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**Preface to the Digital Edition**

This version of the memoir was copied from a photocopy of the typed and bound version of the memoir, which itself was copied from Thomas's handwritten notes (as per the original preface). The main section appears to have been written, or at least completed, in 1955. Apart from spelling corrections the only change I made to the text was to removed the bracketed part of the following sentence from page 32, as it was not written by Thomas as part of the memoir:

It was from there that Parnell spoke the night he was released from Kilmainham Jail **(This jail is pretty well covered by the moves taken on our trip to Ireland in 1975.)**.

A handwritten note in the margin says “this sentence added by John Hannan”. Presumably then John Hannan wrote the original preface and typed the memoir sometime after 1975.

I have kept the page numbering from the typed version, including the jump from page 19 to page 25.

I have added an index of relatives and some “end notes”. When you see a small number in the text (like this**15**) you can click on the number for supplemental information, or clarification.

Tomás Conway, August 2020

**Preface**

This typed and bound version of Thomas Hannan's[[1]](#endnote-2) autobiographical recollections differs only slightly from the handwritten version which he penned himself in a small notebook. That original version contained two distinct sections -- a main narrative and a supplement written sometime after the first. This distinction has been retained in the same form in this volume.

A very small amount of editing has occurred; mostly corrections in the spelling of personal and place names, the addition of punctuation where it seemed appropriate, and some small grammatical adjustments. Otherwise this volume is just as it was penned in his own hand in the now somewhat tattered little notebook.

**Looking Backward on Life by Thomas Hannan**

My first recollections is that our family lived in a cottage not far from the Good Shepherd Convent and St. John's Hospital and St. John's Catholic Church in Limerick City. I could look over a wall at the back of the house by climbing up by crevices in it, and used to see the Limerick County Prison and also an asylum for the feeble minded. There may have been the County Hospital and the Artillery Barracks over that way at that time, but I did not know about that until I was over ten years of age and had been brought from Dublin to Limerick by my Uncle Tom Maloney[[2]](#endnote-3), to his home in Gerald Griffin St. at that time known as Cornwallis St.. Gerald Griffin was an Irish man and a poet. Cornwallis was an old English General, so the name was changed by our fine Irish City Council.

Then next, I remember swallowing a glass marble, it had such nice colors, being a kid I put it in my mouth and down it went, I never found any ill effects from it. Then about that time I was down the street and a horse broke away from a smith's forge that was at the forge end of the street, I remember women with white aprons rushing about and screaming, the child is killed, but the horse said no, so he jumped over me as I sat on the edge of the sidewalk. Then again I remember that I must have fallen out of bed and picked up either my father[[3]](#endnote-4) or mother[[4]](#endnote-5) and I was bawling out good. Years after I found a lump on my collar bone, it is there yet so perhaps I broke it when I fell out of bed and it knit again. I do not know if my parents knew about it or not, I believe I had the measles about that time.

My next recollection is that there were several of us in a train and I think it was my brother Pat[[5]](#endnote-6), who was some years older than I, who said here is Dublin so I looked out the window as the train was coming in to a great big place with a lot of tracks and a ceiling up very high and iron girders and a big clock with a white face, and as I looked at that enormous clock I thought that white clock is Dublin and I tried to figure it out.

Next my father was there and we piled baggage on top of what they called a cab and a man called a jarvey drove us across a big city with a lot of houses and streets and a lot of strange noises. I must have been tired as I don't remember more about that arrival in Dublin. It may have been in the year 1880 or 1881.

There is a sort of blank in my memory for some time must have elapsed, for I remember my mother fixing up some bread and batter and a bit of sweet cake as we called current raisin bread. I was brought to school by someone, perhaps Pat or my sister Katie[[6]](#endnote-7) who was older than Pat. I remember a small class, one with twenty more kids about my age, and I had a red book with short sentences and pictures in it, and I opened up my bread and started eating, the teacher said I would have to wait until play time, that was years away to my mind. Somehow I must have got along all right for I remember being in another class they called it the Green Book. No one ever asked me anything or told me anything except that my mother always had me clean and with my bread and butter going to school. Then after a lapse of time, I don't know long as I never asked about these things I next remember that my mother brought me nice beads golden color and taught me to say the rosary.

I had them for a great many years, where they went I don't know know. Then I remember my aunt who was my father's brother's wife and lived near us, taking me to the shore of Dublin bay out by Clontarf where King Brian Ború, defeated the Danes. We brought home some seaweed; it was supposed to be a cure for whatever was wrong with my mother, who had come home from the Mater Misericordiae Hospital after being there for some time. I was in Second Book when my mother died and she was buried in Glasnevin. I do not know if it was in 1882 or early 1883.

About that time there was a secret society called the Invincibles[[7]](#endnote-8). How many were in it I do not really know. I have an idea that the top members were in the United States and in some way connected with the Clan na Gaels[[8]](#endnote-9) supposedly an organization got together for ways and means for freeing Ireland from English Rule. There were in Dublin at that time perhaps twenty or more. I never found out how many. My father had a suspicion of two of them from some words he heard drop from a man who worked as a van driver, we call them truckers, for the O'Brien and Co.

Mineral Water and Wine Cordials they manufactured or brewed them right there in the factory in Henry Place, Dublin. I used to go there after school nearly every afternoon end spend my time looking at the men washing the bottle by machine and the men blending raisins and grapes and raspberry to make the syrups which were the real foundation for the wines - also saw the men working et the bottling and corking machines, also up at the carpenters’ bench he was a good fellow his name was Joe Kensella. He used to repair broken cases, these cases were made of wood with sections for 24 lemonade bottles, larger cases held 6 dozen bottles and could be shipped by rail all over Ireland. This factory started-with two vans and during my time it had advanced in the business world that the last time I visited them when I was at home in 1910, when Tom[[9]](#endnote-10) was a baby, they had 10 vans, the factory was 6 times larger. I am getting away from my train of thought, About the Invincibles. Ireland at that time had a representative of the British Government taking up residence in the Vice Regal Lodge in the Pheonix Park in Dublin. So a man named Bourke was a secretary and companion to the Lord Lieutenant whose name was Lord Cavendish who had arrived only that week to take over his position.

