

# THE NOLANS AND COSTELLOS OF LISTOWEL, LIMERICK AND CALGARY

Pádraig de Bhaldraithe      Pádraig Óg de Bhaldraithe

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## 1 Introduction

Mr. Grant MacEwan, former mayor of the city of Calgary and lieutenant governor of the province of Alberta, Canada, travelled from Calgary to Limerick in 1985 for the specific purpose of gathering information about the Nolan family, formerly of Barrington Street. He was particularly interested in Patrick James (Paddy) Nolan, K.C., who emigrated from Limerick to Calgary in 1889. Mr. MacEwan has been described as “a distinguished agriculturalist, historian, public servant, author and lecturer.” He has been the recipient of five honorary degrees, is a Member of the Order of Canada, and is considered to be “western Canada’s foremost historical writer.” There could hardly be any greater tribute to Paddy Nolan than this journey of a man of Mr. MacEwan’s stature, 72 years after Paddy’s death, in quest of information for his book<sup>1</sup> on the life and times of this frontier lawyer.

In the Summer 1986 issue of the *Old Limerick Journal*,<sup>2</sup> Mr. MacEwan briefly described his visit to Limerick and asked for further information from readers. While it appears that all Alberta knows of Paddy Nolan, one of Limerick’s most illustrious sons, local readers may need some introduction in this, the centenary year of his departure from his native shores. To quote from the preface to MacEwan’s book:

The life story of the young Irishman, Patrick James Nolan, who came to the Northwest Territories in 1889, caught the spirit of the

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<sup>1</sup>*He Left Them Laughing When He Said Good-bye: The Life And Times Of Frontier Lawyer Paddy Nolan*, by Grant MacEwan, published by Western Producer Prairie Books, P.O.Box 2500, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, S7K 2C4, Canada, 1987. Mr. MacEwan’s earlier works include *Fifty Mighty Men*, published by Western Producer Book Service, 1958, which also contains a chapter on Paddy Nolan (“Paddy was an Irishman — Paddy Nolan,” pp. 67–72).

<sup>2</sup>“Paddy Nolan in Calgary,” No. 19, p. 12.

frontier, and became a legend, deserved well to be written — and sooner. The reasons should be clear: in addition to becoming one of the most successful criminal defense lawyers in Canada, he was recognized as one of the two best orators in the West and also as a wit and humorist unsurpassed.

This article is a humble attempt to describe the family background of this notable Limerick emigrant, to fill in some of the gaps in Mr. MacEwan's book and to correct some inaccuracies in his 1986 article. In that article, he misleadingly states that the "O'Nolans ... were Wexford and Carlow County people." He may have consulted one of the standard works on Irish surnames, such as that of Dr. Edward MacLysaght, which says that "in early times," the Nolan family held "hereditary office under the Kings of Leinster"; and that "the chief of the sept was known as Prince of Foherta, *i.e.* the barony of Forth, in the present county of Carlow where the name was and still is very numerous."<sup>3</sup> MacLysaght goes on to remark that "there was also a sept of the name [Nolan] of Corca Laoidhe which is now well represented in Co. Kerry." In fact, Paddy Nolan's father had moved to Limerick from his birthplace at Greenville, in the townland of Gortcurreen, just outside Listowel, Co. Kerry.

Unfortunately, Mr. MacEwan's task in preparing a biography of Paddy Nolan was complicated by the fact that Paddy had "left no diaries or personal documents, ... incinerated just about everything ... [and] never appreciated the importance of leaving something behind."<sup>4</sup> In particular, Mr. MacEwan must regret that he did not have access to the papers in the Public Record Office in Dublin in the High Court case of *Waldron v. Dee*,<sup>5</sup> which concerned the estate of one Julia Nolan of William Street, Listowel. Julia, a first cousin of the Canadian lawyer, died intestate in 1922. She was survived by eight of her 23 first cousins on the Nolan side and by nine more first cousins on her mother's side. These surviving first cousins, including the plaintiff, Mrs. Margaret Mary (Polly) Waldron, *née* Nolan, and the defendant, John Dee, were left as next-of-kin to squabble over her estate.

