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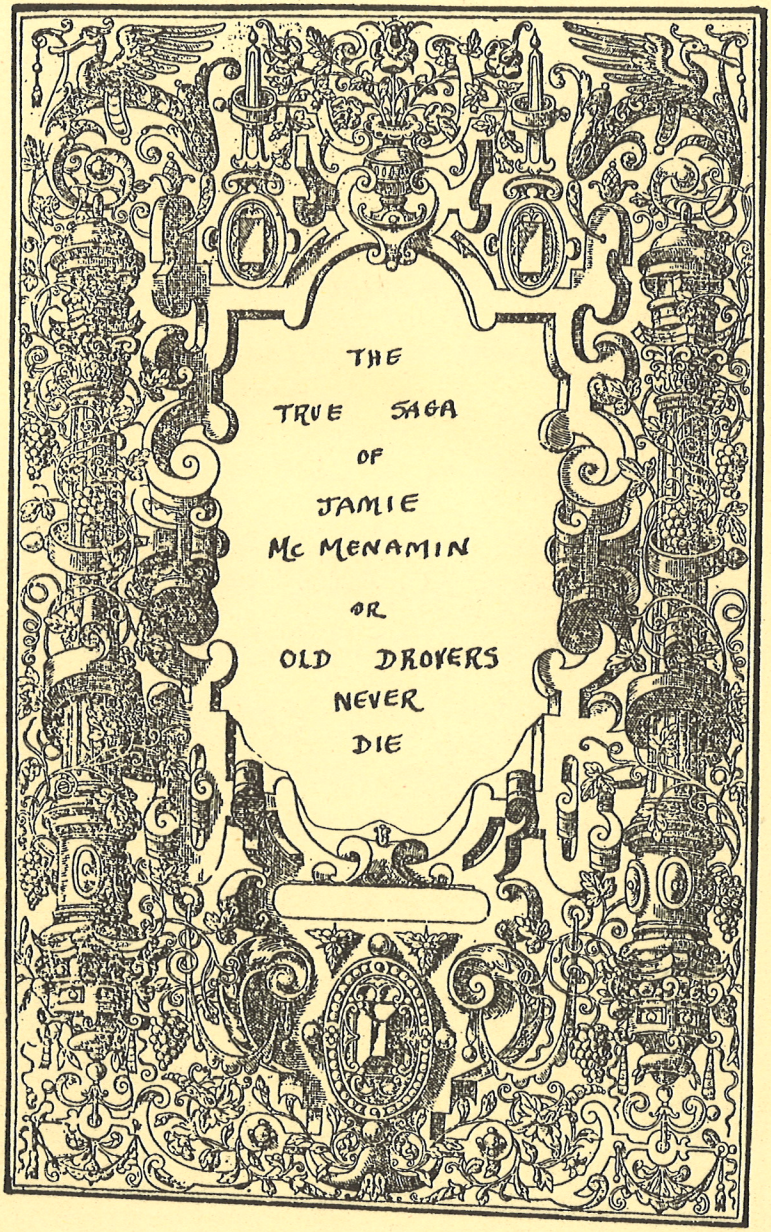


Last Copy on hand
July, 1985

Introduction

In this age of television, video games, computers fastfood service and electronic bank tellers there is too little time to know ourselves, to reflect on the past that produced us, and to appreciate the debt we owe to those who gave us this heritage. This booklet offers a backward peak at part of our history, a glimpse into the life of a descendant of James and Anna McMenamin. Four of their eight sons emigrated to America in the latter 1800's. One of them was my grandfather, Patrick, responsible for my early hobby as family archivist. Once he told me about his lost nephew who had emigrated to Australia rather than America It took me forty years to locate our "lost" Jamie but the effort was worthwhile. Jamie was glad to be found and proved to be a prodigious correspondent. It is scarcely two years since his first letter arrived and he was eager to share the past. We owe much to Jamie, for at

seventy-five, he has made a remarkable contribution to our Mc Menamin history. His own saga is now part of it. He has committed himself to our future where many of us will be grateful.

Joseph P. Mc Menamin
Son of John, Son of Patrick,
Son of James

December 8, 1983

← Jamie, the plucky drover and Irish emigrant; photo taken in 1930 in Rangiora, New Zealand

Jamie, our family sage and philosopher, taken in Auckland, in 1982 →

PATRICK J. McMENAMIN'S BOYHOOD FAMILY

JAMES: BORN ABOUT 1838
MARRIED AT AGE 17
HIS BROTHER, NED,
EMIGRATED TO NEW
YORK - A FARMER.

