

THE KERRYTOWN BROSNAHANS

Seán G Brosnahan

**c. 1992 R.J. & H.P. Brosnahan,
54 Rhodes Street,
Timaru**

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PREFACE

This is the story of one family, my family. We bear, proudly, the name Brosnahan. When I first began working towards this history in 1988 I was aware that there were a number of Brosnahan families among the Irish immigrants who had made their home at Kerrytown in South Canterbury last century. I also knew that there were other families who spelt their name Brosnan but who were probably connected to us in some way. I soon learnt to disregard the variation in spelling; Brosnahan, Brosnan, Bresnahan, all are simply different English renderings of the same Gaelic surname 'O Brosnacháin'. Our immigrant forbears chose their own version of the name according to need, preference and for reasons that cannot now be known. Some of Tim Brosnahan's sons went for 'Brosnan', the rest stuck with 'Brosnahan'. In Ireland today most people of the name use 'Brosnan', for simplicity and because the shorter name is easier. It is no more 'correct' than the long version we favour and in this book I will sometimes treat other variations as Brosnahan, because I'm writing the story and why not.

Our family lore is rich if not particularly full and I learned from an early age the story of the old patriarchs Hugh and Tim Brosnahan, and their wives Deborah and Catherine, who came to New Zealand in old age and lived a further twenty years here amongst their sons and daughters on the Levels Plains. I had been to the Temuka cemetery to visit their graves and been particularly impressed with old Hugh's 102 years. He was my grandfather's grandfather. He probably dandled my infant grandfather, Daniel Brosnahan, on his knee in the 1890s. I had been held in turn by Daniel and in the thought of that close physical link stretching across five generations I felt a deep sense of ages past and of my own history stretching back to 1793 when Hugh Brosnahan was born in Scartaglin, Co Kerry. But if I knew these broad outlines I wanted to fill in the details.

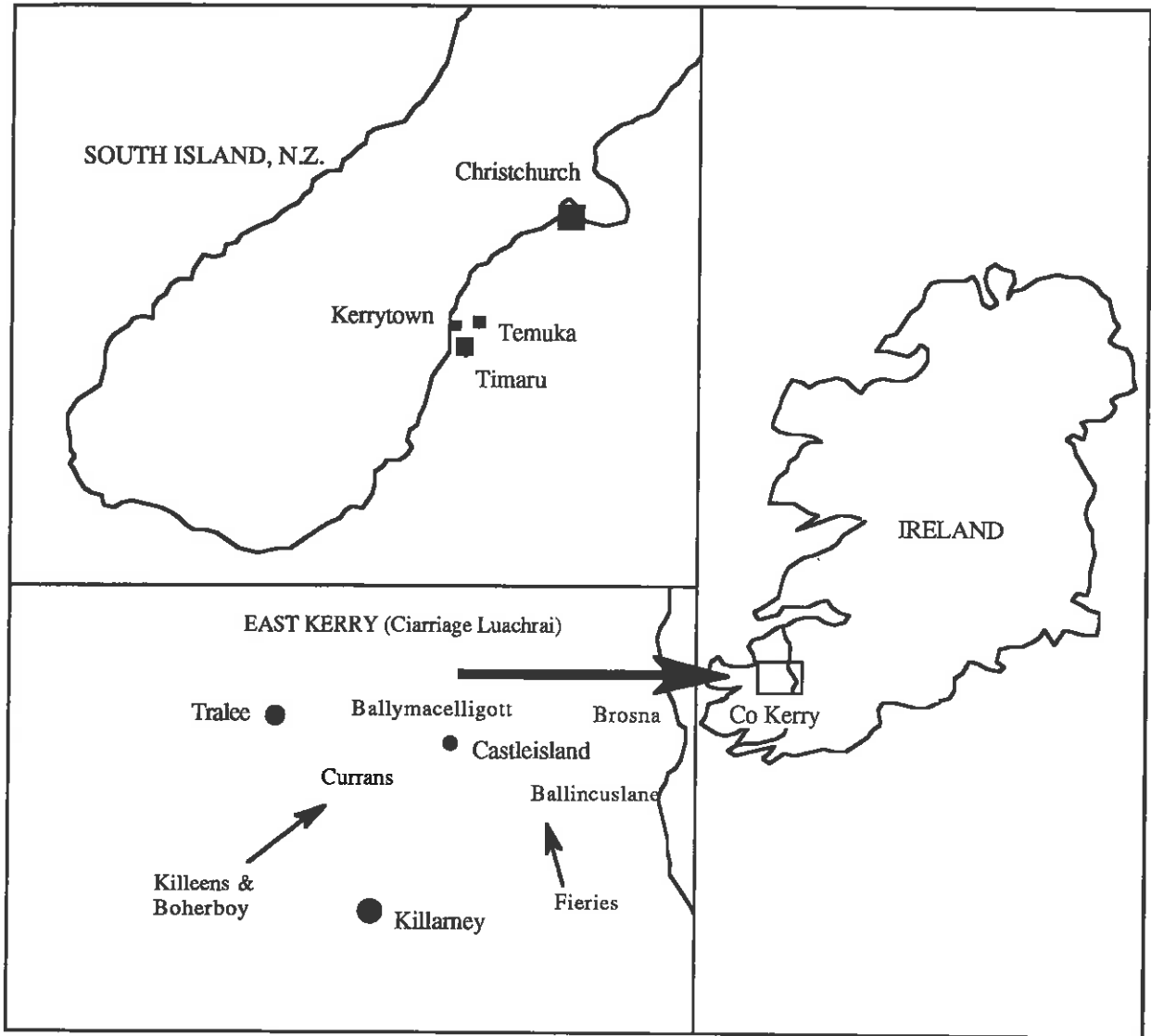
And what of all the other Brosnahans? When I was at secondary school in Timaru in the late 1970s there were dozens of us at St Pats and Mercy College, but only one, Mark, was clearly related to our family. What about the Rosewill Brosnahans, the Arun Street Brosnahans, the Seadown Brosnahans, the Otaio Brosnahans? The further I have dug in recent years the more Brosnahans have appeared, and not just in South Canterbury but in Otago, Wellington, Marlborough, Hawkes Bay and the Gisborne area. The name has turned out to be much less exclusive than I had first thought and yet all the Brosnahans have come from the same place, a small area of County Kerry Ireland (and parts of Cork and Limerick along the county border), and only left it within the last century and a half.

This book will therefore contain something of interest to anyone who shares our name but it will be focussed on the family and descendants of Hugh and Tim Brosnahan of Kerrytown. Their two families settled together at Kerrytown and for at least a generation after their arrival lived in a real sense as an extended family. Inevitably as the family circle extended and particularly as children and

grandchildren moved away and married outside the little Irish Catholic community this shared family life and identity dissipated. For that reason the book will not generally take the family story much beyond the first New Zealand born generation. Today there are over 2000 descendants of the original migrant family and any sense of family identity is obviously rather academic. And yet for all that I have found a remarkable sense of warmth toward the project among long-lost relations and a surprising feeling of "Brosnahan" identity among people for whom the name relates to a grandmother or great-grandmother.

I would like to thank all of the many, many people who have helped me with information, photographs and encouragement in the writing of this book. There are too many to name but I hope that their efforts will be rewarded with the final product. I would however like to dedicate the book to my parents as an acknowledgement of their special role in bringing it (and me) into the world of light. It is published to mark the reunion of the descendants of Hugh's grandson Daniel Brosnahan (my grandfather) and Elizabeth Agnes Mellor in South Canterbury in August 1992.

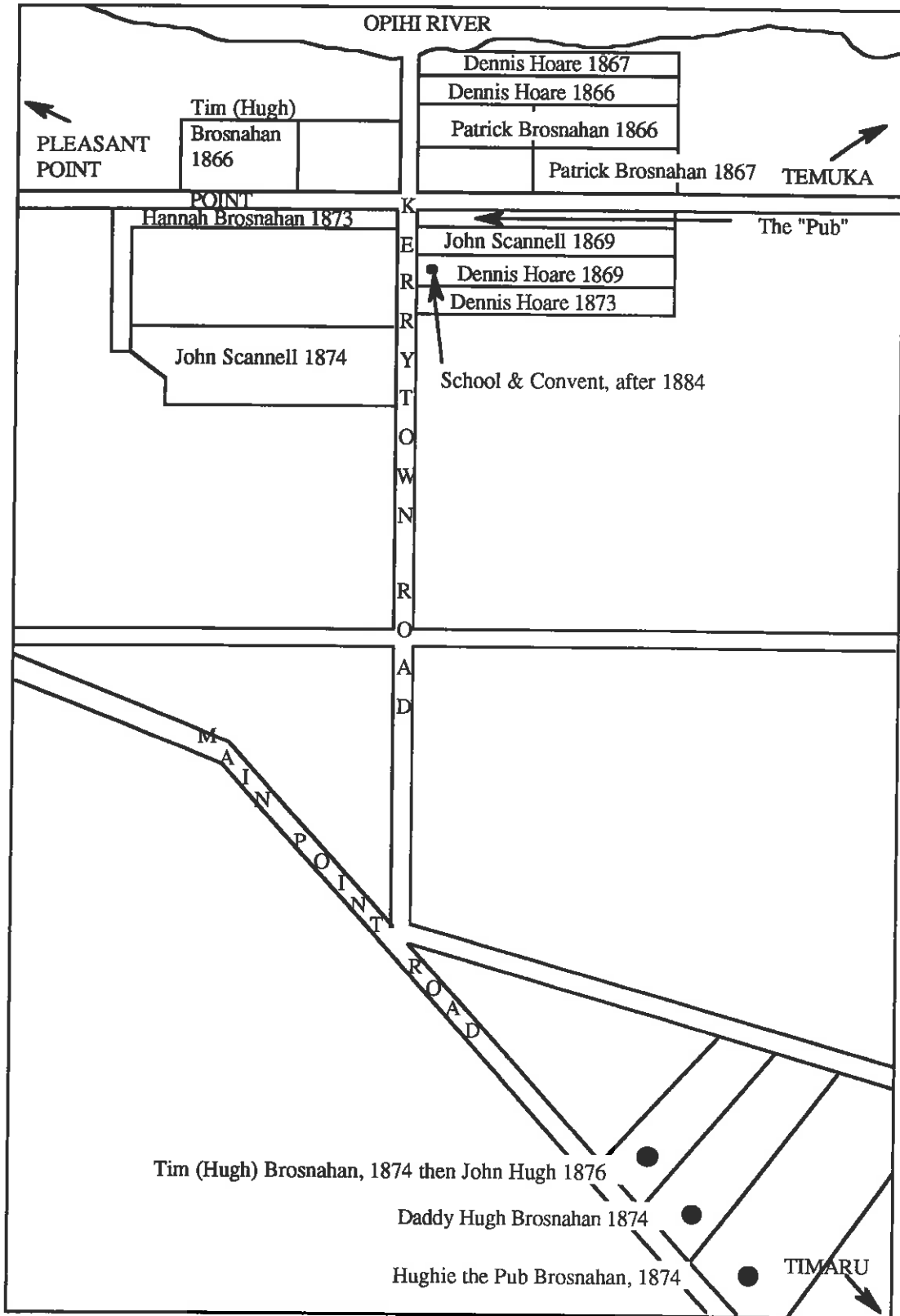
Seán G Brosnahan



IRELAND & NEW ZEALAND

Principal locations referred to in the text.

KERRYTOWN, SOUTH CANTERBURY



Family Sections as Original Purchasers from the Crown.

PART ONE:

IRELAND

Chapter One.

GOING HOME ?

The Beginning of My Quest

In January 1988 I had been in England for twenty months and quite suddenly faced a return to New Zealand. I had by then travelled in France, Germany, Italy, Austria, the length and breadth of England, Wales and Scotland. But I had not been to Ireland, the land in which all but one of my sixteen great great grandparents had been born. It was ridiculous, so while my wife went on ahead to New Zealand I crossed the Irish Sea, determined to pay my dues to the ancestral homeland. As my aeroplane flew into Dublin I was overwhelmed by thoughts of the emigrants, who had departed in sorrow and in hope a century before. I felt a strong urge to imitate the Pope and kiss the ground, but it was the middle of winter, freezing, and I am a New Zealand male, not given to grand public gestures. Nonetheless my feelings were euphoric and I had a deep sense of a huge circle being joined, of going back to the beginning.

I spent four days in Dublin, a city that none of my forbears are likely ever to have visited. Then I headed south, to Limerick, Cork, Kinsale. Finally I arrived at Killarney, the second largest town in Co Kerry and set up camp in its wonderful, and warm, Youth Hostel. All along the route I had noticed that Irish people had a special regard for Kerry, and first heard it called by its popular title "the Kingdom", a special place in a special country. For some it is perhaps the back of beyond - in Ireland they tell "Kerry" jokes as other countries tell "Irish" jokes. For others it is a magical 'kingdom', rich in scenic beauty and rich in its people. I quickly abandoned all my plans to circumnavigate Ireland and settled for a week in Kerry, only wishing I had longer to spend.

