

My great great grandfather (my father's great grandfather on his mother's side - her mother's father) was a member of one of the Companies for a Battalion of the 3rd West Cork Brigade IRA unit. His name was Johnny Murnane and he lived in Gerehamen in Durrus. One of the jobs of the company was to scout for and give the Flying Column whatever they needed. The Flying Column moved around from place to place and sometimes they stayed in my great great grandfather's house. The men of the Column would be cold and hungry and often injured or sick. They could come late at night and my great great grandfather's family would have to look after them. They would stay one or two nights but they were always welcome. They had to clean their wounds, feed them and give them a bed to sleep in. They were a big family and sometimes some of them would have to go to a neighbour's house to sleep when men from the Column came. The house at that time had no electricity. They used candles, a tilly lamp and parafin oil lamps hung on the wall or on the table for light. They had no car. They used a pony and trap to get around and this also had an oil lamp for the night. They had no heating and they kept warm at night with fires and a hot water bottle. There was no telephone in the house and important messages would come by telegram with the postman.

I live in Derreenatra, Schull. Just over the road from my house is an old creamery. It is closed down now but people live in the house attached to it. Before the creamery was built there was just a dwelling house there. There is a story that there was a court held in that house and a man was taken out and shot after the court.

The old Schull Workhouse was burned down in June 1921 by the Glaun and Schull Companies. My father's grandfather on his mother's side, Denis O' Leary from Glaun, was involved in the burning of the workhouse. He died in 1982 and his coffin was draped with the Irish Flag.

Conor Coughlan
Carrigmore,
Derreenatra,
Schull,
Co. Cork

Scoil Bhríde, Ballydehob

OLD BOILER FROM THE WORKHOUSE IN SCHULL