These Invincibles watched for the arrival of those two gentlemen who had come in by mail boat to Kingstown[[10]](#endnote-11) and by train to Westland Row Station[[11]](#endnote-12) in Dublin. These murderers signalled by waving a handkerchief and the others were lined up along the distance from the station to the Lodge in the Park in that way they didn't take any chance they might go to some other place to visit perhaps, so both got to the Vice Regal Lodge, and as the evening was fine they walked over to the road that runs through the Park not a very public place as the often used main road ran outside the Park in the same general direction. The two friends walked up and down near some shade trees which were planted in seven trees to clump the murderers who were watching every move, drove up near them and said something about freeing Ireland and 5 or 6 of them attacked the two men who defended themselves with their umbrellas, that Englishmen usually carry, but they

were stabbed with a dagger or daggers and left in a sitting position against two trees. These two trees died and there are 7 trees in every clump or cluster all the way through the Park driveway except on that spot there are only five trees. I was only child but I went out there one Sunday on a train from the centre of the city, the place is marked with two crosses formed with white stones: These murderers were traced out and arrested some found guilty and hanged, others got jail terms. One, the car driver who was known to me as skin the goot, got 1 years and afterwards I was told he got a job at the Dublin dump. One of them became an informer to save his own neck, he was the leader of the Dublin gang. He (Carey the informer) gave evidence and had a lot to do with their conviction. The government then tried secretly to ship him out to Cape Town which is as you know in South Africa, an English possession. He was followed even on the same ship, by an agent, his name was O'Donnell and I understand was sent over by the Clan na Gael Society to find and murder him or as they may have called just execution of an informer. Carey was shot by O'Donnell when he got a good chance of having Carey alone on the ship as it neared Cape Town. O'Donnell was of course arrested at once, was tried and was hanged. I read about his trial in the Dublin newspaper. As far as I can remember that was about the year 1883. I was at school in the Marlborough St. National schools. These schools must have covered a mile square of ground. There was from 1st the infants that held several hundred children with young women teachers them five schools for the girls each holding a hundred each school was for a certain class such as the Infants. A,B,C, up to First Book and then second book from N1 to N55 were as I stated, each for a book as we called them 3 book to 4th book etc. Then a music gallery and drawing school and what we called manual training in this country. We called carpenter shop. The boys schools were at the North side. The girls at the south side. Well about that time my Uncle Tom Maloney who had a bar-room and restaurant in Gerald Griffin South Limerick. He and my older brother John[[12]](#endnote-13) were salesmen or as we called them Brokers. They sold wheat, oats, barley and rye and butter also **[sentence fragment missing]** commission in the Limerick markets for

the farmers all round the County of Limerick and even to Clare, the next county across the Shannon River that runs through Limerick City. My sister Margaret was his housekeeper and attended to the business when the men were out. I lived there years after and did the same work they did, but I will come to this later on.

Well, Uncle Tom came to Dublin to give evidence in a dispute which was being tried in the Four Courts which was a High court of Ireland in Dublin. He had to give evidence as to which class of firkin was best for butter, the hand made by a cooper or one made by machinery by a lumber yard. (A firkin is a barrel used to hold butter when being brought to market and holds about 70 lbs. of butter, He took me to Limerick and I stayed for three months, wasn't that fine, no school to go to for all that time, it just shows how a kid's mind works, That was the first time I met my Aunt Maloney. My mother's sister, also my brother John and sister Margaret. Well when on this pleasant visit. My Uncle liked to take me for walks and showed me the Treaty Stone where the Treaty of Peace was signed by General Sarsfield and some of his generals for the Irish and General Genkle for the English. The Irish with some French who were in the army in the city, were to march out with flags flying and drums playing and the city left in peace. But an English minister in Christ's Church in Dublin, spoke up and demanded that the city should be taken over by the English, Great England and it's army should not sign a treaty with Papists (Catholics). So the treaty was broken within a week and the English marched in and were there as they were all over Ireland and kept it in subjection. Well my uncle showed me the different breaches in the old walls that were defended by the citizens, even the women with stones in their stockings helped to defend the breached and assisted the soldiers in every way.

Well I then got on a long car as it was called that brought the mail from Bruff and all the small towns and villages to Limerick Post Office. Bruff is 15 miles to the south of the city and the coach came in every morning arriving in Limerick about 9:30 and then going back again at 3:30 in the afternoon. It had 2 horses and long sorts on each side the passengers

sat back to back facing in the centre. They used rugs of their own; as most people did in those days, even on the trains. Well I went out in the Mail Coach and got to Grange about 12 miles out on the Bruff road. My Uncle John and my grandmother, who was alive at that time lived on the old Hannan Farm. My Aunt Margaret, who was my Uncle's wife was there of course. I got off the car at the police station near a short road or boreen that led from the state road up to the farm house. Well it was like Ruth at the Well. As I stood there a young girl who was driving cows from one part of the farm across the road to go up to the farm house where the cow houses were. Well this young girl that our Mary always reminds me of was my sister Annie who married Tom Cusack years afterwards. A nice red head said to me "Are you Tom?", so of course I said "Are you Annie?" Well as the boreen was steep and rough, she put me on the back of a donkey, "Now you can ride up in style", so up I went and being a Dublin Jackeen I rode the donkey in the kitchen door and was not Granny, Uncle John and Aunt Margaret surprised, when I said "How are you Granny?" as most Dublin boys would express grandmothers' names, she gave me a dirty look and would not shake hands, I found out afterwards that she thought I was not respectful in calling her Granny. My Uncle John, Aunt Margaret, and Annie were the finest people I had ever met, and I will always remember them. They are all in Heaven now. It was heaven for me for perhaps a month, up with the dawn, looking at cows being milked and the milk strained and put in what was called cream troughs and keelers, the keelers were round about 4 inches deep and would hold 4 or 5 gals. of milk. The troughs were long about 8 ft. and 4 ft. and 4in. high, the milk was put in them and when after a few days the cream formed and came to a certain degree of ripeness it would be skimmed off by my aunt or Annie and put in a churn barrel. A small amount of very cold water to help keep it cool as it was churned, the churn was a large barrel connected to a bar with cogs on the end that went out through a small window and the donkey was hitched on to a wooden shaft and walked slowly in 6 circle which was no bother to him and then