The first day I bought as good a map of the area as I could find and headed for the local library. The librarians were a great help and very enthusiastic. It was clear very quickly that Brosnahans were not thin on the ground in Co Kerry, and even better, or worse, Hughs and Tims were to be had by the dozen. The Brosnahan heartland is a well-defined area in the hills to the northeast of Killarney, an area known in Irish as Slieve Lougher (a rough translation would be the mountains of rushes). New Zealand records linked our Hugh and Tim to Currans and Castleisland, two of the parishes at the centre of this area. At the library there were records of dozens of Brosnahan families in this area in 1853, when the land was valued for rating purposes for the British authorities by Richard Griffiths. All of our family names were represented among the tenant landholders Griffiths recorded; Hugh, Tim, John, Cornelius, Patrick, singly and in combinations. It was a maze of possibilities.

I really was ill-equipped for my task, having stupidly left my notes of family history in a packing case in London. I knew though that Hugh had married

Deborah Butler in Currans in 1833 and that their son John was born some time around 1848. Amongst all the Tims and Hughs on the valuations I spotted a family of Butlers, a relatively unusual name in Kerry, and hoped that this might be Deborah's family. The librarian was just as keen to pinpoint the family root and gave me the names of a Brosnan and a Butler family to visit. She even rang an elderly gent, Bart Brosnahan of Scartaglin, who pointed me toward the Ballybeg burial ground in Currow "full of Brosnahans". The only problem was how to get into the hills. There were no buses and it was too far to walk or bike. It was Friday and I walked Killarney in search of a car hire firm. Killarney is a very small place, there are few large towns in Ireland, and there was only one. I discovered to my horror that a single day's car hire would cost me £43.50, almost \$120, nearly twice my airfare from London to Dublin. Moreover I would receive the car "empty" and have to put in all the fuel I wanted myself, bringing it back as empty as I dared. I was being had but I had no other options.

I chose Sunday for my precious twenty four hours at the wheel and arranged the hire from midday Sunday to midday Monday, to maximise my visiting hours. I picked the car up at noon and headed for the hills. My first stop was Scartaglin, a church with cemetery attached. Like nearly all of the Catholic churches in Ireland it was not of any great age and certainly wouldn't predate our ancestors' departure. The cemetery also seemed full of 'new' graves. The next stop was the Ballybeg burial ground but despite old Bart's description this also seemed new and there were no Brosnahans to be noted on the headstones. I decided to try my luck at the Brosnans. The name I had been given was that of Willie Brosnan of Dromultan, and after some helpful directions at Currow I found myself boldly knocking on the farmhouse door. A young man answered, Willie's son Tom Brosnan. He was on his own and invited me in to await his father's return. While we waited I explained my mission and Tom, who was about my own age, offered to take me down to the old Ballybeg burial ground, which was not the one I had found.

The old burial ground was up a track behind the newer one, and it was as full of Brosnahans as old Bart had promised. There were stones dating back to the mid 1800s and Tims, Hughs and all the other family names were there in the customary numbers. There were also Foleys, and I felt that here at last was a place I could tag as part of our *turangawaewae* [ancestral land]. There were no graves to be positively identified as 'ours' of course, all of our known Brosnahan ancestors are buried in South Canterbury but maybe there were brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts who had been left behind and forgotten. Tom was right in there with me, scrabbling over mossy old gravestones and deciphering fading memorials and I was more than happy to feel that we were long sundered brethren. I can't honestly say what he thought of it, but it was at least a diverting way to spend a mid-winter Kerry Sunday.

From the cemetery we headed back to the farmhouse and I met Willie. He was very pleasant and like his son seemed to take his colonial visitor and the ancestral quest in his stride. He offered helpful suggestions but the Kerry accent at a fast

clip defeated me with Willie and I was only able to catch every third word. At that precise moment one of the cows calved and I was on hand to witness the great event. Kerry is dairy country, our ancestors would have been dairy farmers and it seemed appropriate altogether. Tom offered to accompany me on my travels for the afternoon. I greatly appreciated the offer, as local knowledge would help me enormously and save my precious time with the car. We set off for the Butlers, who were friendly and welcoming but had no information to offer. They suggested we visit Mick Culloty, the local historian. Tom was somewhat nervous about this proposal - Culloty evidently had a formidable reputation in the locality for taking people to court for leaving his gates open. I was more than happy not to go but he insisted we should. The nearer we got, however, the more apprehensive he became. Even worse every time we stopped to get directions we were warned to make sure we shut the gates.

The Culloty farmhouse was everything I could have hoped for, an old fashioned Irish farmhouse, sparsely furnished by our standards, with a peat fire and the kettle permanently on the boil. Mick was not on hand to greet us but his wife, sons and daughter were. We were welcomed in while the great man was sent for. Mrs Culloty was an hospitable soul and set to making the tea and setting out the home baked bread. She replied to all statements with a friendly "sure I know". She had a pretty daughter, who knew Tom from school I think, and two great strapping sons who watched me with huge grins on their faces, saying not a word. Then in walked Mick. By now I didn't know what to expect and he proved well worth the wait. He was a short squat farmer with huge soiled hands, one squinty eye and pretty deaf to boot. He met all my comments with a bellowed "What ?" and spoke in a huge voice with the same thick Kerry accent, which I had found so hard to understand in Willie Brosnan. As we spoke he suddenly poured half of his mug of tea into a giant saucer and began to drink from this as he fixed me with his one good eye over the rim. My grandfather used to do the same thing.

For some reason which I could not follow Mick felt that our folks must have come from Dromultan. He told me that the Ballybeg (pronounced Ballybuich) burial ground had been a Brosnahan preserve. Then the Sugrués wanted to use it too and the fight lasted a week with the Sugrués winning out and laying the body in question there. Mick is writing a book on the Killentierna parish history and showed me his manuscript. There it was all laid out in neat typescript, I would have loved to read it all. I would have to say that my visit to the Cullotys did not really advance my knowledge of our family's origins a jot but it was tremendously interesting and that afternoon tea in the old Kerry farmhouse was one of my best travel experiences anywhere. Perhaps too I caught a glimpse of what life might have been like for us if the emigrants had not left. I felt a sense that their decision to leave had been a good one and that we have reaped the reward for their courage and endeavours in the new land. More than anything I learnt that the land of my ancestors was not mine - the hills and plains of South Canterbury are my heart's true home.



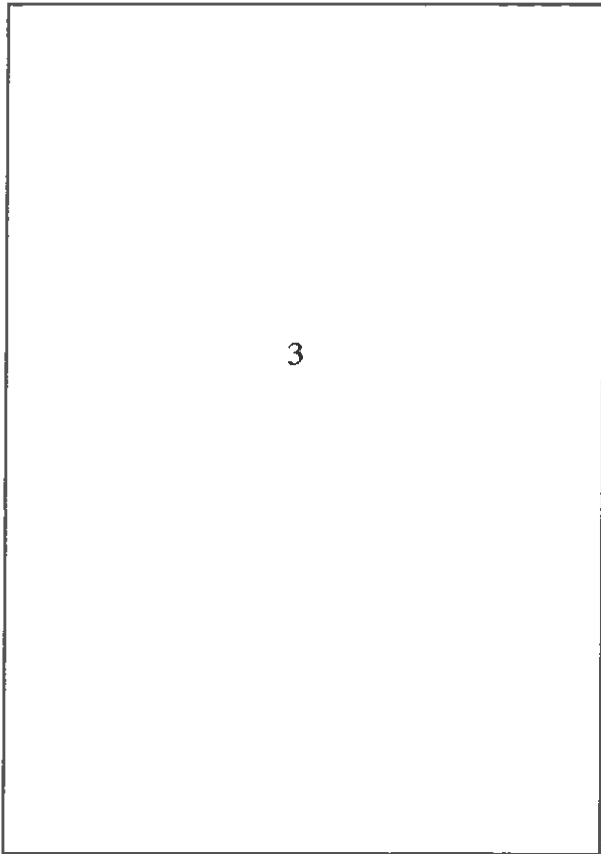
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Kerry farmland, near Currans, 1988



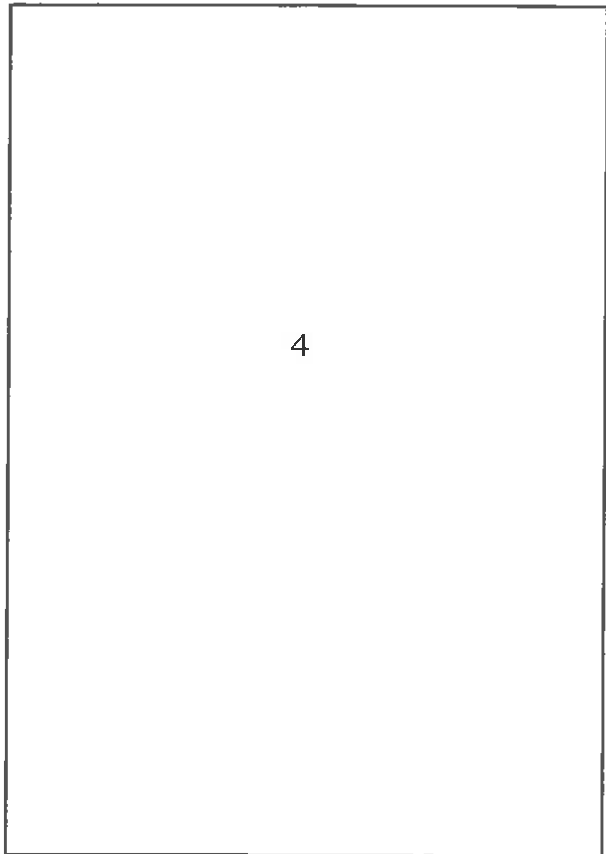
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Willie and Tom Brosnan, Dromultan, Currans parish, Co Kerry, 1988.



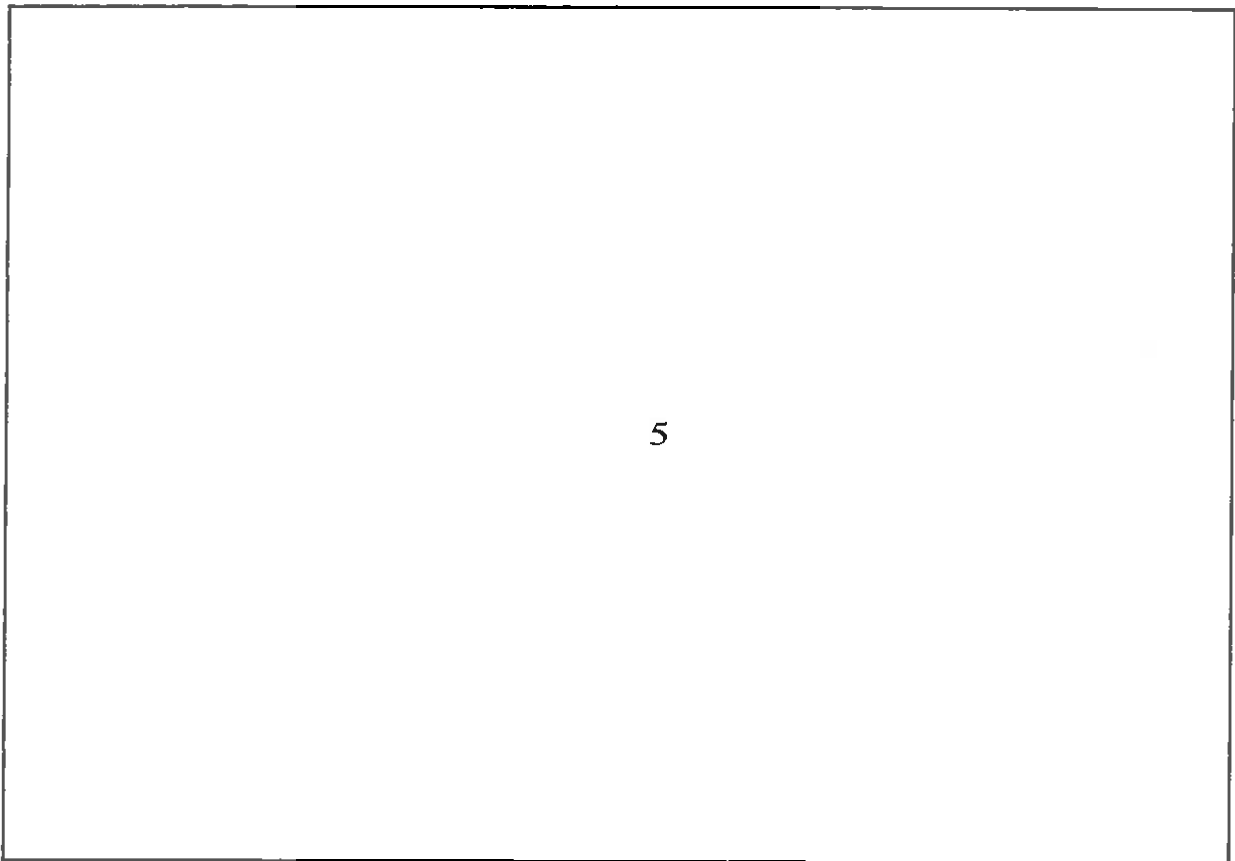
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Memorial to the Kerry poets, Killarney.



