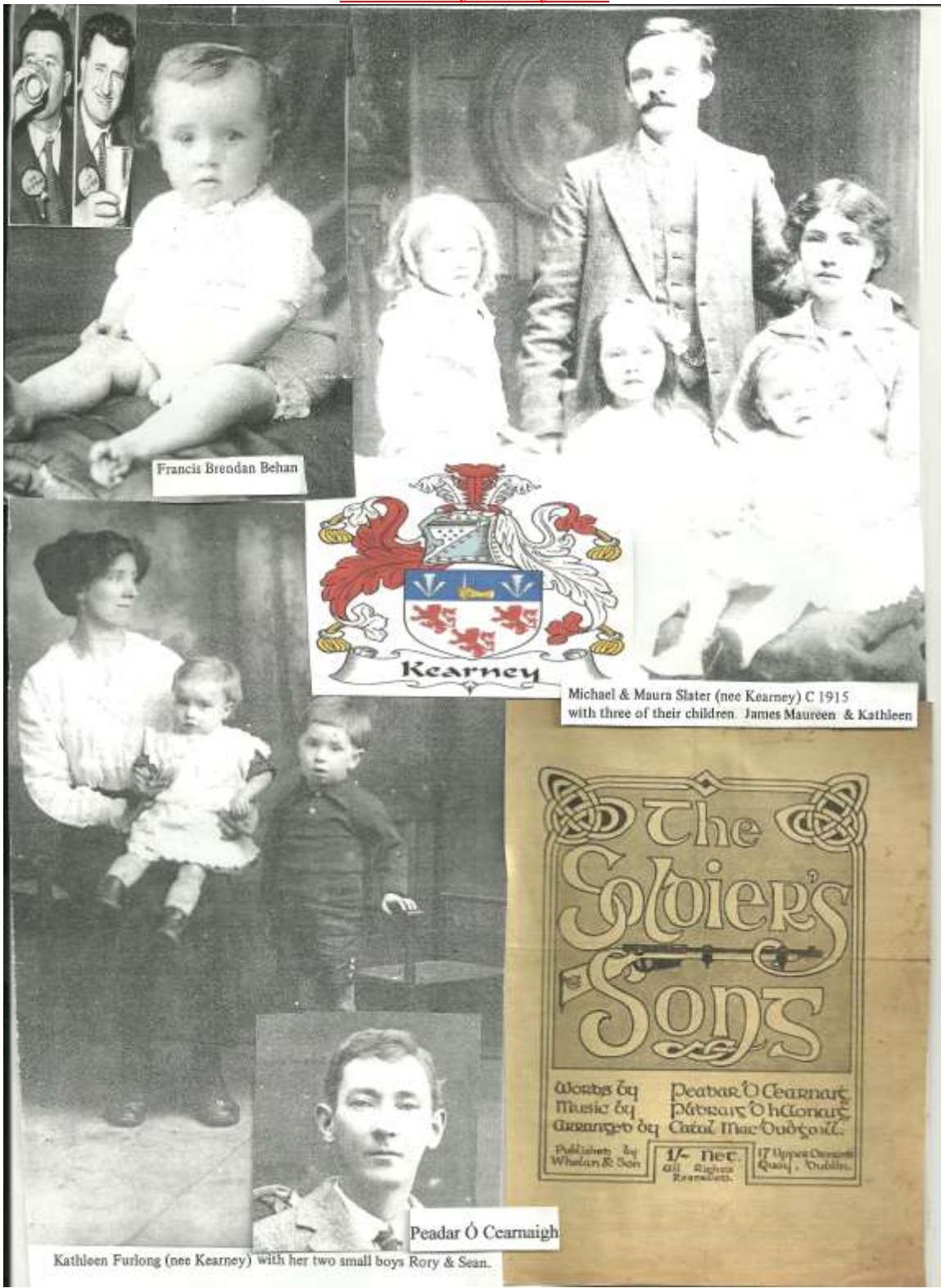


Our Kearney Family Tree



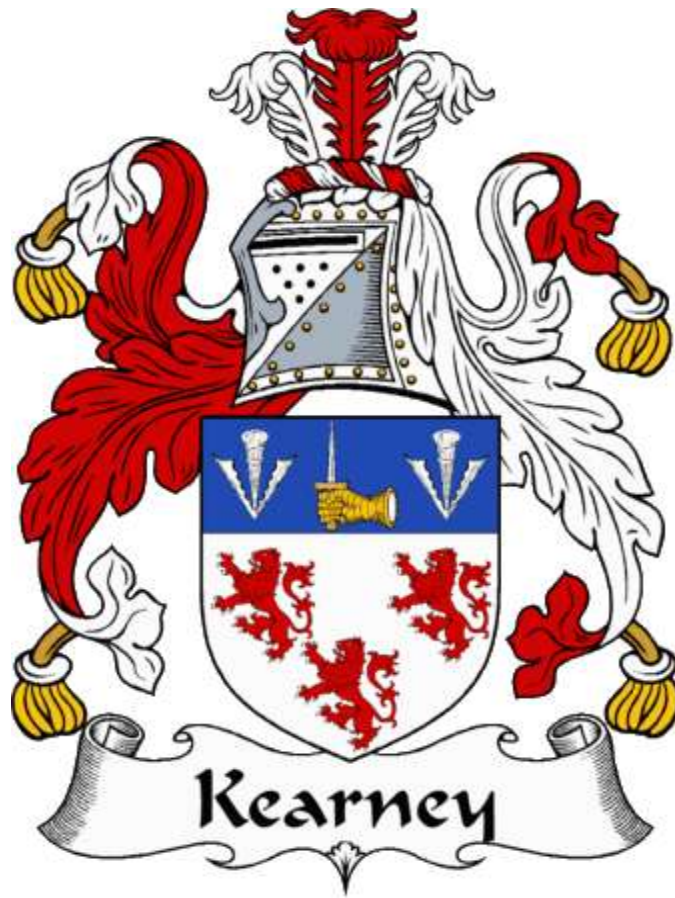
Francis Brendan Behan

Michael & Maura Slater (nee Kearney) c 1915
with three of their children. James Maura & Kathleen

Kathleen Furlong (nee Kearney) with her two small boys Rory & Sean.