The *Waldron v. Dee* case is reminiscent of the famous Dickensian case of *Jarndyce v. Jarndyce*, detailed in *Bleak House*, in the long drawn out nature of the proceedings, but suffice it to say that hearings were still going on as late as February 27, 1947, in a case in which the originating summons was issued on March 19, 1924. The final order, made on the former date, directed payment-out of the funds remaining in Court to the solicitors on account of their costs. There

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<sup>3</sup>*The Surnames of Ireland*, 5th edition, published by Irish Academic Press, 1985, p. 237.

<sup>4</sup>See review by Wendy Dudley, "Historian relished tracing noted lawyer's roots," *Calgary Herald*, November 24, 1987.

<sup>5</sup>1924, No. 224 (Chancery Division). The plaintiff was grandmother and greatgrandmother respectively of the writers of this article.

was not enough left to pay the lawyers in full, and there was nothing at all left for the next-of-kin!

The papers in the case include pedigree affidavits sworn by plaintiff and defendant. The plaintiff's affidavit outlines the Nolan family tree, but errs in ignoring certain deceased members of the family. Nevertheless, it was invaluable for the preparation of this article.

## 2 The Nolan Genealogy

The story of the Nolan family must then begin, for want of earlier records, with the grandparents of Paddy Nolan of Calgary. *Griffith's Valuation* shows William Nolan (the Elder) occupying a tiny holding of 3 acres, 1 rood and 25 perches in Gortcurreen, rented from the Earl Of Listowel. The earlier *Perambulation Books* in the Valuation Office in Dublin break this down into 2 acres, 1 rood and 10 perches of "good clayey, but cold arable" land; also 3 roods of "moory arable" land; an "office"<sup>6</sup> occupying 6 perches; the "waste of 1/2 road," taking up 34 perches; a garden of 9 perches and a house and further "offices" on another 6 perches. The total Poor Law Valuation came to £2.65. The Nolan homestead lay on the northern bank of the old course of the River Feale, just west of Listowel. Much of the nearby land is marked "liable to floods," and the river itself has changed to a more southerly course on more recent maps. It is difficult to follow the various changes in area and ownership over the years, but, although the Nolans gradually accumulated a little more land in Gortcurreen and the adjoining townlands, the holding never exceeded a dozen acres. There is no promise in these early details of the success that later generations of Nolans were to enjoy in such far-flung places as Calgary, Limerick and Burma.

William Nolan (the Elder) married Johanna Buckley in the early years of the nineteenth century, and appears from the Valuation Office records to have lived until about 1860. As the tenancy immediately passed to his son, Patrick, his wife most likely predeceased him.

William Nolan (the Elder) and his wife, Johanna, had six children:<sup>7</sup>

1. Catherine (Kit) Nolan (b. 1812) m. *circa* 1835, at Listowel, William (Billy) Costello,<sup>8</sup> of Trieneragh, Duagh, Co. Kerry, and had at least four children:

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<sup>6</sup>Presumably what would now be called an "out-office."

<sup>7</sup>The male line of this family seems to have become extinct with the death in 1981 of Captain William A. G. Nolan, which might explain why no Nolan stepped forward to write this article. The authors are open to correction on this point, as there may be descendants of some branches of whose existence they are unaware.

<sup>8</sup>The name has been variously spelt Costello and Costelloe, but the former spelling is favoured by the current generation and will be used throughout.

- (a) Thomas (Tom Billy) Costello (b. *circa* 1836, d. at Trieneragh, August 5, 1914) succeeded his father in Trieneragh and m. *circa* 1862 Mary O'Connor (b. *circa* 1843, d. 1939) and had no less than 13 children, although some of these died in infancy.

Notable among this family was James (Jimín) Costello (d. 1972), who took a prominent part locally in the War of Independence (1919–21) as company captain of the Duagh company of the Kerry No. 1 Brigade of the Old I.R.A.<sup>9</sup> This was in marked contrast to the military exploits of at least three of his Nolan second cousins, who all served in the British Army. In the Civil War (1922–3), Jimín was prominent on the anti-treaty side. In July 1922, he went with a flying column to Co. Tipperary, where he was eventually captured between Kildorrery and Mitchelstown. He was imprisoned at Port Laoise and the Curragh until December 22, 1923.<sup>10</sup>

Three of Jimín's brothers were priests in the United States. The Trieneragh farm into which Kit Nolan married around 1835 is now occupied by Jimín's daughter, Mrs. Mary Stack, and her son, Paul.

