigrants were exhausted by the end of their journey. But when word spread that land was in sight, passengers rushed

to the ship's deck to catch their first glimpse of America—the New York Harbor skyline and then the Statue of Liberty.

The American Connection

Many of the Clancy family emigrated to the United States of America. As I do not have much knowledge of most of them I will include in this history some of whom I do have some information. One of the most famous was James Michael Curley, whose mother was Sarah Clancy from Oughterard.

James's father, Michael Curley, was born on a small farm in Oughterard in the year 1850 — a year after the Great Famine (1845-1849). Those who survived the famine suffered in its aftermath from great insecurity. Many fled to America. They brought with them a deep distrust of politicians and of the free market economy. Ireland's rulers were British. They did not cause the famine, but they did little to relieve the distress it caused. Most of the Irish who went to America came from large families. They brought with them a distrust of political rulers. The Irish custom was that the oldest son inherited the farm and his younger sublings were often forced to emigrate. The land was never divided but the family was.

Michael Curley, with his two half-brothers, Daniel and Patrick, arrived in Boston from Oughterard in 1864 in the midst of the Civil War. In 1870 he married the nineteen year old Sarah Clancy who was also from Oughterard. She made the journey from Galway to Roxbury with her mother, her father and her two sisters in the same year that Michael went to Boston.

Their first child John was born in 1872, James in 1874, Michael in 1879. Michael died at 2½ years. James took the name Michael at Confirmation, to honour his father and his infant brother. Three years after the death of Michael Junior his father lifted a heavy curbstone from the ground to the tail board of a tipcart, and burst a blood vessel in the act. He lingered three days in a coma. Sarah Clancy Curley laid him to rest beside her infant son in Old Calvary Cemetery where Boston's Irish emigrants buried their dead. John was only twelve when his father died and James was ten. Sarah was a young widow of about thirty-three years.

I do not propose here to dwell on the life story of the Curleys. I only mention it in connection with Sarah Clancy who was my father's cousin. From what I have read of her she was a true Irish woman. She shared whatever she had with her neighbours when Boston suffered from extreme poverty. For many years she cleaned the floors in the Church of the



James Michael Curley and his wife Mary, 350 Jamaica Way, Boston. (1942). (four times Mayor of Boston, Congress man and Governor of Massachusetts).

Immaculate Conception and scrubbed floors in downtown office buildings. She gathered the local children around her and told them Irish fairy tales. She had warmth enough to love her two sons deeply so that they in turn could love other people. Her sufferings and sacrifices were crucial in keeping the home together in the critical years after her husband's death. Those sacrifices earned from her sons obedience, and respect for her opinion on every important subject. James's respect for women would appear to be due to the respect he had for his mother.

According to Jack Beatty who wrote *The Rascal King* (life of James M. Curley) — 'the credit for James' success in politics must go to his mother. She saw her son, James rise from the Irish slums to be four times Mayor of Boston, Congressman and Governor of Massachusetts. He was there from the era of Teddy Roosevelt to the ascendancy of John F. Kennedy to the White House.'

He may have been known as 'The Rascal King' but he was one of the most colourful politicians in American history. He robbed the rich to feed the poor. He was a builder of hospitals and schools. He was the instrument that helped the Irish to survive when the slogan read 'No Irish need apply'.

This is not meant to be a tribute to James Michael Curley's political success. I am proud to add his name to the Clancy story because his mother Sarah Clancy was a vibrant Irish woman. Her Catholic faith was priceless to her in spite of all her sorrows. She never forgot her humble origins. When her son the Mayor bought her a very expensive shawl for Christmas she said 'Take it back Jimmy a stór — sure it's not for the likes of me'. Their home at 114 Mount Pleasant Avenue was indeed a mecca for people in need and a place of refuge for the Irish. Sarah Clancy lived to a ripe old age and was buried in Boston beside her husband and her infant son.



James Michael Curley and his son Richard.

The Diary of Willie Clancy (my father), written by hand in pencil as he made his way across the Atlantic on 24th April, 1897.

Trip from Galway Bay to Boston

Saturday, April 24th, 1897

It seems very sad to be leaving the old land, but still I never had better courage in my life. All grief seems to have gone away since I left Oughterard. Nine o'clock finds us on the docks and there are multitudes of people waiting. We are waiting the arrival of the 'Scandinavian'. She comes in sight at last, and many and many a heart is heaving as she approaches the lighthouse as we get aboard about 11 o'clock and sail about twelve. The day is fine and all are up on deck. Soon we take the last sight of Ireland. The last land we see is Slyne Head. I laughed heartily when I saw the Aran Islands, thinking of Mike and the monocles. There is a fiddler on board and he comes up an hour before sunset, and plays until night. And all such as are able to dance trip it out heartily, boys and girls. There is something of about three hundred passengers. Nine o'clock comes and we are called to the bunks by the ringing of a bell. Each one is provided with a tin plate, saucepan, knife, fork and spoon, which we must deliver at the end of the voyage. We also got a mattress of straw covered with a ticking and a good English blanket, so you can sleep as comfortable as on any bed at home. You could never imagine the feeding we get. Bread, biscuits, butter and jam, beef, mutton, fish and potatoes, the best I've ever seen. We assisted at three Masses in Claddagh Chapel this morning before we left. One priest came first to the side altar to the right. When he was nearly finished another came to the middle altar and on his being ready another came on the left side. All three read Mass in about three-quarters of an hour.

