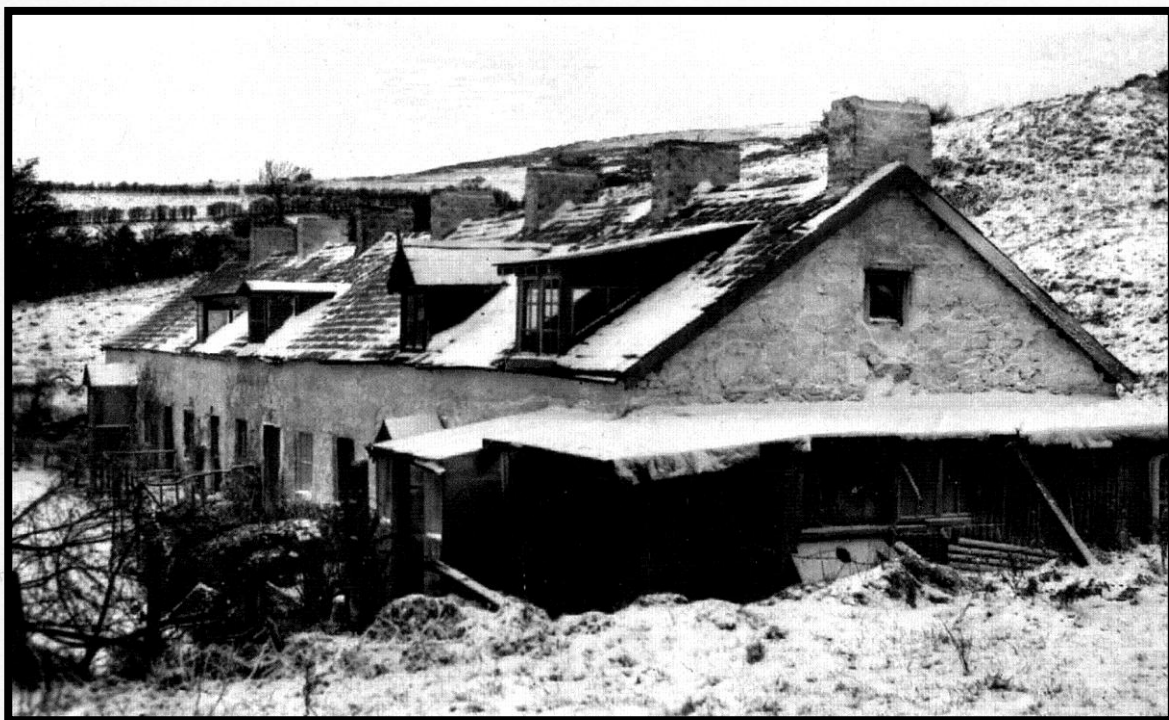


More of
Daddystown



By Sam Moore

Preface

On completion of my booklet entitled "Daddystown," my thoughts soon again returned to where my cousin Beth (more like a sister) and I had spent many happy times since early childhood. I felt compelled to record some more snippets about the social history of the place, with some additional photographs and items of historical interest.

To reiterate, Daddystown consisted of just seven little cottages, originally built to house the workers in the nearby large, limestone quarry which was situated in the town-land of Ballyaghagan on the Cave Hill. It is recorded that quarrying was carried out there between 1840 and 1896.

Not long after the cottages became vacant, the Blair family took up residence in one and, soon after, they occupied two of them. It is shown that the family, seven in all, had a history of living there from the late nineteenth century. A few years later, my grandmother was able to obtain one of the cottages for rent.

In later years, cottages were acquired by Sam Clyde, Tommy Beattie and by the Sayers, Cranston and McCormack families, with a minimum of work being done to make them habitable.

Unfortunately, during my research for additional material in preparation for a second booklet, I discovered that many photographs had either been discarded or destroyed. I have been fortunate, however, to have many that have survived the ravages of time and to have received a number from family and friends.

Travelling through Carrs Glen

On making our way up through the glen, we would have passed over a small stone bridge which was situated just before the mill and the Craigs' house. Through the passage of time, the ground supporting the bridge suffered erosion to such extent that the bridge collapsed. A group of the 29th scouts, led by Gerry Nevin and Bertie McClure, soon got into action and replaced it with long straight logs and compacted earth.