JAMES = ANNE
|
MARRIED, 1842

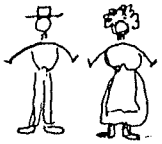
ANNE: BORN ABOUT 1825
MARRIED AT AGE 16
WAS CALLED NANCY
HER MAIDEN NAME
WAS McMENAMIN

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	KATE	MICHAEL	OWEN	JAMES	EDWARD	PATRICK	HUGH	HENRY	JOHN
	1844	1846	1848	1850	1852	1854	1856	1858	1860
# Children →		(5)	(13)			(12)	(7)	(5)*	

The underlined dates are known years of birth; the other dates are reasonably accurate - based on the serial order of ages given by my grandfather. We have an old snapshot of Kate & Edward in their late years, standing in front of a thatched cottage. They never emigrated. Michael seems to have had the exceptional interest for [redacted] her parents, returning to build them a cottage for their old age. Owen was married & had one child when emigrating. James & John never married. James after years in America & Australia returned to buy a farm in the Co. Fermanagh. Owen died in 1870 in Oak Park, Ill. - when his 13th child was nine days old. Edward & Kate never married; Edward had a "club-foot" and became a teacher". * "Henry had a Son Jem in Australia" - as all my grandfather could recall. [Actually it was New Zealand]

THE HENRY Mc MENAMIN FAMILY

HENRY, BORN IN 1857 DID NOT MARRY UNTIL AGE 47, AND DIED AT 63, IN 1920



HENRY = MARGARET
1904

MARGARET, HIS WIFE WAS A Mc MENAMIN BEFORE MARRIAGE – OF THE ROGER Mc M. SEPT AT AGHYARAN PARISH.

1	2	3	4	5
				
JOHN	JAMES	MICHAEL	ANNIE	LENA
1907–1982	1908–1988	1909–1975	1910–1928	1912–1976

NOTES:

JOHN: – raised by "his mother's family" after her death, the younger ones, went with their father & Uncle Jim, the Australians to Edenkeogh with Uncle Neal + Aunt Kate.

JAMES: – emigrated to N.Z. in 1927. back to Ireland 1932-36 + married Margaret Mc Goldrick; no children; they left the outbacks in 1953; came to Auckland; he worked for The Auckland Gas Co., 16 yrs; she died in 1981 after surviving a stroke 4 1/2 yrs before; worked in a hotel 8 yrs.

MICHAEL: Mick had daughter Mary who lives near Jim in Auckland and son, John, newspaper reporter in Tokoroa – 23 Papas St., only one to pass on the name. married April 1983

ANNIE: died at 18

LENA: died – of angina at 64

LETTER FROM JAMES McMENAMIN
OF AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND TO
JOSEPH McMENAMIN, OAK PARK, ILLINOIS
IN JUNE 1982

Dear Joe:

At last I have got round to writing a line in reply to your welcome and interesting letter. It was rather a surprise to me. I know I have many relatives in the U.S.A. but do not know them or their addresses. The only ones I ever corresponded with were my uncles Patrick and Hugh. That was in the early 1930's when I was in New Zealand the first time. I learned from my uncle Edward (or Ned) that I had four uncles in the U.S.A., Mick, Owen, Patrick and Hugh. There was another whose name was James. He returned to Ireland from America in the 1860's after losing all his money in a bank swindle - something like 700 pounds sterling. A nice sum in those days. He returned home and later sailed for Australia where men were reported to be finding gold like a man digging potatoes at Ballarat.

Alas, it was wishful thinking. Uncle James worked hard for many years on cattle and sheep runs, where the owners counted their holdings by the square mile. Like most of the family, he could neither write nor read; getting on in years he returned to Ireland with 800 gold sovereigns in his belt and bought into a sizeable farm in Co. Fermanagh where he started farming on his own. But it didn't last long. After so long in the Australian sunshine, the damp, wet climate of Ireland was too much and he came down with rheumatic fever and ever after suffered much with rheumatism.