just for 25 many minutes and slow again as my Aunt would wish to stop and check how the churning was coming so I had a nice time riding the donkey on churning day. It was a change for him as it was a delight to me. He knew more about churning than I did, he would stop or go fast or slow as he was told by the person at the churn. When it was in proper condition the butter was taken out through a trap door on the churn and washed over and over with the coldest cleanest water from my Uncle's well that was always cold and never ran dry. It was then salted and some colouring put in it and packed into firkins lined with what was known as parchment paper. The farmers around that section had the finest land around the south of Ireland. It was called the Golden Vale. Well the time come and I had to go back to school again in Dublin. The fond memories of those days remain with me yet. I used to think if Heaven was like how that country looked to me as I used to go up the hill at the and of the house always green with cows grazing around me. What a view I could see a part of the River Shannon when the day was clear and across the country I could see the steam from the trains on their way from Limerick City to the different stations very far away. Well back again I went back to Dublin, went to school again.

What time I lost in all this travelling kept me back at school as they never put you in the same class you were in when you left, always a lower one so they would be sure you would pass the examinations that were every July and inspectors not the school master or teachers examined you and travelled all over, to all schools under the National Board of Education. The teachers got a bonus on every pupil that passed his exams, then we used to get the month of August for vacation. I used to go with my brother on trips to his customers all around the county Dublin, Wicklow, Kildare, and so got to know the country and all it's beauties and mixed with the people. As I was William's brother, I was well-treated. Boys how hungry I used to get, I could eat every hour. How apples, pears, plumbs could disappear when I got them, more of that little Heaven. Well I should have been well on to the time for leaving school, but my sister Bridget who was a housekeeper for a cousin of ours, whose wife had died and left him with five

children. Mat, Joe, Jimmy, Nan and Chris. Nan is in the Convent, Jimmy died when I was back in Limerick for the last time. Well as Bridget had a bar room or as we called it a public house and groceries and provisions in a place 11 miles from Limerick and she could not get a license except if there was a man in the place, I was sent down and was that man. She got the license and only gave up the place to marry Patrick Maguire; we called them the Guares. He and his brother had a forge and also a store for flour meal and bran as the farmers did not have to go miles to town they could get the stuff from the Guares. I stopped there two and a half years back in school again and so easy in 5th 2nd stage that I was in, in Dublin how I used to be put teaching the other grades or books as it was called, and teaching the young kids catechism and those prayers I had a nice time and I had my own hurling club and used go to near places on Sundays to hurdle other kids clubs. There was a big men's club also. Pat Guare was the captain and his brother and some of my cousins were members of the team. They were very good and won the championship of the County and some cups. I only got cut knuckles and crack on my shins with hurleys. Well when Bridget got married I went back to Dublin and school again. It seems that my father did not try to get me to face life and a future as he should I must have always been just a child to him, but Katie who was my mother and sister and friend all in one, who took care of the house for my father. Brother Will and I, Pat was in a Pub (in a Publick House Post-Office and Grocery) the outskirts of the County Dublin so he was forgotten, I used to see him once in months. Until he got a job in Lucan a beautiful village 7 miles from Dublin (Royal Arms Hotel) you could go to it by train or steam train. This train had two cars and was run on a narrow track along the side of the road from the city to Lucan and back. The engine was boxed in and the water tanks were flat things on the top. How that thing could throw dirty smoke and frighten horses. I think I could run as fast as it could go.

Now back to my life in Dublin, I find it hard to get back to those days but will try. We went to live in a house in the North Circular Road a half hour walk from the Centre, where my father and brother worked and where I had to walk all across town to work in a big grocery and butcher shop, although the same firm had seven shops as we called them I was the one who got the job furthest from home. I worked from 8:30 A.M. to 7:30 P.M. and all Friday night and all Sat night for 4 shillings a week. That was good old Ireland's way to help its young people, Under British control, but the Irish themselves had a bit to do with these things so why blame England for everything. They never had or never will have a good business just always afraid to expand but put the money in banks. I had been signed on in that shop for 3 years to serve my time as they called it, but my health broke down some from the long hours, and I got a chance from the manager to go to the country to rest up so I went to Grange to my Uncle John and Aunt Margaret and that heavenly view from the hill.

Now I must go back to a time before I went to the Grocery. I passed an examination at Brown and Nolans. They printed bibles and prayer books and a lot of religious books and some other books. I am sure as it was a first class printing concern I got the paper to have signed by my father, but I got cold feet on my ways home and tore up the paper and threw it in the river as I was crossing it on my ways home. I then got a job in a stationers shop but was not bound down or indentured for if I broke my indentures I could be put in Prison. Well I stayed there a month learning to print visiting cards, wedding invitations and ads for small business concerns. He would only give me 2 and 6 pence a week. He would show me how to set up type work & machine by foot like a sewing machine if I went fast I would be caught in the jaws of the machine as I had to put in one piece of printing paper with the right hand and take it out with the left. Why risk being crippled for life for about 60 cents per week, so I walked out one Sat night and never went back. I then got a job in an office it was The John White and Son Glass and China merchants with the wholesale and office in