The small stone bridge that spanned the Milewater River
which flows through Carrs Glen.



A much earlier photograph of the stone bridge.

The trodden path led us past the mill building to its left where there was a large hole, unfenced, which had originally housed the water wheel. The river was dammed so as to provide a constant supply of water to drive the wheel and the mill machinery.

On crossing the bridge we soon approached the house and mill, avoiding the goats which were prone to charge in an attempt to head butt us!



And here we see a man and his dogs making their way across the bridge that had replaced the one which collapsed.

We then made our way to the stile at the top of the glen and crossed two fields leading to the lane which made its way to the cottages.

Daddystown

A little bit of heaven, right there on the Cave Hill. We left all our cares behind when we reached the cottage. Straight away, fresh water was fetched from the spring in the "Well field". The fire was lit and wood was sawn and stockpiled, this coming from tree falls from the forest above Belfast Castle, which were cut to suitable lengths to be carried back to the cottage. All cooking was done on the range fire.

We donned old clothes, including wellies whenever necessary. There was always plenty to do, including long walks to Belfast Castle and over the hill to McArt's Fort and Napoleon's Nose.

The Blair family

The 1901 and 1911 National Archives of Ireland census shows that the Blair family was living at Daddystown from the late 1800's. Copies of the census are seen here.

I can only surmise that the house number, 10, could have been mistakenly taken for a badly written 6 when the census form was being completed.

Census Years / 1901 / Antrim / Ballysillan / Ballyaghagan (part of) / Residents of a house								
Residents of a house 10 in Ballyaghagan (part of) (Ballysillan, Antrim)								
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show all information								
Surname	Forename	Age	Sex	Relation to head	Religion	Birthplace	Occupation	Literacy
Blair	Elizabeth	51	Female	-	Presbyterian	Belfast City	Mill Worker	Cannot read
Blair	Margaret	16	Female	-	Presbyterian	Belfast City	Mill Worker	Read and write
Blair	Joseph	15	Male	-	Presbyterian	Belfast City	Mill Worker	Read and write
Blair	Andrew	12	Male	-	Presbyterian	Belfast City	Mill Worker Half Times	Read and write
Blair	William	7	Male	-	Presbyterian	Belfast City	Scholar	Read and write
Blair	Elizabeth	6	Female	-	Presbyterian	Co Antrim	-	Cannot read
Blair	Andrew	58	Male	Head of Family	Presbyterian	Co Antrim	General Labourer	Cannot read

The 1901 census

Andrew is only twelve years of age at this stage but is already working part time in what could quite possibly have been the Wolf Hill Mill at Ligoniel. The remainder of the week he was still attending school.

In the 1911 census we see that the family are now living in two of the cottages namely numbers 6 and 7.

Census Years / 1911 / Antrim / Ballysillan / Ballyaghagan (part of) / Residents of a house										
Residents of a house 6 in Ballyaghagan (part of) (Ballysillan, Antrim)										
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Surname	Forename	Age	Sex	Relation to head	Religion	Birthplace	Occupation	Literacy	Irish Language	Marital Status
Blair	Andrew	71	Male	Head of Family	Presbyterian	County Antrim	Army Pensioner 59th Regiment	Read and write	-	Married
Blair	Elizabeth	61	Female	Wife	Presbyterian	City of Belfast	-	Cannot read	-	Married
Blair	H Margaret	27	Female	Daughter	Presbyterian	City of Belfast	-	Read and write	-	Single
Blair	Elizabeth	16	Female	Daughter	Presbyterian	County Antrim	-	Read and write	-	Single

Census Years / 1911 / Antrim / Ballysillan / Ballyaghagan (part of) / Residents of a house										
Residents of a house 7 in Ballyaghagan (part of) (Ballysillan, Antrim)										
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Show all information										
Surname	Forename	Age	Sex	Relation to head	Religion	Birthplace	Occupation	Literacy	Irish Language	Marital Status
Blair	John Joseph	25	Male	Head of Family	Presbyterian	City of Belfast	Apprentice Driller	Read and write	-	Single
Blair	Andrew	22	Male	Brother	Presbyterian	City of Belfast	Apprentice Shipwright	Read and write	-	Single
Blair	William	20	Male	Brother	Presbyterian	City of Belfast	Apprentice Caulker	Read and write	-	Single

The 1911 census indicating that two cottages are being occupied

The 1911 census shows that, at this stage, the brothers John Joseph, Andrew and William are apprentices in the shipbuilding industry. They could, of course, have been working in Harland and Wolff, Belfast and possibly on the liner known as the Titanic, the great ship of its day but remembered throughout the world because of the unfortunate event which ended in great tragedy.

