

Jamie's brother John died here in November, 1982, in Cassie's good care. That she and Johnnie, her brother-in-law incidentally, were not without friends becomes evident when Cassie brings me a box containing almost 200 Mass cards, many of which I scan. And later on Cassie's surprise of the evening materializes. Her daughter, Mary, plays a tape recording of "Johnnie" singing an Irish song. Much is said about his love for people and his happy nature and good disposition. (I am glad they showed me his grave in the Montaugh cemetery; the adjoining school incidentally is where he, Jamie and their sisters and other brother attended school as they grew up at Drumbrisker, the farm their Uncle James - "the Australian" purchased with the gold sovereigns, the farm bought later by Harry Calvin, after James, Henry & their mother had died.)

The evening at Cassies was "young" yet — and I had been talking with Cormac before the warm stove, when they ushered in elderly Michael Muldoon — his cap still on, and a wide smile enhancing his bright eyes. Why he comes, I soon learn and hastily make note of it: his mother, Elizabeth McMenamin and my grand uncle, Henry's wife, Margaret were sisters! So Michael (they used his Gaelic name at first, which threw me, when they switched to English) is Jamie's cousin — and Margaret Bleapleis also!

Refreshments are served and good tea but I make no notes of these. There are other visitors we meet. Pat does so well to make it easier. There is another old man, with glasses — dark-rimmed, who retains his cap also. Before we leave, we learn he is Joseph Patrick Johnson, orphaned at an early age — a cousin of Cassie and reared by her family.

It is after 9 PM with still sufficient light outside, when I ask Pat to take a photo of Muldoon and myself. Before we knew it Pat was performing the photographic feat of our Fermanagh visit. He took splendid shots of Cassies' crowd in front of her house with threatening rain drops teazing us.

Our Third Fermanagh Day

Saturday, July 20, 1985

After our 9AM breakfast Pat drove us into Enniskillen to the Aer Lingus office to confirm our flight reservations home on next Thursday, July 25th. To-day's weather promised early to be variable, and it was. I wore my new raincoat, muffler and cap and was glad to have them.

It was 11AM as we boarded the KESTREL that was to take us to Devenish Island; but first the captain detoured a bit taking us under Enniskillen's old watergate bridge that we might see the city's coat-of-arms embedded on its masonry as well as the ruins of Caldwell castle built in 1428!

Forty-five minutes later we have cruised northward and are docking at the west side of historic Devenish Island. It appears unreal, as do its surroundings!

First, I forgot to mention that our group is smaller by two this morning; we are minus Margaret and Ginger. Margaret stayed home to prepare for the dinner the Bleakleys are giving this evening, when we get to meet their friend, Jim Emery, from Castleaderg who was "used" by the IRA as a proxy bomber. So, we ^{four} join a group of ten tourists boarding the Kestrel for the 2-hour Dervish tour. Mary Cleary, Margaret's sister takes me "under her wing", and Eddie, escorts Patrick. The Kestrel's cabin is spacious and enclosed, so we are not concerned about the morning's cool wind and intermittent showers. The fluffy cumulus clouds fill most of the blue sky, but here and there the nearby green hills have bright exposure to sunlight. Before we arrive at Dervish - which is a step backward - some 18 centuries - we are sipping Smithwicks and Mary Cleary, a cup of tea. (She still calls me fo-suff, but is friendly and still interested in knowing her American kin better.)



Actual stained glass window
from old abbey church on Dervenish
Island. (See reverse side of this photo)

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