Sunday 25th:

I slept as sound as a trooper all night. But who could imagine that it's Sunday, nothing but the Heavens above us and the blue sea beneath, in company with Dutchmen, Swedes, Scotts and an ignorant lot of Irishmen. This is a lovely day sailing, and all are on deck save a few who are seasick, Mike Flaherty being on the unhappy list.

Monday, 26th:

This is a morning, and may God forbid I should witness another like it! I got up on deck to look around me and am ordered down by a sailor. You talk of thunder or lightning or storms at home but this strikes the fear of God in me more than anything I have ever witnessed. Waves come like mountains that cover half the ship's deck and anybody might think that she is doomed, nothing but white waves of water on every side and it is a side wind which makes her roll the more. All the tins and dishes are dashed off the tables and a person has to cling to whatever is near him, or his brains would be dashed out too. About one o'clock we pass a three masted schooner bound on the same voyage and how to God she'll weather it out I don't know.

Mick Flaherty is awful sick and has eaten nothing since he left Galway. I'm keeping brave still and am doing justice to every meal. Mick Conneely and Maggie Ward fall sick too and I and Sandy Bodkin are attending them instead of they being attending us. The storm only enrages. The sailors are all running up the rigging like bees and fastening everything for the night. We tumble into the bunks for the night, prepare for the next world and fall dead asleep from annoyance and the tumbling of the ship. All around me are sick tonight, vomiting and howling under me, and over me to the right and to the left. Oh why did I leave my home in Glann are my thoughts right now? I'm off asleep, the ship tosses away and I feel nothing until the next morning.

Tuesday, 27th:

This is a lovely morning. D.G. The sea is as calm as ever you saw Lough Corrib and a new hope arises in us. All are up on deck and Mick Flaherty as well after his two days of vomiting. I am still as well as when I left home, and Mick wonders at as well as I am holding up. We pass four schooners and a steam vessel. Mick has a spy glass, so that brings them close to us.

Six o'clock comes and the fiddler is up again and all are as merry as you please dancing, singing and shouting. We see a whale about 100 yards from the ship spouting water at a height of about 20 feet. He is actually as large as a small island and his fins are like sails of a little vessel. All are running to see him. This closes for this night. I'm sound still.

Wednesday, 28th April:

This is as good a morning as any man could wish for. I slept as sound as a fish all night, and I feel in right good spirits. I think I'll not get sick at all. There's not a ripple on the waters. The ship slides along as smooth as a railway carriage. There is no such a thing as sickness this morning. All appear as gay and as happy as every you saw a crowd at a race course or any such place. The sailors erect two swings and have them fastened to the rigging. So all the passengers gathered around them. No sooner one is off than another is on. At ten o'clock we pass another sailing vessel.

The rate of our vessel today is about twelve miles per hour. The captain directs our attention to a monstrous whale close to the boat. We soon glide past him. There are two other fiddlers on board who did not make their appearance until this evening. The whole crew gathers for recreation after six and the fiddlers start to play on the centre deck. The Donegal boys start to dance a half set. T'was then I thought of home. Indeed if I had some of this at home, I know they do it far better. When they have done dancing they start to shout and cheer for Donegal. A Galway chap named Wallace from near Letterfrack challenges any of them to dance a jig or a reel. He takes with him a ginger lass from near Clifden named Bridget Conneely who spent some time in Scotland and they call for a dance 'The Connacht Man's Rambles'. And indeed you might say they danced it. They beat all I saw yet. Then the same Wallace and John Joe Bodkin go for a flagging jig and the 'Hurrah' goes up for Galway. It's now you could see the Galway men shouting and cheering. There are ten Galway men to one of every other county on the boat. Two of the Donegal boys take up the cudgels. They bring two little darlings of girls with them. They are no good and the decision is given by all in favour of Galway. A song goes around next from every country boy and girl that can give it. I never had a jollier evening in all my life. I got acquainted with a man named Clancy from near Spiddal, and an intelligent fellow too. He was out before. He was a man of about 6 ft., 1 inch and stout according. He is as nice a man as ever I spoke a word to.

The Swedes are playing cards and to hear these fellows gabbing like lots of hungry ducks. They are strapping men from 5 ft. 9 upwards. The bell rings for us to go to the bunks — 10 o'clock. We pass two more sailing vessels as we go to bed.