Peadar Ó Cearnaigh

By Anthony Kearney





Introduction.

I started researching our branch of the Kearney family tree a couple of years ago as a hobby. I think my hope at the time was to turn up an ancestor with some kind of an interesting story. Maybe some involvement in a famous crime or sporting event would have been more than enough.

Sadly for me I hit a brick wall and the research was put on hold after numerous attempts to find any further information about the Kearney's from inner city Dublin failed. Two years in Australia would pass with my Irish family tree put on hold with the hope that some new lead may come to light in the future.

A brief History.

Kearney is a very significant name in Ireland throughout the centuries. There are few names, if any, in the annals of Irish history more renowned than the name of Kearney. There are four main separate Kearney families in Ireland, and at least two separate Irish roots for the name.

Of the two different personal names anglicised as "Kearney," one is Cearnach, meaning "victorious," and the other is Caithearnach or Catharnaigh, meaning "warlike" (sometimes also translated as "foot-soldier") and in our case this is defiantly true. Cearnach was a fairly common Irish name in the early Middle Ages (perhaps popularised by the legendary hero Conall Cearnach, or "Conal of the Victories," He was Ulster's greatest warriors.

The Break through.

Never in my wildest dreams did I think that when I decided to take a second look and research our branch of the Kearney family tree that it would turn up two of Ireland's most famous sons.

In finding my Great Grandfather Hugh Kearney's marriage details to Margaret Turner at Harrington Street Church, Dublin this was a link to Peter Kearney and Margaret Quirk parents of John Kearney the father of Peadar Kearney and the uncle of Brendan Behan. These men turned out to be second and third cousins of my father, Anthony.

I have concentrated my research on our connection with Peadar Kearney's Grandfather Peter Kearney so the link between my descendants and this famous Irish family can be passed down for generations to come.



Peadar Kearney (1883 – 1942), the Dublin man who wrote the words of ‘A Soldier’s Song’, the Irish National Anthem. Other popular songs that he wrote included ‘The Tri-Coloured Ribbon’ and ‘Down by the Glenside.’ He joined the Gaelic League in 1901, became a member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood in 1903 and fought in the Rising of 1916 at Jacob’s Factory. Arrested in 1920, he was jailed for 12 months. He was associated with the Abbey Theatre and was an uncle of Brendan Behan.

Brendan Behan was born in 1923, He was raised at 13 Russell Street in Dublin's north inner city. He became one of Ireland's best-known writers and talkers. Having joined the IRA at the age of sixteen, Behan served time in a Borstal institution in England and in prison in Ireland. He was released from prison as part of a general amnesty in 1946, Brendan moved between Dublin, Kerry and Connemara and spent time in Paris, writing in both Irish and English. He wrote articles for 'The Irish Press' and two radio plays for Radio Éireann.

Our story starts with Peter Kearney grandfather of the Peadar, He was born in Rosy brook, near Ardee in County Louth. He had two brothers, Patrick and Nicholas. Peter married a Margaret Quirk when he was 42 years of age. Peters children were Patrick, Hugh, Tom, Richard, John, Anne and Mary.

John Kearney, Peadar’s father a County Louth man was a grocer he married Kathleen McGuinness. She came from County Meath. He had a sudden death Christmas Day, 1897.

Peadar had three sisters Kathleen, Margaret and Maura. Kathleen’s first husband died young. By this time she had two boys Rory and Sean Furlong. She later re-married Stephan Behan and they had Three more sons Brendan, Bryan and Dominic. Maura married a man by the name of Michael Slater also a 1916 veteran . They had a boy and two girls James Maureen and Kathleen.

Hugh Kearney the brother of John is the branch that leads to my family. Hugh Kearney married Margaret Turner in Harrington Street Church on the 28 February 1903 with an address of 7 Gordon’s Lane south Dublin. The recorded entry in the book states that both of Hugh’s parents Peter and Margaret have since died. Hugh worked as a bricklayer in Dublin according to his sons marriage cert years later.



Hugh and Margaret seem to have lived a very hard life in Tenement Dublin . A number of different addresses show up over the space of 15 years. From 1896 to 1911. These rooms all belonged to tenement dwellings around South Inner Dublin. Sometimes just different rooms in the same house would show up. The 1911 Census return states that a number of children died quit young. This was not uncommon in the slums of Dublin City trough those very dark years in Irish History. Tenement dwellers died younger, died more often from tuberculosis, died more often in childhood.

William Kearney was Hugh and Margaret's first son. He was born 24 May 1894 in 8 Montague Court, Dublin. He may have travelled to America at some stage of his life. He also had the profession of a house painter just like Peadar and John Kearney.

His fist marriage was to a women by the name of Catherine. I am sure they had children and lived around the Montague Court area in Dublin . How many kids and who they are I am not sure but hope to find out one day to complete the tree in full.

His first wife Catherine died of a stroke on the 11th of October 1951 at number 5 Montague Court. This is also the same address on my fathers birth cert and only three doors down from were William himself was born 59 years earlier.

William then meet Kathleen McCausland She was born on the 20th of September 1926 at 32 Mount joy Square. Kathleen was the daughter of an Irish Army Sergeant James McCausland And his wife was Jane Connor from Glomey Buildings, Tenement houses near lower Gloucester Street Lwr.

William and Kathleen went on to have two sons Anthony Kearney born 30th March 1954 and John Kearney born 12th Aug 1955. They married on the 10th of September 1954 in The University Church Stephens Green Dublin.