As a result of Uncle James' illness my father, whose name was Henry, had to leave Edenreagh, the ancestral home of the Mac Menamins, and go to Fermanagh taking with him my mother and us 4 children. For a while things went all right. Then my mother took ill and died

leaving us with Uncle James and my father. I was 5 then - Mick 4, Annie 3, and Lena 1. My uncle said he would have no woman in the house and he would look after us himself, and so he did. He had learned all about washing, cooking, etc. while in Australia. He was a wonder, but in 1918 he died, aged 68, with a hernia. They did not know what to do with a hernia in those days. He often told us that he regretted leaving Australia.

A year later my father sold the farm in Fermanagh and we came back to Edenreagh, where still lived my Uncle Ned and my Aunt Kate who soon passed away, aged 80. Next to go was my dad, aged 63, with pneumonia. He had been tough as whalebone as a young man - short but solidly built. Uncle Ned was left in charge of us; it is of him I would like to say a few words as it was he who taught me all I know about the history of the Mac Menamins. Ned was born with crippled feet and was of no use at manual work. So he was sent to school where he became a brilliant scholar. Having gone as far as the teacher, who was a well learned man, could take him, he then studied two trades, one a surveyor and the other a valuator of land. Luck was with him for it was the time that Gladstone had decided to buy out the great landed gentry, the Irish landlords who had been the curse of Ireland for centuries. My uncle found plenty of employment in surveying and valuing; he always worked for the tenant farmers on the Irish Land Commission but would never work for a landlord as he hated them like vermin. He was a great reader, and as to the history of Ireland, since the dawn of time he could repeat it like he was saying his prayers.

The Mac Menamins originally came from a place called Slavin Glen, a beautiful glen a few miles from Drumguin, a small country town in County Tyrone, about 10 miles from Omagh which was the largest town

in Tyrone. They had lived there since time immemorial. One of them went to Edenreagh with the Earl, Lord, or Marquis "of so and so" who had bought the town land of Edenreagh from the previous land lord. The first thing the new owner did was to turn out all the tenants of the land. He put them on the road side with the help of Military Land Police who were always at his disposal. He left them to perish. But some relief society with dollars it had got from America chartered a coffin ship as they were then called, and took them to Queensland in Australia where they settled, took up land as it was free for the taking, and did well. Today their descendants are well to do, still with a love of Ireland and deep hatred of everything English. The landlord stocked Edenreagh with cattle and employed my ancestor as a herd or stock man as we would call them here. He seems to have gotten on fairly well with this landlord for after a few years he talked him into renting or leasing 100 acres of land to him.

So the Mac Menamins were established in Edenreagh; things flowed quietly until my great great grandfather* came on the scene. As a young man he went to America where he managed to get himself a bit of education -- something then impossible in Ireland for a Catholic to get. After some years he returned and took over the farm. He built the first two storied house ever seen in that district, settled down and married -- had one boy and one girl. The boy's name was Michael.

Edenreagh was sold again, this time to Lord Tennant; a good and kind man, but an absentee who only came to Ireland for the shooting season. He liked my great great granddad, and always stayed with

*Editor's Note - This will be checked since it may be a great grandfather.

him while in Ireland, but he made one fatal mistake as far as we were concerned. He appointed a man named John or Jack Johnstone as his agent and he was a devil. He had a good farm himself or an other estate. But he had two on-coming sons and was looking for farms for them; he was a bitter Orange man and hated Catholics like poison. He disliked my ancestor because he knew he was Fenian, and a Molly Maguire, another society that put terror into landlords and agents. A family named Connally had managed to rent a farm on the estate at a rent they could not pay. So Johnstone jumped them and threw them out on the road side. One farm for one of his sons! Now for the next.

Then my great great granddad walked straight into the net. He saw the Connally's starving on the roadside on a bleak, cold March evening so he said to them, "Come with me, I will give you food and shelter." The news soon reached Johnstone for there is always in Ireland the informer! On hearing this he dryly remarked, "Mac Menamin will soon be looking for shelter himself." True to his word, some days later he approached the house accompanied by six members of the Royal Irish Constabulary with carbines on their shoulders and revolvers in their belts. Johnstone nailed a notice on the door giving the occupier 7 days to be clear of the property. He had another farm for his son!

My ancestor fled to a bleak mountainside where he built a temporary shelter for himself and his family; it was made of sod and thatched with rushes. Then he called on the Fenians and the Molly Maguires to help him. They frightened Johnstone, but not enough. He would only return 16 acres of the 100 he had confiscated. Eventually seeing he could do no better, my ancestor accepted it and passed peacefully away leaving his son James and daughter Ann on 16 acres.

