



*Diary of Our
Father - Son Visit*

*to
Ancestral Ireland
in 1985*

Tuesday, July 9th, 1985

Day of Departure

..... Mary had me at O'Hare Airport by 1:40 PM. Elizabeth came with her. It is a hot day, about 90° F. Never have I left for a trip feeling better, - and better-prepared. Being age 72 may help. This was a dreamed-of trip that had little hope last Xmas in Loyola Hospital. This spring it became a surprising reality when Elizabeth ~~when~~ ^{when} ~~she~~ convalescing from "a crushed vertebral" said she was giving ~~me~~ this trip. She and Mary have given much of themselves in the weeks prior to preparation and even more so as the preparing began. It's good I didn't know what was ahead for Pat & me enroute to New York.

My plane - Flight 594M scheduled to leave at 3:05 PM - took off at 5:30 PM.
(New York being closed due to heavy storms)
and we landed there at 8 PM (Chicago time)
Pat had just arrived ahead of me - but
we were too late for our Aer Lingus
flight. By 10 PM Chicago time we're still
at a TWA service center waiting to be
given free night's lodging and food....
There were some 50 of us - two couples
with two infants each - so well behaved.
By 11 PM we were assigned the Midway
Hotel and were waiting for its van -
we, watching the airport being locked
up as we stood waiting - Pat & I and
a young woman returning to Rome.
It was midnight (Chicago time) when we
got into our hotel room. Pat phoned
Madeleine of our flight. So ends our
departure day - not over the Atlantic
on an Aer Lingus flight as planned;
also not ~~two~~ bomb or hostage air
casualties.

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Wednesday, July 10, 1985
Our Day of Make-Do
New York City

Our frustrating hurdles continue.

I rise at 7AM CST; bath tub drain doesn't work as I take shower. I phone Mary at 7:30 CST; oatmeal + dry toast in Midway's Restaurant. Pat gets no choice for breakfast. I phone Páid in Dublin regarding our plight. At 9AM we check out of Midway; take taxi back to JFK Airport to confirm our seats on Aer Lingus tonight. The taxi driver was a Hindu from Indore; we talk; he shows us his drivers license; he was born Oct. 16, 1950, same day as Pat!! Our fare = \$13; I tip him \$2. Back to TWA to check on our flight seats on Aer Lingus; Pat had been told by phone at Midway Hotel that only one of us was confirmed; TWA's check-in-attendant claims both of us are on the computer! We want to be sure. Pat stands in line an hour to check with another TWA agent. 11AM CST, Pat comes to me

and we are still in trouble. He leaves me with luggage again to make another effort to resolve our problem. Maybe we won't leave tonight yet. Horrible thought now. 11:15 AM CST Pat comes with hopeful news; we are with seats on Northwest Orient departing at 7:30 PM EST. We eat lunch and then leave to catch JFK's airport van to the Northwest Orient complex where we get our boarding passes. Pat then phones his mother - about our good news and we proceed to rest & wait for departure starting with 2 Irish Coffees (1 each) in the cocktail lounge - for the horrendous price of \$8.50... About 3 PM, I had a snack; then Pat, while taking turns to watch our luggage. We catch up meanwhile on much visiting.... 7 PM CST, we see much activity about us; the place is swarming with people. Our flight 038 leaves at 8:05 PM EST; We have had several conversations with an Irish lady, a Mrs. Duggan, about 78, with wrinkled face an natural brown hair yet who like us missed the Aer Lingus connection last night. She, on her way back to revisit her girlhood Galway again.... The time has begun to drag on but we try to rest & relax & prepare ourselves for tomorrow's first day on Ireland's roads to Donegal.