

Troubled times in Ireland

This is a true story about my great grand parents Joe Grace and Bridget Grace and my great grand uncle John Grace. My great grand uncle and great grand father were both members of the I.R.A.

My great granduncle John Grace was Quarter master general of the I.R.A. where he lived in Riverlyons in Co. Offaly. his home was known as a safehouse where he helped and fed Micheal Collins who was on the run! Riverlyons was also a location where the I.R.A held some of their most important meetings and ammunition! My grandmother Bridget Rigney now owns River Lyons

Another time when there was a curfew on they had to be inside by a certain time. John Grace had an important message to deliver and my great grandmother had to deliver it but she was stopped by the Black and Tans. luckily they didn't search the bike because my great grandmother had shoved the note in the bar of the bike holding up the saddle. She risked being shot on the spot. She had got away and passed the message on successfully.

My great gran uncle John Grace had an I.R.A funeral and pension. He had shots fired at his funeral and his coffin was draped in the tri-colours

One day my great grandmother was in Riverlyons producing ammunition in the safehouse when the Black and Tans arrived. She had no where to hide the bullets so she threw the bullets into a boiling pot of potatoes knowing that the bullets could blow up. She opened the doors to the Black and Tans knowing if they looked in the pot for food they would see the bullets and she would be killed instantly. Luckily they never looked in the pot and the bullets didn't blow up killing them all!

That was a story about my ancestor's tough times in the early 1920's!

Aidan O Dwyer.
Lisheen N.S.

Passing of Great Old Gael

LATE MR. JOHN GRACE,
RIVER-LYONS

One of the most staunch members of the G.A.A. has just passed away in the person of Mr. John Grace, River-Lyons, whose death occurred at an advanced age. A true Gael all his life, deceased was a member of the local club for over fifty years and was later elected life President. He was to be seen at every game in the county and up to a few years ago he often cycled long distances to matches. He was a most active member of the local branch of Fine Gael and he was the first man to introduce Deputy O. J. Flanagan to the people of Daingean some twenty years ago. In his early youth John Grace was one of the finest athletes in the country and he was one of the last surviving members of the once famous Killeen Emmet's G.A.A. team. During the troubled times he was a prominent member of the old I.R.A. and he risked his life more than once to carry important dispatches from one headquarters to the other, while his house was always open to the boys on the run. He was a most obliging and kind-hearted man. A most devout Catholic, he was attended in his last illness by the local clergy and he passed away fortified by the rites of the Church.

His funeral from the Church of the Holy Mother of God to Downan Cemetery was large and highly representative and was attended by Deputy O. J. Flanagan, T.D.

The coffin was draped in the Tricolour. Rev. Fr. Daly, C.C., recited the prayers at the graveside.

Chief mourners were: Mrs. K. Grace (wife); Joseph Grace (brother); Mrs. J. Grace, Mrs. Reynolds, Sister M. Michael, Texas (sisters-in-law); Patrick and Joseph Reynolds, Walsh Island (brothers-in-law); James Hamill, Mount Lucas; Miss Teresa and Maura Connolly, Bray (cousins); Mrs. P. Rogers, Mrs. D. Murphy and Mrs. P. Murphy, Margaret and Bridget Grace, May, Christina, Bridie and Nan Reynolds (nieces); John, George, Patrick, Joseph and Michael Grace, Mick, Richard, and Tony Reynolds (nephews); Mrs. George Grace, Mrs. P. Grace, P. Rogers, Daniel and Patrick Murphy (relatives).

FIREARMS CASE

Farmer Fined at Daingean Court

TROUBLED TIMES RECALLED

At Daingean District Court on Thursday week, before Mr. A. O'Donoghue, D.J., a farmer named John Grace of Oldtown, was charged with having in his possession firearms and ammunition for which he had no permit.

Superintendent Sheridan prosecuted, and Mr. J. Ennis, solr. (Messrs Rogers and Co., Tullamore), defended.

Detective Officer M. Whelan stated that on the 20th of January last, accompanied by Detective Officer Walsh, he went to the residence of the defendant at Oldtown. They had a search order. Witness told defendant that if he had any arms or ammunition in his house to hand them over, but the defendant denied having any arms in his possession. Witness searched the place and he found the rock rifle produced, which was not in good condition as it required a new spring. There was also found a 22. B.S.A. air rifle which was capable of discharging a shot. There were also four cartridges for a shot gun, besides ~~some~~ ~~rifle~~ and ~~revolver~~ ammunition, ~~and~~ ~~about~~ ~~two~~ ~~dozen~~ ~~of~~ ~~blasting~~ ~~powder~~ and about six or eight shot. The defendant gave witness to understand that he was in the Black-and-Tan movement and that the stuff found had remained over since then. Witness took possession of all the stuff.

Mr. Ennis—On the information you received did you believe when you were going to the defendant's place that you were going to find something better than you did?

Witness—I could not say what we expected to find, as we never know that. Witness did not say to the defendant that he believed he had a dump there. Except in found concealed in the roof of the piggery, there was no effort at concealment, and some of the articles were found thrown carelessly in drawers in the kitchen. The blasting powder, which was found, was not used for cartridges.

Guard Walsh deposed to finding some of the stuff at defendant's place. Witness found the air rifle in the roof of a piggery outside where it was well concealed among the collar beams. The other stuff was not concealed.

Mr. Ennis—Were you greatly disappointed with regard to what you found?

Witness—Not a bit.

PRE-TRUCE DAYS

Mr. Ennis stated that the defendant was company quartermaster in the Irish Volunteers and subsequently in the I.R.A. and in that capacity it was his duty to collect and keep a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition and he faithfully carried out these duties from 1919 to 1921. In 1921, when the truce came, a training camp for volunteers was established in North Offaly, and the defendant was ordered to give up the arms which he had in his possession, for use in the camp. The arms and ammunition were taken from him from time to time according as they were required, and some remained on his hands and were almost forgotten by him.

