

My great grandad

My great grandad James

Ryan was born in 1891

in Brooklyns New York.

He came to Ireland  
when he was 5 years old.

He was the captain in the

Irish volunteers from 1917-1922.

He was very active in Carlow & Killkenny and  
he was captured by the black and tans.



## The Story

One night he was patrolling around the fields  
and the black and tans shot at him and  
the bullet hit the buckle of his brace and  
saved his life and he held up a white cloth  
and surrendered.

They drove him around the town on top of a lorry to show others an example of him as a prisoner and as a hostage so that other Irish Volunteers would not shoot at them.

He was captured in March 1921 and imprisoned in Spike Island for 9 months.



Towards the end of those 9 months he was then to be brought to Co. Down to be executed. But the Anglo-Irish treaty was signed just in time and he was released two days later in December 8<sup>th</sup> 1921. The new treaty which Micheal Collins was working on saved his life.

2.

He joined the Irish Free State Army in May 1922. Until October 1923.

He then joined the Garda Síochána in 1925. In 1928 he was transferred to Cobh.

He married my great grandmother Hannah Murphy in 1929.

Hannah Murphy who was his girlfriend all through those troubles.



If he stood on the steps of  
the Garda station in Cobh, he could  
see Spike Island where he had been a prisoner  
just a few years earlier.

While he was in Cobh, he would be  
on duty sometimes when the liners would be  
loading to go to America. There he would  
have helped his brothers and sisters who were  
emigrating to America

He was then transferred to Clonakilty as a  
detective in 1942.

He was rewarded a golden  
of honour by the Irish  
government and it was presented  
to him by the late president  
Erskine Childers.



He died in his home in Clonakilly on January  
8<sup>th</sup> 1965.

This was the home that  
he and his family returned  
to from New York.



5. Eva Pattwell.