James married and raised 8 sons and one daughter. Ann married a man called William Monteith who was non-Catholic but he became one, or at least pretended to do so. They had three daughters, the last two twins. On getting married Ann demanded half the land and my grandfather gave it to her, leaving himself 8 acres, too small to live on and too big to live off as I found when I tried it in later years. Ann died shortly after the birth of the twins and William Monteith, not knowing what to do, was delighted when Mrs. Johnstone, daughter-in-law to the man who robbed us of the land, offered to take the three and bring them up as Protestants. Monteith had no objections. Mrs. Johnstone's husband died without making a will. His brother came and claimed half of everything which amounted to 800 pounds. Mrs. Johnstone, not having any money, had to raise a mortgage on the farm.

When she died she left everything to the Monteith girls along with the mortgage! It looked for a long time as if the land would return to us again, as the Monteith girls were much older than us and we were their nearest relations. But it was not to be; that mortgage spoiled everything. If I could have paid it off in 1932 when I returned from New Zealand I would have got the property, but I had no hope of raising 800 pounds in the middle of a world wide depression -- especially in Ireland! However, a neighbor of theirs who was well off with a farm of 400 acres lent them the money they wanted on conditions their property went to him when they passed away. They did not even return the 8 acres their father had taken from my grandfather. They sold it to another farmer.

So ends the story of the Mac Menamins in Edenreagh. There are none of them there now. Now, Joe, I have written a lot so will have to come to close. Before doing so, I will ask you a question: which

of my uncles are you descended from? It is not clear in your letter. You referred to a man or girl named Grace. I remember Uncle Ned getting letters from a girl of that name. She sent him an American paper, the Chicago Tribune, for many years. Margaret Bleakly, your contact in Ireland and our distant relative, would know her maiden name. My brother, John, in Fermanagh has been ill for a long time with a heart complaint called angina. It killed Nick and Lena, my brother and sister, and now I suffer with it myself. I am ill now and since my Maggie died last September, life is very lonely. I have relatives here, but they live long distances away, except for Mary, one of Nick's girls, who lives in Auckland. But at the other end of it, she comes to see me quite often. Her brother John in Tokoroa is the last chance for the name of McMenamin surviving here. Well, Joe, this is all now except to ask you to write to me again. I will be very glad to hear more from you.

Yours sincerely,

J. MacMenamin

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF JAMES McMENAMIN
OF AUCKLAND, NEW ZEALAND
SENT TO JOSEPH P. McMENAMIN IN 1983

On March 25th, 1927 I boarded a ship called the Mataroa. (Shining Cloud in the Maori language) at Southampton in the South of England. The anchor was weighed and we sailed down the English Channel in a stiff breeze, each of us with a rather sad look, and why not? Weren't we bidding goodbye to all we had known in life so far! Our country, our friends, our relations, and all the happy scenes we had witnessed in our childhood. I can tell you there was little gayety for a while.

Other things began to attract our attention - passing ships and the lowering weather. I remember meeting the great ship "Majestic" (then the largest passenger ship in the world) on her return voyage to England. We looked like a banana boat compared to her. Soon the weather looked ugly and big waves began to rise making the "Mataroa" roll with unpleasant results. Passengers began to feel squeamish and expressed wishes that they had never come. They little knew what was ahead of them in the next three days!

Five o'clock sounded and most of us went off for our first dinner at sea. Some did not stay for the three courses but took off to their cabins below. I felt quite good then and ate a hearty dinner, later deciding to get out on deck and have a look around. But a deck officer approached me and told me it would be better to get to my cabin and stay there as there was a storm on the way and he expected a nasty night. I took his advice. The cabin and beds looked nice and neat. I got a top one which proved lucky later on. My luggage consisted of one suitcase which was easily looked after.

Getting into bed I was soon asleep; I hadn't had any sleep for several nights, what with the farewells and a "convoy" in Ireland the night before I left. There was not much chance of any sleep. The trip across the Irish Seas was not one of repose, for the excitement kept one going. Awakening during the night, I was much alarmed at the rolling of the ship. She would roll over on one side, linger a minute or so, then right herself only to do the same thing again. Another thing that alarmed me even more was the swishing of water into the cabin as the ship rolled. I managed to switch on a light and what a sight. Suitcases and clothes were floating around in a foot of water; everyone was awake and everyone sick and vomiting. It made me sick too and for the next three days and nights our cabin was a terrible sight. When day came, stewards came in and fastened belts across our beds to prevent us being thrown out. They also brought crates of soda water in small bottles which they urged us to drink as they said it would ease the sickness.

