

First genealogy report on D. Michael Collins



Irish Family History and Citizenship Research Services

www.recordsireland.ie

research@recordsireland.ie

Tel: 00353-1-6260189

Ignazio Messina

imessina@theblade.com

28th November 2013

RE: Result of Record Search – Order No. CB/3690

Dear Ignazio,

Thank you for your order of a search for the record of birth of Michael John Collins, the son of John Collins and Margaret Buckley, who was born on 30 September 1901 apparently in 'Spa Glen', Mallow County Cork.

A matching record was located at the General Register Office in Dublin and is enclosed. The record lists the birth of Michael Collins on 30 September 1904 at 'Spa Glen, Mallow' in the Registrar's District of Mallow, County Cork. The child's father was John Collins of Spa Glen, a 'Labourer' by profession. His mother was Margaret Collins, formerly Buckley. The birth was registered on 17 October 1904 by the father.

The place of birth listed in the record is quite a detailed address, what is known as a townland address - the smallest administrative division in Ireland equivalent to a small village or group of farms. 'Spa Glen', official spelled 'Spaglen' is situated on the immediate northern outskirts of the town of Mallow and now includes housing

developments as well as agricultural land. You can view the exact location through the maps of Ordnance Survey Ireland on their website at the following direct address:

<http://maps.osi.ie/publicviewer/#V1,556345,599667,6,3>

The 1901 and 1911 Census records for this townland are available to view through the website of the National Archives of Ireland at <http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/>

No Collins household is among the listings for the townland in either Census. Of course you have another indication of a place of residence for the family in terms of the placename of Mullenataura. A family matching the description is listed in a townland of that name in both the 1901 and 1911 Census – see the following direct addresses:

1901 Census

<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1901/Cork/Kildinan/Mullentoura/1146298/>

1911 Census

<http://www.census.nationalarchives.ie/pages/1911/Cork/Kildinan/Mullenataura/414788/>

On both occasions the profession of the head of the household, John Collins, was noted as 'Farmer'. Mullenataura is situated about eight miles to the east of Spaglen. Given the absence of a reference to the family in Spaglen (in either Census) and your instruction regarding the family connection to Mullenataura, it seems likely that the family listed in the Census in Mullenataura are one and same as that listed in the enclosed birth record.

Mullenataura is in the civil parish of Rathcormac, a considerable distance (in relative terms) from the home parish of the military/political leader Michael Collins. There

were up to eight separate Collins households listed in Mullenataura in the 1901 Census so the wider family may have been well established at that location by that time. Indeed there is further preliminary evidence of an early association of the surname with this location. *Griffith's Primary Valuation* was a survey of land and property holding undertaken in Ireland in the mid-1800's. The survey records the names of the various occupiers and lessors (landlords) in each townland, parish and county of Ireland. In county Cork the survey was finalised in the years 1851-53. You can view the listings in the survey for the various occupiers in the townland of Mullenataura through the website www.askaboutireland.ie at the following direct address:

<http://www.askaboutireland.ie/griffith-valuation/index.xml?action=doNameSearch&PlaceID=1735134&county=Cork&barony=Barrymore&parish=Rathcormack&townland=Mullenataura>

This shows several separate properties held by Collins tenants in Mullentaura circa 1851-53. It therefore seems quite probable that the paternal line of Michael John Collins extends a number of generations in Mullenataura. The farmholding of his father John may have been inherited through one of the 1851-53 Collins tenants.

Meanwhile, Tim Pat Coogan's biography of the military/political leader Michael Collins (b. 1890) indicates that that man's father was unusually old at the time of Michael Collins' birth.¹ His father was apparently some 75 years at the time of the birth. The father was thus himself born circa 1815. The baptismal register of the local Roman Catholic parish of Rosscarberry only begins in the previous year, 1814. In the circumstances, this basic source of vital information will not, in and of itself, allow us to trace relatives of Michael Collins beyond a first-cousin. Indeed even to trace a first cousin using this source would be a far from exact science, as independent confirmation of the names of both grandparents of Michael Collins (b. 1890) may not be available.²

¹ Tim Pat Coogan's book is entitled *Michael Collins: The Man Who Made Ireland* published in 2002 by Palgrave

² His grandfather's name should be listed in the civil record of his parents' marriage but his grandmother's name will not appear in that source.

