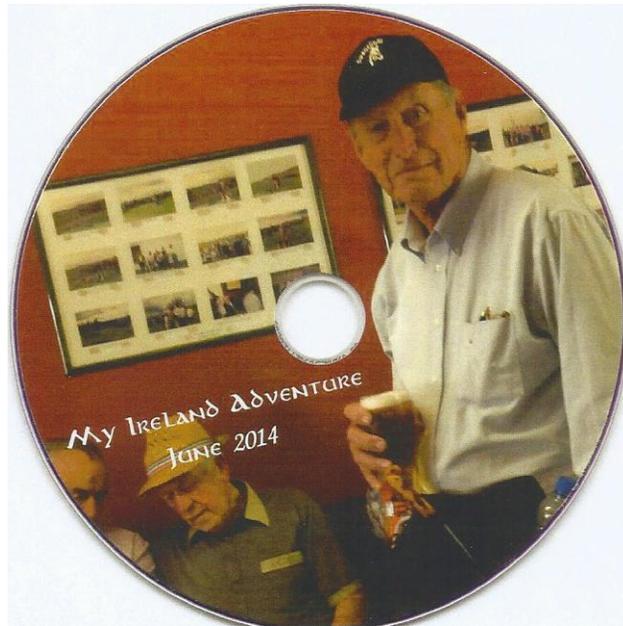


JAMES HULL

IRELAND TRIP SUMMER 2014



My great-grandfather, Michael E. Walsh, was born in the Ennis, County Clare, Ireland area in 1844. He emigrated to the U.S. around 1860 with his father and sisters coming to the Wapella, IL area. The Walsh's were one of the original "Irish Row" Settlers (Irish farmers NE of Wapella). Michael was eventually able to buy a 40 farm and went to his wife to tell her he could now build her a fine home. Her reply was to forgo the new house, sell the 40 acres, and buy 220 acres west of Wapella. Her advice was heeded and at the time of his death, Michael owned considerable acres of farmland.

Last summer to celebrate my birthday (I was born in 1944) and my great-grandfather's (he was born in 1844) I would return to Ennis, the place of his birth.

The first week of my trip I toured alone. The second week I joined up with my cousin and his wife, Dick and Colleen Burns. My Ireland experience covered many counties, each exciting in their own. A few trip highlights were:

While in Dublin I visited a bakery and took the most wonderful loaf of bread to Stevens Green Park and had a picnic and visited with locals!

In Waterford I discovered The Hiberian Crystal Store and Café. When the Waterford factory gave a Christmas bonus I was told their employees were paid in crystal. Therefore, the shop sells some of these items on commission.

In County Cork I saw the Blarney Castle and visited Cobh. We drove into Cobh after dark and were awed by brightly lit cathedral spires. Some of the homes near the harbor are built at a 30 degree angle. Cobh was the last port of call for the Titanic.

County Kerry brought the Ring of Kerry and a visit to Dingle, overlooking the Blasket Islands. A stop at the South Pole Inn in Annascaul led me to discover the history of its founder, Tom Crean, a famous Antarctic explorer early in the 20th century. I finished off County Kerry with a ride in a jaunting cart near Ross Castle.

In County Galway I toured the Connemara region.

Portions of the walls and gates to the town of Clonmel, County Tipperary, are still standing and I was able to take several nice photos of them.

County Clare brought me to the homeland of my great grandfather. The 300 year old Spancilhill Horse Fair was taking place during my visit. Buyers and sellers of horses and ponies from all over Ireland converge at this famous horse fair. I was able to speak with several of the judges and take many photos. "Spancil" relates to the practice of "spancelling," which was to use a short rope to tie an animal's left fore-leg to its right hind leg, thereby hobbling the animal and stopping it from wandering too far.

"**Spancil Hill**" is a famous song written in a traditional Irish folk style by Michael Considine. It bemoans the plight of the Irish immigrants who so longed for home from their new lives in America, many of whom went to California with the Gold Rush. This song is sung by a man who longs for his home in Spancilhill, his friends and the love he left there. All the characters and places in this song are real.

I also visited the Cliffs of Mohr in County Clare. A young Irish girl was playing the harp to earn some tips.

County Limerick brought me to the Foynes Flying Boat Museum on the Shannon River. I toured a reproduction of the Boeing 314 Flying Clipper. Built in the 1930's the plane was the ultimate in luxury, it would fly from New York to Shannon, landing on the river.

Two things I won't forget about my trip:

One: I had my first ever straight razor shave in the same chair as Bruce Springsteen once had a shave in.

Two: I was able to celebrate my birthday and the anniversary of my great grandfather's birthday with a whiskey cake!

To sum up my trip, "Ireland is more than a country, it is a state of mind".

SEE BELOW FOR LYRICS TO SPANCIL HILL SONG AND PHOTOS.

SPANCIL HILL

Last night as I lay dreaming of pleasant days gone by
My mind been bent on rambling to Ireland I did fly
I stepped on board a vision and followed with a will
Til next I came to anchor at the cross in Spancil Hill

It been on the twenty-third of June the day before the fair
When Irelands sons and daughters and friends assembled there
The young, the old, the brave and the bold came their duty to fulfill
At the parish church in Clooney, a mile from Spancil Hill

Delighted by the novelty, enchanted by the scene.
Where in me early boyhood where often I had been.
I thought I heard a murmur. I think I hear it still.
It's the little stream of water that flows down Spancil Hill.

To amuse a passing fancy, I laid down on the ground.
And all my school companions, they shortly gathered round.
When we were home returning, we danced with bright good will
To Martin Monahan's music, at the cross at Spancil Hill.

I went to see me neighbours to see what they might say
The old ones were all dead and gone, the young ones turning grey
But I met the tailor Quigley, he's as bold as ever still
Ah, he used to make me britches when I lived at Spancil Hill

I paid a flying visit to my first and only love
She's as white as any lily, gentle as a dove
And she threw her arms around me, saying Johnny I love you still
Ah, she's now a farmer's daughter and the pride of Spancil Hill

I dreamt I knelt and kissed her as in the days of yore
Ah, Johnny you're only joking as many the time before
Then the cock he crew in the morning, he crew both loud and shrill
I awoke in California, many miles from Spancil Hill





4 SPANCILHILL HORSE JUDGE



3 SPANCILHILL HORSE JUDGES



6 PEAT DRYING IN FIELD



5 TYPICAL HARDWARE STORE WITH WARES IN FRONT



8 SOUTH POLE INN



7 A SNUG IS AN ENCLOSED TABLE IN A PUB GIVING ONE PRIVACY



12 COBH CATHEDRAL



11 COBH HOMES BUILT ON 30 DEGREE ANGLE



10 CLIFF OF MOHR



9 BOEING 314 FLYING CLIPPER AT FOYNES MUSEUM NEAR SHANNON



DICK AND COLLEEN BURNS AT SPENCILHILL BAR WHICH IS OPEN ONE DAY A YEAR ON FAIR DAY