CUNARD
 LINE OF ROYAL
MAIL STEAMSHIPS



FROM BOSTON
QUEENSTOWN
LIVERPOOL

| | | | | |
|----------|-----------|-------|-----|------------|
| PARTHIA. | SATURDAY. | JULY | 20. | NOON. |
| BATAVIA. | SATURDAY. | AUG. | 10. | 7.30 A.M. |
| SAMARIA. | SATURDAY. | AUG. | 24. | 8.00 A.M. |
| BATAVIA. | SATURDAY. | SEPT. | 14. | 11.00 A.M. |

CABIN AND STEERAGE PASSAGE AT LOW RATES.
 Passengers Embark at CUNARD WHARF, East Boston.
 THE PORTER IS FURNISHED FREE AT REGULAR SERVICE.

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JAMES ALEXANDER, Agent.

WHITE STAR LINE



SOUTHAMPTON

Thursday, April 29th:

This is a lovely morning. I slept sound all night. I'm getting an awful appetite. I'd eat anything now, all are appeased here with the best of food. The water we get here to drink is as clear and as good as it is in the plantation in Oughterard. One of the Queenstown greyhounds shoots past us though he is far off, something about eight miles. Nothing today but whales. I saw eight going in a group and they spouted water high into the air. Towards twelve o'clock another of the Atlantic greyhounds glides past us for Ireland. We don't wonder at seeing whales now. They are as thick as the grass on every side. We are expecting to reach the banks of Newfoundland this evening or early tomorrow morning. The vaccination comes off at two o'clock. I've escaped and I think there is not a dozen more on the vessel that have. The dancing goes on again on deck this evening and will every evening to the end of the voyage. At night we saw another steamer going for Ireland. She shoots past us like an arrow. She has three different lights. We are now on the banks of Newfoundland.

Friday, April 30th:

This is another fine day. There is not a ripple on the face of the water and the vessel glides along smoothly. We pass another steamer bound for Ireland. The colour of the sea has changed today from blue to green around the banks, and it's as deep as what we've passed. We have two or more days sailing from the Banks. We might expect to come on fog now at any minute or to come across an iceberg, the greatest danger of the sea and those are many. The dancing goes on again tonight, and there is every hope of fine weather to the end of the voyage.

Saturday, May 1st:

There is a dense fog since about twelve o'clock last night. They have to slacken speed to the rate of six miles per hour. They are blowing the horn all through for fear of colliding with any other vessel. A vessel of some kind passes fairly close, and they answer to each other with the horns; so thick is the fog that you could not see twenty yards before you. About mid-day it clears up and we have a splendid evening. We meet a steam vessel, I suppose bound for Liverpool loaded with cattle. The dancing goes on again this evening and we all are in good cheer. The Galway chaps are still the best dancers. They hold the laurels for every amusement all through.

Sunday, May 2nd:

There was another fog last night, much thicker than the one the previous night. They are obliged to make a standstill for about an hour. It did not last long though. All the passenger were scared when the engine ceased working. They thought she might have been on a rock. The Banks are always the most dangerous part of the voyage. Today there is a fairly stiff breeze against us, and the rate is about seven miles per hour. No dancing is allowed on Sunday. They make us observe the Sabbath in a very quiet way.

Monday, May 3rd:

This is fine morning but a dense fog closes us in on all sides, as thick as you could scarcely see ten yards from you. They are blowing the horn all the time and have to slacken speed to the rate of about two miles per hour. This fog is even more dangerous than the storm and many are the dangers at sea of which we are unaware. It clears up about twelve o'clock and the ship resumes her former rate which is about twelve miles per hour. The dancing goes on again and the merriment. All go to rest in hopes of the next day bringing them to the longed-for port of Boston.

Tuesday, May 4th:

The fog set in last night about 12 o'clock. We were awakened from our sleep by the noise of the horn and could sleep nothing until morning. It has signs of clearing and it seems as if it would last all day. A steam vessel of some kind comes fairly close to us about one o'clock. She answers to ours with the horn but we can't see her the fog is so thick. It clears away about 5.00 p.m. but we don't expect to land until tomorrow. We would have landed early today but for the fog.

There are some very old people on this boat. Their children are bringing them out. Some are from Aran and some from Connemara. They have not a word of English in their mouths. The music goes on again tonight and the hope of landing tomorrow has put a new spirit into us. A life at sea is one of hardship and heart breaks.

Wednesday, May 5th:

We had the fog again last night, since about 12 o'clock till first hour today. A pilot comes on board to pilot her in safely to the port. We see thousands of vessels today on every side, as we are coming near land. We sight the longed for land of promise about 5.00 p.m. We are coming nearer every minute.