Given that the cousinly relationship on the part of the Mullentaura family is believed to be of a far more distant nature, the basic stock of vital records simply will not exist to prove same. The only means we can think of to establish any form of documentary proof would be through a later reference in the family to a cousinly relationship (such as for example a mention of a cousin with a specific address in a funeral account of an ancestor of Michael John of the Mullenataura line).

While it is certainly plausible that the Mullenataura family were related to the Rosscarberry family, on the basis of our initial research and your background information the indications are that the vital records necessary to prove the specific nature of the link may not be available. However if you wish to continue the research (in the hope for example of discovering some secondary documentary source referring to the family link) we will be happy to assist.

Yours sincerely,

Hilda McGauley

Records Ireland

13 The Glade, Woodfarm Acres, Palmerstown, Dublin 20, Ireland Tel: 00353-1-6260189
Principal: Hilda McGauley, Member of the Association of Professional Genealogists in Ireland



MEMBER OF
THE ASSOCIATION OF
PROFESSIONAL GENEALOGISTS
IN IRELAND

Second genealogy report on D. Michael Collins



Irish Family History and Citizenship Research Services

www.recordsireland.ie

research@recordsireland.ie

Tel: 00353-1-6260189

Ignazio Messina

imessina@theblade.com

11th March 2014

RE: Result of Record Searches – Order No. PP/5033

Dear Ignazio,

Thank you for your order of further record searches relating to the family of Michael John Collins of Mullenataura in the civil parish of Rathcormack Co. Cork. Of course the purpose of the ongoing research of the Mullenataura family is to investigate the possibility of a link to the family of Michael Collins the military/political leader of Woodfield in the civil parish of Kilkerranmore, Roman Catholic parish of Rosscarberry, also in County Cork.

The present work sought evidence of a connection through secondary documentary sources, the specific focus being on newspaper notices of death/obituaries for members of the paternal line of Michael John Collins of Mullenataura, whom we refer to in the text below as 'MJ Collins' for ease of reference. To trace such records it was necessary to first research vital and other records relating to the Mullenataura family. The results of the process are set out below.

MJ Collins' parents' marriage

A previous search located the civil birth record of MJ Collins. The record confirmed your background instruction regarding MJ's parents' names. They were listed in the record as John Collins and Margaret Buckley. The family were recorded in the 1911 Census at Mullenataura. Details in their census form suggested that John and Margaret had been married circa 1899. A search for the civil record of that event was undertaken at the General Register Office in Dublin. A matching record was found and a photocopy is enclosed. We have added a reference number 'M1'.

The record lists the marriage of John Collins and Margaret Buckley on 14 February 1899 at the bride's house in the Registrar's District of Carrignavar 2, County Cork. John was listed as a Bachelor and Farmer of full age. His address was noted as 'Mullintoura, Rathcormac'. His father was listed as Patrick Collins, a Farmer. Margaret was a Spinster of full age with an address of Lyravarrig. Her father was John Buckley, also a Farmer.

It is quite unusual to find the location of a marriage listed as the 'bride's house' in a record of this period. Margaret's address of Lyravarrig refers to a townland location in the civil parish of Ardnageehy. In the Roman Catholic divisions it falls within the parish of Watergrasshill (also known as Ardnageehy). It would be expected that details of this marriage would have been recorded in the local Church register by the officiating clergyman following the event. The man in question is specifically listed on the civil record as John O'Leary, Curate of Watergrasshill. The local register at Watergrasshill was consulted for the relevant year, but no record of the marriage was found. It had been hoped that a Church record may have provided the names of the mothers of the married parties, so this result was disappointing.

John Collins' birth

Despite the failure to identify the mother of John Collins through a Church record of his marriage, the available background information for John was sufficient to allow for a search for the civil record of his birth. Your instruction provided a specific date of

birth of 20 February 1866 while the civil record of his marriage provided the name of his father as Patrick. A database source assisted in locating a closely matching record at the General Register Office in Dublin. A photocopy of the record is enclosed (reference B1). It lists the birth of John Collins on 19 February 1866 at Mullintoura in the Registrar's District of Rathcormac, Union of Fermoy, County Cork. The child's father was listed as Patrick Collins of Mullintoura, a Farmer by profession. The child's mother was noted as Ellen Collins, formerly Roche.