one part of Dublin City and the other across the City in a fashionable section. I was to assist the book keeper so I entered the day books as I got them from the others shop every morning as they used these in their charge accounts. I got one every morning and returned the other one I entered them in a ledger as I got them and had to call on the phone to get the press on a lot of things they did not enter in the day books. At times it was a headache to get the information I never could understand why they did not sometimes put in the customer's name and often not the address but nearly every day I had to check on what they sold for so much money. I copied letters and bills that were sent out every evening and I posted them as I went home. I was there 3 months and as the book-keepers leg had got better, he had broken his leg in an accident so my smart Alec boss Mr. John White always wearing a tall hat, long coat spats and thinking no one was as good as he was, would not give me a decent wage and the book-keepers leg was better I got sick of him and going across town to get the bank money and bank it. He at several times passed me on the street as I would be on my way to the P.O., as it closed at 6 O'clock, and he and an old rascal of a friend would be coming over to our office to plan things about some special business as I say they never recognized me so one evening they had lady friends with them and were standing on the side walk and I came along. He saw me coming and turned his back, so I just walked across the street and did not pay any attention to him or his friends. A few days after, the book-keeper said to me, Mr. John says you did not tip your cap to him and his friends when you were on your way home a few evenings ago, so I said he never sees me so why should I tip my cap to him. I only salute a lady or a Priest, so that shut him up. I got out of there soon after John White was a leader in the wrong Men's Club and a full pledged Free Mason. My Irish could not stand that combination so then I tried the stationery and printing.

Then I got the job in the big grocery store. I went for 18 months to a pub in a village called Raheny which was three miles by train on the line from Dublin to Howth which is a headland jutting out into Dublin Bay. I worked there from 7 in the morning until 10 at night, ate my meals as I could as I worked. It was a case of wait on some customers, run into the kitchen, eat a bit, and keep an eye out to get paid or some of them would walk out without paying, If I stayed at the counter over long when I went in again the table was cleared off, so that was that. I had to go to 7 o'clock mass on Sundays, walk about two miles and then eat breakfast and open the bar at 10 o'clock until 10 at night. Was busy all day Sundays as the Dublin men used to come out in the trains about every hour back and forth from Dublin to Howth which was only 9 miles. (Raheny was about 3 miles all right for travellers). So then the last train in was 20 minutes after nine so I had to tidy up and then walk up the road as far as the railway station. That was my life for 18 months and I was supposed to get every Thursday off, but the old boss had a farm and would always go out early that day above all others and then tell me he would be sure to let me go next week. He used to go on a bat(?) often so could or would not want to be in the bar if only for 1 day a week. I was tied up all the time and had poor resting privileges so I jacked that job and went back to the manager of the grocery store again he was glad to have me so I got 6 shillings per week and only left there when my health broke down, I think it was because I had not enough food or rest at that Raheny Pub. We were busy there several days when there was horse races in Baldoyle near Howth. A brother of Peter Maher the great American boxer, his name was Micheal, a big strong boaster, but a great help to me. He helped me to keep the fresh guys from trying to gip on payments of their drinks, as many of them would carry out a tray of drinks to some of the so called ladies sitting on jaunting cars we called them outside cars. I used to watch out the windows every chance I had to look up from my work at the bar and see some of the fellows leave the tray against the wall and go to get on the car

to get away.

The boss and an old maid sister of his as well as Mike used to help in another extension of the bar opened for race days. So I would say Mike that fellow did not pay so Mike would jump over the counter and out the door like a shot, and that fellow was pulled off the car and brought in and pay for the drinks and give his apology. So when that happened a few times it got around amongst the smart race goers I got much better. I used to try to get the money before they took the tray out but they would make believe getting the money out of their pockets, grab the tray and go to the door. Of course they always said they were going to pay for the drinks.

Well as I said I went to Grange to stay a month or so, but my brother John who was running the bar and restaurant and the brokerage business at the markets got a cold and it got to pneumonia that was late in January and he died in March, Annie was with him running the business she had some in from Uncle John and Aunt Margaret's often, she being brought up by them. She did not want to stay there all her life so she came in to Limerick to John. When John got sick I had to come into the city then there was my father who had given up work on account of age, Katie came from Dublin to help Annie, as my sister Margaret that worked there all her life, had got married to Maurice Dore, Eddie's father. She lived half a mile from us and had three children. Eddie, Minnie, and Bridie Maurice worked in a big store like the Outlet in Providence and had charge of the men's apparel department. Well he got sick and died so we took Eddie, a cousin took Minnie and another took Bridie. Poor Margaret went as a house keeper to a priest so there were four of us and that was in 1896.

Then I got used to doing everything. I used to buy the whiskey in the distillery and blend it myself with the help of a friend of my brother John. When I got to know how to do these things I was on my own. Then another friend, a Michael Coffee broke me into the Brokerage business in the markets. In the same way I became an expert and made my own friends. Then

in 1901 my father died so I was surely stuck there then. So the executor of John's will had us work together, then mortgaged the business to a bank and raised money and gave it to Annie's husband as dowry. He had a big farm five miles from town and his brother living with him, and his sister in the next farm. That left Katie and me with a load of debt to the bank in our hands. So we did all we could for some years then Katie married Joe Hannan, a sort of cousin[[13]](#endnote-14) who was out in the U.S. for 16 years and had come home to buy a business so they got married and lived with me. So from the day of the marriage the whole idea was to work me out and take over the business. I saw and heard how the cat jumped and watched for a good break to get away and leave them face things as they had money and I had not. I went to one of my brother John's old friends Michael Coffee, he got me to a friend who was a lawyer and was also a friend of John's. So I took his advice and left things to myself and him. I had made a lot of improvements such as fixing up roofs, putting in new windows, a bathroom and new stove where they only used to burn turf on an iron grating down low on the floor. I also got a drain from the stable yard up the street a bit where our customers used to put up when in shopping and made box stalls there that good blooded horses could be locked in safely when there was a fair, which we had 4 times a year. We also kept the owners of these horses overnight as we had more rooms than we ourselves. Ma used to stop all the time with us, also two young girls Agnes Daly and Ellie Lynn also Lil Ryan. All were very nice good girls and the 8 of them left us one by one to become nuns, first Agnes then Lil. Then as soon as I left with Minnie to come out here Ellie went we heard she was a nun, then lost sight and sound of them out here. All the time from the death of his father Eddie Dore stopped there and slept with me.