- (b) W. N. Costello, J.P.,<sup>11</sup> (most likely William, although always referred to by his initials) was probably, along with his brother John, the first of the family to arrive in Calgary. The city began as a police outpost in 1877, but only "took off" with the arrival of the railroad in 1883. The Costellos were there before the railroad, and their wives and families came in on the first passenger train. W. N.'s son, John Alberta Costello (b. November 17, 1883) was the first white baby born in Calgary.<sup>12</sup> W. N. later tried his luck further afield, and on March 9, 1904, was secretary of the Washington and International Mining Company, incorporated under the laws of the state of Washington, with a capital stock of \$1,000,000.<sup>13</sup> As he is not mentioned in the pedigree affidavit,

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<sup>9</sup>See *Listowel and Its Vicinity*, 2nd edition, by J. Anthony Gaughan, published by Mercier Press, Cork, 1974. Fr. Gaughan quotes Jimín Costello as the eye-witness authority for his version of the story of the controversial raids in April 1920 and April 1921 on Kilmorna House, the residence of Sir Arthur Vicars. Vicars, who had been Ulster King of Arms and "keeper" of the Irish Crown Jewels until their theft in 1907, did all he could to aid the war effort during the First World War, and as a result was not popular among Irish nationalists. He disregarded a solemn warning to leave the country at once, issued during the first raid, and was shot dead by one of the seventeen volunteers involved in the second raid.

<sup>10</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup>MacEwan, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>A share certificate for 1,000 shares in the name of his brother (Tom Billy) is still in the possession of Jimín Costello's family. Tom Billy visited his brothers in North America a number of times.

it would appear that W. N. Costello predeceased Julia Nolan.

- (c) John William Costello, reputed to have been a hedge schoolmaster before he left Ireland, was the first school teacher in Calgary.<sup>14</sup> He had a class of seventeen children and was paid \$50 a month until the money ran out. Then he became Inspector of Weights and Measures. His daughter, Elizabeth Lillian (Lillie) Costello (b. December 15, 1883) was the first white girl born in Calgary. His son, Dr. Michael Copps Costello, was mayor of Calgary from 1915 to 1918, a period in Calgary history in which Prohibition was a live issue, which he is said to have handled with diplomacy.<sup>15</sup> Lillie was one of the few members of the family who ever travelled from Calgary to visit their Irish relatives. On August 7, 1910, she signed a form requesting the postmaster in Limerick to redirect her mail to the General Post Office, Listowel, where she intended to remain until August 15, with her travelling companion, Florence Lee, a sister-in-law of Paddy Nolan. Unlike his brother, John Costello seems to have remained in Calgary, or at least he was there when his uncle, William Nolan (the Younger), died in 1905.<sup>16</sup> As he too is not mentioned in the pedigree affidavit, it is presumed that he also predeceased Julia Nolan.
- (d) Johanna Costello (chr. May 27, 1849) m. Timothy Dillon (d. *ante* May 21, 1922) of Knockaneoun, Listowel and Duagh, Co. Kerry and left issue, three sons and three daughters. The pedigree affidavit declares that she survived Julia Nolan.

2. Denis Nolan.<sup>17</sup>

3. Patrick Nolan (b. *circa* 1825, d. *ante* July 20, 1886) m. *circa* 1858 Margaret Dee (b. *circa* 1839, d. *circa* 1908) of Scartleigh, Listowel. He succeeded his father in Greenville and had a family of two daughters:

- (a) Julia Nolan (b. at Scartleigh, Listowel, March 31, 1860, d. unmarried at William Street, Listowel, May 21, 1922) inherited the Greenville property on her father's death and was the intestate in the case of *Waldron v. Dee*.

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<sup>14</sup>MacEwan, *op. cit.*, p. 21.

<sup>15</sup>See "The 'Dry' Trials of a 'Wet' Mayor," *Calgary News Telegraph*, May 22, 1915; also obituary from a Calgary newspaper of Dr. M. C. Costello's son, Francis, killed in a traffic accident near Calgary in 1946.

<sup>16</sup>See obituary quoted below.

<sup>17</sup>He is not mentioned in the *Waldron v. Dee* pedigree affidavit, but is included on a family tree compiled by Polly Waldron's son, John, which notes that he died unmarried.