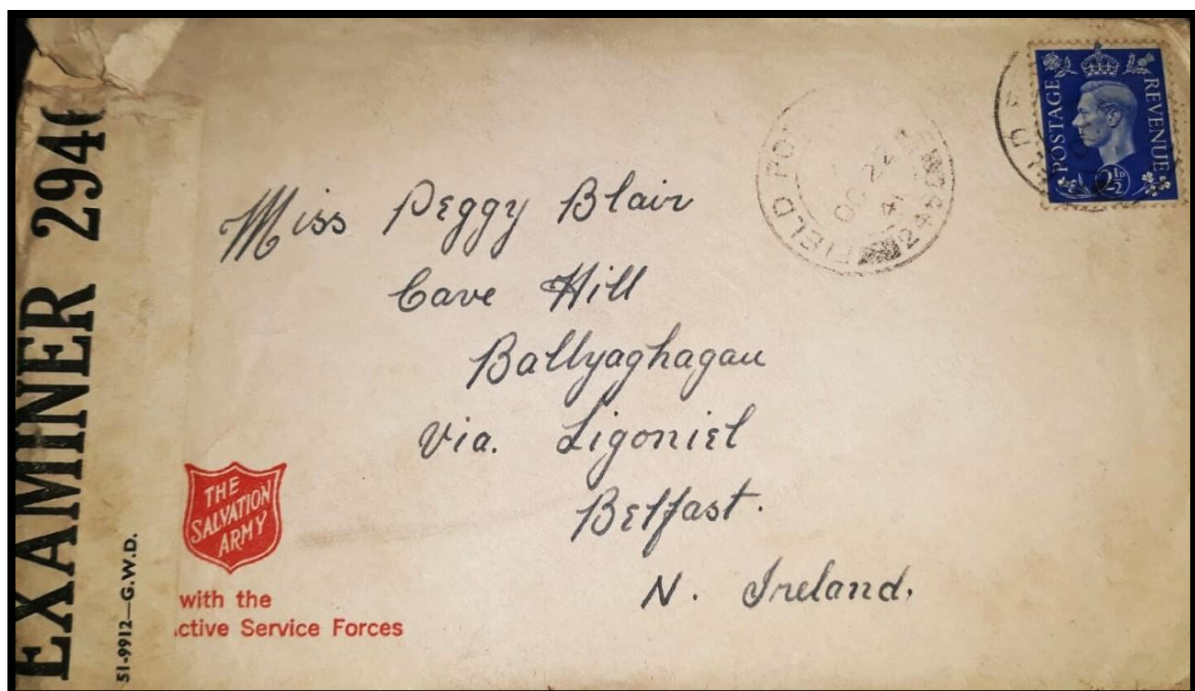
Peggy Blair