He would not live with Joe and Katie so he went to live with some aunts and uncles on a farm away in the west section of Limerick. Well these girls were friendly with Annie then Katie we were like one big family. Agnes and Lil going to Convent School and Ma and Ellie working in a great big dry goods store like the Outlet. I watched my business and saw that the farmers were not planting oats and wheat but putting their farms to grass and not making much butter as when the old people like my Aunt Margaret died out, the young ones did not like to work so they milked the cows and sent the milk to one of the numerous dairies that sprang up every 5 miles or so as there were a lot of good farms. The dairies were owned by the farmers, a sort of cooperative, with a dairy manager and butter maker usually a girl trained to making butter so that Margaret took samples of the milk as it was brought into the Creamery as we called then, he then tested it for water, butterfat etc. I used to help one do it when I could get a day or so off between seasons when I would ride on my bike to the different aunts or uncles houses. Well it came to a showdown with Joe & Katie, if I tried to fight it in law I would only lose money so I settled with them, got my money put in a bank right away.

Minnie Katie her sister and Elly Lynn were still stopping there but when there was a settlement with me. (Ma) that is Minnie and Katie and then Eddie left there Elly stopped for sometime and as I say went to be a Nun. Ma and Katie (her sister) got a room in the next street and I got one with a young man a superintendent of schools. So I went around saw all my friends as I had a bike I did not want be idle and spend my money. I spent so many years working I was never paid enough. Well I wrote to Ma's brother Bill who was out here and had two uncles and cousins. He wrote home all about conditions out here and the opportunity to get to advance oneself. So Ma and I talked it over and as Bill and his brother John who was also here working at the jewelry shops. We talked it over with Mrs. Keane and I said if the farm we came out we could see if the farm Bill and John writing about was a good thing. We would let her know and if the account was good she would sell the farm at home and come out with her two sons Tim and Tom and two daughters Lina and Katie. Katie did come out a few years after we did and stopped with us until she died.

At that time there was a price war on between the Cunard Line and the White Star line that was flying between England Ireland and the U.S. A lot of the Irish got to know about it got together and came in groups for 30 dollars and 4 dollars Head Tax, 30 dollars for the trip and 4 dollars for the U.S. So Ma got with some girls she knew a few of them well, and I got in with a bunch of Athletes that were coming out here to play hurling games. It was a good chance at the time as the shipping war might be settled anytime. Well we both took the chance and although Ma and I were on the same ship I did not see her from Sunday until Thursday or Friday. Ma's sister Lina come to Queenstown and saw us off. We sailed from Queenstown on Sunday and got in the following Sunday afternoon. As it was Sunday the First and Second class passengers could be checked in but as there were hundreds of the third class. A great many on that trip of the Irish, and then there was a lot from all parts of Europe they were on when we got on in Queenstown.

A passengers ticket is checked and visa-ed then we got in a large tug, that goes out to meet the Liner in the outer harbour as there is an inner and outer harbour like two horseshoes in shape so as we got on the liner we wore checked our visas shown and stamped after we were examined by a Doctor. The tender or tug did not leave the Liners side until all were aboard so we sailed out of Queenstown at 1 o'clock on Sunday and got in to N.Y. on the following Sunday afternoon November 25 1905. We therefore had to wait on board ship until Monday and the revenue men who look over the credentials and check for contraband when all was correct we then took a cab with our suitcases and got the trunk sent on to Attleboro. We met a Policeman sure enough his name was Gaffney. I asked him where the Simpson house was I showed him a picture post card of Park street and said that bridge is not on this picture but the place I want is somewhere at that side of this street. He said we are putting this bridge here as the trains run on a level crossing when it is finished the trains will run up and down from N.Y. to Boston. It must be Mrs. Corcorans boarding house you want. I said that is the name of the place I want. So he said that is it across the street. So Ma and I went over up the stairs walked in to the dining room and there was Bill and John seated at a table eating supper cool and calm said they did not know the train would be in for another half hour just think how dumb a person can be when you could throw a stone from the station to Park street.

Well I could not get a room that night but could get one the next night so I slept with Bill and John that night and Ma went to her cousin’s house in Beacon street. Charley Creahan and his wife and two children. Ma stopped there some weeks as a Mrs O'Keefe another friend to Bill and John did not have a room. We got Ma in with Anna that is now married to Frank Shughrue, so I got a room from the Corcorans that a man had died in a few days before. That did not bother me it was a nice room upstairs near the dining room with a bathroom at each and of a long hall. The room and board was Four Dollars and 50 cents per week and we got three meals a day and two on Sundays, good food and attendance and clean rooms.

So Bill showed us around town for a few days and brought us down to John Creahan's house he was Ma's uncle and had a wife two daughters Katie and Annie two boys Willie and Jimmy. Ma and I went out up North Main street to see the wonderful farm we were told about I believe Coreen Riley owns that place now and has part of the farm sold for building lots. Well the house was old wanted a lot of fixing the barn was falling apart and a cow would die with the hunger the grass was so poor. So Ma and I wrote to her mother told her what we saw and advised her to stay on her own farm and home. She'd never like out here after having a good house and cows and good land all her life. So that was the end of that. Ma and I went around to a lot of Jewelry shops or factories as we were asked what experience we had I said we were what you call green horns, but I stated what I did for a living when at home and said Ma was a dress maker and we wanted to make good in this Country and then get married. So we got a job at the Attleboro Manufacturing Co in Pearl St. Mr Wilche the foreman, put me kicking a press as it was called cutting out pieces of jewelry or parts 10 hours a day 12 cents per hour. Ma got a job at the string up bench that is where girls put parts of jewelry on to some wires which are afterwards coloured and treated in the colouring room. Ma got not to like the Maher meals (where she stayed with Anna Shughrue) and she come to a Miss Curry in Park street and got along fine. We both saved what little we could manage and banked it and so in July 1907 it was Attleboro celebrating Old Home Week. We had vacation and got married in St. Johns Church. The one all our children where baptised in and went to until they were too old to go to Sunday School any more. Father O'Connell was Parish Priest that time so Bill and Katie Ma's sister who had come out and was stopping also at Miss Curry's house and worked in the same factory with us. They stood up as Bridesmaid and Best Man. My brother Pat who left Ireland at last came out and lived in Corcorans’ and got a job stamping in the factory where we worked and stayed there until years after he got sick had an operation and died. Katie also got a sort of virus fever and was in hospital about a month she was only out here a few years. Ma and I said we were going to go to New York for the honeymoon but went to Newport as we got a good account of a place