4

**Declan Shea, descendant of Tim Brosnahan
at Furies, Co Kerry 1990.**



5

**Mountainside farmland near Boherboy, Currans parish, Co Kerry, January 1988.
Daddy Hugh Brosnahan is supposed to have farmed in this area in the 1830s.**

On the way back to Dromultan we called in on the presbytery at Currow. The priest was new to the area but like everybody else made me welcome and was more than happy to bring out the old parish marriage and baptismal registers. The long persecution of Irish Catholicism by the Protestant Ascendancy had many unfortunate consequences but for our purpose one of the worst of them is that Catholics in Ireland were long not able or willing to preserve records of their religious observance. So while many English families can trace their lineage back through parish records for centuries, Catholic parishes in Ireland seldom have any records before the mid 1800s. The Currans parish records in Currow presbytery went back as far as 1808, which is pretty good for Ireland. Hugh Brosnahan's great age meant, however, that the New Zealand record of his death in 1895 provides details of his birth and parents, which predates the oldest records in Currow by a full thirteen years. Still, I had a rough date for Hugh's marriage to Deborah Butler in 1833, and the birth of my great-grandfather John in 1848. There was an unfortunate gap in the record of marriages for 1833 and no sign of John Brosnahan's baptism in 1848. Then we struck oil. In 1846 a Tim Brosnan was baptised, the son of Hugh Brosnan and Gobnait Butler of Killeen. In 1843 the same couple had a daughter Mary and in 1837 a son John. In this earliest entry the address was Gurrane.

The only problem was with "Gobnet". The parish priest offered to phone his sister, who had a sister-in-law with this name. He rang and asked her what the English equivalent for Gobnet was, without however mentioning the reason for the enquiry. She replied straight away that Gobnet meant Deborah. [I have since learnt that Gobnet is the name of a saint venerated in East Kerry and should be pronounced "Govna".] Finally I had pinned down some definite record of the old people, and found an "address" which might help me sort out my Hugh from the many. We headed back to Dromultan. I was thrilled with my ventures and full of gratitude for the convivial welcome accorded me by one and all. More than anything I was grateful to Tom Brosnan for devoting his afternoon to my quest. The Brosnans invited me to stay for tea. Over our meal Willie showed me on my map where Killeen is, and told me that Gurrane was virtually the same place. They are the names of "townlands", as is Dromultan. An Irish townland has nothing to do with towns but is the smallest in a series of administrative units of land and generally made up of ten to fifteen contiguous farms. A number of townlands make up a "parish", the parishes make up a "barony" and so on up to the counties and provinces. My map showed none of these divisions and without Willie's local knowledge I wouldn't have been much further ahead.

In the falling dark I came down off the hills and back to Killarney. It had been a tremendously fruitful day and I begrudged not a penny of my £43.50 for the car that had made it possible. And I still had another half day on wheels. At first light I was up again and on the road to Castleisland. This was the place, with which our Irish location had always been most definitely linked, though I now know that it is the parish of Castleisland rather than the town itself which is the connection, particularly for old Tim and Catherine Brosnahan who married there and their

children who were baptised there. I visited the church and the local bookshop, looking for a copy of the parish history. There was none to be had but I did find a book on "faction fighting", which I bought: there was a famous feud or "faction fight" around Castleisland between the O'Connors and the Brosnahans, of which more later in the book. My next stop was Gurrane townland, or as near to it as I could work out from my map and Willie Brosnan's instructions. The land here stretches up the hillside and I took photos up and down in bright sunshine. This was as close as I was ever likely to get to an ancestral hearth and I savoured the moment. I didn't have time to do much more as with the clock ticking away on my hire car I headed for Tralee and the county library.

Tralee is really quite close to Gurrane and I realised that this, the larger of the two main Kerry towns, was more likely to have family connections than Killarney well to the south. At the library I looked again at Mr Griffith's Valuation of 1853 but could find no trace there of any Hugh Brosnahan. I then looked at the earlier "tithe books" which recorded the tithes that all landholders had to pay to the [Anglican] Church of Ireland. These survived for Currans parish for 1827 and 1837, and for Killentierna for 1827. In 1827 a Hugh and Tim Brosnahan had to pay tithes on land valued at £120 at Killentierna, a very substantial lot in comparison with the other entries. In the Currans record for 1825 there was a Patrick Brosnan with 19 acres at Gurrane Lower, while at Gurrane Upper Timothy Brosnan held 25 acres in partnership with four other men. Thomas Butler had just over 3 acres and Cornelius Brosnan 1 acre 3 roods in the same place and together with three other men they jointly held 15 acres of mountain land. At the neighbouring "Urrahogal, part called Boherboy" Timothy and Thomas Brosnan, Patrick Brosnan and four others jointly held 130 acres. Apart from the Butler connection I began to feel that I was sinking back into utter confusion. Looking ten years later I found that Timothy and Thomas Brosnahan still had 21 acres to their name at Boherboy, linked this time with a Catherine Brosnan. Alongside them in the Whitigale demesne was Hugh Brosnahan with a mere 2 roods 17 perches. Was this my great great grandfather? I really couldn't tell but I knew from the baptism of John Brosnan that Hugh was in Gurrane somewhere in 1837 so I decided he would do. Back in Dublin I ordered a photograph of the Ordnance Survey map of 1853 which shows the Boherboy area at a scale of 6 inches to the mile. It cost such a lot that I am going to have to claim Hugh Brosnahan of Whitigale demesne in 1835 as my man.

I have detailed these land holdings in all their confusion to give a sense of the problems that any search for exact details of our ancestors' lives can raise. I have spent considerable time in the last few years trying to sort out those details from all the sources that are available to me in New Zealand. I have made quite a lot of headway, though there is much that I still do not know or understand. My experiences in Kerry have sustained all my later efforts to track the Brosnahans from Ireland to New Zealand. This quest for "roots" has made me deeply aware of how much we stand on the shoulders of our forbears. I offer this history as a tribute to those ancestors, ordinary men and women who lived ordinary lives.

They handed on to us precious gifts; life itself, faith, the hope of a better life and the obligation to do the same for our children and grandchildren. I will step out of the story now and let the facts, and my conjectures, speak for themselves.

Chapter Two.

THE RIMERS OF BROSNAGHE

Speculations on the Origins of a Name

Many Irish families claim elaborate pedigrees and descent from an ancient kingship. Such claims may have some substance in many instances. The notion of peasants eking out a living as tenants on land once held by their lordly ancestors does reflect an historical reality in Ireland. The Brosnahans however have no such claim to royal antecedents. The origin of the Brosnahan surname, the central subject of this book, goes back perhaps as far as the eleventh century, when the Irish pioneered the use of such names as a social custom. There are three possible interpretations of its meaning and the social origins of the family.

Edward MacLysaght, the modern authority on Irish surnames, has little to say in any of his books about "Brosnahan". He simply suggests that the surname is probably derived from the placename Brosna in County Kerry. There is a village of this name in north east Kerry, as well a river and a parish. The name is almost invariably linked with the county of Kerry but there are also references to Brosnahans in Limerick and Cork, the two counties which border on the northeastern part of Co Kerry. The parish of Brosna actually straddles the borders of both counties, and it is a reasonable proposition that the Brosnahans were originally so named for their point of origin.

A literal meaning of the name is disappointingly mundane. "Brosna" in Irish means a bundle of sticks. Professor Frank Brosnahan, formerly of Victoria University in Wellington and the descendant of Tim and Ellen Brosnahan of Poverty Bay, has written a very scholarly analysis of the origin of the name as a word along these lines. His conclusion is that if the family did not take its name from the village, river or parish name then they may have had some association with firewood; cutting it, selling it or just living near a source of it. This puts the family's origins quite literally and probably correctly, amongst the hewers of wood and the drawers of water.

There is an alternative interpretation, however, which points to a more illustrious background. When Jeremiah King wrote his book County Kerry Past & Present: a Handbook to the Local & Family History of the County in the early part of this century he offered some very interesting references in his entry for "Brosnan, Brosnahan". He first noted that the 1901 census of Ireland had recorded 262 Brosnahan families in Kerry. He then recorded the following sentence in Irish; "Brosna, Brosnad droma laraind Daire Mochua for brue Fheile in Ciarraige Luachrai". I have so far failed in all my attempts to find a translation for the above. "Fheile" is probably a reference to the river Feile, "Ciarraige Luachrai" is the Irish name for East Kerry. King then states that "in the bardic schools the seventh year was given to studying the Brosnacha, or miscellanies, or collections,

assigned to the professor or sai".

Here lies perhaps a hint of vanished glories. Celtic Ireland was a tribal society, similar to Maori society in its emphasis on the extended family, tribal groupings and family and tribal territories as the basis of social organisation. In this society, as in Maori society, a primary position was accorded to the bards, the poets and keepers of law and tradition. Their training was a highly organised and rigorous process. Bardic Schools were an important part of Irish society before their decline in the seventeenth century after the Cromwellian conquest devastated Ireland. For centuries they had produced a succession of poets, historians and brehons - the guardians of the Brehon law under which chieftains governed Irish society. According to a description of 1561 there were four 'orders' of bard. Firstly the Brehon or judge, secondly the Seanchai or chronicler, third the Bard, who was a poet and versifier, and finally the File, who was poet but more than that a scholar and guardian of traditional knowledge.

The schools were maintained by the patronage of the great of the land and set away in remote places. Only the descendants of poets who were already of some distinction in their tribe were able to attend. The training was long and hard and it is intriguing to find King's reference to the seventh year in the bardic school as devoted to the collections of poetry or "Brosnacha". This is an appealing interpretation for the origin for our name. Remember too that the original form of the name is "O Brosnacháin". The last part of the word "áin" is a suffix added to the word in the manner of "let" in English words such as "farmlet" or rivulet". So the core of our name in its original Irish is "Brosnacha", a word applied to collections of poetry of old. King gives another intriguing reference, which adds some weight to this interpretation. He records that,

In the Earl of Desmond' rents the bloodshed of Kerrye is due to the manor of Castle Island, together with the rent of Kilsarcan and the (O'Daly) rimers lands for candlelight to the said manor allowed, the lands held by the Earl's rimers in the mountain of Slieve Lougher named the Brosnaghe and by the rimers of Egleantine and Ballyroho. The rimers of Brosnaghe are bound to entertain the Earl when he goes from Kerrie to Connilloe. [my emphasis]

Jeremiah King does not say where this reference comes from but it is almost certainly from the Desmond Survey in the 1570s. This was a tallying up of the whole estate of the Earl of Desmond, an analysis of all its valuables, rents and tributes due to the murdered Fitzgerald Earl of Desmond. The "Earl's rimers in the mountain of Slieve Lougher named the Brosnaghe", duty bound to entertain the Earl as he passed through their territory, are quite possibly our ancestors. If so they were poets, whether Bards or the more important File of the Bardic system, and held an honoured place in the society of Ciarrighe Luachrai before the Cromwellian conquests destroyed the social system which gave the bards their *mana* [prestige].

One concrete reference to Brosnahans in this era concerns those who are named in lists of the "Fiants", rebels during the English conquest under Queen Elizabeth the

first, who were subsequently pardoned and sometimes given back confiscated lands. At least two Brosnahans feature in these lists: "Dermod m'Teig I Vrosnaghane" who was pardoned along with "John m'Davie Tobin" on March 18, 1600. They were both classed as "yeomen" and their pardon did not extend to intrusions on Crown lands or to any debts or arrears due to the Crown. Just over a year later on August 25, 1601 "Ullick age M'Killigot, gent., Dermod roe M' Connor I Brosneghan, [and] Tho M'Richard of Rathvoige, husb[bandmen]" were similarly pardoned. It is good to see that there were Brosnahans who needed to be pardoned for resistance to the invaders and interesting to note their ascribed position in the social structure of the day - yeomen and husbandmen.

The Passing of the Old Order & the Fall of the Poets

If Brosnahan bards did once hold forth for the Earls of Desmond as they travelled through the Slieve Luachrai none of their works and little memory of them has survived. Whatever our origins, whether our ancestors were simply people from the vicinity of Brosna, firewood sellers, poets, or something between, their Gaelic culture began to die away in the two centuries before the family emigrated to New Zealand. The memory of that old order and the sorrow of its decline are part of our forgotten cultural heritage. Four great Kerry poets were the chroniclers of its destruction and their works and their lives provide a link with the experience of our forbears, particularly since two of the four came from the same area as the Brosnahans - the Slieve Luachrai.

The first of the four was Pierce Ferriter, a native of the Dingle peninsula. Of an old Norman family Pierce joined the Kerry resistance to Cromwell's soldiers in the 1650s and was the last Irish leader to lay down his arms in Kerry. He was treacherously murdered by an English general in Killarney in 1653 after coming to a parley with assurances of safe conduct. Pierce Ferriter was a great harpist and poet and his lament records the doom which overtook the Irish world in the seventeenth century;

I heard a story that tormented me by day
And at night-time cast me into the gloom of sadness,
That left my body weak as a that of woman in labour,
Without vigour, without sensation, without humour, without usefulness.

We have no priests in the land of Fodhla,
We have no Mass nor religious orders,
We have no solemn baptism for our children,
Those of our nobility who still remain are listless and without power.

It startles me like death, the plight of my countrymen,
That mild, gentle and learned nobility,
In the land where once they were the rulers
They are now ordered to come and go.

Geoffrey O'Donoghue succeeded to Ferriter's mantle as the leading Kerry poet and was the patron of all the other Munster poets of his day. He was famous for the

feasts and banquets he gave from the O'Donoghue castle at Killaha. Geoffrey lived from 1620 till 1685, the era of Cromwell and Charles II, a period of terrible suffering and loss in Ireland. With most of the Irish nobility he lost his lands and his social position and with them the whole Irish world of learning and music and lavish hospitality.