A subsequent follow-up search of the local Roman Catholic baptismal register (that of the parish of Rathcormac) located a matching baptismal record for this child.¹ The details are transcribed in the Appendix below. The child's date of baptism was recorded as 20th February 1866, which appears to have been the true significance of the date retained in the family.

Search for Margaret Buckley's Birth

Birth details for Margaret Buckley were also considered on the basis of the remote possibility of a connection on her part to the Woodfield Collins family. In the absence of a specific date of birth or independent confirmation of mother's name the conclusions possible in the case of Margaret are less certain. Your background instruction indicates that she was born in 1867, a detail which fits with the age information provided by Margaret at the time of the 1901 and 1911 Census of Ireland. We know that Margaret was residing at Lyravarrig at the time of her marriage which was probably her birthplace. Her father was John Buckley, a Farmer.

The government funded website at www.irishgenealogy.ie provides a database of references to many Church records from County Cork, including the Roman Catholic parish of Watergrasshill, within which (as previously noted) Lyravarrig is situated. That database was searched for any reference to a Margaret Buckley baptised in the parish of Watergrasshill during the course of the 1860's. Just two references were listed, only one of which showed a father John. The reference indeed related to 1867.

¹ The register is held on microfilm at the National Library of Ireland

The child's mother was noted as Eliza Dinan. You can view a digitized copy of the relevant baptismal record (dated 11 April 1867) through the www.irishgenealogy.ie database at the following direct address:

<http://churchrecords.irishgenealogy.ie/reels/cork%20%26%20ross.watergrasshill%20%28ardnageeha%29.p4790.00104.pdf>

A follow-up search resulted in location of a corresponding civil record of birth which is enclosed (reference B2). It lists a specific townland address for the family of Lyravarrig and records the profession of the father John Buckley as 'Farmer'.² The record is therefore a very good match with the known information on the background of MJ Collins mother. No obvious link to the Collins family of Woodfield is apparent.

Mullenataura Valuation Office Records

The next source consulted were the records of the Valuation Office. That office maintained information on property occupation and ownership in each townland of Ireland from the latter decades of the 19th Century through the 20th Century. It was hoped that the details of succession to the farmholding of the relevant Collins family of Mullenataura would assist in locating records of death for MJ's ancestors.

The Valuation Offices' records build on a mid-19th Century survey known as *Griffith's Primary Valuation*. In the case of County Cork, that survey was completed in the years 1851-53. As previously discussed it recorded a large number of tenants of surname Collins in the townland of Mullenataura at that time.

Surrounding evidence from the 1901 Census suggested that John Collins had succeeded to his family's farmholding by the turn of the Century. He was listed in the 1901 census at Mullenataura as 'John P. A. Collins'. He was the head of the household in which he

² The record lists the birth of Margaret Buckley on 9 April 1867 at Lyreavarrig, Ardnageehy in the Registrar's District of Carrignavar, Union of Cork, County Cork. The father was noted as John Buckley of Lyreavarrig, a Farmer. The mother was Elizabeth Buckley, formerly Dinan. The birth was registered on 1 May 1867 by Catherine Buckley of Lyreavarrig, who was present at birth.

was residing and his profession was noted as 'Farmer'. No Collins resident listed in Mullenataura matched the profile of either of his parents Patrick or Ellen.

The Valuation Office's 'Revision Book' records for Mullenataura for the period circa the 1901 Census were consulted. Three men named John Collins were listed as occupiers in the townland at that time. They were:

John Thomas Collins

John P Collins Senior

John P Collins Junior

The latter seemed the most likely candidate as the then 35 year old 'John P.A. Collin' listed in the Census.³ He held two separate lots, each including a house and land, with a total area of about 46 ½ acres. He was the outright owner of the property rather than a tenant, the lands having been subject to a purchase under the terms of the 'Land Acts' in shortly preceding years.⁴

It was interesting to note that this property was placed in the name of a Denis Buckley after 1901 before reverting once again to the name of John Collins a short number of years later. This resonates both with the connection to the Buckley family on the part of our subject and also the evidence presented in the civil birth record of MJ himself, which suggested that his family had temporarily lived away from Mullenataura in the period between the two censuses.