to stay from a friend. We did not know that time that Newport was more classy for a honeymoon than New York but we learned very fast I tell you. Ma and I went to live in a boarding house up in Bank street and then got a tenement upstairs in 60 Pearl street. It was there Katie lived with us until she died and Pat also lived with us and Ma's brother Bill who was an engraver at Smith and Crosbys Gold and Silver Factory. Well all five of the children were born in that house and I went to work in Saarts the Mrs O'Keefe I spoke of before, come and lived downstairs so she had Miles, Margaret, George called (Hope) and Dorris. George died some years after Dorris. He married Mary McConville had 4 or 5 boys, was in the U.S. Navy and in business after he got out but had a very nice home and family at the time he died of some virus infection that was rampant about that time. His wife Mary got married to a gentleman Lee Smith whose wife had died some years ago. He is interest in banking and The Apco Mossberg Co. Well back to our own story. After Tom our oldest and only child at the time was about 18 months old, Ma took it into her head she wanted to go back to Ireland and see her Mother and family as her father had been dead some years when she left home. Katie had died that year. Pat was still with us, so as I thought if more children should come along she would never be able to go back. So we got tickets from Frank Bowen who was the shipping agent and went on our trip bundling up the baby and away we went to Boston and on ship to Queenstown then on to Croom where Ma's brother Tom met us and brought us to the Home, we stayed and visited all her friends and mine and I also went up to Dublin to see a brother that was sick, and who died about a year after I got back here to Attleboro[[14]](#endnote-15). So Ma was satisfied.

Pat in the meantime stopped in his regular room and got his meals from Mrs O'Keefe. We also went to see Mrs Cusack that is Annie married him, and Joe and Katie my sister that left the Gerald Griffin Street place. They had one daughter who now writes to me and married a man named Madden[[15]](#endnote-16), who was a druggist, he has died since Xmas[[16]](#endnote-17) they had I boy who died last year and 3 girls 2 of whom write to me one in Dublin and the youngest in Limerick.

Margaret that married Maurice Dore, Katie who married Joe Hannan, Bridget who married Pat Maguire, Annie who married Tom Cusack. They are all gone. Uncles and

Aunts cousins all gone but me, and I believe 2 boys William’s sons are in Dublin are carpenters from the last account I got about them. So Tommy grew up then Mary come then Bill then Dorothy and again John the youngest all born in 60 Pearl street went to St Johns Church, Attleboro schools and High. Then Tom and John went to Providence College. Tom first and John after he got cut of High school. Bill preferred Boston college so used to commute and graduated Cum Laud. We left the Pearl street house and we live in now from Frank Guild, and there you are and here I am.

I am writing this last, instead of first, as I forgot some things that have to be filled in about some years between my visits to Limerick from Dublin.

Well, when I was very young my father would take me for walks some times to the Park, to the Museums, and then, again, out to the Botanic Gardens (It is in the Golden Vale the richest land around that part of the country. Grange is a farm about 12 miles from Limerick City to the South and is near Lough Gur. Count Lord Fedamore was getting rents from the farmers in this area.) a beautifully laid out place with trees and flowers and plants from all over the world. I asked him who the Hannans were and where did we cone from, I got an evasive answer. Perhaps he thought I was too young and might not understand, so all I know is the Grandfather and Grandmother of all the Hannans lived in that house in Grange. My father had at least 3 sisters that I knew and he had two brothers, Uncle John in Grange and Uncle William in Dublin who worked in the wine and cordial department in Cebeoins Factory. He was not friendly to me so I did not bother talking to visiting him much. I much preferred hammering at something with the carpenter or trying to make something that I hardly ever finished — the regular kid stuff.

My mother's name was Hannan, from another part of the County of Limerick and she had 2 brothers and 3 sisters, Aunt Conway, Aunt Shaughnessey and Aunt Maloney. Aunt Conway was married to Tom Conway who had five sons: Father John, a Priest, then Pat, Tom, Michael and Jim. And, five daughters: Helen, Maggie and two others who were in the U.S. in my time. Aunt Shaughnessey, who was also married to a farmer about 3 miles from the

City of Limerick had two sons: John & Ned. There were four daughter: Mary, Margaret, Nora and Catherine. Nora and I were very chummy and used to go out there on the bike often on Sunday morning after Mass and come home at night. It was a pleasant change after a week in the city to walk around the farm and orchard and look how the crops were coming and what was being planted and how the farm produced and talk things over with the older folks. As I was making my living on the production of the farms, I had to have a good understanding of the condition of what I called my people. Their troubles were my troubles and I always learned something as I was brought up in the City of Dublin and only got to the country for the few visits that I have written about. I had a lot to learn and they each liked me to visit them in turn and I learned a lot.

Aunt Conway lived near where Ma's people lived and went to the same chapel[[17]](#endnote-18). My mother's people were only a few miles from Ma's home, as Newtown Crecora, County Limerick was my mother's home. Years after my mother had died in Dublin and I went to live and work in Limerick, I used to ride out the seven miles to my cousins’ (Uncle Ned's son and two daughters) on Saturday afternoon and stay over until Monday. They also had a large farm and there was a forth or rath on the farm down near the main road and another some distance. The house was some distance in from the road (Newtown Road) and before I got the bike I always liked walking. So, Saturday afternoon I dressed up for walking and had knickers or riding breeches, leather leggings to the knees and, of course, my walking stick, a flower in the button hole and walked out some miles.