Three days and nights we wallowed in the Bay of Biscay, making little headway. On the morning of the 4th day the ship was steady again. We jumped out of our bunks and rushed up on deck to find a nice calm blue sea and warm sunshine. The big storm was over, in a day or so we would be passing the Canary Islands. Hope soon returned as we sailed on, the weather getting warmer all the time; the sea was like a mill pond. When we reached the tropics we took our blankets and slept on deck at night as it was much cooler. One woke up in the morning feeling so good.

Then we talked alot about Oa Tea Roa. (The "land of the long white cloud", in Maori). We had heard everything good about it. "The paradise of the Pacific". "The land of milk and honey". It had plenty of milk and honey all right, but we would learn it

stopped there.

Further on the way we stopped at Panama, which was interesting. It was owned and run by the U.S.A. then. We also stopped at Pitcairn Island, some thousand miles north of New Zealand. The natives came out in boats and sold us fruit and curios.

We reached the promised land on May 1st, 1927, and berthed at Princess Warf, Auckland. We admired the beautiful harbour, but that was the last of our admiration.

After many hours of red tape we were allowed to go ashore. There was no welcome of any kind and one could smell an air of hostility among the few people on the wharf, especially the labourers themselves. The government officials were not prepared to offer any help whatsoever. After all the propaganda, they had put across in England and Ireland inviting immigrants, they now told us that New Zealand was in a depression and that we would have to fend for ourselves. This was anything but encouraging after coming so far. However, a little ray of sunshine broke through; a ship's officer came forward to tell us that all who had not already arranged accommodation for that night were welcome to stay on board and have breakfast. With that the shipping company's responsibility ended.

After breakfast I came out onto Quay Street. I thought it better to have a look at my purse; it contained nine shillings and six pence (less than three dollars at the rate of that time) not very much for one who didn't know a soul in the southern hemisphere! I got into conversation with a man who had come up from the country to meet a relative of the ship and he said that he knew an old farmer named Williams who wanted someone to help him on the farm; he lived alone and milked the cows twice a day and he was stone deaf. He would pay 1:5 shillings per week as wages. I thought it over and

decided to have a look at it.

After a lot of trouble I found my way out in the country long after dark. There was no life or light in the house, but I spotted a small light some distance away. I went to see what it was and discovered it was the cow shed. The old fellow was milking by the light of a hurricane lamp. The communication between us was very poor as he could not hear. He took me back to the house where he lit a kerosene lamp and then returned to the cow shed to finish the milking. I had a look around inside the house. It was absolutely filthy and stank to high heaven. I sat down on a chair and cried my heart out. What had I done, I asked myself, to get into such a fix? The old coot returned later and started to prepare a meal. I had often seen the pigs fed in Ireland but their meal was much better and cleaner than that one. Our means of talking was two pieces of paper and pencils and it was question and answer all the way.

I suffered with Williams for four months until I had put a bit of money together and in the meantime had got to know another man who had a farm a few miles further along the track. His name was Ted Farr, Australian born and very proud of it. He was a big tall lanky fellow and always wore the slouch hat of the Australians like my Uncle Jamie did in County Fermanagh. He had been in World War I and had built a neat little house of three rooms and had a neat, clean cow shed. Unlike old Williams, he was an excellent housekeeper and cook and milked some 30 cows. He seemed so well off, owned several hundred acres, most of it still in native bush. He asked me if I would like to come and work for him. I said I would be delighted to do so, as I had taken a liking to him. We got on very well. He was my first friend in New Zealand and one of the best. We kept in touch for several years after I left for the South Island.

A race of people I would like to mention here are the native Maori, a brown-skinned people that are Polynesian. They are very like the Irish in many of their manners and customs; if you call at their homes, however humble some of them might be, you are welcomed with real hospitality. Only the best is good enough while you stay.

One night while Ted was talking he made a suggestion which was to change things for me; he suggested I go to the South Island where I would feel more at home there because the people were more friendly. Ted knew that I understood and loved horses and that I was a champion stacker of hay, wheat, oats, and barley and he explained that those crops, unlike the Auckland area, were quite common there. Although he was sorry to lose me, he said that he would not stand in the way of a young fellow bettering himself, so I went to the South. My first job was a big one, 3,000 acres of wheat to stook (shock) and then stack. Wages were 2 shillings per hour (about 50¢) and work as long as you were able to do. The work was hard and the climate hot when harvest started in January.