Historic developments on this property were traced for further evidence. Tracing forward in time, it was found that John Collins was eventually replaced as owner in an amendment dated 1943. John's successor was a William J Collins. This tallies with your information relating to MJ Collins' family farm which eventually passed to his brother,

³ The John Thomas Collins noted was likely the man who appeared in the 1901 Census as John T Collins, a farmer of 87 years.

⁴ The 'Land Acts' were a series of legislative measures enacted in the late 19th Century which established a system of government-assisted purchase to enable tenant farmers to exit the landlord system.

whom you referred to in your article as 'Uncle Bill' (the uncle of D. Michael). The Valuation Office records show that the above William was succeeded in 1972 by a John Collins. Again this detail tallies with your information regarding the name of the successor of 'Uncle Bill'.

Tracing back in time from the period circa the 1901 Census, it was found that John P. Collins Junior had originally succeeded to the property in 1898. His predecessor occupier was an Ellen Collins.⁵ Ellen had herself replaced a Patrick Collins Jr. in 1888. Patrick had been in occupation since 1861-62, at which time he had succeeded a John Collins Senior. Again those details fit with the evidence from the other sources. John Collins Jnr. had likely replaced his mother Ellen as occupier and she had likely previously replaced her husband Patrick. The records therefore provided clear suggestions as to approximate dates of death for ancestors of MJ Collins as follows:

His father John circa 1943

His grandmother Ellen circa 1898

His grandfather Patrick circa 1888

The predecessor of Patrick – John Collins Senior – may have been MJ's great-grandfather. His date of replacement suggests that he may have died circa 1861-62. That is some two years prior to the date of introduction of the civil registration system for deaths in Ireland, so a civil record of death will not be available in his case. Searches were performed for records of death of Patrick Collins (circa 1888), Ellen Collins (circa 1898) and John Collins (circa 1948).

⁵ Ellen had held lot 10 (comprising about 29 acres) and a share of a wider lot 9 with two other occupiers. The latter was divided into individual shares about the time of John Jr.'s succession, John obtaining about 17 acres.

Death Records

Matching civil records of death for Patrick, Ellen and John Collins were located at the General Register Office. Photocopies of the records are enclosed (labelled D1, to D3).

Patrick Collins died on 9 September 1887 at 'Moulentoura' in the Registrar's District of Rathcormac, Co. Cork. He was listed as a married farmer, aged 53 years. His death was registered in the following month by his brother Michael Collins of Moulentoura.

Ellen Collins died on 17 November 1897 at 'Mullentoury' in the Registrar's District of Rathcormac, County Cork. She was listed as a 'Farmer's Widow' aged 56 years. Her death was registered by her son John Collins of 'Mullentoury'.

John Collins died on 22 August 1948 at Mullentoura. He was listed as a Widower and farmer, aged 82 years. His death was registered by his son William Collins, who seems to have replaced him as official occupier some five years before the death. Each of the three death records fits very well with the background evidence.

Obituary Search

The aim of the above searches was of course to locate obituaries or death notices for members of the relevant Collins family in the hope of uncovering some link to the Woodfield Collins' (the family of the military/political leader). A number of newspapers were searched for such material relating to the above John, Ellen and Patrick Collins in the period following each death. Major available national and regional publications were searched in each case as follows:

Patrick Collins, died 9 September 1887 -
Cork Constitution
Cork Examiner
Freeman's Journal

Ellen Collin, died 17 November 1897 -
Cork Constitution
Cork Examiner
Freeman's Journal
Irish Independent

John Collins, died 22 August 1948 -
Cork Examiner
Irish Independent
Irish Press

Unfortunately this process resulted in location of just one notice of death, which was not particularly detailed. The notice related to John Collins and appeared in the edition of the *Cork Examiner* dating from 23 August 1948. A photocopy is enclosed (reference N1). It lists simply:

COLLINS (Rathcormac) – On August 22, 1948 at his residence, Mullinturra, John Collins. Deeply regretted R.I.P. Funeral on this day (Monday) at 2 p.m. (O.T.) from Rathcormac Catholic Church to local cemetery.