Then, I crossed in over a fence and went across some fields and up through a grove of trees. As it got dark on this occasion I would, as I often did before, call out to my cousin Martin, “Martin, I am here -- McGinty," as he used to call me McGinty. So he would come out and get up on a fence and hold up a lantern that helped a lot, but I knew my way pretty well.

Well, this time as I crossed the fields and saw two more or less sound white things, I thought it was one of the farm people bringing in milk in two pails. But I said to myself, she is late, so I said "Good evening Ma’am." I got no answer so repeated, “Good evening Ma’am, you are out late." Still no answer. As I walked up closer I found it was a cow with two white spots. I must say I laughed out loud and told the story when I got to the house.

Another time Martin had another cousin; Jim Ryan, a brother of the girl Lil that I have mentioned as being in the house with Ma and Agnes and Ellie, that went to be a nun. He and Martin pushed me into the room where Mary and Gracie were, then fastened the latch on the outside. I kept quiet. Mary said “Who is there? I think it is you McGinty so they played a trick on you," and both of them laughed. It was dark and they were in bed and my Aunt and Uncle were sleeping in the next room so I worked carefully and pried up the hinges, the sort that when you lift the door they come apart. Fortunately for me I could lift and pull so I got it open at the hingeside and had a good time getting through. It was one time I was glad I was not big or fat. So the boys would not

let me in to bed. One slept in each bed so I took a blanket off one bed and slept on the floor. How we laughed at it many a time. I told my Aunt about it a long time after and she had a good laugh. That was the house my mother was born in, so I always felt much at home, in fact our house. I visited Uncles, Aunts, or Cousins; we always had a pleasant time as they all liked music, dancing, and no drinking. If I was seen on my way to any of these homes the word got around and that night first one couple would stroll in, then another, until a good crowd of the boys and girls arrived. So then the music would start and a dance would be in order. The boys and girls gave me a great welcome and it always meant a dance.

I was out there several times in Lent. No dance, but the rosary, all kneeling down around the fireplace, no fun. If you visit one friend's house, down goes the kettle for tea and cream cake or apple cake and they would not spare the apples. You got the kettle put on in every house. If you did not take the tea, well it would be more or less a slight so if you know your way around, you drink all the tea you get and like it. I did, anyway.

Well, I still know that there were a lot of events that happened in the years I was going to school in Dublin, so I must go back to perhaps 1886 to 1889. There was the Egyptian war with England. I saw the soldiers leaving on ships don on the river Liffey. I even played sick from school at times to see them. They went from there to England and on to Egypt. It was a tough war and gave England a great fright for a

few years. I don’t remember how long it lasted. I was too young for that sort of thing.

There were at that time members of Parliament, that is, men chosen to represent the Irish National Parliament in England. there were a great many men who fought for the freedom of Ireland. Wonderful leaders who devoted their lives to the fight for freedom and suffered death in prisons and deportation and even death on the gallows. Great noble men such as Robert Emmet, Wolfe Tone and Lord Edward Fitzgerald to name a few. They fought with swords and guns. Then there was Daniel O'Connell, Parnell, Davitt, the two brothers John and William Redmond, and Healy the jealous fellow that turned against Parnell and became a favorite of the English Government so that he got a high position in Ireland. When the split came Ireland was very much divided. Some saw him a patriot and could not see that he was in the pay of the English politicians who sought to divide the Irish Parliamentary Party that was pressing them hard and showing them up before the world.

Against Parnell they used their usual tactics -- if you cannot beat him fair, do it any foul way. So they worked what I know to be the Badger Game. Farnell was the leader and was an idol of the Irish Nation for his fine leadership. And, he was a perfect gentleman. Well, a Captain O'Shea of the English Army, with his wife, Kitty, was used to bait a trap for Parnell. It was timed and sprung in the regular way those people had planned it so that Parnell was disgraced. There were the courtroom acts where all the proofs were lined up so that the poor gentleman was broken in spirit and health. A lot of the good friends fell away from

him. That's why I say Ireland and his colleagues were divided and the Parliamentary Party never got back on its feet again. The New Redmonds and the Healy gang spoiled what the great Parnell had given his life to build up. I will not get into politics as it would take me months to write and try to explain and I was very young and did not take interest in those things, but I was told by my father about many things and he read the papers every day. I used to ask him about things I did not understand about Ireland and its fights for freedom. Then I used to read a lot about Ireland in stories and the history of Ireland from the bygone days before St. Patrick came to convert the Irish people.

There was also a land league that was got up to fight against absentee landlords -- English Generals who were given some of the finest sections of Ireland and who never spent either time or money in the country. They forced the farmers who lived in what the landlords called their land to pay rents to them, the very land that was their father's and was handed down to them for generations. So a William O'Brien who was a member of Parnell's party put up a good fight for the settlement of the dispute and to get the farms for the Irish people. He was imprisoned for making speeches, of course, by the English, but the fight got stronger. It went on for many years so that by the time I was in Limerick, that is when I came to live there before I came out here, the farmers were permitted to buy their own land on what was so many years purchase. Pay the bank so much for so many years and the banks did up the landlords. He people then tried to build up the businesses and the farms, but owing to the poverty and persecutions thousands had to go to foreign lands to try to live. That was more or less why I

became one of those that could not see any way to make a living and so came out here. It was the best thing I ever did for God has been very good to me and my wife and we are blessed with five of the finest children a father and mother could ever expect to have. God bless them. We thank Him every day.

Well, when I was in Dublin Atlantic Cable, came in to the River Liffey as it was being shown in different ports of the world. I heard about it at school and went away out towards the and of the Liffey, to the North Wall as we called it. I waited that Sunday for several hours and as it was two miles from home and I got hungry I asked a coast guard who had a telescope about where the ship would be. He told me it was waiting for high tide to get over the bar out in Dublin Bay and it would not be in for hours. So I went home, had dinner and my father came back with me and the ship was in. It had 6 masts and also had paddles as it was a paddle wheeler. The paddles were as big as a small cottage. In the dictionary there are the measurements. I knew them at that time, but forget them now. The ship stayed about a month and you could get in to see all over it for one shilling. They also had theatricals. I did not have a shilling in those good old days so did not go on board, so got an eyeful from outside.