After harvest was over I went potato gathering at one shilling per bag. After that I went on to a big farm as a "teamster", that is, a driver of a team of six big Clydsdale horses hitched to a three furrow plough. I liked this work. It was easy as there was a seat on the plough. The horses knew what to do themselves.

But the human heart or mind is never content and always yearns for something else. I used to see big droves of wild cattle being driven along the roads on stock routes by men and dogs. These men were known as "drovers" and their dogs "cattle dogs". At last the desire to become a drover overcame me, so I went and bought myself a well-trained stock horse at a fancy price and two good cattle dogs, one a "heeler" the other a "leader" or dog that guides the

mob of cattle in the right direction. I joined up with a gang of drovers but first had to learn how to use the stock whip. And let me tell you, that takes some learning. I gave myself many nasty cuts in the process. The whip is Australian in origin, and is made of pleated kangaroo hide cut into thin strips or strings, then pleated. The handle, 18 inches long, has a light steel bar up its center and the back is "roo" hide that tapers down towards the end of the lash to almost a string, like a leather shoelace. The Australian whip is 18 ft. in length and the New Zealand one 12 ft. In the hand of one who knows to use it, it cracks like a rifle firing and it sure can move cattle!

We headed way up North from Christchurch into the foothills of the Kaikouras, one of the loveliest range of mountains in this world, and moved into wild, broken country, where without the dogs, it would have been hopeless. We would send them to the bush in the morning and not see them till late evening, when one could see the cattle emerging from the gullies and hear the dogs barking. Oh, for one of those days again!!

That chapter of our lives was soon to fade as the great depression of the 1930's was on us and everything seemed to fold up overnight. There was still plenty of work, but no money. The working man could not afford to work for nothing or he would starve. In 1932 I tried hard to find work but all in vain. New Zealand was a different country then that it is now; it had no industries; it was simply a farming country. At last I was fed up and decided to go home. I walked into Thomas Cook's office in Christchurch and found a fellow asleep behind a desk. "Wake up," I roared. "You've got a customer." "What is it?" he said. "A passage on the first ship out of here," I replied. That was easily settled as the "Rangitiki" was sailing in a few days from

Wellington. All was needed was 2:10. Later when I boarded ship I was sorry that circumstances had compelled me to leave. As I lay in my bunk at night, I would sometimes remember the poem of a "bush" poet that ran as follows.

It was "A Drover's Horse" and as I thought of it, my hand began to close on a fancied rein.

"For I felt the swing and the easy stride
of the grand old horse that I used to ride
In drought or plenty, in good or ill
the old grey horse was my comrade still.

The old grey horse with his honest ways
was a mate to me in the droving days."

We had a pleasant trip home. Quite a number of Irish people were returning as well as myself. We landed at Tilbury and got a train to London. We tasted plenty of good Guinness stout which we hadn't seen for a long time as New Zealand is a beer drinking country. It was a bit heavy and not being used to it, we became sleepy. Then we had a meal, toddled off to Euston Station to catch the express for Liverpool which we reached at 10 o'clock that night. There the "Ulster Queen" would take us across the Irish Sea to our homeland. We got aboard, had some more Guinness, and decided to have some sleep as it had been a long day.

We woke up to a beautiful clear morning and came on deck. What a sight met our eyes, one I will never forget. Away to the southwest of us against the skyline were the beautiful Mourne Mountains which looked lovely in the early morning sun. We parted in Belfast after a round of Old Bushmills Irish whiskey, never to meet again.

I made my way to Edenreagh to receive the usual Irish welcome. Times were not as bad as I expected; in rural homes no one was hungry. There was plenty of potatoes, Irish and American bacon. Porridge and plenty of soda bread were cooked in a camp oven over a peat or

turf fire. People had little money though; prices of things they had to sell were low but anything one had to buy was cheap. One thing that came to my attention as soon as I arrived was the cheerfulness of the people themselves. I had been sickened before I left New Zealand at the moaning and whining about the bad times. I never heard a murmur in Ireland. Could it be that the Irish people, having been innured to hardships for centuries, accepted it as part of life?