Other Relatives

It was next decided to expand the search for obituary information to include other Collins individuals of Mullentaura of the elder generation, having a documented or probable connection to the same family line. The first obvious candidate was Michael

Collins, the brother of Patrick Collin (died 1887) who was the informant listed on his civil death record. This Michael was evidently the granduncle of MJ Collins.

The Valuation Office records showed just one Michael Collins holding land in Mullenataura at the time of Patrick's death in 1887. The name was listed as occupier of the relevant holding through to the late 20th Century. That suggests that the c.1887 holder was succeeded at some point by a man of the same name (with no amendment to the records therefore necessary). A man fitting the age profile of a brother of Patrick Collins (the 1887 deceased) was noted in the 1901 Census of Mullenataura. He did not appear with his family in the later 1911 Census. The eldest son of the relevant family still residing in household in 1911 was also named Michael. He may have succeeded his father as official occupier following his death at some point in the period between the two censuses. A record of death fitting the description of the relevant Michael Collins was located at the General Register Office (see reference D4). It listed the date of death as 7 May 1906 and the location as Mullintoura. The deceased was a married farmer aged 75 years. A follow up search for a death notice or obituary in the *Cork Examiner* and *Cork Constitution* newspapers yielded a negative result.

Wider Family

MJ's grandfather Patrick had held a share of one particular plot of land in Mullenataura for a number of years prior to his death. He held that land jointly with two other occupier/tenants, both of whom had the surname Collins. One was a John P. Collins, who was later distinguished from MJ's father (also John P. Collins) by the addition of 'Senior'. It seems likely that John P. Senior and John P. Junior were related, the former perhaps being an uncle or granduncle of the latter. On the evidence of the 1901 Census, it seemed likely that John P Collins Senior was deceased by that time, although he was not replaced in the Valuation Office records until 1910 (there was often some delay in amending details in these records to reflect actual changes in circumstances).

A matching record of death for this man – dating from the year 1900 – was obtained at the General Register Office (see photocopy D5). It lists the death of John P. Collins on 16 July 1900 at Mullintoura. The deceased was a married farmer, aged 71 years. His death was registered by a Thomas Collins of Mullintoura, listed as his brother. A search of the *Cork Examiner* and *Cork Constitution* newspapers failed to locate a death notice or obituary for this man.

John P Senior's brother Thomas and his second historic co-occupier (who was named William) present as two further subjects for future research. Another brother of this John P. Collins Senior was traced through a listing from the Calendar of Wills and Administrations for Ireland, a transcript of which was available online. The Calendar entry noted:

Collins, John, 21 September

Administration of the estate of John Collins late of Mullintaura Rathcormac County Cork Farmer, who died 18 July 1900 granted at Cork to Lawrence Collins Engineer, the brother.

A search of the National Archives' database of the 1901 Census located one potential matching candidate as the above Lawrence. The man in question was residing in Blackrock town in County Cork. He had the profession of 'Civil Service Telegraph Engineer'. A record of death was obtained at the General Register Office listing the death of a Laurence Collins on 1 June 1926 at Lee View, Blackrock in Cork (see photocopy D6). He was noted as a Widower aged 86 years with the profession of 'Superintendent Engineer, G.P.O'. That abbreviation stands for 'General Post Office', a body also responsible for telegraphs. His death was registered by a Norah Collins, also of Lee View, Blackrock. A notice of this man's death was obtained in the *Cork Examiner* newspaper of 2 June 1926 (see photocopy N2). It was quite brief stating:

COLLINS – On June 1st at his residence, Lee View, Blackrock, Laurence Collins, late Superintendent Engineer, G.P.O. at an advanced age. R.I.P. Funeral private.

Military Listing

The Irish Military Archives have recently made available online a number of their collections at the website <http://www.militaryarchives.ie/> One source provided is a Census of military personnel dating from November 1922, during the course of the Irish Civil War. It relates to those who were serving in the newly established National Army of the Irish Free State, commanded by Michael Collins until his death in August of that year.