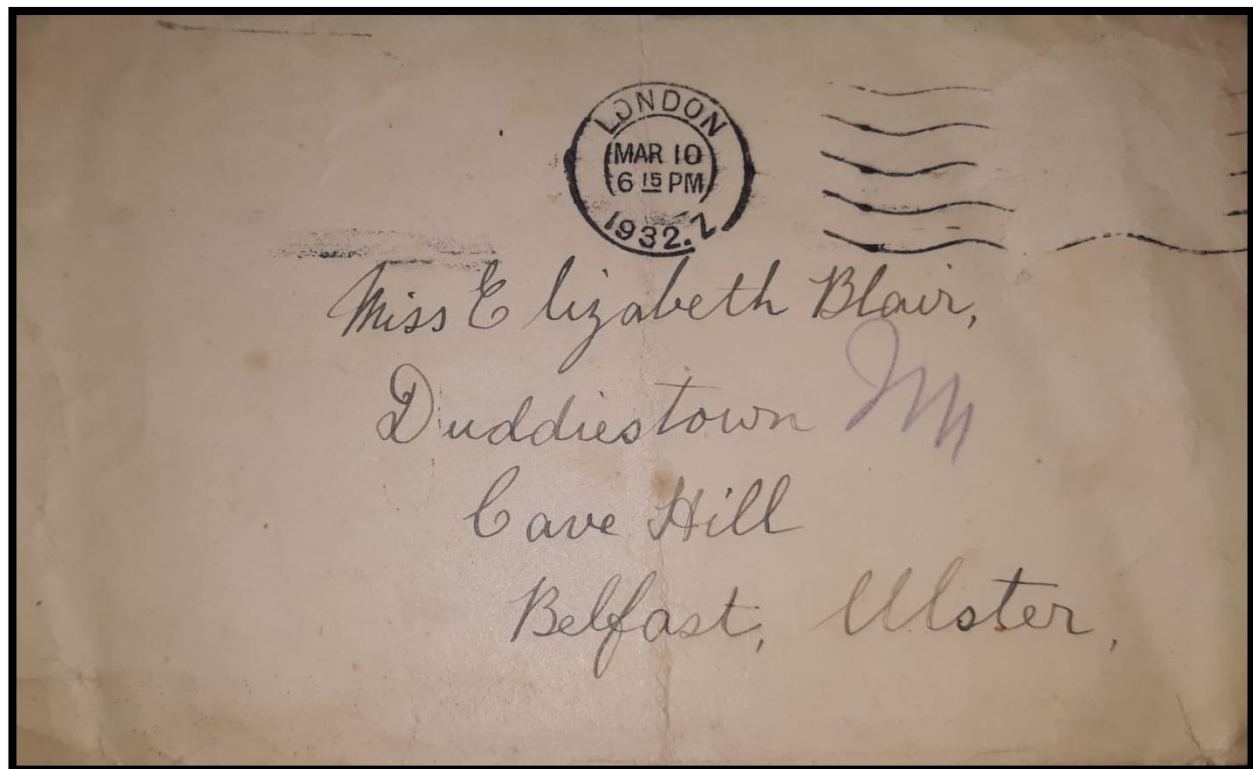
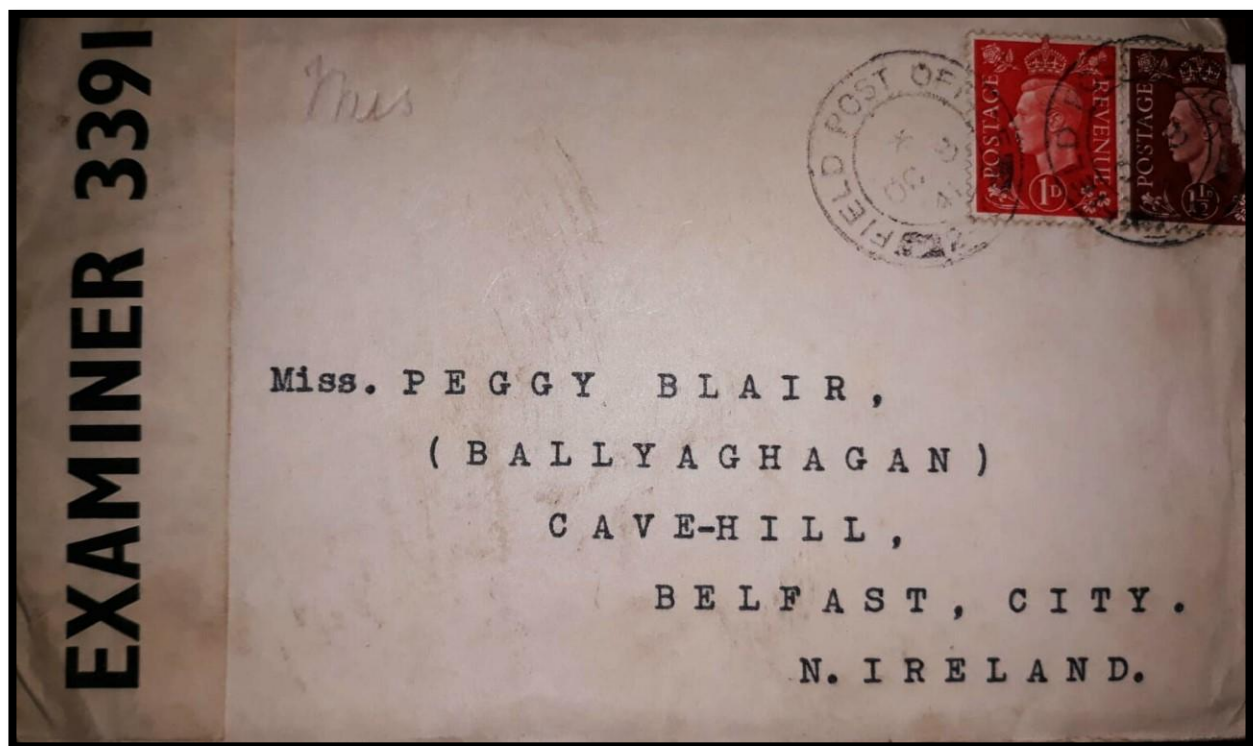


