



Growing up in America, I always knew that my grandparents, Thomas Paul Hoban and Mary Ellen (nee Waldron), came from Ballyhaunis and ended up in the Seattle area. But my father died when I was four, my mother remarried and the family moved to California after WWII, so I rarely saw my grandfather or cousins. Within the past decade I have re-established a link with the Hoban descendents living in the Pacific North West, and begun to find out about my ancestors. Here is their story.

Patrick Hoban was a farmer in Lisbaun East, five km to the northeast of Ballyhaunis. He and his wife Bridget (nee Bones) leased 12 acres of land that was part of the large estate of Lord Viscount Dillon. They raised a family of 4 boys and 3 girls in the 1840's and 50's, during the difficult years of the famine.

The earliest immigration we know by the Hobans from Lisbaun occurred during the 1860's when four of Patrick and Bridget's children migrated to the United States, settled and raised their families, mostly in Minnesota. Many of their descendents still live in the Minneapolis area.

One son, Thomas Hoban stayed in Lisbaun, married Eleanor Sloyne in 1867 and raised a family of seven children. All seven tried life in the United States during the 1890's. The Hoban kids took passage on the trans-Atlantic passenger ships from Queenstown on the south coast of Ireland. They always traveled in the company of relatives and friends from Ballyhaunis -- groups of young, single Irish folk seeking jobs as housekeepers, railroad men and laborers.

The young Hobans headed for Minneapolis and moved in with the aunts and uncles who had preceded them by a generation. Five -- Patrick C., Thomas P., Margaret, Mary and Delia -- moved on west, all settling in the Seattle-to-Tacoma corridor, close to the railroad line. They lived in Irish neighborhoods and maintained their national identity all their lives. Thomas and Delia returned to the Ould Sod for several visits.



Children of Thomas Hoban and Eleanor Sloyan in 1905 – Delia, Patrick C., Michael, Mary, Margaret and Thomas P.

My grandfather, Thomas P. Hoban was among the immigrants in 1893. He was Irish speaking, pipe smoking, willing to work, and headed west! Abandon the family and friends back home? Not at all! Did they have to look far for work? No! The Northern Pacific Railway needed hard-working hands to break through the Great Rocky Mountains and then drive on west to Seattle.

Being a railroad employee meant that travel on the rails was free, while wages from the Northern Pacific provided adequate money for the ship passage back across "the pond". Grandfather Thomas returned home three times. One trip was in 1908 to wed Mary Ellen Waldron from Holy Well. No doubt they knew each other as children, since they were in the same parish back home. They married in the Began parish church. I can imagine the families bursting with happiness, and yet sad that they were to live so far away. But emigration had become a necessary part of life in Ireland.

Nell, a 17-year old sister of Mary Ellen, also made the voyage and settled near them in O'Brien (now Kent). She was among 24 young folks from Ballyhaunis, in their teens and early 20's, who made the voyage on that same ship, the *Carmenia*. Their surnames - such as Lyons, Burke, Cunnane, Finn, Byrne, Fitzmaurice, Flanagan, Gallagher, Costello, Dillon, Morley and Ruane - are still prominent in the Ballyhaunis/Began area.

Tragically, Tom's wife Mary died of "Child Bed Fever" within a month of the birth of her fourth child. The four children were boarded with the Christian Brothers at Briscoe School in O'Brien, Washington until 1920 when Tom took them to Ireland for three months.

Home of Patrick C. Hoban (no longer exists) in O'Brien (now Kent) Washington, about 1912

He might have stayed, but the Black and Tans were active, and Tom feared for his young sons. Instead, he returned to Seattle with Annie Waldron, another of his wife's sisters. She was a huge help in lending a hand to raise her nephews and niece, and spent the rest of her life living only three houses distant from Tom.



Hoban Family Reunion, Kent, 2007

Now fast forward a century and two generations. My first cousin, Thomas Hoban IV, who I hadn't seen in four decades, finds my address in California, and I am back in the fold! The time was right and the interest was there. I began to gather vital records of all the cousins I could locate. This led to the preparation of a genealogy chart, and reunions in Woodinville in 2003 and 2005, Kent in 2007 and County Mayo, Ireland in 2009. Finally the family is back together.

My cousin Tom provided me with certified records of births and marriages that proved I have grandparents born in Ireland which enabled me to obtain Irish citizenship. After a few trips to Ireland, I am smitten with her landscape, history, peoples and music. Now my wife and I spend half the year in Ireland, just an hour's drive from Ballyhaunis. And we love it!



John Hoban, Cloonroe, Urlaur, Co. Mayo - 1920's?

And what of the two brothers, John and Michael, who stayed in Ireland? Many of their descendents, my second cousins, still live near the family farm, while some moved to other areas of Ireland such as Dublin, as well as England, New York, Chicago and Texas.