We note that your background information on the Mullenataura family of MJ Collins suggests that his brothers John and Billy (uncles of D.Michael) fought in the war on opposite sides. John apparently fought with the National Army of the Free State. If John had joined the army by November 1922 he would likely have appeared in this Census. A potentially matching listing was found through the Military Archive database. It relates to a John Collins aged 21 years who was serving at the Watergrasshill Post, Eastern Division, Southern Command. His home address was recorded as 'Mullentoura, Ballyhooley, Co. Cork'. His next-of-kin was listed as Mrs. M Collins of the same address. The age noted for this John is a close match with that of the brother of MJ recorded in the 1911 Census at Mullenatoura.⁶ John attested at Rathcormac on 26 September 1922, some four weeks after the assassination of Michael Collins. A number of the other men serving in the Watergrasshill post had attested at Rathcormac in the months shortly preceding this Army census of November 1922. You can view a digitized copy of the entry for John through the following direct website address:

⁶ That Census had recorded another John Collins residing in Mullenatoura who was of a similar age and also had a mother with a first initial of 'M'. We know that John's father was still living in 1922. However it seems that many of the young soldiers listed in the Census recorded their mother rather than their father as the next-of-kin so the record very likely relates to MJ's brother John.

[http://census.militaryarchives.ie/pdf/Watergrasshill Eastern Division Southern Command Page 8.pdf](http://census.militaryarchives.ie/pdf/Watergrasshill%20Eastern%20Division%20Southern%20Command%20Page%208.pdf)

Further Research

It would be possible, if thought worthwhile, to continue the research using similar methodology in an effort to trace more detailed death notices or obituaries for other members of the wider Collins family of Mullenataura. Some potential subjects include MJ's brother Billy and mother Mary (formerly Buckley) but also other Collins of the townland whose specific relationship to MJ may not be entirely known at this stage but who are very likely to be relatively close cousins and therefore share any relationship to the Woodfield Collins's on the paternal line. Thomas Collins, the brother of John P Collins Senior, is for example such a subject.

Another potential source of information on the family relationships of the above deceased's would be their Will records. While very unlikely to provide information on a connection to any distant cousins in Woodfield, the details listed in a surviving Will could assist in identifying close relatives who may present as new subjects for research of death notices etc. for any connection to the Woodfield family. We will be happy to assist with any further research you might like to pursue and in the meantime look forward to hearing your comments or queries on the present findings.

Yours sincerely,

Hilda McGauley
Records Ireland

13 The Glade, Woodfarm Acres, Palmerstown, Dublin 20, Ireland Tel: 00353-1-6260189
Principal: Hilda McGauley, Member of the Association of Professional Genealogists in Ireland



Appendix

Transcript from microfilm copy baptismal register of the Roman Catholic parish of Rathcormac diocese of Cloyne, held at the National Library of Ireland

20 Feb 1866

John of

Pat^k Collins & Ellen Roche

ss. Pat^k Collins & Cath Collins

Third genealogy report on D. Michael Collins



Irish Family History and Citizenship Research Services

www.recordsireland.ie

research@recordsireland.ie

Tel: 00353-1-6260189

Ignazio Messina

imessina@theblade.com

19th June 2014

RE: Result of Record Searches – Order No. PP/5054

Dear Ignazio,

Thank you for your order of additional research of the Collins family of Mullenataura, Co. Cork.

Subjects and Focus

The present round of work focussed on three subjects:

- Margaret Collins (formerly Buckley) the mother of Michael John Collins of Mullenataura (hereinafter referred to as 'M.J.')
- William (Bill) Collins, the brother of M.J.
- Thomas Collins, the brother of "John P Collins Senior", considered a potential candidate as a granduncle of MJ.

The research plan involved a search for civil records of death for each of the three to be followed by a search for obituaries or death notices, the ultimate aim being to find some reference to a connection on the part of the Mullenataura family to Michael

Collins the military/political leader of Woodfield in the civil parish of Kilkerranmore, County Cork.

Mrs. Margaret Collins

MJ's mother Margaret is known to have died prior to August 1948, as the record of death of MJ's father John dating from that time described John as a 'Widower'. Margaret was born circa 1867. A closely matching record was located at the General Register Office following a search of the Index of Deaths. The record is enclosed. It lists the death of Margaret Collins on 6 October 1947 at Mullintoura in the Registrar's District of Rathcormac, Superintendent Registrar's District of Fermoy, County Cork. The deceased was noted as 'married' and so had a living husband. She was also described as the 'Wife of a Farmer'. Her age was recorded as 80 years. Her death was registered by her son William Collins of Mullintoura.