The marriage was short lived as sadly William died on the 11th of October 1955. His place of death was Harold's Cross Hospice. He was buried in Mount Jerome Cemetery with his first wife Catherine in an unmarked grave Plot Ref: A15-481-312-66. The fact that William died while his two sons were very young played a big part in the lack of information being passed on to his Children or Grandchildren.

Kathleen moved to Ballyfermot for a number of years with an address on Muskerry Road Ballyfermot Dublin 10. After the death of William, Kathleen went on to have Five more children. Patrick, Laura, Anne, Thomas, Kathleen.

When Anthony and John were young boy's they moved on to number 72 Mount Pleasant Buildings. The Building's have since been knocked in the late Seventy's. They would have attended St Mary's, Primary School, Richmond Hill. These buildings were one of the most run down, tightly cramped, poverty stricken areas in Dublin at this time. Many people who lived here could not afford to pay their rent in their previous homes so their only alternative was to move into these accommodations, for the others in these flats were merely all that they could ever afford to live in.



Mount Pleasant Building Circa early 1970's

Anthony Kearney married Antoinette (Twiggy) O'Shea on the 31st of January 1974 at the Church of Good Sheppard, Church town. They went on to have Six children. Anthony, Thomas, Paul, Elaine, Sabrina and Rachael. Anthony was born with an address in Mountpleasant Buildings. Thomas was born in the flats in Avonbeg Tallaght.

They moved then to the Maisonettes in Columbanis Place, Milltown number 34. This was around the late Seventy's for Six years. From Milltown to a short stay in 40 Carrickmount Drive, Rathfarnham they then moved to White Church Close in the Mid 1980's and the Six kids went to Scoil Mhuire Primary School Ballyboden.

His first Son Anthony married Nicky Beirne in July 1999 from Bancroft Tallaght. They had four children. Katie, Ryan, Jessica and Adam. Paul Kearney married Tracey Doyle in Whitechurch Ballyboden on the 6th of Sept 2003. They went on to have three kids. Shauna, Luke and Casey Kearney. Elaine had two boys David and Dean. Sabrina has one of each Dylan and Haley and Rachael Kearney has a daughter Rebecca and a son Stephen.

John Kearney married Daphne Walsh in Sandford Village on the 03 Aug 1975. They had three children. Karl, Daphne and John. They also lived in Whitechurch Crescent Ballyboden for a number of years from the mid 1980s. The kids also attended Scoil Mhuire primary school. John spent time as the publican in the local pub in White church (The Furry Bog). He has since moved on to run a number of pubs in Dublin and Ratoath.

His daughter Daphne married Thomas Duggan on the 17 June 2000 in Ratoath. They went on to have two children. Jody and Ryan Duggan.

John Kearney jnr has three children. Shane Fetherson (Kearney), and Brooke and Oscar Kearney. John Married Martina Kely on the 25th of June 2005.

Out lined below are Descendants of **Peter Kearney** in the generations 1-6. This Genealogy report is relevant to our branch of the Kearney Tree only.

Generation No. 1

1. PETER1 KEARNEY was born in Rosybrook, near Ardee in County Louth. He married MARGARET QUIRK.

More About PETER KEARNEY:

Religion: Peter was 42 when they married

Children of PETER KEARNEY and MARGARET QUIRK are:

2. i. HUGH2 KEARNEY, b. 1866, Co. Louth.
- ii. PATRICK KEARNEY.

More About PATRICK KEARNEY:

Emigration: Emigrated to the US

iii. TOM KEARNEY.

More About TOM KEARNEY:

Emigration: Emigrated to the US

- iv. RICHARD KEARNEY.
- v. ANNE KEARNEY.
- 3. vi. JOHN KEARNEY, b. Co Louth; d. 25 Dec 1897.
- vii. MARY KEARNEY.

More About MARY KEARNEY:

Emigration: Emigrated to the US

Generation No. 2

2. HUGH2 KEARNEY (PETER1) was born 1866 in Co. Louth. He married MARGARET TURNER 28 Feb 1903 in Harrington Street Church Dublin., daughter of JOHN TURNER and ANN HILL. She was born 1871 in Co. Killkenny.

More About HUGH KEARNEY and MARGARET TURNER:

Marriage: 28 Feb 1903, Harrington Street Church Dublin.

Marriage date: Residing at 7 Gordons Place

Children of HUGH KEARNEY and MARGARET TURNER are:

- 4. i. WILLIAM3 KEARNEY, b. 24 May 1894, 8 Montague Court, Dublin 2; d. 11 Oct 1955, Harolds Cross Hospice, Residing at 54 loretto Ave..
- ii. CHRIST Y KEARNEY, b. 1899, 7.4 Gordons Place ,Fitzwilliam.
- iii. JAMES KEARNEY, b. 1903, 2 Montague Place, Dublin 2.
- iv. THOMAS KEARNEY, b. 1896.
- v. PATRICK KEARNEY, b. 02 Apr 1896, 18 Montague Place.

3. JOHN2 KEARNEY (PETER1) was born in Co Louth, and died 25 Dec 1897. He married KATHLEEN MCGUINNESS. She was born in Co. Meath.

More About JOHN KEARNEY:

Graduation: Grocer

Children of JOHN KEARNEY and KATHLEEN MCGUINNESS are:

- 5. i. KATHLEEN3 KEARNEY.
- 6. ii. PEADER KEARNEY, b. 12 Dec 1883; d. 23 Nov 1942, Burried in Glasnevin.
- 7. iii. MAURA KEARNEY.
- 8. iv. MARGARET KEARNEY.
- v. JOHN KEARNEY.