Egan O'Rahilly followed O'Donoghue as the leading Kerry poet. He was born in 1675 in the Slieve Luachrai and as a youth witnessed the passing of the old Gaelic order. Yet much of this way of life lingered on in the hill country of Kerry and O'Rahilly grew up in an atmosphere where music and learning were held in high honour. As a young man he experienced the comfortable life of the Irish poet but when his patron lost his lands through confiscation in 1690 O'Rahilly was forced into a meagre existence as a wanderer. His poems record the horrors of his time as the great families of Kerry lost their land, Ireland's leaders fled to Europe and the harsh regime of the penal laws descended on the country. Egan lamented his own bitter losses and the misery of Ireland;

A poor sorrow-laden country, lonely, crucified,
A country without a man, a son, a mate,
A country without vigour, without pleasure, without a hearing.
A country without justice to the poor.

Egan lived until 1792 and thus outlived the last of the four great poets of Kerry. This was Owen Roe O'Sullivan, a peasant's son who was the original wild Irish rover. He too came from O'Rahilly's (and the Brosnahan's) country and was born in 1748. He was as famous for his wild ways as for his poems but was beloved of the common people of his day, his poems a source of joy and pleasure in dark times. O'Sullivan died in 1784, after a short and tempestuous life. A great scholar, fluent in four languages, his gifts were a tribute to the ancient traditions of learning in Kerry.

These traditions were maintained through the seventeenth century when "Going to Kerry for learning" was an Irish custom and students gathered surreptitiously in the Kerry hedge-schools for wide-ranging studies. This is evident from statements made by some of the harshest of the oppressors, people like Sir William Petty a scoundrel who gained huge territories in Kerry through confiscations and who noted that though the Irish were living "in a brutish nasty Condition, as in Cabins, with neither Door, Stairs nor Window" a knowledge of French and Latin was "very frequent amongst the poorer Irish and chiefly in Kerry". A report on the county in 1673 similarly noted that "the said county aboundeth with youth learning of needless latin instead of useful trades".

Egan O'Rahilly died in 1792. In February of the following year Hugh Brosnahan was born in Scartaglin. One hundred and two years later he died at Kerrytown, South Canterbury. His sons and daughter died within living memory of our old people.

The Revival of Education

Up to the 1820s therefore our ancestors were largely deprived of access to education and we know for instance that old Tim Brosnahan was illiterate. On the other hand all of the children of both Hugh's and Tim's families were at least able to sign their names (except for Margaret). The resurgence of elementary education among the Irish with the lifting of the penal sanctions in the 1820s is attested to by the published report of a British Parliamentary Enquiry into the schools of Ireland in 1826-27. The enquiry published details of existing schools parish by parish throughout the country, noting the means of support, salaries of masters, school buildings and religious direction if any.

The returns of the East Kerry parishes show an intriguing number of Brosnahans as masters. In Ballymacelligott Cornelius Brusnahan had a school at Coohnadaad. It was a Catholic free school, with 10 Church of Ireland and 90 Catholic pupils (78 boys, 22 girls). The schoolhouse was of stone and mud with a hatched roof and Cornelius received £12 per annum as salary. A parish committee supervised the school and paid the master, and scriptures were not read. There were two other schools in the parish, the one at Rattany taught by Marcus Brusnahan and Timothy Sullivan. This was also a Catholic free school with 5 Church of Ireland pupils and 175 Catholics (130 boys and 50 girls). Brusnahan received £12 and Sullivan £6, the schoolhouse was mud and thatched and scriptures were not read. In Killentierna parish Thomas Brosnan had a school at Ballybeg. It was also a free Catholic school connected with the London Hibernian Society. Brosnan's salary was £28, the schoolhouse stone and lime and thatched and there were 4 Church of Ireland pupils and 158 Catholics (120 boys, 40 girls). At Douglas in the Killorglin parish Timothy Brosnahan held a school for 70 Catholics in a stone, clay and thatched schoolhouse and at a salary of £8.

The Faction Fight: Brosnahan vs O'Connor

The first English conquest of Ireland was led by the Norman Earl "Strongbow", brother of Henry II of England, back in the thirteenth century. Compared to the later conquests it was relatively painless. The conquerors quickly adapted themselves to the customs of the conquered and reached an accommodation with the Irish tribes, which saw Norman enclaves established alongside Irish areas. The great Norman families soon began to speak Irish and indeed became 'more Irish than the Irish'. In Kerry the Fitzgerald Earls of Desmond ruled over a territory in the north of the county from a string of castles running east to west along the river valleys of central Kerry. To the south of the line was McCarthy territory. The Brosnahans were thus in the Geraldine (Fitzgerald) sphere of influence.

By the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries rural Ireland was a society under great stress and there was a high level of violence. In many places this was expressed in the peculiar custom of the "faction fight". Faction fights were regular local clashes between crowds based on family, locality or some other grouping.

Sticks and stones broke many bones in faction fights, which could involve hundreds of participants on both sides. The fights were over some trivial quarrel and indeed the reason for the fight was often long forgotten and generations old before the clashes came to an end. In many cases the fight took place on a particular day each year or some occasion such as a market day and the participants lived alongside each other happily enough for the rest of the year. The local authorities seem to have seen the faction fighting as a useful outlet for social pressures, which might otherwise be directing against the Anglo-Irish establishment, and left the factions to run their course.

Around Castleisland in Co Kerry the famous faction fight was between the O'Connors and the Brosnahans. There is no record of what it was all about so we can speculate with gay abandon. It is intriguing to find Maori in New Zealand in the twentieth century preserving with great zest and determination the causes and struggles of their *whanau* [extended family], *hapu* [subtribe] and *iwi* [tribe]. Where in former times these struggles were fought out in battle, today the struggle might be fought out with words, in matters of protocol or, in cases of grievances arising from the Treaty of Waitangi, before the Waitangi Tribunal. The points at issue may easily go back one hundred and fifty years or further, the passage of time is irrelevant where tribal lore and tradition are faithfully passed on from generation to generation.

When the Brosnahans and the O'Connors were enjoying their regular clashes around Castleisland in the early 1800s there was a similar passage of time back to the old Gaelic order, swept away by the depredations of Cromwell and his cronies in the 1650s. The old ways of life lingered on for decades, particularly in 'backward' places like Kerry. It was only in the 1800s that English began to displace Irish as the language of everyday life in rural Kerry. In more remote areas the language and other customs lingered even longer. We might find in the regular Brosnahan/O'Connor clash some distant echo of old allegiances going back to the days when Brosnahans recited odes to the Fitzgerald Earls of Desmond, while the O'Connors held their lands at Carrigafoyle in the McCarthy territory.

There have been no recorded clashes with the old enemy on this side of the water. Indeed the "Timaliza" [the original Hugh's son Tim who married Eliza Connor] branch of the family cemented a marriage alliance with the O'Connors, an ancient and highly venerable tradition in conflict resolution everywhere.

Chapter Three.

HUGH & TIM BROSNAHAN IN KERRY

Things We Know, Things We Don't

Hugh and Tim Brosnahan were brothers who followed their children to New Zealand as old men and lived a further two decades in the new country. They were the oldest Irishmen in Kerrytown and probably South Canterbury by a long shot and must have seemed like real patriarchs in the new settlements where old people were few and far between. Hugh was born at Scartaglin, Co Kerry on February 18, 1793 and his brother was born ten years later at Castleisland, or at least that is what his granddaughter Mary Coughlan thought when she completed his death registration in 1895. Their parents were Timothy Brosnahan, a farmer, and Norah or Johannah Cahill; there is a discrepancy in the name recorded for their mother on the respective death registrations.

Hugh & Deborah

Hugh married first, but not until he was forty years old (1833). His bride was twenty years younger and went by the name of a local saint, Gobnait [pronounced Govna] Butler. She was the daughter of Thomas Butler and Mary Flynn and in New Zealand always went by the name Deborah, the English equivalent of her Irish name. The couple were apparently married in the Currans parish but the marriage registers have a gap for this period and the marriage is not recorded. The first child to appear in the baptism registers does not appear until 1837 when a son "John Brosnan" was baptised on March 5. There is a large discrepancy between this date of birth and all the recorded ages of the son John who came to New Zealand with Hugh and Deborah in 1873. It is quite likely that the John born in 1837 died as a child, perhaps in the terrible Famine years 1848-51, and the name was 'recycled' - a not uncommon practice in those times.

At the time of John's birth in 1837 the family's address was recorded as "Gurrane". The baptismal sponsors were John Butler and Nora Brosnan, probably a brother and sister of each parent. The next child appears in the register in 1843, a daughter "Mary Brosnan". At her baptism on January 29 the family address was "Killeen" and the sponsors were James and Mary Butler. The final entry for the family in the surviving Currans registers appears for 1846 when a son "Tim Brosnan" was baptised on April 11. His sponsors were Pat Brosnan and Julia Daly and the family were still at Killeen.

These are the only references to Hugh and his family in Irish records that can be positively connected to the old man of Kerrytown. They are useful in that they give three precise references to the family's place of residence and give us the names of brothers/sisters/cousins/friends whose memory is long lost to us. They do not, however, give us any further information about the family. Were they

landless labourers or tenant farmers, how many acres did they farm and what type of farming was it, could they read and write?

Even with the precise locality references "Killeen" and "Gurrane" it is difficult to find Hugh Brosnahan in the two surviving sources of information on Irish land tenure in this period. The first of these sources are the "Tithe Applotment Books" of 1825 and 1835, which detail the lands held by tenants parish by parish and the amount of "tithe" due on them to the local protestant church. In the 1825 book the tenants at "Gurrane" in Currans parish are listed thus:

				<u>Acres</u>	
Gurrane	lower	Patrick Brosnan	┌───┐	19 0 0	
		Darby Buckley		52 2 0	
		John Kennedy			
	upper	Timothy Sullivan	┌───┐	25 0 0	
		Owen Sullivan			
		Timothy Brosnan			
		M Hogan			
		James Griffin			
			John Sullivan	┌───┐	34 0 0
			Owen Sullivan	┌───┐	3 2 0
			Thomas Butler		3 2 0
			Roger and Malachi Sullivan		1 3 0
			Cornelius Brosnan		1 3 0
mountain		John Lyne	┌───┐	15 0 0	
		Thomas Butler			
		Roger Sullivan			
		Malachi Sullivan			
		John Lyne			
		Cornelius Brosnan			

There is no sign of Hugh. Tim, Patrick and Cornelius are all names given to his children however, probably in honour of relations as per the Irish custom, and Thomas Butler is the name of his father-in-law. The land holdings were very small, included mountain land and were apparently farmed in partnership. At Urrahogal in the "part called Boherboy", the next place listed, a group consisting of "Tim & Thomas Brosnan, Patrick Brosnan, Thomas Egan, Patrick Costello, Griffin, Broderick" held a much larger lot of 130 acres. This Tim Brosnan just might be Hugh's father. In Irish terms his 130 acres, even in partnership, was a very large holding in 1825.

Ten years later in 1835 the large partnerships in this area seem to have disappeared. At Boherboy Tim Brosnahan held 21 acres alongside Thomas Brosnahan and Catherine Brosnan. 'Next door' on the "Whitigale demesne" of Knockneecolteen a "Hugh Brosnahan" held the humble area of 2 roods 17 perches. This ties in with the place of residence supplied on the baptismal records for 1837 to 1846 and the names of other Brosnahans recorded in these land records also fit the known family names. The most compelling evidence that this is 'our' Hugh

however is the listing of Thomas Butler, a much less common name in Kerry and in all probability Hugh's father-in-law. It seems likely that Hugh's late marriage was linked to his status in relation to the land. In 1825 he did not have land in his own right, by 1835 he did, however humble a plot it might have been.

The next source of information on land holding is the Griffiths Valuation of 1853. There is no sign of Hugh Brosnahan at Gurrane, Killeen or anywhere in Currans parish. Thomas Butler is still listed at "Garraundarragh", while James Butler appears at "Urroghal". Again these are probably the in-laws, James was the godfather to Mary Brosnahan in 1843.

After 1846 the Hugh Brosnahan trail disappears into confusion in Kerry sources - there are dozens of possible Hughs and nothing to sort out which is 'ours' - and there is no clear evidence of where the family was until the 1860s when they began to arrive in New Zealand. There was also another son, Patrick, born to the couple in 1841, who does not feature among the Currans baptisms, and four further children born to Hugh and Deborah after 1846. They were John Hugh, born between 1848 and 1852, Hugh born about 1853, Cornelius born about 1859, and Joan whose place in the family is unclear since for some reason she did not come out to New Zealand. The birthplace of John Hugh Brosnahan is recorded in his marriage registration in Temuka in 1883 as "BallyMcElligott, Co Kerry". This suggests that somewhere around 1848 the family left their small holding in Currans parish and moved to the neighbouring parish of Ballymacelligott.

The date is significant, coinciding with the terrible Famine years of 1845 to 1852. It is impossible to say how the family fared in these years. The birth of a 'second' John probably indicates the death of the first as a child in this period and there may have been other children whose memory is lost to us. Quite apart from the death and misery of the Famine and the epidemics of disease which accompanied the failure of the potato crop, the huge loss of population through death and emigration in these years had important effects on those who survived. Before the famine about 80% of Irish farmers had very small holdings of less than 15 acres. Below them in the social scale were the agricultural labourers, who had only a small plot of ground attached to their cabins used to grow potatoes for the family while they traded their labour for the rent. The famine years hit both the farmers and the labourers hard and led to the rapid decline in the number of labourers and the disappearance of the small holders as farms were consolidated.