- (b) Catherine<sup>18</sup> (Katie) Nolan (b. *circa* October 15, 1862, d.s.p. November 19, 1907) m. Patrick Clancy (d. September 11, 1898). He was a grocer and shopkeeper, who had a public house at William Street, Listowel, which passed to his wife on his death.<sup>19</sup> On Catherine's death, there appears to have been a family arrangement under which the Greenville farm was transferred to Jeremiah Dee (a younger first cousin on her mother's side) and the public house in William Street was transferred to her sister, Julia. When Julia herself died, the licensed premises became the subject of the long drawn-out *Waldron v. Dee* lawsuit, which ultimately benefited nobody but the lawyers.

A generation later, the Greenville farm passed from Jeremiah Dee's widow, Catherine, to her nephew Jim Sheahan, who now lives there. With typical Kerry wit, a neighbour remarked to the current occupant, after the birth of his first child, "Those are the first nappies on that clothes line in three generations!"

In her later years, Julia Nolan was helped out in the shop by the Aherne sisters, whose mother was another first cousin on the Dee side. An interesting story is told of how one of these girls was involved (wittingly or otherwise) in gun-running for the Old I.R.A. during the troubled times. She arrived in Listowel by train one day, carrying a suitcase with lethal contents. Being barely able to lift the heavy weight, she approached a British soldier standing on the platform and asked him for assistance. He was only too willing to oblige, completely unaware of the contents of his burden!

4. James Nolan, (b. *circa* 1828, d. April 21, 1888) m. *circa* 1854 a widow, Mrs. Mary Hough (*née* O'Rourke, d. December 11, 1891). James rose from his humble beginnings in Greenville to the proprietorship of a large shop in Limerick. In 1891, his son, William M., was advertising "Nolan's old established house, 43, William Street, Limerick," where "bread stuffs and feeding stuffs of every description can always be had by wholesale and retail."<sup>20</sup>

James was an elected guardian for the Limerick Union in 1880, from the Market Ward, and, at the same time, a member of the Council of the Corporation of Limerick, from the Irishtown Ward.<sup>21</sup> The family resided in

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<sup>18</sup>The unusual spelling Catharine (*sic*) appears on her death certificate.

<sup>19</sup>It is now Whelan's Fruit and Vegetable shop, two doors away from the better known hostelry of playwright John B. Keane.

<sup>20</sup>*The Limerick City and Counties of Limerick and Clare: Directory 1891-'2* printed by H. & E. Ashe, 15, Upper Cecil Street, Limerick.

<sup>21</sup>*Limerick, Clare, Tipperary and Kerry: Directory 1880-81*, published by William Bassett, 1,

Barrington Street, Limerick.

In addition to his step-daughter, Bridget Hough,<sup>22</sup> who was later to become Mother Mary Of The Angels, Mother Provincial of the Good Shepherd nuns, James Nolan's family included four highly successful sons and two daughters who died relatively young:

- (a) William Michael Nolan (b. September 29, 1855,<sup>23</sup> d. at his residence, "Mentana," Laurel Hill Avenue, Limerick, March 22, 1941) m. Ellen Mary Murphy (d. February 16, 1944). He was High Sheriff of Limerick City in 1890 and Mayor in 1895 and 1896. He resigned and was elected Town Clerk on May 6, 1896. He resigned from the latter office only about ten years before his death, having served for 37 years. He was a Justice of the Peace from 1904 to 1920; Belgian Consul for Limerick, Clare and Tipperary, 1896 and Chevalier of the Order of the Crown of Belgium, 1920. He had been educated by the Christian Brothers, and also at Weir's Academy and at the Limerick Diocesan Seminary, and listed his recreations as reading, country walks and garden work. He lived earlier at 8 Upper Mallow Street, and carried on his father's corn and flour business in William Street.<sup>24</sup> His own son, Captain William A. G. Nolan (b. July 13, 1897, d. unmarried, February 6, 1981), who served in the British Army in both World Wars, is mentioned elsewhere in this article. William M. Nolan was also survived by a daughter, Mrs. Marie Rose O'Dwyer (b. August 22, 1892, d. November 5, 1983).
- (b) Michael James Nolan, M.D., (b. September 29, 1859, d. December 27, 1944) m. firstly a Miss Greene and secondly Kathleen Whelan. He was the only doctor in the family<sup>25</sup> and was elected President of the Medico-Psychological Association of Great Britain and Ireland for 1924–1925. At that time, he was Resident Medical Superintendent of the Down District Asylum and Consulting Visitor-in-Lunacy to the Lords Chief Justices of Northern and Southern Ireland. It is possible that there are surviving descendants of either or both of his marriages,

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Brunswick Street, Limerick.

