

Hello Mark,

Michael has asked me to write something for your upcoming website for the Peace Park. Not being completely sure what to write I'll start with something about myself and family.

First off my name is Patrick Gorman, I'm 55 yrs old and I have lived all my life in Dixon Illinois. I have a wife, Carol, we've been married almost 32 years and have three children, Amanda Romaine, Bridget Kelly, and Eoin Patrick James. Both my wife and I are of Irish descent, hers from Co. Louth (Dundalk) and mine being from (Glenmore) Co. Kilkenny and (Waterford City) Co. Waterford Ireland. My wife I love Ireland and embrace our Irish roots, we've been there a total of seven times.

Eoin has been twice, the most recent as a student at the University of Cork this last summer. Bridget spent 5 months in Dublin (2005) as a student at [Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology](#).

I've been President of the Lee County Genealogical Society since Jan 2005, and vice Pres. for three years before that. Our organization was formed in 1994 and we have almost 350 members in all 50 states.

I started researching my family history in 2001 and continue to do so any chance I get. Dixon and Castlebar formed a Twinning / Sister City relationship back in 2005 and I am vice Pres. of Dixon Sister Cities Assoc. Through that organization we met Ray & Helen Norton of Torlough and became good friends. When Ray and Helen came to the States for St. Patrick's Day in 2007 they brought a copy of Michael Feeney's Book "Mayo Comrades of the Great War 1914-1919". They gave Carol and I a copy which I promptly read cover to cover. I was particularly taken with the part about Martin Cooney the soldier that lies in an un-marked grave. I contacted Michael immediately and volunteered to get Martin a tombstone. It was then that he informed me that Father Patrick Joseph Gallagher, also listed in his book, was in an un-marked grave as well. It was then I knew I had my work cut out for me as I had never done military research before. BUT through persistence and the caring people at the Military Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, and the VA in Washington I can now say that both stones are now safely in the hands of the families of these men.

Yesterday afternoon (Sunday) we (LCGS) in Lee County had a service similar to what Michael mentioned about re-dedicating the Cooney & Gallagher graves in Mayo. Back in the late 1960's there was a grave in a rural Lee Co. Cemetery that for whatever reason was vandalized. It belonged to a Union Civil War Soldier by the name of John F. Bainter. I ordered a stone from the VA just as I had done for the fallen Irish soldiers and it arrived in late September. At first I hadn't planned a big ceremony but do to the timing of the stone's arrival and our Veterans Day holiday not too far off I decided to do it up right. Members of the Amboy American Legion, The Illinois National Guard, and members of the 2nd. Illinois Light Artillery Regiment Civil War Re-enactors were contacted and all agreed to participate. It turned out to be a wonderful affair with about 75 people showing up. I couldn't believe the amount of people in attendance.

In August of 2007 after our son finished his studies at UCC Carol and I flew to Ireland to travel with Eoin. It was at that time that I finally got to meet with Michael Feeney. Blackie Gavin drove

me out to his home one night before we left and we sat and talked for about an hour. I knew right then that Michael was a man of integrity and good character and was doing good things for the City of Castlebar. It was at that time that Michael gave me a list from the back of his book naming four soldiers that he was seeking information on. As of this writing two have been positively found with a third in the works. The fourth, Walter J. O'Malley is still being looked into by the records center. The problem I am assuming is number of O'Malleys that served in the armed forces. In the meantime Michael has sent me the names of probably 8-12 other soldiers that we have had great success with. One (Kenneth McHugh KIA WWI) I even managed to get pictures of his grave in Baraboo, Wisconsin. I sent them on to Michael who promptly delivered them to family member Paddy McHugh.

I'm currently working on getting the records for Michael Lavin of Gortgrave, Kiltimagh, KIA WW II. A request has been sent off for his records and this one should be quite easy as I was able to give them Michael's service number and place of internment overseas.

I will begin work next on 2 brothers named Martin and Michael Brennan from Kileadan, Kiltimagh, who were killed with the U.S. Forces in W.W.2.

The biggest obstacle in doing research on the military personnel of WW I & WW II is that there was a fire in the records center, July of 1973, and most of what was destroyed were the records of those that were KIA in both great wars.

I hope this has helped and you are able to publish this on your site. I will accept soldier research requests from anyone in Mayo that wants it done, as long as they go through Michael Feeney or have his permission. There will be no charge from me.

If want more from me in the way of articles or research let me know, I'll do anything I can to help your cause. I hope I haven't rambled on to much!

All the Best,  
Patrick Gorman  
Pres. Lee Co. Genealogical Society  
Dixon Illinois