The population had a major shake-up. Many people moved, onto new and larger farms if they were lucky, away to England, Scotland or America if they had given up on their chances at home. The Hugh Brosnahan family seem to have moved into Ballymacelligott in this period, though there is no sign of them there on the 1853 Valuations. Eventually they emigrated of course but not to America. Instead they came to New Zealand, not all at once but in four successive waves. The choice of New Zealand indicates that the family were in the class of farmers who had some means. The Australasian colonies were so much more expensive to get

to that the poorer emigrants opted for the cheaper short trans-Atlantic route. Even with the assisted immigration schemes of the 1860s and 1870s New Zealand was the destination of the slightly better-off.

Tim & Catherine

Tim Brosnahan was a full ten years younger than Hugh. Like his older brother he married late, in his case aged forty two. His bride was Catherine Keefe or O'Keefe, an eighteen year old. According to Catherine's death registration in 1916 she was born in Co Cork and her parents were Timothy Keefe, a farmer, and Margaret Brosnahan. Tim and Catherine were married in Castleisland, Co Kerry on February 17, 1846. The Castleisland registers of Catholic marriages and baptisms survive and both the marriage and the baptisms of six of Tim and Catherine's children can be examined. Unfortunately the marriage entry is virtually illegible. Tim is listed as "Thade Brosnan" the son of "Thade Brosnan", and Catherine's father's name looks more like "Michael" than Timothy. The names of the witnesses are completely illegible. Ages and places of residence are not recorded in the marriage register.

The baptisms are more useful since they do give a place of residence, though again not all are legible. The eldest child was Johanna (Leonard) but her baptism is not on record at Castleisland, the second was Margaret (Eden) who was baptised February 23, 1851, then Norah (Coughlan/Breen) baptised May 24, 1853. Kate (Perry) and Mary (Scannell) are not on record either. Tim was baptised November 29, 1855, Julia on April 15, 1859. Julia did not come with the family to New Zealand and as she would only have been twelve when they left probably died young. Hugh was baptised September 14, 1862, Patrick on February 19, 1865, Bridget (Murphy) on January 3, 1868 and John on March 5, 1870. Cornelius, the youngest, was born in New Zealand in 1872.

There are no Keefes among the godparents whose names can be deciphered in the baptismal registers. On the contrary these are mainly Brosnahans: "James [?] Brosnan & Helena Scoular" in 1859, "Jacobus [James] Brosnan & Elizabeth Horan" in 1862, "David Brosnan & Maria Scollard" in 1865, "Cornelius Brosnan & Hanora Brosnan" in 1868 and "Cornelius Brosnan & [illegible]" in 1870. The names of the Brosnahan children's godparents provide another set of names of long forgotten brothers/sisters/cousins. Combined with the names provided by Hugh and Deborah's children we now have the following: John, James & Mary Butler; Nora, Patrick, James, David, Hanora and Cornelius Brosnan; Julia Daly; Helena Scoular [perhaps Scollard]; Maria Scollard; Elizabeth Horan. At least two, David Brosnahan and his wife Maria Scollard, also came out to New Zealand and settled at Kerrytown. Were they related? It seems possible but we cannot establish any direct link from surviving records. David's father was also a David and we have no information on his parents. David is not a name that was continued in either Hugh or Tim's families, though the descendants of both David and Timothy are entwined in the family tree in the second part of this book.

In all the baptismal entries where the place of residence could be read it was "Fieries", variously spelt. This raises an interesting question since Fieries (pronounced 'Ferries') is not actually in the Castleisland parish. There are two "Fieries" in Co Kerry, the first of them well to the southeast of Castleisland in the parish of Kilnanare and just across the river Maine from Boherboy, Urroghal etc, where Hugh and Tim senior have been tentatively identified in the 1830s and 1840s. The other is a townland of Ballincuslane parish which borders the Castleisland parish. Tim and Catherine were at one of them from at least 1859 to 1868. But which one? Griffith's Valuations of this area in 1853 are the obvious source for clarification but as so often the answers to be found in Griffiths are far from clear. The only Brosnahans listed as ratepayers in Fieries, Kilnanare are "John Bresnihan", who was paying 6 shillings for a house on land rented from William Hayes, "Thomas Bresnihan" paying 4 shillings for his house on the neighbouring plot, also rented from Hayes, and another "John Bresnihan" paying 6 shillings for his house and a garden of 1 rood and 34 perches on land rented from Jeremiah O'Connell.

At Fieries, Ballincuslane there are no Brosnahans listed in Griffiths at all. But there is no shortage of Brosnahans listed in its neighbouring townlands within the parish and when we consider the small area of land involved and the variations possible between an "official" description and popular usage any one of the Tim Brosnahans might be relevant. To give some idea of the complexity of the Brosnahans on the ground in Kerry there are numerous listings within this one parish for Benjamin, Cornelius, Margaret, Mary, Michael, Johanna, Tim, Martin, John, Ellen, Julia, Daniel, Thomas, Jeremiah, Patrick, Patrick jnr, Hugh, and Catherine Brosnahan! Many of these names appear more than once, sometimes against a house only, sometimes with land only, sometimes with both. All of this in an area of land no bigger than the Levels Plain. The only possible clues to making a specific identification of Tim and Catherine's place of residence in this period is to look for a tie up between their neighbour's names and the people known to have had a close connection with them. On this basis the most likely 'candidate' is the Tim Brosnahan who was paying 4 shillings rates on a house in Cordal East townland on land rented from Margaret Ormsby.

His immediate neighbours included Tim Brosnahan, Michael Brosnahan, Tim Keefe, Barry and Michael Scollard, Patrick Looney and Ellen and Margaret Brosnahan. "Our" Tim and Catherine had connections with a Tim Keefe - Catherine's father - and with Scollards - Maria Scollard was a godmother to one of their children, while Michael Scollard, son of Barry Scollard and Julia Keefe, was a fellow immigrant to New Zealand. This web of possible links is the best evidence now available in any case of the Kerry location of the family before their departure for New Zealand. The 4 shilling house does not suggest that Tim was a 'farmer' in his own right, although it is quite possible that even if this is him his farm acres were quite distinct from his house and some of the other rates entries also apply to him. We do know, however, that Tim Brosnahan was illiterate; his

will is signed with a "mark". This brings to an end the known details of the Brosnahans in Co Kerry. The next section brings the story up to the huge family decision to leave Ireland and strike out for new opportunities in South Canterbury "half the world from home".

PART TWO:

NEW ZEALAND

Chapter Four.

LINKS IN THE MIGRATION CHAIN

The Brosnahans Come to New Zealand

'Our' Brosnahans were not the first to arrive in New Zealand. Patrick Brosnan, a Limerick man who arrived in Wellington in 1840, was probably the earliest Brosnahan arrival in the colony. He subsequently joined the goldrush to Gabriels Gully and there are numerous Brosnans in Otago, who trace their descent from Patrick. The earliest member of our family to arrive was also a Patrick however, the eldest surviving son of Hugh and Deborah.

Patrick arrived on the "Echunga", which was the second immigrant ship to call directly at Timaru. She arrived off Timaru on December 16, 1862 after a voyage of 102 days from London. Many of her passengers were assisted, which meant that part of the cost of their fares was carried by the Canterbury Provincial Government. Patrick's name does not appear among the official list of these assisted passengers and nor does it appear in the newspaper list of the fare paying passengers. He was however on board the ship - his fellow passengers accepted his right to appear alongside them in the group of "Echunga" passengers and their families at Timaru's Jubilee celebrations in 1909. Jack Kelliher, Patrick's grandson, remembers attending these celebrations and a photograph of the "Echunga" group taken at that time appeared in the Timaru Herald centennial supplement in 1959. Patrick is in the group and so is his three year old grandson Jack.

There was some confusion over the "Echunga" passengers from the outset because many of them refused to disembark at Timaru and carried on to Christchurch. Timaru at that time scarcely existed as a settlement. Although the authorities had had months to prepare accomodation for the immigrants their preparations were negligible - some tents were hastily thrown up after the first batch of new arrivals had landed in pouring rain. One hundred and thirty of the three hundred or so immigrants had been supposed to disembark at Timaru but, not surprisingly, a number of them refused. Patrick Brosnahan probably took his chances in Timaru however. He was not the only Kerryman on the "Echunga", nor indeed the only Brosnahan.

There were in fact two other Brosnahans - John and his sister Margaret - and at least seven other immigrants from Co Kerry on the vessel. This raises the intriguing question; how did a humble group of farmers and farm labourers in Co Kerry even hear of New Zealand in 1862, let alone avail themselves of government assistance to emigrate to far distant Canterbury? It is all the more remarkable when we consider that no emigration agents and no advertising campaign for New Zealand immigrants were seen in the south of Ireland before 1873. More than that Irish Catholics were distinctly 'not required' in Canterbury, which was a settlement

deliberately planned as an English and Anglican colony.

The answers almost certainly lie with the other seven Kerry immigrants, who were all in a group. They were Patrick and Catherine Hoare of O'Dorney parish, their son Denis, daughter Margaret, daughter and son-in-law John and Mary Moore, and Elizabeth Connor. They had all been "nominated" as immigrants by Richard Hoare, who was already in Timaru by March 1862. Richard was the eldest son of Patrick and Catherine. He had himself emigrated to Otago as an assisted immigrant in 1860. His presence in Timaru in 1862 is probably the key to the whole subsequent story of Irish Catholic settlement in South Canterbury. The weakness in the Canterbury establishment's 'defences' against Irish settlers was the nomination scheme, which meant that if you let one Irishman through the net he would shortly get you to help pay for the passage of his brothers, sisters, parents, cousins and friends. The Hoares were thus the first of a series of waves of Kerry immigrants, which eventually led to a major proportion of the Irish settlers of South Canterbury being from Co Kerry.

The Canterbury authorities had little option but to provide the subsidised fares. Their idealised settlement failed to grab the imagination of sufficient numbers of the English lower classes and the immigrant ships would have sailed half full but for the Irish and Scots who were prepared to chance their arm in the new settlement. There were plenty of Irish in England and Scotland at any one time, many of them seasonal workers who regularly travelled across the Irish sea for work. Richard Hoare may have been one such worker who heard about and took the opportunity of an assisted fare to the Scottish settlement of Otago, leaving from Glasgow on the "Robert Henderson" in 1860. He soon got himself a job on one of the South Canterbury sheep stations - probably the Levels. One oral tradition [from a taped interview of Cis McGillen, a daughter of the immigrant generation of Irish in South Canterbury] has it that his employers, the Rhodes, were so impressed with his work that they encouraged him to get his friends and family to follow him and promised work and land for them on the Levels. This ties in pretty well with what actually happened.

So much for the Hoares. Patrick Brosnahan was not part of the nominated group but nor were John and Margaret Brosnahan who definitely paid their own passage (about £15 each) on the "Echunga". John "Peg Leg" Brosnahan is the ancestor of many of the present day Brosnahan families in South Canterbury [including those at Rosewill, Otaio and Arun Street]. John and Margaret were from Kerry, and their father's place of birth is supposed to have been Aghadoe, which is a parish just to the south of Ballincuslane in East Kerry. The Hoare's O'Dorney parish is not very far distant from Ballymacelligott and Currans, the parishes where Patrick's family are thought to have been and we can assume that Patrick learnt of Canterbury and the immigration schedule from the Hoares. We do not know whether John and Margaret were relatives but it seems likely. They must have moved in the same circles anyway. For both families in any case the "Echunga" and its family representatives proved to be the first link in a chain that would see

Patrick Brosnahan [H1] family group: Margaret (Horgan), Patrick, Hugh, Catherine (Atley), Mary (Kellner), Maggie (nee Cahill), Annie (Maynard).

7

Patrick Brosnahan [H1] & Hugh 'the Pub' Brosnahan [H5].

8

Dennis Hoare, husband of Mary Brosnahan [H2].

the other members follow.

Tim & Mary: the second link in the chain

Patrick's first years in New Zealand were probably spent labouring on one of the large sheep runs, which were the main feature of South Canterbury in the early 1860s. His grandson Jack Kelliher recalls Patrick telling him of a period working at digging telegraph pole holes between Timaru and Christchurch and this sort of navvying work was the common experience of the Irish labourers in their first years in the colony. Like many young male immigrants Patrick also tried his luck on the West Coast goldfields. He later told his grandson that he was doing alright on the diggings when he received word that his brother Tim was on his way to Canterbury. Hiding his pick and pan in a good place he set off to meet him and never returned.

Tim, or 'Thade' as he appears on the passenger list, was not on his own but accompanied by his sister Mary. They came to the colony as fare paying passengers in the steerage quarters of the barque "Rachel". This was not really an immigrant ship but a cargo vessel and she carried only thirty six passengers in total. They had left London on December 3, 1864 and arrived at Lyttelton 104 days later on March 26, 1865. One passenger died and several others fell seriously ill with dysentery. The sailors were also reported to have ransacked the cargo en route and several faced charges in Lyttelton. Fellow passengers listed in the newspaper report of her arrival in the Lyttelton Times included a 'James Brasham, wife and four children'. The ship then carried on to Timaru, where she arrived a few days later. Tim and Mary were still aboard and the Timaru Herald passenger list corrects 'James Brasham' to Mr & Mrs Brosnahan and four children. And thus the two families continued their emigration in tandem - James Brosnan was the father of the "Echunga" John and Margaret. If the families were not 'related', they were most certainly connected!