In June, 2009, we hosted a successful reunion of about 40 cousins from those lines plus nine American Hobans. The day began with a family Mass in the apparition chapel at the basilica in Knock, Co. Mayo, and continued with lunch and a program in a nearby hotel on an unusually bright day.

There are more than 330 descendents of Thomas Hoban and Eleanor Sloyan. Most of the 22 second cousins still live in Washington. I think our grandparents would be very pleased!

-- James Hoban, jrick40@aol.com

Hoban Family Reunion, 31 May 2009, Co. Mayo, Ireland



THE THOMAS HOBAN - ELEANOR SLOYAN CHILDRENS' FAMILIES

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------|---|------------------------------------|--|---|------------------------------------|---|--------------------------------------|------------------|
| Par-ents | Father PATRICK HOBAN | | Mother BRIDGET BONES | | Father THOMAS SLOYAN | | Mother BRIDGET FITZMAURICE | |
| 1st | THOMAS HOBAN | | | ----- Married ----- | | ELEANOR SLOYAN | | |
| Gen | <i>b. 18 Jan 1838, Lisbaun E., Ballyhaunis, Mayo, Ireland</i> | | | <i>7 Feb 1867, Bekan Church Ballyhaunis, Mayo, IE</i> | | <i>b. 25 Jun 1833, Brackloon W., Ballyhaunis, Mayo, Ireland</i> | | |
| | <i>d. 15 Feb 1921, Ballyhaunis, Mayo, Ireland</i> | | | | | <i>d. Bef 1920, Ballyhaunis, Mayo, Ireland</i> | | |
| 2nd | MARGARET | PATRICK CHRISTOPHER | JOHN | THOMAS PAUL | MARY | MICHAEL | BRIDGET "DELIA" | |
| Gen | <i>b. 20 Jan 1868 Lisbaun, Mayo</i> | <i>b. 1 Aug 1869 Lisbaun, Mayo</i> | <i>b. 17 Aug 1871 Lisbaun, Mayo</i> | <i>b. 6 Feb 1874 Lisbaun, Mayo</i> | <i>b. 9 Sep 1875 Lisbaun, Mayo</i> | <i>b. 5 Oct 1879 Lisbaun, Mayo</i> | <i>b. 11 Dec 1881 Lisbaun, Mayo</i> | |
| | <i>d. before 1930 Washington</i> | <i>d. 2 Nov 1952 Tacoma WA</i> | <i>d. 23 Nov 1940 Cloonroe, Urlaur, Mayo</i> | <i>d 24 Jan 1962 Seattle WA</i> | <i>d. 1940 Seattle WA</i> | <i>d. 11 May 1947 Lisbaun, Mayo</i> | <i>d. 16 Sep 1965 Seattle, WA</i> | |
| | <i>Married</i> | <i>Married</i> | <i>Married</i> | <i>Married</i> | <i>Married (Div)</i> | <i>Married</i> | <i>Married</i> | |
| | EDWARD MAHER | LOUISE MARY GILL | BRIDGET KENNY | MARY WALDRON | JOHN DIETZ | CATHERINE COFFEY | MICHAEL FREELEY | |
| | | | | | <i>Married</i> | | | |
| | | | | | TOM McMAHON | | | |
| 3rd | THOMAS | HENIRETTA GILL | MARY ANN | THOMAS ANTHONY | HELEN "ELSIE" | THOMAS | HELENA CATHERINE | |
| | HELEN | JOHN EMMETT | MICHAEL "TOM" | JAMES PATRICK | JOHN THOMAS | ANNIE MAY | JOHN EMMETT | |
| Gen | ADRIENNE | RICHARD SLOYAN | JOHN JOSEPH | JOHN J. | ROBERT "EMMETT" | NELLIE | MARY | |
| | M. GRACE | MARGARET LOUISE | ELLEN (SR. LELIA) | HELEN M. | EDWARD FRANCIS | KITTY | BERNARD LEO | |
| | HENRY | THOMAS PATRICK | DELIA | | KATHLEEN "DOLLY" | JOHN EDWARD | | |
| | CHILD | CYRUS BARTHOLOMEW | PATRICK | | JAMES | BRIGID "DELIA" | | |
| | | FRANCIS XAVIER | JAMES | | CHARLES | FRANCES | | |
| | | | VINCENT T. | | SR. ROBERTA | | | |
| | | | EMMET | | | | | |
| 4th | 0 | 7 | 14 | 13 | 8 | 36 | 3 | TOTAL 81 |
| 5th | | 9 | 10 | 21 | 22 | 64 | 3 | TOTAL 129 |
| 6th | | 11 | 6 | 30 | 20 | 27 | 1 | TOTAL 95 |
| 7th | | | | | 24 | | | TOTAL 24 |
| 8th | | | | | 2 | | | TOTAL 2 |

Second through eight generations = 338 descendents

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