<sup>22</sup>Not O'Rourke as she is inadvertently described in MacEwan's article.

<sup>23</sup>*Thom's Irish Who's Who, 1923*, from which the list of his distinctions is taken.

<sup>24</sup>He must have been responsible for the 1891 advertisement, for the father was then dead and the son is listed as occupant of 43 William Street in the text of the directory. However, he may have disposed of the business on taking up public office, or on the death of his mother in 1891.

<sup>25</sup>Contrary to MacEwan's statement in his article, repeated on p. 9 of his book, that James Joseph Nolan was also a medical doctor. It is most unlikely that such a qualification would not be mentioned in the extensive obituary for James quoted at length below.

but they are not known to the authors.

- (c) Johanna Nolan (b. *ante* 1862, d. May 14, 1891) was probably the Johanna Nolan who was godmother to her brother Patrick James, and therefore older than he.
- (d) Patrick James (Paddy) Nolan (chr. at St. Michael's, Limerick, March 3, 1862,<sup>26</sup> d. in Canada on February 10, 1913) m. at St. Mary's Church in Calgary, April 19, 1892, Mary Elizabeth (Minnie) Lee (b. in Toronto, *circa* 1870, d. July 13, 1963).<sup>27</sup> There is no point in repeating here the whole story of Paddy Nolan's extraordinary success and popularity in Calgary, which MacEwan has already recounted so well. However, some details of his education on this side of the Atlantic, which have only surfaced since the publication of MacEwan's book, deserve to be recorded.

Paddy Nolan was educated at the Sacred Heart College, Limerick for 5 years; at London University, where he matriculated in the first division in June 1880; at the Royal University of Ireland, where he was an exhibitor at matriculation in December 1881; at Trinity College, Dublin, of which he is described as Candidate Bachelor on January 7, 1885;<sup>28</sup> at the Honorable Society of Gray's Inn, London, where he was admitted on January 25, 1884 and kept the following terms Commons in the Dining Hall of the said Society: Hilary, Easter, Trinity and Michaelmas 1884; and at the Honorable Society of the King's Inns, Dublin, where he kept eight terms, ending with Hilary Term 1885, and was thereupon admitted to the degree of Barrister-at-Law.<sup>29</sup>

In the Trinity of the 1880s, Paddy Nolan would have been a contemporary of such a well known figure as Douglas Hyde, later President of Ireland. Some fascinating insights into his student days in the Dublin of that time are provided by the minute books and other records of the Dublin University Philosophical Society ("The Phil"), by which he was eventually awarded a Gold Medal for Oratory and a Certifi-

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<sup>26</sup>Paddy Nolan obviously regretted that his birth was not delayed a couple of weeks, until St. Patrick's Day, 1862. That is the date of birth he gives on his King's Inns Memorial. By the time of his death, he had also knocked a couple of years off his true age, and obituaries give his date of birth as March 17, 1864!

<sup>27</sup>For the story of her youth, see "A Young Girl in the Old West," by Shelagh Nolan (her granddaughter), in *The Beaver: Exploring Canada's History*, vol. 66:4, August/September 1986.

<sup>28</sup>The authors could trace no record of his ever having a degree conferred at Trinity, but he is variously described as B.A. and B.L. in the records of the Dublin University Philosophical Society.

<sup>29</sup>See Memorials to the Right Honorable and Honorable the Benchers of the King's Inns ... to be specially admitted as a Student (Easter Term 1882) ... and ... to be admitted to the degree of Barrister-at-Law (Hilary Term 1885).



cate for Composition.<sup>30</sup> However, he was not always held in such high esteem by the Society, for an Extraordinary General Meeting was held on Saturday, December 19, 1885, at 3 p.m. to ratify the decision of the Council expelling three members, including Paddy Nolan, for persistent disorderly conduct at the Society's meetings. The honorary secretary, William Moore,<sup>31</sup> proposed and the honorary registrar, Edward R. Wade, seconded the following motion: "That Mr. P. J. Nolan be expelled from the Society." Mr. R. M. W. Wilson proposed, and Mr. J. Moloney seconded, the following amendment: "That Mr. Nolan be suspended from his right of attending the meetings of the Society for the remainder of the session, and that an apology be accepted from him." After considerable discussion, this was withdrawn and the following amendment was proposed and seconded: "That Mr. Nolan do apologise to the Society and do sign the following undertaking:

I undertake to bow on all occasions till the end of session 1885-6 to the decision of the chair. If, in the opinion of the Council, I fail to observe this undertaking, I shall *ipso facto* cease to be a member of the Society."