The Cousins: Johannah & Margaret

Patrick was about twenty one when he arrived in Timaru. Timothy was about eighteen and Mary twenty two. She must have gone into 'domestic service' almost straight from the boat as there was a huge demand for young women to work as servants for the better off households of the colony. Like so many others however Mary's days as a servant were brief. Just over a year after her arrival in New Zealand, on April 16, 1866 Mary Brosnahan married Dennis Hoare "at Mr Richard Hoare's place, Timaru district". The celebrant was Fr Chervier, one of the French Marist priests who made periodic visits to Timaru from Christchurch, and her bridesmaid was Eliza Connor, who would shortly marry her brother Tim.

With Mary now installed as a housewife in her own right, two of her female cousins - Tim and Catherine's eldest daughters Johannah and Margaret - made the great journey to New Zealand, the first members of that family to arrive. By then

the link between Kerry and Canterbury was beginning to become firmly established. There had been Keanes, Barretts, Driscolls and Stacks arriving from Kerry on emigrant ships between 1863 and 1866 and on the same boat as the two Brosnahan girls, the "Himalaya", in 1867 were a whole group of young single people from the county. They were all able to come cheaply as those already in Canterbury had put their names forward for assisted passages. The girls actually came for "free" from 1865, such was the demand for young women to be servants and wives in the colony.

Johannah and Margaret Brosnahan were bracketed on the passenger list with John and Mary Scannell. John Scannell seems to have been the first member of that well-known South Canterbury family to come to New Zealand and he came both as the nominated passenger of Tim Brosnahan and with two of Tim's cousins. Clearly there was a close relationship between the families back in Kerry. The relationship was eventually even closer - John Scannell later married Mary Brosnahan, the younger sister of the girls he had accompanied to the colony in 1867.

The "Himalaya" arrived in Lyttelton from London on February 10, 1867. Like all of the Kerry immigrants to come to South Canterbury the Brosnahan girls would have first had to make the long journey from Kerry to London to catch the boat. This in itself must have been a major undertaking - it was probably the first journey outside the county for the majority of them. Some would never make another such journey again, like old Catherine Hoare, who never moved more than twenty miles beyond her home at Kerrytown for the rest of her life. Arriving in Lyttelton, the immigrants would have had to take a further sea passage down the coast to Timaru, as there were at that time no roads or railway across the Canterbury plains. Some had a year or two in the Christchurch district before moving south. Margaret Brosnahan may never have come to Timaru at all.

Margaret was married to William Eden, a blacksmith, in the Anglican church at Lyttelton on December 1, 1868. She signed the marriage register with an X - she could not write, the only one of the two families of her generation who could not. No member of the family appeared as a witness at the wedding and Margaret may well have never seen any of the rest of her family again. By marrying 'outside of the faith' she had effectively cut herself off from them. From a modern perspective this may seem strange and even cruel on the family's part. Things would have seemed very different in the 1860s. Catholicism for the Irish immigrants was more than just a church or even a set of beliefs. It was at the very centre of their cultural identity. To marry 'out' was therefore a deeply shocking act, and in a sense a betrayal. Margaret would have known that and her marriage to William Eden set the seal on her dealings with the family. She was the only Brosnahan of her generation in either family to leave the church.

The Founding of Kerrytown

By the time the Brosnahan girls arrived in Canterbury there were a growing

number of young Kerry people living in the Timaru district. There was plenty of work for the men as farm labourers, shearers and contractors and for the women as domestic servants and dairymaids. When the priest made his periodic visitation from Christchurch there were an increasing number of marriages for him to perform and baptisms soon followed. The registers kept by these French priests provide an intriguing record of the accents of their overwhelmingly Irish flock. The Frenchmen were dealing with a foreign language and initially filled in their registers exactly as they heard the names pronounced. Fr Chataignier's first attempt at Brosnahan was for Patrick's wedding to Magaret Cahill in 1869. He wrote "Patrrick Brusnaan", though Patrick signed himself "Brosnahan". "Brusnaan" is a very close rendering of the way the name is pronounced today in Co Kerry - "Brushnin" would be the exact pronunciation.

With the marriages and the first colonial born children the Kerry settlers took a further step and began to purchase land in their own right. This was the fulfillment of the great Irish dream, to own land directly and with no landlord. It was a dream denied those who remained in Ireland until the so-called "Land War" agitation by the Irish Land League in the 1880s. Castleisland, a common point of origin for many of the early South Canterbury settlers, was the centre of Land League activity in Co Kerry and it is not surprising that the successful acquisition of farmland by the Kerry settlers in New Zealand proved a major attraction to successive waves of migrants. Michael Barrett, Dennis Hoare and Patrick Brosnahan set the ball rolling in May of 1866, when they purchased three small blocks on the Levels plain. Dennis and Patrick, old shipmates on the "Echunga" and now brothers-in-law, bought adjacent 30 acre sections on the Temuka/river side of the crossroad of Kerrytown Road and the Point-Arowhenua Road.

As further sections became available Dennis and Patrick added to their holdings and others joined them on "Arowhenua Survey Block V", creating the nucleus of what became known as "Kerrytown". It never was in fact a 'town' in the New Zealand sense. It was really more like what is known in Ireland as a 'townland' - the smallest Irish territorial unit made up of about a dozen adjoining farms. An Irish version of the name might be "Bally Kerry", which would be a truer reflection of the nature of the settlement which developed and save all those who search in vain for the "town" along the Kerrytown Road today. The "Kerry" was a simple acknowledgement of the shared Irish origin of many of the first settlers on these plains farms.

For "our" Brosnahans there were two original points of concentration. The first was on each quarter of the Kerrytown crossroads. Dennis and Mary Hoare and Patrick Brosnahan began on the Temuka/river quarter in 1866 & 1867, the Hoares and John Scannell continued on the Timaru/Levels quarter in 1869, Johannah Brosnahan took up a ten acre block on the Point/Levels quarter in 1873, and Tim Brosnahan bought a twenty acre section on the Point/river quarter in 1866, six weeks after his brother's original purchase. The second Brosnahan area was at the southern end of the Kerrytown strip, in three sections along the Main

Point Road. But that came later and followed the arrival of the rest of the family. Next to arrive were Hugh "the Pub", fifth son of Hugh and Deborah, and Nora [Coughlan/Breen], third daughter of Tim and Catherine.

Hughie the Pub & Nora

The "Merope" arrived at Lyttelton on October 27, 1870 after a 90 day passage from London. It was a 'proper' immigrant ship, brand new and built specifically for the New Zealand immigrant route by the Shaw, Savill Co. Among the passengers on this, her maiden voyage were four young single people from Co Kerry, all of them assisted immigrants nominated by people already resident in the Timaru district. The two men, both listed as 'ploughmen', were twenty year old John Connor and eighteen year old Hugh Brosnahan, while accompanying them were Mary Connor and Honora Brosnahan, 'dairymaids' of eighteen and seventeen respectively. Hugh and Honora were cousins and a bill for £11 had been taken out in Timaru by Patrick and Timothy Brosnahan to guarantee their fares.

The Chain Complete: the 'Old Folks' Arrive

It is no exaggeration to describe the next arrivals as "old folks". Although Tim and Catherine are listed on the official passenger list of the "Zealandia" as 'thirty nine' and 'thirty six' in 1871 they were in fact much older. Tim was probably at least sixty eight and Catherine was forty six. The reason for the subterfuge was simple: the New Zealand Government was not prepared to assist immigrants over 50 to the colony 'unless a member of a large family, and no person above 60 in any circumstances'. They had a brood of kids with them of course; Kate 17, Mary 15, Tim 11, Hugh 7, Patrick 5, Bridget 2, and John an infant. Having been nominated by those already in Timaru would also have helped - there is nothing to suggest that there were any problems with officials in any case.

As well as the Brosnahans the "Zealandia" brought a number of single Kerry folk, all of them nominated from Timaru: James Poff, Michael Tanguay, Mary Scollard, Johanna Butler and Ellen Crimmen. The ship was another of the Shaw, Savill Co's purpose-built immigrant ships and the voyage to New Zealand though as long, tedious and unpleasant as any passage in the steerage quarters of a sailing ship was as good as any and at ninety two days relatively quick. The "Zealandia" was said to have been a beautiful ship and had a long career in the New Zealand trade. Her captain in 1871 was James White and he was swept overboard on the voyage back to England and drowned. She arrived at Lyttelton on December 9, 1871.

By now over half of the Hugh and Deborah Brosnahan family were in South Canterbury and all of Tim and Catherine's family, except the girl Julia, who had probably died in Ireland. The final link in this great chain of immigration, stretching over half the world and through nearly fourteen years, was the arrival of the rest of the Hugh and Deborah family. But if Tim and Catherine had had to slice years off their ages to qualify for the assisted passages, the audacity of Hugh

and Deborah was outrageous. Hugh was fully eighty years old and Deborah sixty when they sailed for New Zealand on the "Star of India" in September 1873. On the official lists two ages are supplied for Hugh, both false, and Deborah's age is similarly false. Firstly in the record of the nomination of Hugh, Deborah, John, Cornelius and Margaret Brosnahan for assisted passages the ages are given as 60, 50, 24, 15 and 17 respectively. On the actual passenger list, however, five years have mysteriously disappeared from the Hugh's age- now 55.

A big contingent of forty came from Kerry with the Brosnahans on the "Star of India" in 1873. They made up a significant proportion of the 300 or so passengers and included a number of families who became well-known Kerrytown settlers - the Lynchs, Seelers and Barretts. One of their fellow passengers recorded his memories of the voyage many years later,

We had about 300 passengers aboard. They were a mixed lot - English, Irish, Scots, Swedish, Danes, Germans, and a few Russians and Poles. I well remember the rough weather we ran into in the Bay of Biscay and the dismay it spread among the passengers. There was a lot of seasickness, of course, and the immigrants were very downhearted. You would hear the women blaming the husbands and the men blaming the wives for deciding to come on such a dangerous undertaking. The people from the Emerald Isle would be vigorously telling their beads, while the Cockneys were liberally swearing at each other and everybody else for being such fools as to leave good old London. But this only lasted a short while, and then all hands settled down to shipboard life. The women would be sitting around sewing and singing, and the men's favourite pastime was to play pitch-penny on the deck.

After sighting an iceberg and coming to the aid of a ship on fire the "Star of India" eventually reached Lyttelton after 97 days from London on New Year's Day 1874. Though she was an old ship and only under charter for the New Zealand trade our informant above recorded that many of the women shed tears at leaving the ship, which had brought them safely to the new land. And well might they have given thanks for a safe arrival. The immigrant ship "Surat", which left London for Port Chalmers only days before the "Star of India", struck the south Otago coast on New Year's Eve 1873 and her passengers were lucky to escape the wreck with their lives - they lost all their other possessions.

With Hugh and Deborah, John and Cornelius' arrival in Timaru in the New Year of 1874 the two founding families of our clan were completely transferred from their ancestral territory in Co Kerry to the new opportunities of South Canterbury, New Zealand. Nor were they alone in making the journey. The same process which had seen these two families reconstruct themselves in successive waves of migration had also been taken up by other Kerry families. As friends, neighbours and relations were gathered up in the migratory flow a whole section of East Kerry society was resettled in South Canterbury. It is hardly surprising that many chose to settle near their friends and relations and gave the little concentration of farms on the Levels Plain the name "Kerrytown". While the descendants of these pioneers are now scattered hither and yon across New Zealand, there remains a special something in that name and place, an echo of the communal identity and experience which eased the transition from the Old World to the New for hundreds

of Irish immigrants.

To recap the migration of our two Brosnahan families:

1862	"Echunga" to Timaru	Patrick [Hugh family]
1865	"Barque Rachel" to Timaru	Tim and Mary [Hugh family]
1867	"Himalaya" to Lyttelton	Hannah and Margaret [Tim family]
1870	"Merope" to Lyttelton	Hugh [Hugh family] and Norah [Tim family]
1872	"Zealandia" to Lyttelton	Tim and Catherine, Catherine, Mary, Bridget, Hugh, Tim, Patrick and John
1873	"Star of India" to Lyttelton	Hugh and Deborah, John and Cornelius.

One daughter from each family did not come to New Zealand, Hugh and Deborah's daughter Joan and Tim and Catherine's Julia. We have no information on them but can assume from her age that Julia at least probably died in Ireland before the family emigrated. The sharp-eyed will have noted that the Margaret Brosnahan who was listed with Hugh and Deborah's family on the "Star of India" passenger list does not appear in the listing above. This is because she is another example of the family's willingness to bend the rules to get cheap fares to New Zealand. Whoever Margaret was, she was not a daughter of Hugh and Deborah as far as can be determined and was probably not a 'Brosnahan' at all. She appears with the family only in the list of passage orders granted for Nominated Immigrants, which guaranteed her a free passage to New Zealand. Whoever it was who nominated the Brosnahans and laid down £24 for their fares in Timaru on May 17, 1873, also put down Margaret's name with the family group. She did come with them too but thereafter disappears from our knowledge.

Chapter Four.