We can't embark tonight as it is too late. We cast anchor in Boston Harbour about 7 o'clock. An American doctor comes on in a steam launch and examines all the passengers, and the vessel for fear of any bad sickness being aboard. He finds all square before him. However, if anyone on board had any taken sickness, the vessel would not be let land. To look around you after nightfall and see the place lighted up with electricity, you imagine you are in paradise. Eleven days and seven hours it took us from Galway to Boston. I never got a minute's sickness during the voyage. It was a very pleasant one though we suffered intensely from the fog. We would have done it in ten days but for the fog. D.G. we are in.

Safe anchorage and a hope of seeing friends tomorrow.

FOOTNOTE: They had a safe anchorage and the friends my father met the following day were Sarah Clancy Curley and her family. He wrote the above diary on board the ship and sent it to his mother. She kept it among her little treasures. After her death my aunt Bridget got it and she gave it to my sister, Mary. She in turn gave it to my brother, Fursey, and after his death I got it. I am happy to include it in our history. It is an important part of our story. It gives us a good description of what

trans-Atlantic travel was like at the end of the last century. I also think it is worthy to note that just about twenty-two years after that sea voyage, my father witnessed the first trans-Atlantic flight when Alcock and Brown landed in the bogs of Derrygymla about three miles outside Clifden in June, 1919. My father met Alcock and Brown and he had a portion of the plane but it was burned in our house during the Sack of Clifden in 1921. My father also was a personal friend of Marconi who sent the first trans-Atlantic radio message from near Clifden.

On reflecting on my father's diary of 1897, it strikes me that he was a real optimist. Not once did he complain about anything. The food was good! He never got sick. He enjoyed the music and the dancing. He looked forward to the promised land in the USA. I do not remember my father as I was just an infant when he died. His diary gives me an insight into his character and the type of man he was. He was just about nineteen when he went to Boston. It must have been heart-breaking for him leaving his home in Oughterard at such an early age, yet he never once complained. It is indeed a lesson for all of us.



Boston 1897

When Willie arrived in Boston he stayed with his cousin Sarah Clancy Curley. At first he worked as a long shore man. There was not much of a future in that. The Curley brothers who were some few years older than Willie were fully aware that without education he would have little success. The only education he had was what he got in Glann National School. It was indeed a fairly basic education in the Three R's. I wonder would some of our Leaving Certs of today be as clear in writing a day to day account of their experience as he did.

The Curleys advised him to attend night school. He did this and studied journalism. He later got a job with "The Boston Globe". He returned home on holidays to see his mother in 1901. His name is included in the 1901 Census in Ireland. That was the last night he saw his mother. He returned to Boston and she died while he was out there.

While in Boston he got involved in politics with the Curley Brothers. He learned all the tricks of American politics as he got involved in helping James Curley in his campaign to become Mayor of Boston. These learnings and experience were a great help to him when he returned to Ireland and got involved at home in the cause of Irish freedom and the Sinn Féin movement in Connemara.

Willie had a great future before him in Boston. He was mixing in the right circle to assure him success. He returned to Ireland again in 1908 with the intention of going back to Boston. While in Ireland he spent some time with his brother Pat in Clifden who was running a successful business there. While in Clifden he met my mother Grace Mongey from outside Navan. She was on the catering staff of the Railway Hotel. It must have been love at first sight because they were married shortly afterwards in the Convent Chapel in Clifden. They had their passage booked to go to Boston. Willie had a good job there and with his education and family connections, a bright future appeared to be in store for them in the U.S.A.

His brother Pat persuaded him not to return to Boston. There was a business place for sale in Main Street and Pat helped him to buy it. It was a grocery shop and a public house owned by a family called Brennan. Willie modelled the bar on the Boston saloons. It was the most modern bar in Clifden and attracted many customers. It was in that house that they reared their eight children, five boys and three girls. All the family were born there except the oldest girl Mary and the second youngest

son Liam. In those days it was the custom for a young woman to return to her own home to give birth to her first child. Mary was born in Mullagha, Staekallen, Navan—the home of the Mongey family. Liam was born in Market Street, Clifden as the house in Main Street was being rebuilt after the burning of Clifden by the Black and Tans. The family lived in Market Street for about twelve months.

If my father and mother had returned to Boston as they had planned to do perhaps they would have been spared the tragedies that later later fell on the family. Willie got involved in the fight for Irish freedom. His devotion to Republicanism and his patriotic love for Ireland sent him to jail on two occasions and cost him the loss of his home on the 17th March—St. Patrick's Day 1921.

All down the years up to my father's death in 1930 and indeed afterwards the Curley connection and friendship remained in my family. John Curley spend holidays in my home in Clifden. Family photographs, wedding portraits came regularly to my father from James Curley. Willie was known in Clifden and throughout Connemara as "Boston Clancy". We, the family, were known as the Bostons. Even though we had great connections with the USA, none of the immediate family emigrated there; all stayed in Ireland, and found jobs there.