John and Katie Kearney parents of Peadar /

Generation No. 3

4. WILLIAM³ KEARNEY (HUGH², PETER¹) was born 24 May 1894 in 8 Montague Court, Dublin 2, and died 11 Oct 1955 in Harrolds Cross Hospice, Residing at 54 Loretto Ave.. He married KATLEEN MCCAUSLAND 10 Sep 1954 in The University Church, St Stephens Green, D2, daughter of JAMES MCCAUSLAND and JANE CONNOR. She was born 1926 in 32 Mountjoy Square, Dublin 1, and died 11 Jul 1980 in 40 Carrickmount Drive, Rathfarnham.

More About WILLIAM KEARNEY:

Baptism: Sponsors- Bernard Martin and Eliza Martin. Priest C Grimes

More About WILLIAM KEARNEY and KATLEEN MCCAUSLAND:

Marriage: 10 Sep 1954, The University Church, St Stephens Green, D2

Children of WILLIAM KEARNEY and KATLEEN MCCAUSLAND are:

9. i. ANTHONY⁴ KEARNEY, b. 30 Mar 1954, 5 Montague Court, Dublin 2.
10. ii. JOHN KEARNEY, b. 12 Aug 1955, 54 Loretto Ave, Dublin.

5. KATHLEEN³ KEARNEY (JOHN², PETER¹) She married STEPHEN BEHAN 1922.

More About STEPHEN BEHAN and KATHLEEN KEARNEY:

Marriage: 1922

Children of KATHLEEN KEARNEY and STEPHEN BEHAN are:

- i. BRENDAN⁴ BEHAN, b. 09 Feb 1923; m. BEATRICE.
- ii. BRIAN BEHAN.
- iii. DOMONIC BEHAN.
- iv. RORY FURLONG BEHAN, b. Son from Margarets First marriage.
- v. SEAN FURLONG BEHAN.

6. PEADER³ KEARNEY (JOHN², PETER¹) was born 12 Dec 1883, and died 23 Nov 1942 in Buried in Glasnevin. He married EVA O'FLANAGAN. She was born 1894.

Children of PEADER KEARNEY and EVA O'FLANAGAN are:



- i. CON⁴ KEARNEY.
- ii. PEARSE KEARNEY.

7. MAURA³ KEARNEY (JOHN², PETER¹) She married MICHAEL SLATER.

Children of MAURA KEARNEY and MICHAEL SLATER are:

- i. JAMES⁴ SLATER.
- ii. MAUREEN SLATER.
- iii. KATHLEEN SLATER.

8. MARGARET³ KEARNEY (JOHN², PETER¹) She married DE BURCA.

Children of MARGARET KEARNEY and DE BURCA are:

- i. SEAMUS⁴ DE BURCA, b. 1912; d. 2002.
- ii. LORCAN DE BURCA.

Generation No. 4

9. ANTHONY⁴ KEARNEY (WILLIAM³, HUGH², PETER¹) was born 13 Mar 1954 in 5 Montague Court, Dublin 2. He married TWIGGY ANTIONETTE O'SHEA 31 Jan 1974 in Church of Good shepard, Churchtown, daughter of THOMAS O'SHEA and REBECCA KEATING. She was born 12 Jun 1957 in Dublin, Baptism, Ballyfermot Church..

More About ANTHONY KEARNEY and ANTIONETTE O'SHEA:

Marriage: 31 Jan 1974, Church of Good shepard, Churchtown

Children of ANTHONY KEARNEY and ANTIONETTE O'SHEA are:

14. i. ANTHONY⁵ KEARNEY, b. 06 May 1975, Coombe- Dublin.
- ii. THOMAS KEARNEY, b. 17 Jun 1976, Dublin, Coombe; d. God Parents, Anne Kennedy, Martin O'Shea.
15. iii. PAUL KEARNEY, b. 23 Oct 1977, Dublin, Coombe, Father McCabe, Good Shepard Church.
16. iv. ELAINE KEARNEY, b. 16 Jan 1981, Dublin, Coombe, Baptism, Good Shepard Church, Rathfarnam.
17. v. SABRINA KEARNEY, b. 02 Jan 1982, Dublin, Coombe, Baptism, Good Shepard Church, Rathfarnam.
18. vi. RACHAEL KEARNEY, b. 02 Apr 1983, Dublin, Coombe.

10. JOHN⁴ KEARNEY (WILLIAM³, HUGH², PETER¹) was born 12 Aug 1955 in 54 Loretto Ave, Dublin. He married DAPHNEY WALSH Daughter of Dick and Daphne on 03 Aug 1975 in Sandyford Village..

More About JOHN KEARNEY and DAPHNEY WALSH:

Marriage: 03 Aug 1975, Sandyford Village.

Children of JOHN KEARNEY and DAPHNEY WALSH are:

- i. KARL⁵ KEARNEY, b. 19 Dec 1975.
19. ii. DAPHNEY KEARNEY, b. 18 Jan 1977.
20. iii. JOHN KEARNEY, b. 28 Aug 1978.

Generation No. 5

14. ANTHONY⁵ KEARNEY (ANTHONY⁴, WILLIAM³, HUGH², PETER¹) was born 06 May 1975 in Coombe - Dublin. He married NICKY BEIRNE 16 Jul 1999 in Priory-Tallaght Village-Arklow Bay Hotel, daughter of EUGENE BEIRNE and MARGARET LALLY. She was born 21 Jan 1975 in Coombe-Dublin.

More About ANTHONY KEARNEY and NICKY BEIRNE:

Marriage: 16 Jul 1999, Priory-Tallaght Village-Arklow Bay Hotel

Children of ANTHONY KEARNEY and NICKY BEIRNE are:

- i. KATIE⁶ KEARNEY, b. 09 Jul 2000, Dublin, Coombe.
- ii. RYAN KEARNEY, b. 07 Dec 2002, Dublin, Coombe.
- iii. JESSICA KEARNEY, b. 20 Jun 2007, Dublin, Coombe.
- iv. ADAM KEARNEY, b. 22 Jul 2008, Dublin, Coombe.