COLONIAL CAREERS

The Emigrant Generation and their Achievement

The principal achievement of the emigrants, from their own perspective, was undoubtedly the acquisition of land. In New Zealand the Brosnahans became independent land-owners, free of the tyranny of the landlord and able to reap the rewards of their own efforts to develop farms and houses of their own. The tremendous pride of the immigrant Irish of South Canterbury in their small freeholds is evident in the fictional account of the inhabitants of "Tangi Flat" in the novel Moonshine by Helen Wilson. Tangi Flat is 'really' Waitohi Flat across the river from Kerrytown but the exclusively Irish nature of the settlement is more akin to Kerrytown, which features in the novel as "Corktown". Helen Wilson seems to have regarded the Irish settlers with an equal measure of respect and contempt, she was herself the daughter of one of the station-owners who went broke and grew up in Timaru in genteel poverty. In the novel and in her autobiography she recorded her memories of the Irish settlers among whom she spent a short time as a pupil-teacher at the Waitohi school in the 1880s.

According to Wilson the settlers had been brought out from Ireland as free emigrants and found employment on the large estates of the Australia and New Zealand Land Company. By arrangement they were paid in land instead of money and by their own standards had thereby struck it rich and had "their fill of comfort and would eat their enough every day" while their farms were their own and "no rent collector at all". [My First Eighty Years Helen Wilson]

These men had come out with the settled conviction that the only desirable thing in life was to own a little patch of land, rent free. This trait was exploited by the company. To each immigrant was offered the freehold of a certain acreage as payment for a given amount of ploughing, fencing, or whatever labour the company required. It was fully expected that in this way the new settlement would supply the neighbouring estate with peasant labour for all time. But the company had overreached itself. It had apportioned the allotments in a too inaccessible corner of its princely selection [of land]. It had also forgotten that your primitive Irishman does not covet regular work. He prefers to live on the margin of subsistence. These people simply settled down, all moneyless, on their new holdings as soon as they were granted and thus transplanted a little bit of 'Ould Ireland' - minus the rent collector - a stagnating, isolated, self-contained backwash, standing aside from and apart from the changing, vigorous life of young New Zealand. [Moonshine Helen Wilson, 1956, p 29]

Helen Wilson's own bitter personal experience of a descent into poverty may account for some of her contempt. Her father was ruined by the drastic fall in land prices in Canterbury in the 1880s. Like many others he had raised large mortgages on land valued at £15 to £20 per acre. When the prices fell away to £4 per acre he was bankrupted. According to Wilson the Irish escaped the catastrophe because they wouldn't take on mortgages to build decent houses and farms. As a result these "poor, ignorant, foolish peasants who knew no better ... were able to live in independence and what they considered comfort."

Quite apart from her obvious prejudice Helen Wilson is wrong about the reluctance of the Kerrytown settlers to take on mortgages. Land titles to the Brosnahan properties in Kerrytown are replete with mortgages taken out, the loans repaid and further loans raised. And if the Irish felt pleased with their small patches of land, well they might. In 1876 the British Government printed a return of all the owners of land of one acre or more in Ireland. Not one Brosnahan owned a single acre of land in Co Kerry, despite a residence going back into the mists of time and the huge numbers of Brosnahans listed all over the county as tenant farmers. Six years later, in 1882, the New Zealand Government published a similar list of all the freeholders in New Zealand. After less than two decades in the new country ten Brosnahans owned over 1,100 acres in Geraldine county between them. They included old Hugh and Tim, and three of Hugh's sons. Two of Tim's married daughters also appear in their own right on the Freeholders List adding another 70 acres and two Brosnahans to the count.

The second major achievement for the emigrants was to marry and have families. In Ireland this was also becoming something that only the fortunate few could hope for. After the Famine Irishmen and women began to marry later and later. Only one son could hope to inherit the family farm and he might have to wait years before he would come into his own. Without a farm it was hard to attract a bride. This new pattern of later marriages and fewer and larger farms helped make emigration a major feature of Irish life, since only by emigrating could many people ever hope to have a family and farm of their own. With the exception of Tim and Catherine's son John, who died as an infant, all of the children who came to New Zealand married and had families of their own. Their own children were not so fortunate - the large number of old bachelors and spinsters in the next generation points to a shrinking of opportunities in South Canterbury as the supply of new land for farms dried up.

For most of the emigrant families that is about it. They emigrated, worked to buy their own farms, married and had children. Their simple life on the land does not make for enthralling biographies and few of the family featured in an obituary from the Timaru Herald or Tablet when they died. What follows are brief accounts of the lives of the two sets of Brosnahan parents and their sixteen sons and daughters. These accounts are mainly based on the sparse references to the individuals in written sources. It is a pity that the rich communal life of this large extended family and its friends, relations and neighbours at Kerrytown has left so few oral traditions or anecdotes to reach the present generation.

"Daddy Hugh" and Deborah Brosnahan

Relatively little is known about the twenty years that "Daddy Hugh" spent in South Canterbury. As a really 'old' man he was an oddity in colonial Canterbury with its population almost entirely made up of young people. There does not seem to be any newspaper notice recording his hundredth birthday in 1893 but when he died two years later the Timaru Herald, Temuka Leader, Tablet and Lyttelton Times all

published reports on the passing of one of the colony's oldest residents. The accounts are all similar but each has some details worth noting, variously that he was born "on February 18, 1893" at "Curns, Co Kerry" [Currans] where he was a farmer. When his sons became "prosperous farmers" in New Zealand "two-and-twenty years ago they sent for their father and mother, then aged eighty and sixty years old respectively, and their father's brother, aged seventy". He "was able to get about and look after things on the farm of the son he lived with until within six weeks of his death" and "retained his senses till the last". He "was a quiet, inoffensive man, and much respected by all who knew him", who "enjoyed splendid health until a couple of months ago, when he became cross and irritable, and suffered from some internal pains." He left behind "five sons and a daughter, all in the colony, a widow more than eighty years of age, yet a hearty old lady, and a brother aged 92, who is now bedridden at Kerrytown and nearing his end."

There is a story that old Hugh was visited on his death-bed by Tim his brother and prophesied that his brother would be dead within the month. Tim went home to bed and died three weeks later. Another story recounts Hugh walking from the Levels to his son Tim's house at Washdyke before dawn and demanding of the sleeping household what they were about lying abed all day. The son he and Deborah lived with was John Hugh, their third son. The farm was a combination of at least three original crown grants on the Main Point Road just before the Kerrytown Road (from Timaru), at least one of which seems to have been purchased by Hugh senior himself only six months after his arrival in South Canterbury. There is every possibility of confusion in interpreting the land titles, where "Hugh Brosnahan" is listed as the purchaser, since Hugh 'junior' was certainly the original purchaser of the fifty acre Section 20873 - in March 1876 he requested that a new certificate of title be issued to "Hugh Brosnahan the younger" as the original purchaser from the Crown and his request was granted.

Hugh senior or "Daddy Hugh" was probably the original purchaser of the twenty acre Section 21054 however. In 1892 he transferred its ownership to "Hugh Brosnahan the younger" who in this case was his eldest son Patrick's eldest son and one of his five grandsons to bear the name "Hugh Brosnahan". Oral tradition has it that the "old people" had a cabin in an orchard to the Timaru side of John Hugh's house on the Main Point Road. His fourth son "Hughie the Pub" had the adjoining sections to the southeast until 1879, when he began his brief career as a hotelkeeper, while the second son Tim was the original purchaser of the next section to the northwest, before selling it to his brother John Hugh in 1876. Patrick, Tim, Cornelius, John Hugh and Mary were all the owners of good farming acres in the district. In short "Daddy Hugh" was surrounded by his children, each of them securely on the land and married and raising a great crop of grandchildren. It seems likely that he would also have been a substitute 'grandad' to the host of young Irish families from Kerrytown and the surrounding district and would have felt right at home. No photograph of Daddy Hugh seems to have survived. He died at Kerrytown on July 18, 1895 and according to his death certificate the cause of death was "old age" which he had had for "about three

years".

Even less is known of old Deborah. She had been a full twenty years younger than her husband but only survived him by four years, dying at Kerrytown on July 15, 1899, aged 86. They had been married for over fifty years and had at least seven children. Deborah was "Gobnait" in Ireland but there was no memory of the Irish name among her New Zealand descendants and the name change is probably a good indication of the attitude of the Kerrytown Irish to Ireland. Secure in their own identity they had their focus on the new land and for most of them the Irish language was not a part of the future. There is little evidence that the Kerrytown Irish were particularly supportive of Irish political movements, though they probably supported the fundraising appeals of the various Irish delegates who toured New Zealand in the colonial period. There is no known surviving photograph of old Deborah either. Hugh and Deborah are buried together in the Temuka cemetery. Their grave is marked by a fine marble tombstone and surrounded by the graves of their children and grandchildren.

Patrick (Hugh) Brosnahan and Margaret Cahill

Patrick was the first member of the family to arrive in New Zealand but relatively little is known about him. He was twenty one or so when he arrived in Timaru in 1862 and must have been happy with the prospects he found in the primitive settlement. He would have found ready employment on the large sheep runs which then dominated the South Canterbury landscape and economy. In his last year he lived with his daughter, Mary Kelliher, at Pleasant Point and told his grandson Jack Kelliher, then in his teens, a little of his experiences in the early days. This included a brief period on the diggings on the Coast and the typical labouring jobs of young men in a new colony - in Pat's case digging telegraph pole holes between Christchurch and Timaru.

In 1909 Timaru celebrated the fiftieth jubilee of the arrival of its first immigrant ship, the "Strathallan". During the celebrations a number of early settlers were interviewed about their early years in South Canterbury. No Brosnahans were interviewed but one of their close contemporaries, Matthew Driscoll, was. The Driscoll (O'Driscoll) family experience was very similar to the Brosnahan's with a whole series of arrivals by different members of the family over a period of years. Matthew Driscoll's account of his coming to New Zealand and gradual establishment as a farmer in his own right would be little different from the experiences of Patrick Brosnahan.

[After his arrival] Mr Driscoll went to Christchurch and soon succeeded in getting a job, road-making, for which he received 8s per day. This, he says, was untold wealth to him, for he had been unable to make 8 pence per day in Ireland. The first £20 he got together, he sent home to his parents and he subsequently got his brothers and sisters to come out to NZ. After working in Canterbury for some time, taking everything he could get to do, he went over to the West Coast goldfields, but he had no luck there, and only stopped a week or two. Returning to Christchurch he went to Southbridge where he got married and he and Mrs Driscoll came down to Timaru by coach in 1867.

Ashburton did not exist then, the present town being represented in those early days by one accomodation house. After working around Temuka and Arowhenua for some time, saving all he could, Mr Driscoll took up some land on the Levels Downs - 50 acres at first - and he has been there ever since, gradually increasing his holding as he prospered, until he was able to show the deeds for just on 500 acres. Mr Driscoll had a varied experience of roughing it in the early days and his acquisition of a competence by hard work and thrift is typical of the ultimate success of many early colonists of the same stamp.

Patrick began buying his own land in May 1866 when he purchased thirty acres at the Kerrytown crossroads. He added to this area in July with another 14 acre section alongside the first. By 1882 he had increased his holding to 200 acres, then valued at £1500, and somewhere along the way he shifted from the Kerrytown crossroads to the Main Point Road. He planted some of the large trees along the roadway just pass the Kerrytown turnoff towards Pleasant Point.

On July 8, 1869 Patrick got married. Fr Chataignier conducted the ceremony in a house on the Levels Plain belonging to Dennis Hoare who had married Pat's sister Mary in 1865. Patrick was twenty eight and a farmer, and his bride was Margaret Cahill, a servant girl whose age was stated as both '16' and '22' on the register. Both were able to sign their own name. The witnesses were Mrs Moore (Mary Hoare) who had been a fellow passenger on the "Echunga", and Julia Connor. The couple were to have six children but only one son, Hugh, who died childless. One granddaughter, Mary Foley, married into another Brosnahan family (Barry, son of David Brosnahan and Mary Scollard) but both of their sons were also childless and the Brosnahan name has died out. Another of their granddaughters, Mary Kelliher, married a Patrick Brosnan, however, and their descendants include many Brosnans. This Patrick Brosnan was in fact a grandson of the original old Tim Brosnahan - Patrick Hugh's uncle.

Two things are clearly evident in this tangled web of Brosnahans. The first is that there are a very small proportion of the Brosnahan descendants who come from male lines, with the result that few carry the name Brosnahan. The second is that the family tree of these two families is intertwined both with its own branches and with that of the other Brosnahan families in South Canterbury. The large number of Brosnahans in South Canterbury in the nineteenth century and their practice of using the same few family names makes for a confusing profusion of Pat, Tim, Hugh and Cornelius Brosnahans in particular. The way that the various people were distinguished was to add an extra name as an identification aid, most often the father's name. Hence Hugh's son Patrick became Paddy Hugh, while his cousin, Tim's son, was known as Paddy Tim.

Surviving photographs of Paddy Hugh and his brothers show a marked similarity in the facial features, especially the area of the nose and cheekbones. This could be said to be the "Brosnahan" look - it also evident in the photographs of Tim and Catherine's children. Three of the brothers died within a few weeks of each between May and June in 1922. Patrick was the second to go, dying on June 13. He was 81 years old. Margaret had predeceased him on July 13, 1908 aged only 54. They are buried together in the Temuka cemetery in close proximity to

Patrick's parents and other members of the extended family. Their son Hugh, and his wife Mary Beatrice, are also buried with them.

Patrick and Margarets' children were: Deborah born September 2, 1871, who married Daniel Foley and had five children; Mary, born July 31, 1873, who married Thomas Kelliher and had nine children; Hannah, born April 25, 1875, who married Percy Maynard and had six children; Catherine, born December 7, 1876, who married James Atley and had nine children; Margaret, born December 14, 1878, who married Bart Horgan and had four children; and Hugh born December 4, 1880 who married Mary Gosling but had no children. Three of their granddaughters became religious sisters.