That was the year 1932. Great events were on the way both for Ireland and me, although we did not realize it at the time. First, I met a lovely girl named Margaret McGoldrick whose people like our own had lived in the Castlederg district for generations. We were married on February 22, 1933 and settled down to live on our little farm at Edenreagh.

On the political scene events began moving in 1932. Mr. De Valera was elected Prime Minister by a large majority of what was then called the Irish Free State. His first move was to inform the British government that a sum of money known as Land Annuities (amounting to 10 million pounds yearly) would no longer be paid to them as they had no rightful claim to it. They were surprised. "What sort of man is this," they asked. Mr. DeValera told them he was willing to put this matter before any international court in the world and he would abide by that Court's decision. They said "No, this is a domestic dispute and must be settled within the Empire." DeValera replied that Ireland considered it a dispute between two independent nations. The British retaliated by imposing a tariff of $6 a head on Irish cattle.

At this time most of Ireland's cattle surplus was exported to England and Scotland. This new head duty meant the death knell to the Irish cattle farmer. But if his cattle could be gotten into the six northern countries illegally, the tariff could be ignored.

THE SMUGGLERS

So now the three most thrilling years of my life began, and the three hardest. No one, only those who went through it will ever know the hardships we went through, with cold, wet, hunger, and above all fatigue and want of sleep. Still, it had a fascination for us that is hard to understand now. I well remember my first assignment.

It was a lovely evening in September, 1933. I was busy cutting a little field of oats on my small farm in a primitive way with a scythe just as my grandfather had done 100 years ago. A man, whom I knew slightly, approached me and said, "Put that scythe away; I have better work for you." His name was Con Connelly, a big cattle dealer who bought large mobs of cattle in Ireland and took them to England and Scotland, where he sold them at a good profit. He owned a good farm outside Castlederg. He told me he had 60 head over the border at Stranorlar in Donegal, and if I would drive them to his farm at night he would pay me one pound per head. I thought it over and agreed to do the job. He said he did not think there was much danger as the customs had not got the hang of things yet. But if there was trouble, I was to forget the cattle and make my own escape. This was the rule smuggling men laid down afterwards. I told my Maggie what I decided to do. She did not object but was a bit anxious about my safety. Next evening as day was fading, with my faithful dog I set out for Stranorlar some eight or ten miles away. Being a fast walker, it did not take me very long to get there.

I was welcomed by the family where the cattle were held and was soon having a hearty meal. There is no other place in this world for hospitality like Donegal as I was to learn in the following years. We sat afterwards and talked. I told them of the droving days in New

Zealand and how it was done there. At midnight I had my mob at the line that divided Ireland. I said a little prayer to the Mother of God for her protection and over we went along the main road to Castlederg, to Connolly's farm, putting the cattle in a field, or paddock as we would call it in New Zealand. I then headed for home, happy and contented. There I found that my Maggie was still afoot. She had stayed up waiting my return. I gave her a lecture not to do that again. Connolly came around and handed me sixty pounds, which when I considered it later was the most unlucky money I ever got. It was tempting, I know, for it caused me to overlook the real big money. I, myself, could have kept away from the border, employed an agent to buy for me and get other smugglers to bring them across to the north. Then I could arrange with the well-to-do Protestant farmers to sell them for me at a pound a head. But I was too young and foolish then to see all that. Daring the customs officer and police to catch me and the moving of mobs of cattle had something appealing in it. Though it differed every way, even to the cattle themselves, from the New Zealand scene, the allure never changed. The cattle in Ireland were docile while their cousins in New Zealand were partly wild and dangerous, would turn on man and horse when roused and severely injure or in some cases kill both.

In Ireland the summer months were the most pleasant for us but they had one drawback. The short nights didn't give one so much chance if one had to go a long way. Once you crossed the border, the further you got away from it, the safer you were. Two brothers who were twins, John and Joe Donaghy, joined with me. They were both shrewd cattle dealers, and quite a lot of the stock we put over belonged to them. At the start it was one pound per head, but competition grew fast and the price dropped to ten shillings. However,

a few men in the business preferred the old drovers who had learned the ropes, and could be trusted; so they continued to pay them the higher price. (God knows we earned it.)

To go on roads and lanes was suicide as these were patrolled day and night by police and customs men in cars and vans. The rugged mountain country, lonely glens and marshy bogs were our routes. It became worse when we got into the farm lands with hedges, ditches, barbedwire fences and stone walls. Noise and lights had to be out. If a beast got injured or bogged in swamp land, it had to be left behind. Time could not be lost.