15. PAUL⁵ KEARNEY (ANTHONY⁴, WILLIAM³, HUGH², PETER¹) was born 23 Oct 1977 in Dublin, Coombe, Father McCabe, Good Shepard Church. He married TRACEY DOYLE 06 Sep 2003 in Church of Good Council, Whitechurch, daughter of TOMMY DOYLE and ANN QUINN. She was born 21 Apr 1979 in Holles Street, Dublin.

More About PAUL KEARNEY and TRACEY DOYLE:

Marriage: 06 Sep 2003, Church of Good Council, Whitechurch

Children of PAUL KEARNEY and TRACEY DOYLE are:

- i. SHAUNA6 KEARNEY, b. 22 Dec 1996.
- ii. LUKE KEARNEY, b. 02 Jul 2002.
- iii. KASEY KEARNEY, b. 24 Nov 2004.

16. ELAINE5 KEARNEY (ANTHONY4, WILLIAM3, HUGH2, PETER1) was born 16 Jan 1981 in Dublin, Coombe, Baptism, Good Shepard Church, Rathfarnham.

Children of ELAINE KEARNEY are:

- i. DAVID6 KEARNEY.
- ii. DEAN KEARNEY.

17. SABRINA5 KEARNEY (ANTHONY4, WILLIAM3, HUGH2, PETER1) was born 02 Jan 1982 in Dublin, Coombe, Baptism, Good Shepard Church, Rathfarnham.

Children of SABRINA KEARNEY are:

- i. DYLAN6 KEARNEY, b. 18 Dec 2001.
- ii. HALEY KEARNEY, b. 7 June 2011.

18. RACHAEL5 KEARNEY (ANTHONY4, WILLIAM3, HUGH2, PETER1) was born 02 Apr 1983 in Dublin, Coombe.

Children of RACHAEL KEARNEY are:

- i. REBECA6 KEARNEY, b. 11 Apr 2002.
- ii. STEPHEN KEARNEY, b. Jan 2007.

19. DAPHNEY5 KEARNEY (JOHN4, WILLIAM3, HUGH2, PETER1) was born 18 Jan 1977. She married THOMAS DUGGAN 17 Jun 2006 in Rathoath, Co Kildare. He was born 31 Mar 1978.

More About THOMAS DUGGAN and DAPHNEY KEARNEY:
Marriage: 17 Jun 2006, Rathoath, Co Kildare

Children of DAPHNEY KEARNEY and THOMAS DUGGAN are:

- i. JODY6 DUGGAN, b. 05 Mar 2000.
- ii. RYAN DUGGAN, b. 18 Nov 2009.

20. JOHN5 KEARNEY (JOHN4, WILLIAM3, HUGH2, PETER1) was born 28 Aug 1978. He married MARTINA KELTY 25 Jun 2005. She was born 28 Jan 1979.

More About JOHN KEARNEY and MARTINA KELTY:
Marriage: 25 Jun 2005

Children of JOHN KEARNEY and MARTINA KELTY are:

- i. SHANE FETHERSON6 KEARNEY, b. 18 Dec 1998.
- ii. BROOKE KEARNEY, b. 31 May 2007.
- iii. OSCAR KEARNEY, b. 04 Aug 2010.



More about Peadar Kearney

Peadar Kearney (Irish: *Peadar Ó Cearnaigh*; 12 December 1883 – 24 November 1942) was an Irish

republican and composer of numerous rebel songs. In 1907 he wrote the lyrics to "The Soldier's Song" ("Amhrán na bhFiann"), now the Irish national anthem.

Background

Kearney was born at 68 Lower Dorset Street, Dublin in 1883. His father was from Louth and his mother was originally from Meath. He was educated at the Model School, Schoolhouse Lane and St Joseph's Christian Brothers School in Fairview, Dublin. He left school at the age of 14, becoming an apprentice house painter.

Political activity

Kearney joined the Gaelic League in 1901, and joined the Irish Republican Brotherhood in 1903. He taught night classes in Irish and numbered Sean O'Casey among his pupils. He found work with the National Theatre Society and in 1904 was one of the first to inspect the derelict building that became the Abbey Theatre, which opened its doors on 27 December of that year. He assisted with props and performed occasional walk-on parts at the Abbey until 1916.

Kearney was a co-founder of the Irish Volunteers in 1913. He took part in the Howth and Kilcoole gun running's in 1914. In the Easter Rising of 1916 Kearney fought at Jacob's biscuit factory under Thomas MacDonagh, abandoning an Abbey Theatre tour in England in order to take part in the Rising.[2] He escaped before the garrison was taken into custody.

He was active in the War of Independence. On 25 November 1920 he was captured at his home in Summerhill, Dublin and was interned first in Collinstown Camp in Dublin and later in Ballykinler Camp in County Down.

A personal friend of Michael Collins, Kearney at first took the Free State side in the Civil War but lost faith in the Free State after Collins's death.[1] He took no further part in politics, returning to his original trade of house painting. Kearney died in relative poverty in Inchicore in 1942.[3] He is buried in Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin. He was survived by his wife Eva and two sons, Pearse and Con.

Songs and legacy

Kearney's songs were highly popular with the Volunteers (which later became the IRA) in the 1913-22 period. Most popular was "The Soldier's Song". Kearney penned the original English lyrics in 1907 and his friend and musical collaborator Patrick Heeney composed the music. The lyrics were published in 1912 and the music in 1916. In 1926, four years after the formation of the Free State, the Irish translation, "Amhrán na bhFiann", was adopted as the national anthem, replacing God Save Ireland. Kearney was not paid royalties for his contribution to the song.

Other well-known songs by Kearney include "Down by the Glenside (The Bold Fenian Men)", "The Tri-coloured Ribbon", "Down by the Liffey Side" and "Erin Go Bragh" (Erin Go Bragh was the text on the Irish national flag before the adoption of the [tricolour](#)).