Upon consultation, Mr. Nolan obeyed the directions of this amendment. As the secretary accepted it, it became the original motion and, being put accordingly, was carried without a division.

Thus rehabilitated, P. J. Nolan, B.A., contested the election for the Council of the Society the following summer. He was proposed by E. W. Harris, LL.B., and seconded by J. J. Stockley, B.A., but failed to win election. Perhaps this early experience explains why he was so reluctant to seek election to public office in Canada, where, despite his obvious personal popularity, his sole electoral attempt also met with defeat.

The Committee appointed that year to scrutinise the returns in Oratory and Composition, however, recommended that a Silver Medal be awarded to P. J. Nolan, B.L., bearing the inscription, "2nd Silver Medal, Session 1885-1886." He was himself a member of the Committee to sit during the long vacation to revise and codify the Society's laws.

In the following academic year, on Thursday evening, November 11,

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<sup>30</sup>The authors are grateful to recent "Phil" committee members Fergus Lynch and Joseph Smyth for providing access to these records.

<sup>31</sup>Moore was awarded a Gold Medal for Oratory by the Society in the same year as Paddy Nolan, and he too went on to enjoy a successful legal career, becoming Lord Justice of Appeal in Northern Ireland. (See *Thom's Irish Who's Who* 1923.)

1886, William Moore, now president of the society, called upon Mr. P. J. Nolan to read his paper on “Charles Dickens.” The vote of thanks to the essayist was later put and unanimously accepted. On November 25 of that year, P. J. Nolan, B.L., proposed the rather frivolous motion that “owing to the depressed state of the society, the custom of tea-drinking at Council meetings should be discontinued.” The seconder was A. W. Mahaffy.

As already mentioned, Paddy Nolan’s “Phil” career culminated in the award of a Gold Medal for Oratory.

Paddy Nolan’s only child was Henry Grattan (Harry) Nolan (b. in Calgary, May 5, 1895, d. at Banff, Alberta, July 8, 1957), fittingly named after one of the leading political figures in Ireland in the late eighteenth century. Harry was studying in England on a Rhodes Scholarship when the First World War broke out, and enlisted in the Imperial Army. He was awarded a Military Cross for gallantry in 1918. After the war, he resumed his studies at Oxford and was called to the English bar. On his return to Canada, he was called to the Alberta bar. He served in the legal branch of the army in the Second World War, and rose to the rank of brigadier. For his war services, he was created Commander Order of the British Empire in 1946. Just over a year before his death, he was appointed a judge of the Supreme Court of Canada, perhaps the highest honour bestowed on any of the descendants of William Nolan (the Elder) and Johanna Buckley of Greenville, Listowel.

Harry Nolan’s legal and military career afforded him several opportunities to travel to London and Ireland and renew acquaintances with some of his relatives there. His daughters, Moira Nolan and Mrs. Shelagh Lester, are still living in Calgary, where his grandson, Brian Nolan Lester, is carrying on the legal tradition.

- (e) Mary Nolan (chr. at St. Michael’s in 1864, d. young).
- (f) James Joseph (Séamus) Nolan, nicknamed “The Lamb,” (b. in Limerick May 7, 1869, d. in a London nursing home, September 13, 1939) m. 1897 Charlotte (Harriett) Russell<sup>32</sup> (d. at her residence, 26, Clyde Road, Dublin, February 8, 1954, in her 85th year). James was a Fellow of both the Royal Geographical Society and the Institute of Journalists. He was educated at the Crescent, Limerick, and at King’s College,

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<sup>32</sup>Youngest daughter of Mr. George Russell of Limerick and sister of Mr. Matthew Russell, proprietor of the National Bakery and of Mrs. Helena O’Connor. She was also related to Alderman G. E. Russell, mayor of Limerick in 1954. Charlotte was a highly talented singer, and a singing Scholar of the Royal College of Music.