Peggy was born at Daddystown in 1928. Her mother Lizzie (Elizabeth) is seen holding the baby Peggy in her arms and, on the right, Peggy, a little older, is in the arms of her aunt Maggie.

Letters addressed to Peggy and Lizzie

I have been made to understand that the mail was actually delivered to that remote place by a postman.





A different slant on the spelling of Daddystown

During our time at Daddystown, only three members of the Blair family were living there, namely Peggy, Lizzie and Maggie. Older members had passed away and the younger ones had moved further afield.



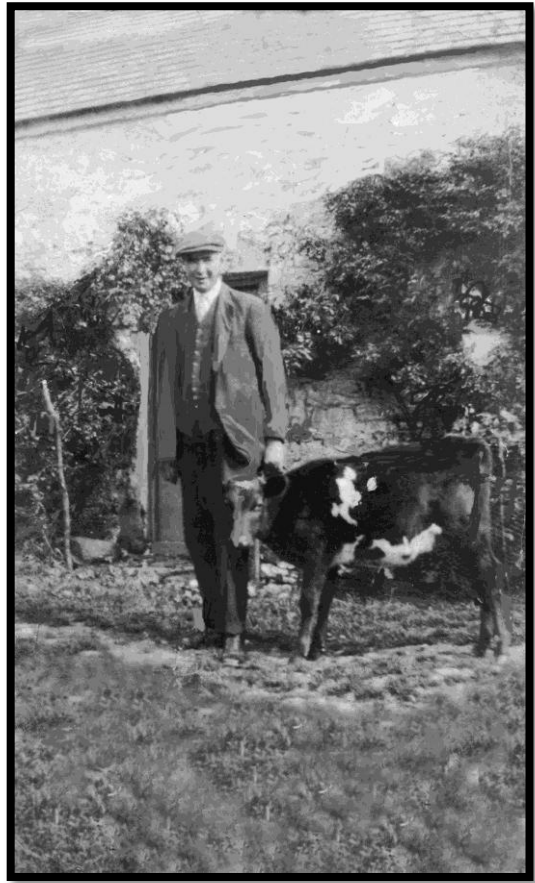
Here we see that Peggy has grown somewhat.

A bit older again. She is seen here with my aunt Marty. Peggy, with her dog and cat, and Marty, holding a hen in her arms.





Peggy on her grandmother's knee



Uncle Joe on a visit

The Moores

Our cottage was always full with visiting family and friends. Many of them made their way home in darkness after a full day of entertainment, at times by a group of musicians led by Willy John McFadden.



The group on a visit. (Not the ladies with the guitars).

After some renditions by the group, there was some community singing and solo offerings. Peggy is seen standing beside my grandmother whom she had befriended. Visitors on that day were McFaddens, McDowells and the Bustards.

Two fishy stories

Uncle Willie often went to the glen river where he lay down on the rocks to tickle trout. He waited until a trout

would come nearby and would gently “tickle” its belly. This had a largely calming effect on the fish which could be quickly grasped and thrown onto the river bank. When he had a good catch, it was fish for tea.

I have often repeated the story of when my cousin Beth’s dad, Jack, took Beth and me up the lane and, just as we turned onto the Hightown Road, a motorcyclist went by. At that point a large fish fell from his backpack, probably a trout. He was gone in seconds, so it was back to the cottage, the trout immediately cleaned and onto the pan. I wonder how he could ever have explained about “the one that got away”!