Kearney's sister Kathleen was the mother of [Irish writers](#) [Brendan Behan](#) and [Dominic Behan](#), both of whom were also republicans and songwriters. Brendan Behan was in prison when Kearney died, and was refused permission to attend his funeral. In a letter to Kearney's son, Pearse, he said, "my Uncle Peadar was the one, outside my own parents, who excited the admiration and love that is friendship."

In 1957 his nephew Seamus de Burca (or Jimmy Bourke son of Kearney's sister, Margaret) published a biography of Kearney, *The Soldier's Song: The Story of Peadar Ó Cearnaigh*. In 1976 De Burca also published Kearney's letters to his wife written during his internment in 1921 were published as *My Dear Eva ... Letters from Ballykinlar Internment Camp, 1921*. A wall plaque on the west side of Dorset Street commemorates his birth there.

Below is the fitting resting place for the broul Peadar Kearney Peadar's Sister Kathleen (Behan) was Brendan's mother.

Other well-known songs by Kearney include "Down by the Glenside" "The Tri-coloured Ribbon", "Down by the Liffey Side" and "Erin Go Bragh" this was the text on the Irish National flag before the adoption of the tricolour.

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More about Brendan Behan

Behan was born in the inner city of Dublin on 9 February 1923 into an educated working class family. He lived in a house on Russell Street near Mountjoy Square owned by his grandmother, Christine English, who owned a number of properties in the area. Also living in the area was his uncle Peadar Kearney, song writer and author of the Irish national anthem. Brendan's father Stephen Behan, a house painter who had been active in the Irish War of Independence, read classical literature to the children at bedtime from sources such as Zola, Galsworthy, and Maupassant; his mother, Kathleen, took them on literary tours of the city. If Behan's interest in literature came from his father, his political beliefs were by his mother. She remained politically active all her life and was a personal friend of the Irish republican Michael Collins. Brendan Behan wrote a lament to Collins, "The Laughing Boy", at the age of thirteen. The title was from the affectionate nickname Mrs. Behan gave to Collins. Kathleen published her autobiography, "Mother of All The Behan's," a collaboration with her son Brian, in 1984.

Behan's uncle Peadar Kearney wrote the Irish national anthem *Amhrán na bhFiann*. His brother, Dominic Behan, was also a renowned songwriter best known for the song "The Patriot Game"; another sibling, Brian Behan, was a prominent radical political activist and public speaker, actor, author, and playwright. Brendan and Brian did not share the same views, especially when the question of politics or nationalism arose. Brendan on his deathbed (presumably in jest) asked Cathal Goulding, then the Chief of Staff of the IRA, to 'have that bastard Brian shot—we've had all sorts in our family, but never a traitor!'

A biographer Ulick O'Connor, recounts that one day, at the age of eight, Brendan was returning home with his granny and a crony from a drinking session. A passer-by remarked, "Oh, my! Isn't it terrible ma'am to see such a beautiful child deformed?" "How dare you", said his granny. "He's not deformed, he's just drunk!"

Behan left school at 13 to follow in his father's footsteps as a house painter.

Republican activities

In 1937, the family moved to a new local authority housing scheme in Crumlin. Behan became a member of Fianna Éireann, the youth organization of the IRA. He published his first poems and prose in the organisation's magazine, *Fianna: the Voice of Young Ireland*. In 1931 he also became the youngest contributor to be published in the *Irish Press* with his poem "Reply of Young Boy to Pro-English verses". At sixteen, Behan joined the IRA and embarked on an unauthorised solo mission to England to blow up the Liverpool docks. He was arrested and found in possession of explosives. Behan was sentenced to three years in a borstal and did not return to Ireland until 1941. He wrote about these years in his autobiography, *Borstal Boy*. In 1942, during the timeframe leading to the IRA's Northern Campaign, Behan was tried for the attempted murder of two Detectives of the Garda Síochána. The assassinations were to take place in Dublin while at a commemoration ceremony for Wolfe Tone, the father of Irish Republicanism. Sentenced to fourteen years in prison, he was incarcerated in Mountjoy Prison and the Curragh Camp. These experiences were relayed in "Confessions of an Irish Rebel." Released under a general amnesty for IRA prisoners and internees in 1946, his terrorist career was over by the age of twenty-three. Aside from a short prison sentence he received in 1947 for his part in trying to break a fellow IRA member out of a Manchester jail, he effectively left the IRA, though he remained great friends with Cathal Goulding.

Behan the writer

Behan's prison experiences were central to his future writing career. In Mountjoy he wrote his first play, *The Landlady*, and also began to write short stories and other prose. It was a literary magazine called *Envoy* (A Review of Literature and Art), founded by John Ryan, that first published Behan's short stories and his first poem. Some of his early work was also published in *The Bell*, the leading Irish literary magazine of the time. He also learned Irish in prison and, after his release in 1946, he spent some time in the Gaeltacht areas of Galway and Kerry, where he started writing poetry in Irish. He left Ireland and all its perceived social pressures to live in Paris in the early 1950s. There he felt he could lose himself and release the artist within. Although he still drank heavily, he managed to earn a living, supposedly by writing pornography. By the time he returned to Ireland, he had become a writer who drank too much, rather than a drinker who talked about what he was going to write. He had also developed the knowledge that in order to succeed, he would have to discipline himself. Throughout the rest of his writing career, he would rise at seven in the morning and work until noon—when the pubs opened. He began to write for various newspapers, such as *The Irish Times*, and also for radio, where a play entitled "The Leaving Party" was broadcast. Additionally, he cultivated a reputation as carouser-in-chief and swayed shoulder-to-shoulder with other literati of the day that he had got to know through *Envoy* and who used the pub, McDaid's, as their base: Flann O'Brien, Patrick Kavanagh, Patrick Swift, Anthony Cronin, and J. P. Donleavy. For unknown reasons he had a major falling-out with Kavanagh, who reportedly would visibly shudder at the mention of Behan's name and who referred to Behan as "evil incarnate".