My father's niece, Mary Catherine Clancy, daughter of James Clancy and Mary Bridget D'Arcy, Maughermore, Oughterard went to Boston in the nineteen-fifties. There she met Joe Curran from Spiddal. They



James Joseph and Mary Catherine Clancy, Maughermore, Oughterard. (1947).

married in Boston and reared their family there—one son, Joseph and three daughters, Mary Ann, Julie and Joan.

I have not got any information on anymore of the Clancys who went to the United States except my cousin Cummin Clancy—son of Matt, grandson of Billie. Cummin's story will be related in the next chapter.

Two members of the present generation have also settled in the USA. Frankie Stanley and her sister Eileen have both settled in New York. Both are daughters of Eileen Clancy of Main Street, Clifden and grand-daughters of Pat Clancy. Eileen married Jeff Knight.



Kilmainham Jail 1921: Tommie Whelan, Clifden (executed on the 14th March 1921), with two prison wardens.



Aerial view of Clifden

The Burning of Clifden, 17th March, 1921

Many stories have been written about the burning of Clifden by the Black and Tans on the 17th March, 1921. The history of my family would not be complete without a reference to it. I can only relate what was told to me by my sister Mary and other family members. My mother seldom spoke of it. Anytime I asked her to share her memories of that night with me she changed the subject. I suppose the memories were too painful to recall.

On the 14th March 1921 Tommy Whelan a local boy from outside Clifden was executed in Kilmainham Jail in Dublin. Tommy was hanged for an alleged shooting at a bakery in Dublin. On the night of the 16th March 1921 two policemen, named Reynolds and Sweeney, were detailed for duty on the square in Clifden. Reynolds was a native of Rooskey, Co. Leitrim and Sweeney was from Donegal.

Before going on duty they visited my home. One of them asked my sister Mary who was then a young girl of twelve years for some shamrock. She proudly pinned a sprig on each of their uniforms to honour our patron, St. Patrick, whose feast was the following day. They left my home for duty on the square. Shortly after 9 p.m. my family heard two shots. Reynolds and Sweeney were both shot dead. No one was charged with this shooting. It was alleged that the deed was carried out by a maverick group of the IRA. It was a reprisal for the hanging of Tommie Whealan. The shamrock on their uniforms was saturated with their blood. The local people were shocked and terrified.

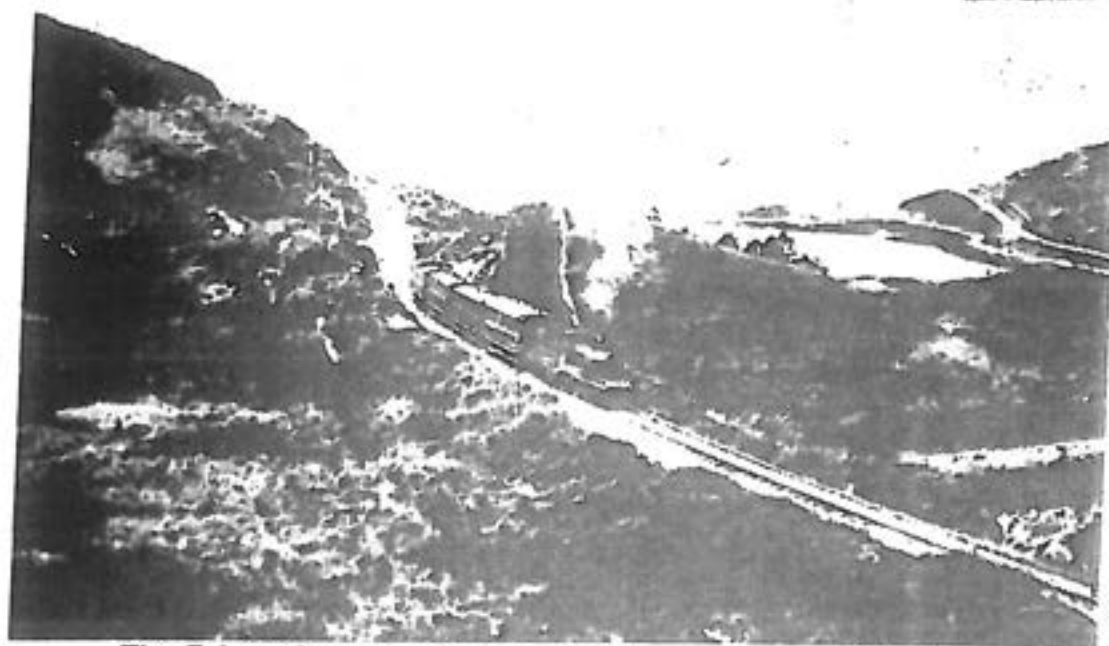
My father Willie Clancy (known as Boston) had just been released from Galway Jail (the site where the present Galway Cathedral stands). My mother told me he was sent to jail because he was minding some ammunition for the boys on the run. My father was not a member of the local flying column but he was a contact person for the Republicans. He gained information for them about the movements of the British soldiers and the Black and Tans. He also stored their ammunition. He dug a hole in the garden at the back of our home and kept the ammunition there. In the month of February the weather was quite wet. He was afraid the ammunition would get wet in the garden so he transferred it to a safe hiding place in the house. Shortly after that the house was raided and Daddy was sent to jail. He spent some weeks there. As a result of



Willie Clancy (Irish Volunteers), his wife Grace, his children, Mary (5 years), James (3 years) and Gráinne (6 months). (Clifden 1914).



