

In August 2017, my wife and I travelled from our home in Boston to Ireland for the first time. While in Galway, we made a visit to Cloonaghgarve. I wanted to see where my paternal grandmother lived before emigrating to the US in the early 1900s. This turned out to be a most surprising and enjoyable part of the trip, exceeding all of our expectations.

Pauline, of the Milltown Heritage Society, was very helpful and instrumental in connecting us with Michael Flaherty, who graciously acted as our tour guide. He took us to the farm of Bridie and Jimmy Diskin who own and live in the house which my great uncle built in the early 1900s. We were able to see the area where my grandmother and her family lived. I came away with a great appreciation for her and the environment and period in which she lived and grew up.

After showing us the area where my grandmother's village resided, the Diskin's kindly invited us in for tea and a snack. Before leaving the States, I had heard about Irish hospitality and I'm so grateful to have been able to experience it firsthand. The most memorable part of the visit was when Bridie presented me with a 1935 Irish penny. She found it years ago, wedged in a floor board, and was holding onto it for the day that a relative came by to visit. Words cannot describe the how touched I was by this gesture!

After that charming interlude, Michael took us to the Addergoole cemetery where my great-grandparents are buried. He showed us the Addergoole Cross and told us of his part in finding and resurrecting it. Even at the cemetery, the beauty of the area was amazing.

I would like to thank Pauline, Michael, and Bridie and Jimmy Diskin for their assistance and hospitality in helping me discover more about my family; and for their kindness during our visit to Cloonagh, which I will always cherish.