Behan's fortunes changed in 1954 with the appearance of his play *The Quare Fellow*—his major breakthrough at last. Originally called *The Twisting of Another Rope* and influenced by his time spent in jail, it chronicles the vicissitudes of prison life leading up to the execution of "the quare fellow"—a character who is never seen. The prison dialogue is vivid and laced with satire, but reveals to the reader the human detritus that surrounds capital punishment. It was produced in the Pike Theatre in Dublin. The play ran for six months. In May, 1956, *The Quare Fellow* opened in the Theatre Royal Stratford East, in a production by Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop. Subsequently it transferred to the West End. Behan generated immense publicity for *The Quare Fellow* as a result of a drunken appearance on the Malcolm Muggeridge TV show. The English, relatively unaccustomed to public drunkenness in authors, took him to their hearts. A fellow guest on the show, Irish-American actor Jackie Gleason, reportedly said about the incident: "It wasn't an act of God, but an act of Guinness!" Behan and Gleason went on to forge a friendship. Brendan loved the story of how, walking along the street in London shortly after this episode, a Cockney approached him and exclaimed that he understood every word he had said—drunk or not—but hadn't a clue what "that bugger Muggeridge was on about!" While addled, Brendan would clamber on stage and recite the play's signature song "The Auld Triangle". The transfer of the play to Broadway provided Behan with international recognition. Rumours still abound that Littlewood's hand was all over *The Quare Fellow* and led to the saying, "Dylan Thomas wrote Under Milk Wood, Brendan Behan wrote under Littlewood". She remained a supporter, visiting him in Dublin in 1960.[2]

In 1957, his Irish language play, *An Giall (The Hostage)* opened in the Damer Theatre, Dublin. Reminiscent of Frank O'Connor's *Guests of the Nation*, it portrays the detention, in a teeming Dublin house in the late 1950s, of a British conscript soldier seized by the IRA as a hostage pending the scheduled execution in Northern Ireland of an imprisoned IRA volunteer. The hostage falls in love with an Irish convent girl, Teresa, working as a maid in the house. Their innocent world of love is incongruous among their surroundings—the house also serves as a brothel. In the end, the hostage dies accidentally during a bungled police raid, revealing the human cost of war—a universal suffering. The subsequent English language version *The Hostage* (1958), reflecting Behan's own translation from the Irish, but also much influenced by Joan Littlewood during a troubled collaboration with Behan, is a bawdy, slapstick play that adds a number of flamboyantly gay characters and bears only a limited resemblance to the original Irish language version.

His autobiographical novel *Borstal Boy* followed in 1958. A vivid memoir of his time in Hollesley Bay Borstal, Suffolk, England, an original voice in Irish literature boomed out from its pages. The language is both acerbic and delicate, the portrayal of inmates and "screws" cerebral. For a Republican, though, it isn't a vitriolic attack on Britain; it delineates Behan's move away from violence. In one account an inmate strives to entice Brendan in chanting political slogans with him. Brendan curses and damns him in his mind, hoping he would cease his rantings—hardly the sign of a troublesome prisoner. By the end the idealistic boy rebel emerges as a realistic young man who recognises the truth: violence, especially political

violence, is futile. Kenneth Tynan, the 1950s literary critic said: "While other writers hoard words like misers, Behan sends them out on a spree, ribald, flushed, and spoiling for a fight." He was now established as one of the leading Irish writers of his generation.

He learned to speak Irish at the home of the Nolan family in the Gaeltacht area of Galway in the late forties. Drs Sinead and Maureen Nolan (daughters of the house) never heard a disrespectful word or a hint of obscenity from him during that time. He was much loved and revered by their deeply religious parents, who recognized his genius for language early. They saw his theatrics for what it was: a cover up for an exquisitely sensitive nature.[*citation needed*] In the end his favourite drink (a lethal combination for a diabetic) was Champagne and Sherry.

Decline and Death

Behan found fame difficult. He had long been a heavy drinker (describing himself, on one occasion, as "a drinker with a writing problem" and claiming "I only drink on two occasions—when I'm thirsty and when I'm not") and developed diabetes in the early 1960s. As his fame grew, so too did his alcohol consumption. This combination resulted in a series of famously drunken public appearances, on both stage and television. Brendan saw that it paid to be drunk; the public wanted the witty, iconoclastic, genial "broth of a boy," and he gave that to them in abundance, exclaiming: "There's no bad publicity except an obituary." His health suffered terribly, with diabetic comas and seizures occurring regularly. Towards the end he became the caricature of the drunken Irishman. The public who once extended their arms now closed ranks against him; publicans flung him from their premises. Although Brendan cried out that he was a writer, inside he knew his fears had materialised—he was unable to generate another classic. His last two books, *Brendan Behan's Island* and *Brendan Behan's New York*, published in 1962 and 1964 respectively, were talk books and cannot be compared to his former works. They were littered with pretentiousness and sycophancy, neither of which he would have tolerated earlier: "As Norman Mailer said to me." Arthur Miller came up to me. ..." "One day with Groucho Marx. ..." Both works were tape-recorded, which Brendan hated. He preferred to write longhand or to type.

Behan had married Beatrice Salkeld (the daughter of painter Cecil Salkeld) in 1955. A daughter, Blanaid, was born in 1963. Love, however, wasn't enough to bring Behan back from his alcoholic abyss. By early March 1964, the end was in sight. Collapsing at the Harbour Lights bar, he was transferred to the Meath Hospital in central Dublin, where he died, aged 41.

Could Barack Obama be related to Brendan Behan or maybe our branch of the Kearney Family Tree.

A leading Irish biographer is investigating a link between renowned Irish writer Brendan Behan and US President Barack Obama. *Herald* columnist Ulick O'Connor believes there may be a connection between Behan's mother, Kathleen Kearney, and the great great grandfather of Barack, Fulmouth Kearney.