*Mary Josephine Clancy,
Clifden. 1927.*



The Galway-Clifden train photographed near Recess in 1910-1915

dampness and malnutrition he developed pneumonia. Many pleas were made to the authorities to release him. It was all of no avail until Canon McAlpine, P.P., Clifden travelled to Galway where he met the Governor of the jail. He pleaded with him to release my father and added that he had left a wife and young family in Clifden. Later my father was released. He had many stories to tell of his time in prison. One was that nightly he heard the rattle of chains going up and down the corridor outside his prison cell. It was believed that it was the ghost of Ulick Joyce who was hanged in innocence for the Maam Treasna Murders.

My father had just returned from jail when the policemen were shot so he was a very sick man the night the Black and Tans came to Clifden. The Black and Tans were sent over to Ireland from England to chastise the Irish. They were supposed to be the scum of English prisons who were sent to help the British Army. They were nick-named Black and Tans by the Irish because they wore black tunics, tan pants and black caps. The Black and Tans were a noted pack of greyhounds in Tipperary—hence the name Black and Tans.

On the morning of the 17th March around 3.30 a.m. my mother was awakened from sleep by a banging at the hall door. When she awoke she saw eight men rushing into the bedroom. They wore balaclavas and carried guns. They asked for the whereabouts of my father. Dad was a man of ready wit. When he heard the noise downstairs he disappeared from the bed and hid in a press in the wall. The men searched around the room but they were so drunk they did not notice the press. They left the room and went downstairs. A member of the R.I.C. who was a friend of my father came into the bedroom and told my mother to leave the house immediately as the Black and Tans were about to set it on fire.

She immediately left with her children. Mary the eldest was about twelve years; Tom the third eldest was six years and Padraic was just a baby of thirteen months. The second eldest James was not in Clifden that night. He was in Co. Meath with his maternal grandparents—Thomas and Maria Mongey of Mullagha, Stackallen, Navan. When they came down the stairs the house was already on fire. They had no time to get any clothing. They were turned out on Main Street in their night attire.

My mother kept lodgers then. One was a railway porter called McKeanealy. He worked at the Clifden Railway Station. My father borrowed his uniform and escaped from the house as a railway porter. He joined my mother on the street. He winked at her and said "Will

I carry the child for you Mam?" Mary and Tom were the last to leave the house. Mary recalls seeing all the Tans gathered on the landing on the stairs. They were all carrying guns and drinking whiskey that they had stolen from our bar.

The Station Master in Clifden at that time was a man call O'Rourke. His wife was a native of Co. Meath. Being strangers in Connemara and coming from the same county, my mother and Mrs. O'Rourke became close friends. So when her home went up in flames she went straight her friend at the Railway Station. Many other Clifden people whose homes were burned went to the Convent of Mercy where the Sisters gave them shelter and clothing.

I will now include a detailed report I received recently from Brigid A. O'Rourke (Mrs. Reid, Salthill, Galway). Brigid is a daughter of Station Master O'Rourke and was an eyewitness on that fatal night.

CHILDHOOD MEMORIES OF THE SACK OF CLIFDEN, 17th MARCH, 1991 BY BRIGID A. O'ROURKE

At 10 p.m. on St. Patrick's Eve, March 16th 1921, my father Peter J. O'Rourke, then Station Master at Clifden Railway Station got a phone message to say a special train was leaving Galway for Clifden with a troop of Black and Tans to take over the town and to arrest IRA suspects. At that hour of the night all his men were off duty, so he had to set off down the railway line to make the points re train coming in. The train had to be stopped some distance away from the Railway Station. It could not be let into the Railway Station (the platform) because a train was already there ready to leave for Galway the following morning at 10 a.m.

He had his lamp and when he saw the oncoming train he turned on the red light so the driver stopped. Immediately the Captain in charge who was on the engine plate with the driver stepped down. He confronted my father with a gun, and questioned him "Was this a set up for them being ambushed". My father then explained to him the reason why they had to get off there on the line and march into town. He treated him to a few blows of the butts of his rifle.

In our house that night two women were visiting—a Mrs. Canning (RIC man's wife) and a Mrs. O'Connell who had a shop near the station. They asked my father if he would leave them home, so again taking his lamp he left them as far as the railway gates. He was halted there and asked to help to carry a shutter of Eddie King's shop where a wounded policeman named Sweeney lay dying. They took him to the Cottage

Hospital on the Galway Road. He was also told that Charlie Reynolds, another policeman was shot dead; both men were on duty outside Eddie King's shop. All this time bullets were whizzing by from the Dooneen hills. This all happened sometime previous to the coming of the train loads of Black and Tans.