As we lived on the north side of the city at that time I used to walk up North Frederick St. where the Orange Bulb and the National Club were next door to each other. I saw and heard a great many speeches

the balcony on the second floor. It was from there that Parnell spoke the night he was released from Kilmainham Jail. There were torchlight processions and bands all the way from the jail to the club which must have been about three miles. It was one of the great events in my young life.

There was a Sunday near Christmas when my father and I went for a walk out towards the Clontarf Road. Clontarf was a nice but small bathing beach about three miles from the centre of Dublin and could be reached by train. We saw an engine of a train lying on the bed of a signalman whose signal house was close to the tracks. He, fortunately, was at Mass at the time. It was a shunting engine and had got off the rails in some way. I never got particulars as I used to study my lessons for the next day after supper or tea as we called it. We always went to bed about 10:00 o'clock, except my brother William, he generally got in about 11:00 o'clock.

The first time I saw a real Indian was at a Wild West show at the Rotunda, a very old building always used for political meetings and concerts. This time it was the real Buffalo Bill (Bill Cody) with cowboys at camp and singing songs and then chasing the Indians round and round a big ring like a circus ring with drop netting between the people and the actors. These nets had forests and rocks figures on them as you looked through them you saw what was a forest opposite to you and all the fighting was in between. Hengler’s Circus used to come from England every May and go away first of October. They had a great big building

out back in the Rotunda Gardens, like a small park close to the principal street, O'Connell St. running north and south and across the street from the clubs I mentioned where the Naturalist Club was. I saw Prince George when he visited Ireland when he was only a boy. I also saw Lord Roberts and Lord Kitchener and General Wolsley as the boys in the school kept tabs on the great military events and some of us were sick and did not go to school when there was a great military general and hundreds of soldiers and bands (even if they wore the red coat) we wanted to see and hear. They used to have reviews and mock battles as we called them, in the park, often lasting a whole week. We were not hungry or tired all day, but when it was all over it was a long way home. If I was late, well, I was always home for tea and I could be playing with one of the boys from school, you know, so I did not have to explain anything. Outside of these things I hardly ever went playing in the streets like some other boys -- I stayed home. My mother wanted it that way, so I studied my lessons and then got a thriller western and so got to know all about the wild west to my mind. The "Bowery Boys" was a great story in a small paper magazine out once a week -- lots of fun. Nothing like what they write now. The Queen Clipper of the Clouds and a Thousand Leagues Under the Sea were favorites with the boys. Sometimes we got a thriller like Calamity Jane and Deadwood Dick. The boys treasured these and you would only pass them on to a real friend.

I often, especially in August vacation time, went to Kingstown, it is in Dublin about 20 minutes in the train from Westland Row Station. It has a lovely harbor and the mail boats, there were 5 of them, carried

the mails to and from Holyhead in England across the Irish Sea. They were Ulster, Munster, Leinster, Connaught and Ireland. One of them was always held in reserve so as to keep the mail running no matter what the weather. The mail was in large baskets that had wheels so they could be run down the gangway of the steamer across the platform and into the train in short time. It them came in through Westland Row Station, then on a new overhead railway track to Amiens street Station and then on a branch line where some of it went to Belfast up the coast and the other went on an “underground” under part of the outer edge of the city under Phoenix Park to Kingsbridge Station where it went to all the southern cities. There was also another station where the trains run to the western part of Ireland, it was the Broadstone Railway. The mail used to be carried to it in mail trucks. I saw a very large lumber yard and furniture manufacturing place that burned one Sunday and the firemen were still there the following Sunday.

I made my First Communion in the Marlborough Pro Cathedral, that is where the Bishop says Mass, and I was confirmed by a Cardinal (I can not think of his name just now, perhaps it was Manning); it was in 1887 I think. In 1889 I was visiting Grange again and that was about the time I was with my sister Bridget and going to school in Meanus. Ma's people used to go to mass there sometimes but Fedamore was their parish church.

Well my Grandmother died in 1889, I remember she was 89 years old so I have that fresh in my memory. I used to like to look at the Highlanders Band every day as they passed up and down Thomas Street where I worked in that grocery store. Soldiers (the guards) used to go down from

Kilmainham barracks to the Dublin Castle and the Bank of Ireland. That was under British Control at that time.

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1. Thomas Hannan (1864 – 1964), married to Mary T. “Minnie” Keane, and author of this memoir [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
2. Tom Maloney (~1823 – 1891), married to Thomas’ mother’s sister, first name unknown [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
3. Patrick Hannan (~1837 – 1900), married to Mary Hannan (~1833 – 1883) [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
4. Mary Hannan (~1833 – 1883), married to Patrick Hannan (~1837 – 1900) [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
5. Pat Hannan (1869 - 1940) [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
6. Katie Hannan (1868 – 1941) [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
7. The Invincibles were a splinter group of the Irish Republican Brotherhood [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
8. The Clan na Gael was an Irish republican organization in the United States in the late 19th and 20th centuries, successor to the Fenian Brotherhood and a sister organization to the Irish Republican Brotherhood [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
9. Tom Hannan (1908 - ?) [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
10. Renamed “Dún Laoghaire” in 1920 [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
11. Renamed “Pearse” station in 1966, incorrectly known as “Pearse Street” station locally [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
12. John Hannan (1862 - 1896) [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
13. Joe and Katie were first cousins. Joe’s parents were Ned Hannan and Nora Ryan. [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
14. William Hannan was the brother of Thomas who died in 1911. [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
15. Joe and Katies’ daughter Nora married James Madden. [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
16. James Madden died in January 1955, which indicates that this section was written during 1955. [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
17. The Conways lived in Carnane, Fedamore [↑](#endnote-ref-18)