London. Soon after leaving college, he went into journalism and in 1897 was appointed assistant editor of *Hearth and Home*. Nine years later, he was appointed to the editorial chair, where he remained until 1912, when he resigned on the sale of the paper. While connected with *Hearth and Home*, James was editor of *The Citizen*, and a member of the editorial staff of *Black and White* (1903–'12). In 1912, he became assistant editor of *Canada*, remaining in that post for two years, and in 1915 he went to Burma (then part of the Indian Empire) to become editor of the *Rangoon Times*, holding that appointment until 1920.<sup>33</sup>

James was organiser of the Patriotic Resolve meetings in Rangoon from 1915 to 1918, and, on his resignation from the *Rangoon Times*, was appointed Director of Publicity to the Government of Burma, a position which he retained until 1925. Some time afterwards, he retired and returned to live in London, where he remained London correspondent of the *Rangoon Times*. He published one book<sup>34</sup> and was all his life keenly interested in politics. Among his recreations were cricket (looking on), footpath walks, the theatre, playing cards, listening to music and travel. He was a member of the East India United Services Club.

James's nephew, Henry Grattan Nolan, described him as a most interesting man, and asserted that he knew London better than anyone he had ever met.<sup>35</sup>

On James's death, his widow, Charlotte, and their only son, Lt.-Col. Michael Nolan, retired to Dublin.<sup>36</sup>

5. Margaret Nolan (b. 1830) m. *circa* 1850 Thomas Molyneaux, publican and grocer, of Church Street, Listowel and had five children:
  - (a) Margaret Molyneaux (d. September 24, 1912) m. James Enright.
  - (b) Catherine (Kate) Molyneaux (b. *circa* 1855, d. in Cook County, Illinois, April 17, 1923) m. firstly John Buckley and secondly a Mr. Reidy. She went to the USA in 1877.
  - (c) Patrick Molyneaux. As he is not mentioned in the pedigree affidavit, he is presumed to have predeceased Julia Nolan.

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<sup>33</sup>An obituary of his son, Lt.-Col. Michael Nolan, says that the father was editor of the *Bombay Times*, but this appears to be an error.

<sup>34</sup>*Professions for Boys and How to Enter Them*.

<sup>35</sup>Letter to Paddy Waldron, April 26, 1938.

<sup>36</sup>A member of the British Army (like his first cousins, W. A. G. Nolan and Harry Nolan), Michael survived his mother by less than a year, dying unmarried at Sir Patrick Dun's Hospital, Dublin on December 10, 1954, aged 55 years.

(d) Hanna Molyneaux m. O'Connor. She also appears to have predeceased Julia Nolan.

(e) William B. Molyneaux of London.

6. William Nolan (the Younger) (b. at Gortcurreen, *circa* 1836, d. at Holy Cross Hospital, Calgary, July 29, 1905) m. at Six-Mile-Bridge, Co. Clare, January 19, 1864, Mary Kett of Garna House, Six-Mile-Bridge (b. 1846, d. December 21, 1876). William was clearly devastated by the death of his young wife after less than 12 years of marriage, coming soon after the loss of the youngest of their eight children, of whom two more had died in 1871. His movements from then until his arrival in Calgary some years later, and his life in Calgary itself, are clouded in mystery.

Like his brother James, William had risen from his humble Kerry roots to become a successful Limerick businessman, having a pawnbroking business at 3 and 4 Cornmarket Row by the time of the birth of his first child, later Mrs. Polly Waldron.<sup>37</sup> He may still have been in business at the time of her marriage in 1882<sup>38</sup> at the tender age of 17, although by then she was living with her maternal grandmother in Garna House and her four surviving brothers had been “farmed out” to other relatives.

A handwritten obituary in the authors’ possession, presumably copied from the *Calgary Herald* or another local newspaper, reads as follows:

The death occurred Saturday in the Holy Cross Hospital of William Nolan in his 79th year. The deceased was well known in Calgary, having lived there for the last 20 years, the last seven of which were spent at the institution in which he died. “Dad’s” presence at the door of the hospital will be missed by visitors to that place. He leaves a family of five children, two of whom are in the States and the remainder in Ireland. P. J. Nolan and J. W. Costello of this city are nephews of the deceased. The funeral takes place at 10 o’clock tomorrow from the hospital to the R.C. Church.

A family legend, attributed to Capt. William A. G. Nolan, says that William Nolan, pawnbroker, was responsible for accidentally “burning the shanty town of Calgary,” possibly meaning that he started the so-called Great Fire of 1886. It would be interesting to know whether William Nolan travelled

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<sup>37</sup>Birth certificate.