After his ordeal my father returned to the Station House. Mrs. Canning and Mrs. O'Connell had returned there and told my mother what happened. All of us children got out of bed. Next thing a bullet came into the bedroom where my father and mother slept. We were put under beds in our own room for fear of anymore bullets coming in.

After some hours, my Dad heard a woman crying outside the door. She was saying "Peter, for God's sake let us in, our house is on fire". The woman was my mother's friend, Mrs. Willie Clancy. She was outside in her night attire with her three children. They were looking for Willie to shoot him as he was an IRA suspect. In Clancys house there were a number of railwaymen lodging including the crew of the morning train due out at 10 a.m. As the soldiers interrogated each one as they let then out the front door all kept answering "I work at the Station". Willie Clancy was the last out. He was lame and very sick. One of them said to him: "Are you a railwayman too with a bad leg?" Willie answered: "I hurt myself yesterday at the turntable in the engine shed at the station." The soldier gave him a kick in the backside and said "All you good for nothing railwaymen, clear out." Then up goes the house in flames. Willie ran down to our house with only his trousers, a jacket and no shoes. My mother put him lying on the sofa as he was a very sick man and all got tea.

Next morning, a Mrs. Grennan came to our house with her son Dan, who was also a railway porter. They came in for the Mass (St. Patrick's Day) and discovered there was no Mass, and the town was all burned down.

At 10 a.m. a knock came to our front door. When my father opened it who was there but a platoon of soldiers with a Sergeant-in-charge. They demanded the keys of the engine shed, the store, office, etc. They were looking for anyone who might be hiding there. He gave them the keys. While they were gone Dad was terrified they would raid our house and find Willie Clancy there. My father and Willie put our piano crossways in corner. Willie hid behind it. My mother put an old tablecloth across it. The women all said the Rosary. When they came back with the keys after inspecting all the outhouses the Sgt-in-charge said to my

father: "No need to inspect your house I am sure". I remember well my Dad having me by the hand. He said: "All that is there are a few people who were disappointed that there was no Mass, and a few railwaymen having to go on duty on the next train out". The Sgt. then handed my father the keys and told his men who were standing at the front gate to march on. My father breathed a sigh of relief. He knew that if Willie Clancy was found in our house Dad would be shot dead for harbouring him and the Clancy family.

The next train that was to leave at 10 a.m. did not leave until 3 p.m. The Clancy family had to be fed and clothed. The children got all our clothes, our cloaks, shoes, etc. Mrs. Clancy got Mammy's clothes, and a suit of Dad's for Willie. They all got on the 3 p.m. train. Mrs. Willie and the children got tickets. They had no money as all was lost in the fire, but Dad gave them tickets for Oughterard. Willie was a native of Glann, Oughterard. Willie was put into what was called a fish van with the air able to get in for him. It was arranged with the driver and guard of the train that when they came to Oughterard he was to be let off and hide until someone he knew came for him.

The town was a wreck after the burning. Many shops were burned. A young man named John Joe McDonnell was also killed. He was a cousin of Willie Clancy's. Willie's brother, Pete Clancy, an ex-R.I.C. man was also shot.

The Black and Tans took their train back to Galway at 8 p.m. They took any amount of cigarettes and whiskey with them that they found by looting. I always heard my father say that these men were really ruthless. They were all ex-convicts out of English jails. All the men on the train that night known as the Black and Tans will never be forgotten by the people of Clifden who lived there at that time.

—*Brigid A. O'Rourke Reid*

My sister Mary confirms Brigid's report, but adds that my father who was pretty ill then was taken from the Oughterard Railway Station to the hospital in Oughterard. Andy D'Arcy (father of Mrs. Jones Ferris) met every train with his pony and side-car. He brought Daddy to the hospital where he spent many weeks after that. Andy then drove Mammy, Mary, Tom and Padraic to Rath Hill in Gleann where they were looked after by my father's brother Matthias Clancy and his wife Maggie.

One month after that my mother's father Thomas Mongey died in Mullagha, Stackallen, Navan, Co. Meath. My Uncle Matthias brought herself and the children to the train in Oughterard on the first leg of

their journey to attend the funeral. From there they travelled to Galway from Galway by train to the Broadstone Station in Dublin.

There was no transport from Dublin to Navan as the lines were blocked by the Black and Tans. However, my mother eventually got a lift from the man who drove the mail van to Navan. At first he did not want to take her as he had been searched every day on route by the Black and Tans. My mother pleaded with him. She was a very prayerful woman and assured him that Our Lady and the Sacred Heart would take care of them. He consented to bringing them. For the first time in weeks the mail van was not stopped even once. When they reached Navan all doors were closed to them. The daily papers carried stories of the burning of Clifden. People were afraid to let them in, as the papers also carried the story of the shooting of Pete Clancy, my father's brother. The Navan people thought it was my father who was shot.