A follow-up search of several national and regional newspapers located just one notice relating to her death, which was published in *The Cork Examiner* of 8 October 1947.¹ The notice was in simple terms stating:

COLLINS (Mullintoura) - On October 7, 1947, at her residence, Mrs. Margaret Collins. Deeply regretted by her husband and family. R.I.P. Funeral on this day (Wednesday), at 2 o'clock (O.T.) from Rathcormac to Ballinaltig - (American papers please copy)

The 'Ballinaltig' referred to is a graveyard in the local parish of Rathcormac.

William Collins

MJ Collins' brother William was born circa 1906, on the basis of his age at the time of the 1911 Census. He is known to have succeeded father John as holder of the family farm in Mullenataura. Listings from the Valuation Office's 'Revision Book' land records indicate that William was replaced as owner/occupier of the farm in an amendment

¹ Other publications consulted included *The Irish Press*, *The Irish Times*, *Irish Independent* and *Southern Star*

dating to 1972. A search of the Index of Death at the General Register Office for that year located a matching record of death, which is enclosed.

The record shows that William Collins died on 23 January 1972 at 'Mullentaura, Ballyhooly' in the Registrar's District of Rathcormac, Superintendent Registrar's District of Fermoy, County Cork. He was 64 years. He was married and had the occupation of 'Farmer'. His death was registered by his daughter Margaret Collins of Mullentaura, Ballyhooly.

A similar follow-up search of several publications for an obituary or death notice succeeded in locating just one notice of death which was relatively brief. It was published in the edition of the *The Cork Examiner* dated Tuesday, January 25, 1972.² It read as follows:

COLLINS (Ballyhooly)- On January 23, 1972 at his residence, Mullintoura, William J., beloved husband of Mary Collins. Deeply regretted by his loving wife, sons, daughters, brothers and sisters, daughters-in-law, grandson, relatives and friends. R.I.P. Requiem Mass on today (Tuesday) at 12 o'clock at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, Rathcormac. Funeral immediately afterwards to Castlehyde Cemetery.

Castlehyde cemetery is relatively close to Mullenataura.

Thomas Collins

Thomas Collins of Mullenataura was considered a potential candidate as a granduncle of MJ Collins. He was listed as the informant on the record of death of his own brother John P Collins Senior in July of 1900. John P Senior was 71 years at death, so Thomas was likely of a similar age profile. The closest matching candidate in the 1901 Census of Mullenataura was a farmer aged 63 years. That man also appeared in the 1911 Census of

² Other publications searched included *The Irish Press*, *The Irish Times*, *Irish Independent*, *Southern Star* and *Cork Holly Bough*

the townland. The evidence from the Valuation Office Revision Books showed that the property in the townland most likely linked to that individual was listed in the same name for many proceeding years. This was likely due to a succession by his son of the same name at some point after 1911 (his son of the same name was residing with him in 1911). A search of the Index of Deaths located a matching record of death from the year 1911. A photocopy is enclosed.

The record lists the death of Thomas Collins on 25 November 1911 at Mullinataura in the Registrar's District of Rathcormac, Superintendent Registrar's District of Fermoy, County Cork. The deceased was 73 years. He had the occupation of 'Farmer' and was married. His death was registered by his son also Thomas Collins of Mullinataura.

A follow-up search for a notice of death or obituary for this man proved entirely negative despite the availability of several regional newspapers for the area covering that particular period.³

Additional Research

It was next decided to consider (at no additional fee) some further sources for potential leads. A search was made of the Calendar of Wills and Administrations, held at the National Archives of Ireland for records of some of the Collins individuals identified in the research to date as follows:

- John Collins, died 22 August 1948 (father of M.J. Collins)
- William Collins, died 23 January 1972 (brother of M.J. Collins)
- Thomas Collins, died 9 November 1911 (possible granduncle of M.J. Collins)
- John P. Collins 'Senior', died 16 July 1900 (possible granduncle of M.J. Collins)

No reference was found in the Calendar to a Will or Administration in the estate of M.J.'s father John despite a search of an extensive period following his death.⁴

³ The publications searched included the *Irish Independent*, *Freeman's Journal*, *Cork Examiner*, *Cork Free Press*, *Cork Echo*, *Southern Star* and *Cork County Eagle & Munster Advertiser*

Similarly, the search of the Calendar proved negative in the case of Thomas Collins.⁵ A Will was however found in the case of William Collins, the apparent brother of M.J. The Will was executed some ten years prior to William's death. Under the terms of the Will, he bequeathed all his property to his wife Mary. A scanned image of the Will is enclosed. The probate documentation also includes some schedules detailing William's property at the time of his death which included lands and buildings in the townlands of 'Mullentaura' and Glannagoul. We can forward copies of that documentation if required.