Many were the stirring episodes that took place involving hair breadth escapes. If I could write a book on it, it could be a best seller. We would cross the border as darkness fell and head for Carrigaholten Mountain which was on the northern side; it was a grim place on a winter night, covered with rocks and heather, leaving nothing to guide you. Lakes, and what was far more dangerous, blind lakes or swamps, were death traps to man or beast. Carrigaholten is not very far from Edenreagh. Most of the cattle for the Castlederg and Drumquin districts came over to Carrigaholten. The Drumquin trip was a tough one for no sooner had you cleared Carrigaholten and gotten across the main road from Enniskillen to Derry (which took some doing) then you ran straight into the Carriaga Stohen Range for the rest of the journey. A dog could be used only if it didn't bark. How I longed sometimes for a Queensland heeler. The cattle were often very tired and sore footed. When we took them over at Lettercran or the Tyrone-Donegal-Fermanagh border, it was a rugged ten Irish miles. The winter nights were cruel, but we were young then and didn't notice the cold so much; the wet was the worst. Lack of sleep and weariness was another problem. Many times on the bleak slopes of

Carrigaholten we lay down in the shelter of a rock and slept for a few hours, while the cattle stood patiently by, glad of a rest also. When we awakened one could hear our teeth chattering.

A cat and mouse game was played between us and the customs guys. When we were putting over a big mob of valuable stock, we would pick out two or three of the least valued and send them ahead with someone who could run. If any customs were in ambush, they would jump out, seize the few cattle and take them off to their station. They seldom worried about the drovers. We would follow an hour later when the way was clear. This method worked for about a year, but our opponents were slowly learning. They would lie "doggo" when the few cattle came along, knowing there were many better to follow. As we learned tricks, so did they.

Finally the Northern Ireland Parliment grew very wrathful at the number of cattle smuggled in so they decided to do something. They blamed the well-to-do Protestant farmers in the North for aiding the smugglers which was true. Weren't we Irish paying these "Loyalists", one pound per head for selling them for us. And wasn't Sir Basil Brooke, the Prime Minister, the biggest smuggler of all? The British customs got busy and took a census of every animal on every farm within ten miles of the border. They came around often to check and see if anyone had anything not already listed. They had to show evidence how they came to have it. Otherwise, it was seized and the owner fined three times the value or six months hard labor. This happened near the end of 1935 and it almost crippled our industry. A few tried to carry on but the game was nearly over.

One thing we smuggling fellows felt proud of was that the customs hadn't beaten us. We could put thousands of cattle across

if we could only get people to handle them on the other side. A few made fortunes, the shrewd ones, by exploiting others. Others made plenty and spent it as they made it, enjoying themselves. I would say now they were the winners. Still others lost all they had. It was a gamble with a lot of hard work and hardships in it, such as not having your clothes off for a week or seeing a bed in that time. The want of sleep was the worst of all.

The only regret I have, if you could call it that, is that I started at the wrong end of the business financially. I had a lot of fun and excitement. I have no regrets now. My two mates made a lot of money, but in a way, what good was it? John is in his grave many years, and Joe is in a mental hospital. I am still alive and well (thank God).

In 1935, I picked up a newspaper and read big headings that said "Labour wins election in New Zealand". I rushed inside and said to my Maggie, "start packing!" She said, "What for?" I said, "We are on our way to New Zealand." Maggie was pleased and said, "I won't have to worry about you at night anymore." So we booked a passage on the Orient liner "Arsova" and sailed via Suez. Called at Gibralter, Marseilles, Toulon, Naples, Port Said, Eden, Colombo, Fremantle, Melbourne and Sydney; crossed the Tasman Sea to New Zealand.

I worked first for a while on farms but seeing no future there, I gained a job with the Lands and Survey Department, the largest farmer in this world as I was to learn. This was 1936. Three years later I saw their stock census published in a paper. It was as follows: sheep-sixteen million, cattle-four million, horses-five hundred thousand. I worked with them 27 years and all that time never was out of sight of cattle, sheep, and horses. It seemed to me that I was doomed to be with them. Sometimes as I slept out at

mustering, with the Southern Cross looking down on me, my thoughts would wander back to my smuggling days. I still remember a line or two I composed about them:

"I am wondering today if the old spirit lives
For the men who lived it I vow
A long lease of ease would willingly give
To be back on the border now!

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