

## WEST CORK: STORIES OF THE REVOLUTION, 1916-1923

My granny' name is Clodagh O' Sullivan. As part of this project I spoke to her about her mothers family who lived in Bantry. Her mother's family name was O'Mahony on her dads side and McSweeney on her mothers side. The McSweenys were from Kealkil, a townland outside Bantry. The O'Mahony's were from the town of Bantry. Both families were involved in the activities at that time.

Ms. Bridie 'Ann' McSweeney- April 1975





*Ms. Bridie McSweeney and family*

### ' Cumann Na mBan'

Ms. Bridie 'Ann' Mc Sweeney was Captin of the Bantry Branch of 'Cumann Na mBan'. She and her members helped in many ways by keeping the volunteers fed and clothed and by distrackting the soldiers so the volunteers could escape. Once she went to Dublin on the train and collected ammuniion for the volunteers in Dunmanway. She hid the ammuniion under her clothing and travelled back on the train to Dunmanway. When she got back and off the train she gave all the ammuniion to the volunteers in Dunmanway. The next morning she heard that the R.I.C barracks in Dunmanway was blown up. There was no one injured. She was my grannies great aunt and lived until she was 98 years old. She was a very lovely lady who did not like to talk much about her activities with 'Cumann Na mBan'. These were difficult times for people.



## 'The Thimble'

My grannies grandad David O'Mahony was a grocer and lived in Barrack Street in Bantry. He was Chair of the local volunteer board. Two of his sons Jack and Jimmy were recruits of Fianna Eireann as children. They were enrolled on October 7<sup>th</sup> 1917 by Countess Marhievicz at Newtown Bantry on that day. The 'Black and Tans' were stationed in Bantry House, they were very cruel. Dave's General Store was picked out and burned to the ground as a reprisal for the burning of the RIC Barracks in 1921. Grandad O' Mahony was tipped off a few days before and he sat up all night for a few nights so he would hear the Black and Tans coming. He had 10 children. On the night of the fire the Black and Tans splashed petrol through the windows and on the doors and set it alight. They were drunk and went away quickly. The whole family escaped out a side door to a lane and were taken in by neighbours. The children were later sent to relations in the countryside. The only thing left after the fire was his wives silver thimble. Which stayed in the family for many years.

### The Shop and Residence - 1916



*A family portrait taken circa 1916*



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