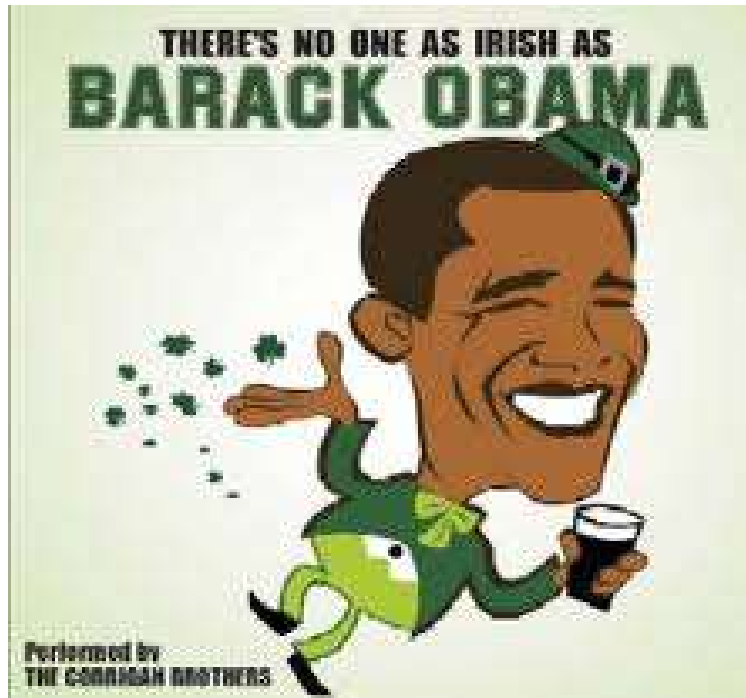
Kathleen was also the sister of Peadar Kearney, who penned our national anthem.

Mr O'Connor, who wrote the biography of Brendan Behan, said the Kearney name was not a very common name in Ireland at the time that Obama's ancestors lived in Moneygall, Co Offaly.

"With all the fuss about President Obama's Irish cousins, no one mentioned that, with his Kearney great great grandfather, he could be related to Brendan Behan," Mr O'Connor said. "Brendan remains an icon in the United States so it would not do the President any harm to look further into his Kearney heritage. Mr O'Connor has tracked down a painting of Kathleen Kearney, which he believes bears a resemblance to Obama. His great great grandfather was Joseph Kearney, a wealthy shoemaker from Moneygall, who lived from 1794 to 1861.

Records show that President Obama's great grandfather Fulmouth Kearney left Moneygall boarded the SS Marmion from Liverpool to New York in 1850. But Mr Healy says that he isn't claiming to be anything except a very, very distant cousin.

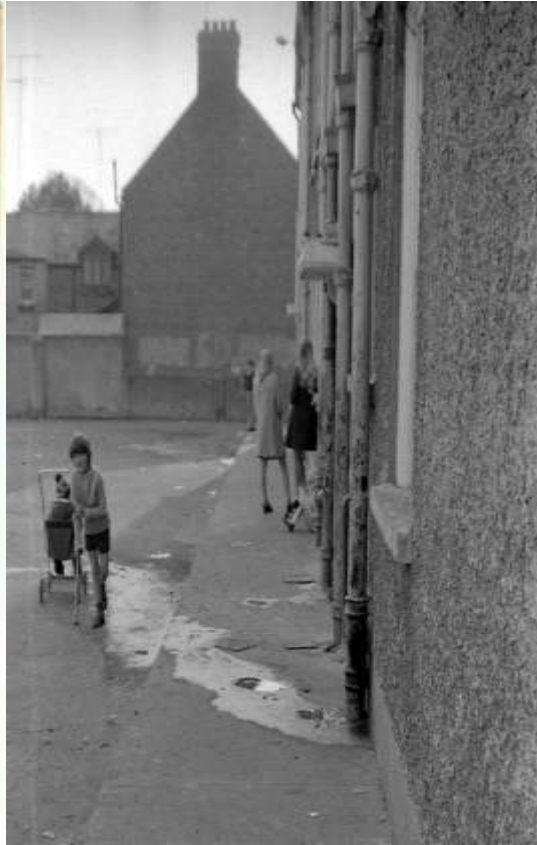
Earlier this week, he told the *Herald*: "Because the connection is so far, it's really hard to feel emotional but I think I did feel he had a link to Ireland. Only an Irishman could speak the way he did."



The Family Album - trough the years.



Family Picture. Whitechurch Circa 1980s



Mount Pleasant Buildings.



View down Jimmy's Lane. Mount Pleasant Buildings being Knocked in the 70s.



Peadar Kearney's personal documents including his 1916 Volunteers medal go on sale at Whites in 2006.



Brendan Behan enjoying a pint of plain.



Cousins John and Paul Kearney looking smart



Tony Kearney hard at it. Circa 1970's



Kearney Family Wedding 6th September 2003. (Paul and Tracy)



**John and Daphne Aug 1975.
June 2000.**



Thomas and Daphne,





Tony Kearney



Thomas and Antoinette Kearney



Paul Kearney



Elaine, Sabrina and Rachael Kearney Circa 1980'



Anthony Jnr Circa late 70's

Conclusion

When I started Genealogy as a hobby I never taught that my own family tree would turn out to be so interesting. Most of the information contained in this booklet has been found online or in the Birth and Death Registrar in Dublin. Also a trip or two to Mount Jerome graveyard helped when putting the jigsaw together.

I am sure some of the details contained here will not be 100% accurate. Hopefully the small amount of research I have started will inspire Kearney's now and for generations to come to keep the family history alive. If you have future information in relation to this tree I will be only to happy to make some changes.

I hope you enjoyed reading this account as much as I did researching it.

Anto ☺

e-mail : anthonyk135@gmail.com