<sup>38</sup>Marriage certificate and *Directory 1880-81*, *op. cit.*

to Calgary with his Costello nephews (or their wives), or arrived there independently, and, if the latter, whether he was there before them or came later.

William's eight children were:<sup>39</sup>

- (a) Margaret Mary (Polly) Nolan (b. at 3 Cornmarket Row, Limerick, January 1, 1865, d. at her residence, "Elsinore," South Circular Road, Limerick, April 13, 1953) m. at Six-Mile-Bridge, Co. Clare, April 28, 1882, Sergeant Thomas Waldron of the R.I.C. (b. at Castleconnell, Co. Limerick, March 13, 1855, d. at his residence, 16 Fairview Terrace, Limerick, May 18, 1917).

Within a short time of her father's death, Polly was the only one of his children still living in Ireland, and she does not seem to have kept in close touch with her three brothers in North America. Of her seventeen children,<sup>40</sup> ten survived to adulthood, of whom three are still alive, in their eighties and nineties. These were somewhat perturbed to read Mr. MacEwan's reference to the Nolans' being "Wexford and Carlow County people," and insisted that their living testimony as to Paddy Nolan's Listowel roots be committed to print!

One of them, Desmond Waldron (b. 1907) has vivid memories of an incident which occurred in Julia Nolan's licensed premises during the troubled times. As a young boy, he paid a visit, with his mother, to her first cousin, Julia, as they returned to Limerick from a holiday in Ballybunion. He awoke early one morning to find armed men in his bedroom firing from the windows at the "enemy," who were returning fire from the upstairs windows of a house across the road. Desmond and his mother were constrained to crawl on their hands and knees from the bedroom, down the stairs, to the back door, from where they ran down a laneway to an old shed where they found a number of other terrified "refugees," many of them "telling their beads."<sup>41</sup>

- (b) Denis William Nolan (b. March 6, 1866, d. December 17, 1871).

- (c) Mary Nolan (b. September 2, 1867, d. January 30, 1871).

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<sup>39</sup>Births, marriages and deaths of two generations of this family are recorded in a diary for the year 1865, still in the authors' possession.

<sup>40</sup>See "We spent a long weekend in the West of Ireland," by W. J. Dignam, Australian High Commissioner to Eire, in *The Catholic Weekly*, June 19, 1947. The somewhat misleading description therein, "Mrs. Waldron, aunt of Mr. T. W. Waldron," should read "aunt-in-law," for Polly was the only member of this family to marry a Waldron.

<sup>41</sup>*i.e.* saying the rosary.

- (d) Patrick James (Paddy) Nolan (b. March 2, 1869), in contrast to his first cousin and namesake, was among the less successful Irish emigrants in the New York area. He lived at one stage in Jersey City, and later shared “one room in a poor section of Brooklyn.”<sup>42</sup> By 1934, however, there had “been no trace of P.J. [Nolan] for the past two years.”<sup>43</sup> Nothing is known of his last years, and he is presumed not to have left any descendants.
- (e) Michael William Nolan (b. February 27, 1871) also went to the U.S.A. He too is not believed to have left any descendants. As he is not mentioned in the pedigree affidavit, he probably predeceased Julia Nolan.
- (f) Martin William Nolan (b. November 8, 1872, d. in America, October 17, 1910). Nothing is known of the fate of his two children, who were just infants when their father died.
- (g) James William Nolan (b. April 24, 1874, d.s.p. in Limerick, February 9, 1906) m. Anne Nolan.
- (h) Bridget Mary Nolan (b. November 18, 1875, d. October 13, 1876).

### 3 Postscript

While there appear to be no Nolans of this family now living in either Listowel or Limerick, the Nolan name is preserved in Limerick by Nolan’s Cottages.

The authors would be glad to receive any further information on the family from interested readers. A computerised chart of all 313 known descendants of William Nolan (the Elder) and Johanna Buckley, down to great-great-great-great-grandchildren, is available.

#### **Addresses for correspondence:**

39 Park Drive, Dublin 6. [+353 1 4972493]

Carrigaholt, Kilrush, Co. Clare. [+353 65 9058090]

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<sup>42</sup>Thomas Waldron, letter to Paddy Waldron, October 14, 1934.

<sup>43</sup>Thomas Waldron, letter to Jack Waldron, September 17, 1934.