Sunday morning singing



A group of younger scout members on a Sunday morning with the bellows organ being played by a scout leader named Sam Murray



On the left is Ruby who fell to the floor when trying to climb through the skylight window, Lily having forgotten to bring the door key.

On the right is Granny's next door neighbour's daughter Ada applying her makeup.

We see the enamelled buckets, in which we fetched water from the spring and the cups on the side of the welsh dresser.

Below, is granny with her sister Minnie at the door of the cottage.





The musicians at the back with Willie John McFadden middle right.
A number of the family of Mullans appear in this photo,
and Peggy, of course.

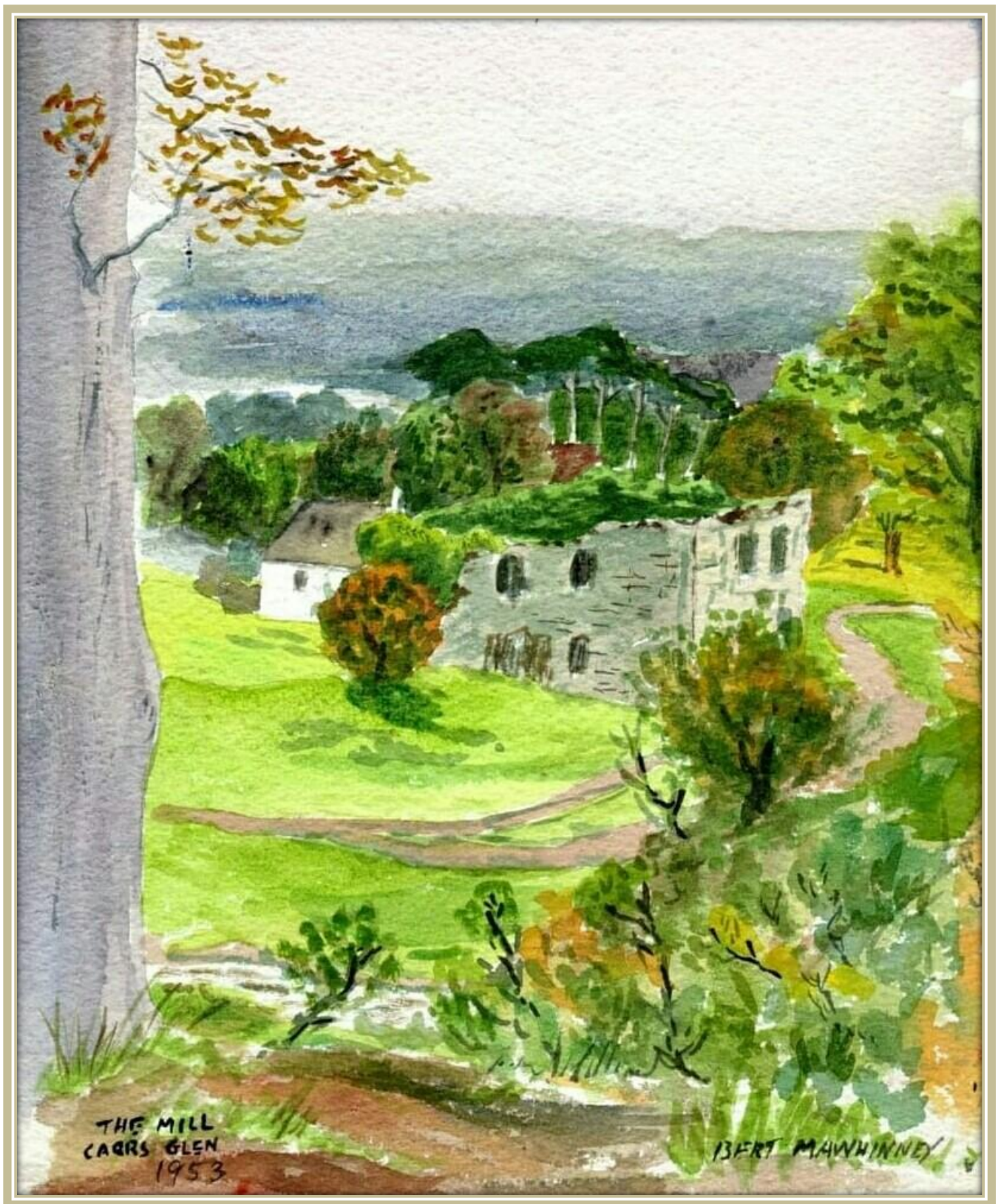


Beth and her future husband, Jackie, are seen here with
Ronnie and his sister Betty McCormack.