The defendant, John Grace, deposed that he lives in an out-of-the-way place a long distance from the high road. Defendant was a member of the Irish Volunteers, which he joined as early as 1914. He subsequently became a member of the I.R.A., and in 1920, he was appointed quartermaster of the local company. In that capacity he had charge of a considerable quantity of arms and ammunition. Most of the meetings and conferences of the leaders of the movement were held at his place.

In 1921 after the truce there was a training camp for the I.R.A. established in North Offaly and he received an order from the Brigade O.C. to hand over the arms as they were required for training purposes and he did hand over all in his possession except what was in court. One of the rifles which was found was brought to the defendant in 1920 in a broken condition and it was never put right afterwards. When it was found the stock was in one place and the barrel in another place. Regarding the BSA rifle, the defendant stated that he knew who it belonged to, and his reason for not giving it up was because he did not know the owner. When it was given to him by others he was told to keep it safely as it would certainly be called for at some future date and returned to the owner. He (defendant) knew who owned the rifle, he had a certain amount of respect for the owner and intended to keep it until he was called for.

THE BLASTING POWDER

Regarding the blasting powder, he could not rightly tell to whom it belonged. It might have belonged to the Company or it might have been in the house for thirty years previously. Defendant's father was in the habit of using such powder for quarrying work, and it may have belonged to him. When the truce came in 1921 defendant ceased his volunteer activities and has been since then a supporter of the Free State Government.

Mr. Ennis asked that the case be dealt with leniently. The only thing against his client was that he did not take the precaution of handing the things over to the Civic Guards. He handed in two letters from local Peace Commissioners giving the highest evidence of character regarding his client.

Justice—These Peace Commissioners should come to court and give evidence as to character.

Dr. O'Meara, P.C., was in court and he stated that he had written one of the letters referred to.

Mr. Sheridan—We admit he has a good character.

The Justice said the things should have been handed over to the Civic Guards, or destroyed, as there was always the danger they might fall into the hands of people having the worst intentions. Having regard to the past history of the defendant, and as he believed him to be a decent man he would only fine him 10s. All the stuff found was confiscated, with the exception of the B.S.A. rifle.

GETTING READY

depending on which the dumpers has evoked

for this week. of a proper get considerable course should maximum accomle available to e it, subject to is to be drafted

at the padding for a long wait. laid on to its on of a pump- bertaken from- pool may come urther delay.

maglor folk for go to Mr. D. Mrs. R. Boyle Boyle, Rector), hospital under cal care, the and the latter

erved

can, presided at Joseph's College, ph the Worker, he college; Rev. air comprised a Afterward, Dr. t. Joseph's Day

ity. His remain- St. Michael's evening, and the following Be- lay to the family elooney. To his nily and other thy of the com- on their trac-

N DIES

ughton, Ruane. at his brother's

TO SAUDI ARABIA

Miss Angela McCormack, S.R.N., daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James McCormack, "Three Jolly Pigeons," Athlone, recently travelled to Saudi Arabia, where she intends to pursue her nursing career. Miss McCormack formerly worked on the staff of St. Vincent's Hospital, Athlone.



OLD I.R.A. MAN'S DEATH

One of the oldest and highly respected members of the farming community of the district passed to his eternal reward on April 25th in the person of Mr. Joseph Grace, Little Island. He had reached an advanced age. Deceased was a most industrious person and was a most obliging neighbour and friend. He was a member of the Old I.R.A. Brigade and did his bit for his country during the trouble times. At the largely-attended funeral to St. Mary's Cemetery, Messrs. Wm. Pilkington, James O'Brien, Patrick Mulpeter and George Murrin, former Old I.R.A. comrades, formed a guard of honour as a last tribute, while at the graveside a firing party from Customs Barracks, Athlone rendered full military honours. The coffin was draped in the Tri-colour. Rev. Fr. Conlon, C.C., recited the prayers at the graveside. To his wife, sons, daughters, grandchildren, relatives and friends the sympathy of all goes out in their great loss. Chief mourners were Bridget Grace (wife), John, George, Patrick, Joseph and Michael (sons); Mary, Rosie, Margaret, Catherine and Bridget (daughters); Joseph Rigney (son-in-law), Mrs. G. Grace (daughter-in-law), grandchildren, great-grandchildren, relatives and friends, to whom deepest sympathy is extended. Many Mass cards, Telegrams and messages of sympathy were received. Rev. Father Cronin, O.M.I. and V. Rev. Fr. Kinsella also attended the funeral. Requiem Mass for the repose of his soul was celebrated by Rev. Fr. Whelan, C.C.

G.A.A.

In a fast and exciting first-round Junior Championship game between Ballinagar and Edonderry played at Sunday

League

Coman's Park, Connacht Utd. Battery Colno. Pioneers, 4; I Athown, 2; A

FIXT

Coman's Park, Gentex, Sunday, —P. O'Brien, Connacht U Rovers, Gentex, Referee—P. O'Brien, Sarsfield v. Coman's Park, Referee—M. Clonbrusk v. I Saturday, 7 P. Fallon, Pioneers v. A 3 p.m., Sunda White.



Champi

The draws has the men's four somes and mixe championships. entries are much before and it win the compet regard to the

TEACHER

Following on successful Open return to the see with the Teache Stroke competi

JUNIO

Sponsored by wicks, the Athl 5 - 9 handicaps 36 holes on Sunc is important the Jerry Martin or early as possible

Michael Cleary ner's enclosure entering the sing tion with an all-f

Ladies' C