Paddy Mongey, Mullagha, Stackallen, Navan, with his niece and nephew Mary Josephine and James Clancy. (1924).

Eventually, a friend of my mother called Mrs. Carpenter took them in. She had a small house but she gave them their own beds for the night. Next day my uncle Paddy Mongey came in his pony and trap to collect them. The Sacred Heart and Our Lady brought her home in time for her father's funeral. They remained in Mullagha for some weeks after that. During all this time my father was in the hospital in Oughterard.

When they returned to Clifden the family home was in ruins. My father rented a house from Bodkins in Market Square where Walshs Coffee Shop is at present. It was known locally as "Bostons". It later became "The Sinn Fein Club". My brother Liam was born in that house on the 15th July 1922. My father got very little compensation to rebuild the house in Main Street. Kathleen Villiers Tuttle in her book "Beyond the Twelve Pins" stated that he got £2,000. That figure is not correct.

At the re-building of the house in Main Street an extra storey was added to the original structure. The family lived there until it was sold in the 'seventies about eight years after my mother's death.

THE SHOOTING OF UNCLE PETE CLANCY

Uncle Pete was a member of the R.I.C. When he was stationed in Limerick he was obliged to resign from the force because he got Black Fever. With his wife Nora he joined his brother Pat in Clifden and worked in the business there. He was there on the 17th March, 1921. The Black and Tans tried to burn Uncle Pat's house. Pat was not at home. He was attending a cattle mart in Dublin. Pete put out the fire. He was then taken out to the back yard and shot by one of the Black and Tans while his wife Nora looked on. One of them shouted at her "You'll be a widow in the morning". Pete got three bullets in the neck—one went 1/18 of an inch of the jugular vein. The Tans thought he was dead but Dr. Joe Casey who was a GP in Clifden came on the scene. Pete was rushed fifty miles away to the old Central Hospital in Galway where he underwent surgery. Dr. Michael O'Malley from Killmilken saved his life. Pete later bought a house in Glann, Oughterard on the shores of Lough Corrib which he called "Island View". He got compensation which was very little.

Pete was never the same man after the shooting. His speech was impaired. He suffered from a bad back. In later years he was the victim of Parkinsons Disease. He died in Galway in the late 'fifties. His niece Bride Cowley cared for him in his old age.



Pete Clancy, Island View, Glann. Oughterard, with his niece Phyl. 1934.

THE ASSASSINATION OF JOHN JOE McDONNELL

My father's cousin, John Joe McDonnell, owned "The Centrel Hotel" in Clifden. He was related to my father through my grandmother Mary Geogheghan. John Joe was a Sgt. Major in the British Army during the 1914-1918 War (World War I). He returned to Clifden after the War and ran a thriving business in his hotel in Main Street. He was there on St. Patrick's morning 1921.

The Tans called him out and threatened to kill him. He told them he was loyal to the Crown and that he served in the 1914-1918 War. They would not listen to him. They accused him of being a member of the IRA. He denied this. They took him outside his hotel and fired a hand grenade at him. They blew his head off. His brains were scattered on the street. He was supposed to have been mistaken for his cousin Alex Higgins who was active in the movement.

Many stories have been told and re-told about the burning of Clifden and the assassination of John Joe McDonnell. One story is about a young curate, Fr. Kelly, who was being sent on transfer to Ballyconneely. He stayed in Clifden that night. On St. Patrick's morning he came on the body of John Joe and anointed all that was left of his mortal remains.

Another story is about people who came into town to go to Mass in St. Joseph's Church. The Tans told them to kneel down outside the Central Hotel and kiss the blood of their hero.

The burning of Clifden had ill effects on many families in Clifden, not least my own. My father never really got over it. His health never was restored. He was only fifty-two years when he died in 1930. My mother was a widow for forty years. She suffered through a lot of poverty



in the thirties and forties. My brother James died at the early age of seventeen years. My brother Tom never reached mental adulthood.

Yet in spite of all this my mother reared and educated her family. She saw them all settled in good jobs and married. She loved her grandchildren and enjoyed their company until her death in 1970.

When my sister Mary recalls the night of the burning her saddest memory is to see the stable being burned with her pet pure-bred Connemara Pony called "Fanny" neighing as he was burned alive. The cows were also burned and the Tans put the burned carcasses of the animals in front of the house. One of the Tans kept playing "God Save the King" on our piano and then started firing bullets into the keys. Some of the other houses that were burned were Bartleys, P.K. Joyce's, Mattie Joyce's, Lyndon O'Neill's, Alex Higgins', Katie Guilfoyle's.



The Connemara Flying Column (1921) outside the home of Willie Clancy (Clifden). Petie McDonnell and colleagues beside armour car constructed from the boiler of the Mulraney Hotel.