Above left. Beth's mum's wedding day, with my mum, as bridesmaid.
 Right. Granda Billy in his Second World War uniform.
 Below. My mum and dad on their wedding day





Here, we see a painting performed in 1953 by an amateur artist, Bert Mawhinney. It depicts the mill and house as we would have seen it on our way down through the glen. Sadly, there is little evidence of the existence of either of the buildings, except for part of a wall of the mill covered in ivy, which can be bypassed without it being noticed.

Much has already been said about the 29th scouts who spent a lot of time there. Names from that era include, Bertie McClure, Roy Kilpatrick and Sam Murray, not forgetting Gerry Nevin who went on holiday and came back with a black belt in judo. He was the first ever to have a judo black belt in the whole of Ireland.

Although there are many photographs of the cottages at Daddystown which were taken over the years, there are none which show how they looked on the inside.

For this reason, I have drawn up the following description, from my still vivid memories, of the appearance of the inside of our cottage.

THE COTTAGE

Our cottage at Daddystown consisted of only two rooms, one up and one down. At the front was a beautiful little lattice window, to the right of which was a half door with a plaque which aptly bore the name, "The Cottage". The upper door was invariably left open until nightfall, when it was closed over.

On the wall to the right on entering was a picture of a beautiful young American Indian girl who was wearing a single feather at the back of her head-band. She was seated on the ground with her knees drawn up, on which she was resting her arms while gazing at a bright full moon which illuminated the scene.

Beside this was a Welsh dresser in which plates stood on their edges. On the sides, cups were hanging from cup hooks. Under the dresser sat two white enamelled buckets with lids. The buckets were used to fetch water from a spring in what we called the "Well Field", which was about one hundred yards from the cottage.

Further to this was an open staircase without handrail and which led to a single bedroom in which were a double bed and three single beds in a row. There was no other furniture in the room, only hooks for hanging clothes. A sky-light was the source of light during day-time and a single ship's lamp, suspended on a gimbal, together with candles were used to light the room at night. When very young, Beth and I would quietly get out of bed, crawl to the edge of the opening in the floor and peer down, seeing the adults below upside down. We then quickly scarpered back to bed when we were seen.

Downstairs was the living room-cum-dining room and kitchen. Underneath the staircase was a chaise longue, behind which were piles of logs and coal for the fire.

On the back wall was a window with a view of what we called "the back field."

Opposite the stairs was a large cupboard with two drawers at the top. This was used to store food and general every-day items.

Beside the cupboard was a large range fire on which all of the cooking was done. There was nothing like the wonderful aroma when the food was being cooked in a large frying pan on the open fire.

Then there was a sofa which was pulled up in front of the fire at night. When darkness fell, two Tilly lamps, which hissed incessantly, were lit.

A dining table and chairs sat under the lattice window and in the window reveal were two fluted glass vases which always contained fresh wild flowers.

In both rooms the walls and ceiling were sheeted with tongue and groove boards. The upper parts of the walls and ceilings were painted a cream colour and the bottom three feet light green with a two inch brown border between these running around the walls.

It is unimaginable how we survived without the innumerable list of items which require an electricity supply. There was also the absence of running water on tap. Water for washing and cooking was fetched from a little stream nearby.

The only entertainment was from an old wind-up gramophone which scratched out "78's". But, there was a lot to do and we made our own amusement. There was always a large number of family and friends visiting and, of course, with the accompaniment of a continuous hubbub of laughter and conversation.

Acknowledgements and thanks

Once again my thanks go to Peggy Blair's daughter, Linda McAllen for photographs and permission for me to include parts of the history of her family at Daddystown.

Also, my thanks go to Laura Shiels, Bertie McClure, Gerard Brannigan