In the case of John P. Collins 'Senior' we know from our previous research that an Administration of his estate occurred following his death – you may recall that a brief index entry from the Calendar had been viewed online. In the present search the full papers were examined and they were found to provide quite detailed family information. We had surmised that John P. may have been a granduncle of M.J. Collins. The grandfather of M.J., who was named Patrick Collins, had held one particular plot of land jointly with John P. Collins and another occupier of surname Collins. A fraternal relationship between Patrick and John P. therefore seemed probable. The information in the Administration papers does not support this conclusion. However it is at least very likely that the two men inherited shares in the land from a common ancestor. They may for example have been first cousins.

The papers show that John P.'s estate was administered by his brother Laurence Collins, an Engineer with an address of Blackrock in Cork. Laurence was required to swear an oath as part of the process and it is that document that includes the detailed family information. A scanned copy is enclosed. Laurence swore that John P. had died a widower:

“without child, grandchild or the descendants of such, and without parents, but leaving me and two other lawful brothers Michael and Thomas Collins, and two lawful sisters Bridget Mullins, wife of Patrick Mullins of Bridgefort [sic]

⁴ The Calendar was searched from the year of death (1948) forward to 1965.

⁵ The period searched in Thomas' case being the year of death (1911) forward to 1924.

Connecticut U.S. America and Mary Kilgrew, wife of John Kilgrew of Waterford, Commifision Agent, and one lawful nephew Nicholas Collins and two lawful nieces Bridget Collins and Hanorah Collins children of another deceased brother Patrick Collins, his only next of kin him surviving.”

This tells us that, while the deceased had a brother Patrick, he was other than M.J.’s grandfather Patrick, as M.J.’s father John (who was then living) was not mentioned as a nephew of the deceased (surviving son of the deceased’s brother). Nevertheless the deceased was likely to have been a family member of some kind in M.J.’s paternal line where the relationship to Michael Collins of Woodfield is posited to subsist in earlier generations.

The reference to the U.S. relations of John P. Collins of Mullenataura – the Mullins family of Bridgeport Connecticut - is interesting in that context. Perhaps the link to the Woodfield family may have been noted and maintained independently by various branches of U.S. cousins following the rise to prominence of the political/military leader in the period following the Irish General Election of 1918. Perhaps that is a possible route of further research to consider. The website www.familysearch.org (which provides references to many U.S. vital records) includes some potential leads for this family, in particular three references to births of children of Patrick Mullins and Bridget Collins in Bridgeport Connecticut as follows:

-John Joseph Mullins, 7 May 1874

<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/F7QJ-9LX>

-Mary Agnes Mullins, 21 December 1875

<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/F7QJ-CXT>

-Dennis E Mullins, 11 March 1878

<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/F7QV-HVD>

Additionally a reference is listed to the death of an Eldridge F Mullins, son of Patrick Mullins and a mother of surname Collins. The man in question died in Pierce Township, Clermont, Ohio on 19 April 1930 at the age of 54 years – see:

<https://familysearch.org/pal:/MM9.1.1/X6XS-8RF>

Perhaps a search for that man's obituary in Ohio would be a worthwhile exercise.

To date, the results of our Irish research have proved discouraging in terms of the possibility of discovering a link between the Mullenataura and Woodfield Collins families through a reference in a death notice/obituary of a member of the Collins clan of the former townland. If you wish to continue the research we will be happy to help, though it appears on the basis of the results to date that the probability of ultimate success is quite low.

Yours sincerely,

Hilda McGauley
Records Ireland

13 The Glade, Woodfarm Acres, Palmerstown, Dublin 20, Ireland Tel: 00353-1-6260189
Principal: Hilda McGauley, Member of the Association of Professional Genealogists in Ireland