Mary Brosnahan & Dennis Hoare

Mary and her husband Dennis were among the earliest settlers of Kerrytown. The Hoares were indeed perhaps the first Kerry family in South Canterbury and pioneers in establishing an Irish and Catholic presence in the region. Dennis was 22 when he arrived at Timaru with his parents and sisters in 1862. Arriving at such an early stage in the region's development he, and his whole family, were well placed to do well in the colony. But only with hard work and "thrift". The price of land was deliberately kept high in Canterbury through the first decades of settlement as part of provincial government policy. This ensured a pool of labour from among the immigrants for the large sheep stations, whose owners largely controlled the provincial government. It also helped them avoid the break up of their large sheep runs, which were only held under license until the land was required for agricultural purposes and freehold farms.

The Hoares were still able to reap the rewards of their early arrival in South Canterbury and were early landowners. Richard Hoare's early experiences were recorded in an interview with the Dunedin newspaper the Otago Witness in 1879:

He made good wages at bullock-driving and other kinds of work, saved his money, and nine years ago bought 20 acres of land on the Levels at £2 per acre. He added to it from year to year, paying £3 for some of it, and for his last purchase of 35 acres, made nearly a year ago, he paid £500. He has now a valuable farm of 500 acres, the only inconvenience about it being that it is not all in one block. He has also another farm of 600 acres at Rangitata. Some of his paddocks are two or three miles apart. If he goes on, however, as he has gone so far, he will fill up the gaps in a few years and make it a compact estate.

By way of contrast, Richard's father Patrick Hoare is recorded at Dromcunnig in the O'Dorney parish, Co Kerry in 1853 with a mere 68 acres - a good sized farm in the Irish setting - and he was a tenant at will, open to the loss of his tenancy at any time with no compensation for any improvements to land or buildings which he might have made. Richard Hoare's farm on the Levels flat was his own. He could add to it, sell it and develop it as he wished. And he did. In 1879 he had 200 acres of wheat, 100 of oats and 10 of potatoes. The farm carried 450 sheep, 20 head of cattle, eight horses and up to 70 pigs. There were 10 milking cows,

calves were reared and fresh butter sent to the local market. He had two good teams of horses, including two draught mares. By the time he died aged 70 in 1905, old Richard Hoare was quite the local gent, hosting the members of the South Canterbury Hunt on his farm and entertaining them at his "homestead" near Kerrytown. He left a substantial estate valued at just under £4000.

His brother Dennis was never quite so successful but their careers were broadly similar. The key difference was Dennis' brief stint as a hotelier in Timaru. This was a major venture, which involved the complete rebuilding of the city's Albion Hotel and its reopening as the Shamrock Hotel [now the City Hotel] in Stafford Street. The hotel opened on Christmas Eve 1879, just before the infamous "riots" between the Kerry men and the Protestant Orange lodge of Timaru on Boxing Day of that year. A series of advertisements in the rather florid style of the day appeared in the Timaru Herald and the Tablet to announce the venture.

Shamrock Hotel

Caed Mile Failte

Dennis Hoare begs to return his sincere thanks to his Friends and the Public generally for the kind support accorded him since commencing business. He now begs to inform them that he has COMPLETED HIS NEW AND COMMODIOUS BUILDING

Which is Fitted Up replete with every convenience for the carrying on of an extensive publican's business, consequently he is in a position to cater for the public.

The Hotel contains 40 bedrooms which are well ventilated and lofty
Private Sitting Rooms, Bar Parlours, Dining Rooms &c. &c.

The Billiard Room contains one of
ALCOCKS TABLES And is under the supervision of an experienced marker.

The enterprise was clearly ambitious and unfortunately Dennis was unable to weather the economic downturn of the 1880s, which coincided with the opening of his great new hotel. On November 25, 1882 Dennis Hoare was declared bankrupt. All was not lost, however. It seems that he was careful enough to transfer the deeds of his landholdings to his wife Mary and so it is that she appears in the 1882 list of New Zealand Freeholders in her own right while he does not. Mary is listed as the owner of 615 acres in Geraldine County (which included the Levels), valued at £6,620. This was considerably more than any of the other Kerrytown settlers could lay claim to and indeed Richard Hoare, who was the next wealthiest of them in the Freeholders List, had 374 acres in the country and land in Timaru together worth less than half that amount - £3,180. The reprieve was only temporary, however, and on May 22, 1886 Mary and Dennis were together adjudged bankrupt. I have not followed the Hoare's original or later landholdings through the records in Christchurch but they seem to have lost their land at this time. In any case they were no longer registered as "freeholders" on the electoral roll of 1893 and at Mary's death in 1912 her whole estate was valued at £1593. It must have been a disappointing failure given the economic success of other Irish settlers who ran hotels. Thomas O'Driscoll, a fellow Kerryman who had arrived as an assisted immigrant on the "Mermaid" in 1866 became a very wealthy

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Kerrytown group: Margaret Hoare (H2.4) later Mrs James Brosnahan, Mary Brosnahan (Peg Leg's daughter) later Mrs Paddy Hoare, Edie Donovan later Mrs Hugh Hoare.

10

Fr Richard Hoare SM (H2.6)

11

Mary Margaret Brosnahan (H2.4.1) later the second Mrs Joseph Goulding.

gentleman through his long tenure at the Hibernian Hotel in Timaru. In 1882 he held land in the town and country worth £9,768 and his grand home in Lisava Avenue Timaru survives today as striking testimony to his colonial achievement.

The bankruptcy was not the only tumultuous episode in their life together. They had married on April 16, 1866 at Richard Hoare's place at the Levels. Mary was 24 and working as a servant while Dennis was 23 and a farmer. A month later Dennis bought his first freehold section of 30 acres by the Kerrytown crossroads and the couple settled down to life on their own small farm. In May of 1867 the first of their nine children was born, Catherine Hoare who became Sr Mary Louis of the sisters of St Joseph. In the following February a major flood swept across the plain, leaving a trail of damage (and one death of which more later). The flood had a bizarre sequel for the Hoares. A week after the flood had subsided Dennis and Richard Hoare were taken to court by their neighbours, the Parr brothers, accused of stealing timber from the Parr's house and mill, which had been washed away by the flood.

Dennis was sentenced to one month's prison and Richard was allowed one week to provide witnesses to the alibi he maintained. He duly produced on his behalf Richard Ceeler (Seeler), a fellow Kerryman living near the Parr's mill, Henry Lopdell who was living with Dennis, and most crucially Alfred Cardale manager of Hakataramea station, where Richard had been shearing for two months before the floods. Even with the latter's testimony that Richard was not home at the time of the floods the judge expressed his dissatisfaction with the "excuses" but dismissed the case. The Parr's feelings, and prejudices, are recorded in a letter written by James Parr to his family in England on March 1, 1868.

We brought some of our neighbours up for stealing the other day. They took the shoot of the water wheel from the river bed, knocked it in pieces and covered it over with rubbish. One of them got 14 days hard labour. They have a deal more stuff, but we could swear to that. It was the first time I was ever in court on business. It took them a little by surprise, for their solicitor told them they were sure to get off. I should think it would be a lesson for them for the future. They are Irish, so what can you expect.
(my emphasis)

"Dinny" Hoare did not receive any obituaries when he died in 1904. He was 64. Mary survived him by another 8 years and was 68 years old when she died in 1912. They must have been proud of their achievements for all the set-backs and failures. Of their nine children, eight survived to adulthood. Two of their daughters entered the convent as Sisters of St Joseph and their third son, Richard, became one of the earliest colonial-born Marist priests, after a belated secondary education as an adult at St Patricks College in Wellington.

The children were: Catherine, born May 10, 1867 who became Sr Mary Louis; Patrick Dennis, born July 14, 1868, who married Mary Brosnahan but had no children; Hugh Hoare, born December 11, 1869, who married Edie Donovan and had four children; Margaret Hoare, born July 24, 1871, who married James 'Wigg' Brosnahan and had six children of whom three became nuns and one a

Marist priest; Deborah , born March 16, 1873, who became Sr Oswald; Richard Hoare, born April 12, 1875, who became a Marist priest; Mary Veronica "Polly", born May 10, 1877, who never married; Hannah (Annie), born May 21, 1879 who married William Lynch but had no children, and Dennis Joseph Hoare, born June 6, 1885, who must have died young as there are no further traces of him after the baptismal record.

Mary was obituaried in the Tablet. Her "kindly and charitable disposition" were noted as was her Christian resignation to her final two years of illness. She "departed this life fortified by all the rites and consolations of the Church of which she was a most fervent and faithful member." She left a family of eight and was carried to her grave by Messrs Brosnahan (2), S Scannell and J Breen "nephews of the deceased". In fact the last two, S Scannell and J Breen, were not Mary's nephews but her cousins' sons. The description is however a clear indication that the extended Brosnahan family still had a close relationship in the early part of this century. Over time this has of course dissipated to the present point where a shared interest in the "family" history is about all that can link the far-flung descendants of the migrants together.

Mary's will is preserved among the Court records in National Archives office in Christchurch. It is an interesting document for what it reveals about the family relationships and for the way in which Mary attempted to provide for the differing material needs of her children. Her close relationship with her brother Timothy continued to the end - he was the executor of her estate. The actual contents of the estate are not specified the total value was £1593 9s 6d. The Temuka parish priest was left £10 to say Masses for Mary's soul; the daughters Margaret (Mrs James Brosnahan), Katie and Deborah (Sr Mary Louis and Sr Oswald) were left £40 each while Margaret also got Mary's piano. Annie (Mrs Lynch) got £50, as did the priest son Richard, while Patrick, the eldest son was left £400. Her personal effects were to be divided between Margaret, Annie and her daughter-in-law Edith, Hugh Hoare's wife. Thereafter all of Mary's property was left for Tim Brosnahan to manage in trust for the support of Mary Veronica (Polly), the spinster daughter, for her life and after that, or anything left over, was bequeathed to Hugh Hoare, the second son and only boy to have any children.

Tim Brosnahan and Eliza Connor

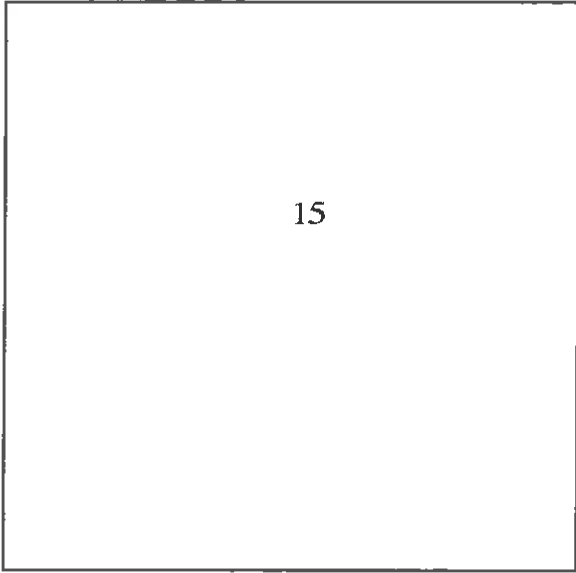
Tim was born at Killeen, in Currans parish, Co Kerry and baptised on April 11, 1846. He accompanied his sister Mary to New Zealand in 1865 and news of his impending arrival brought his brother Pat back to Canterbury from the West Coast goldfields. Just over a year after his arrival in South Canterbury Tim bought his first twenty acres of land, Pt 10331 Arowhenua Block V, a section at the heart of what became Kerrytown and right alongside Pat Brosnahan and Dennis Hoare. In 1874 he was the first purchaser of a twenty acre section along the Main Point Road (alongside his father Hugh and brother Hugh) but by then he had already bought the land at Washdyke (along Divans Road) that was his long-term property and two

13

Timaliza family: Deborah Brosnahan, Margaret Brosnahan (Dolly Goulding), Christina Brosnahan (O'Brien), Tim Brosnahan holding Dorothy, Ita on Hugh Brosnahan's knee Betty Brosnahan at the front.

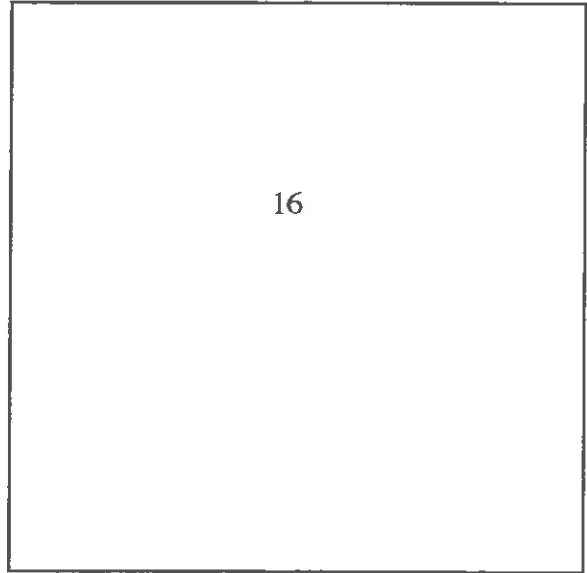
14

Hugh Brosnahan (H3.5) Golden Wedding: Tom Probyn, Dorothy (Hanifin), Gertie (Kelly), Betty (Probyn), Bernard Goulding, Mr & Mrs Hanifin, Len Hanifin, Hugh & Christina Brosnahan.



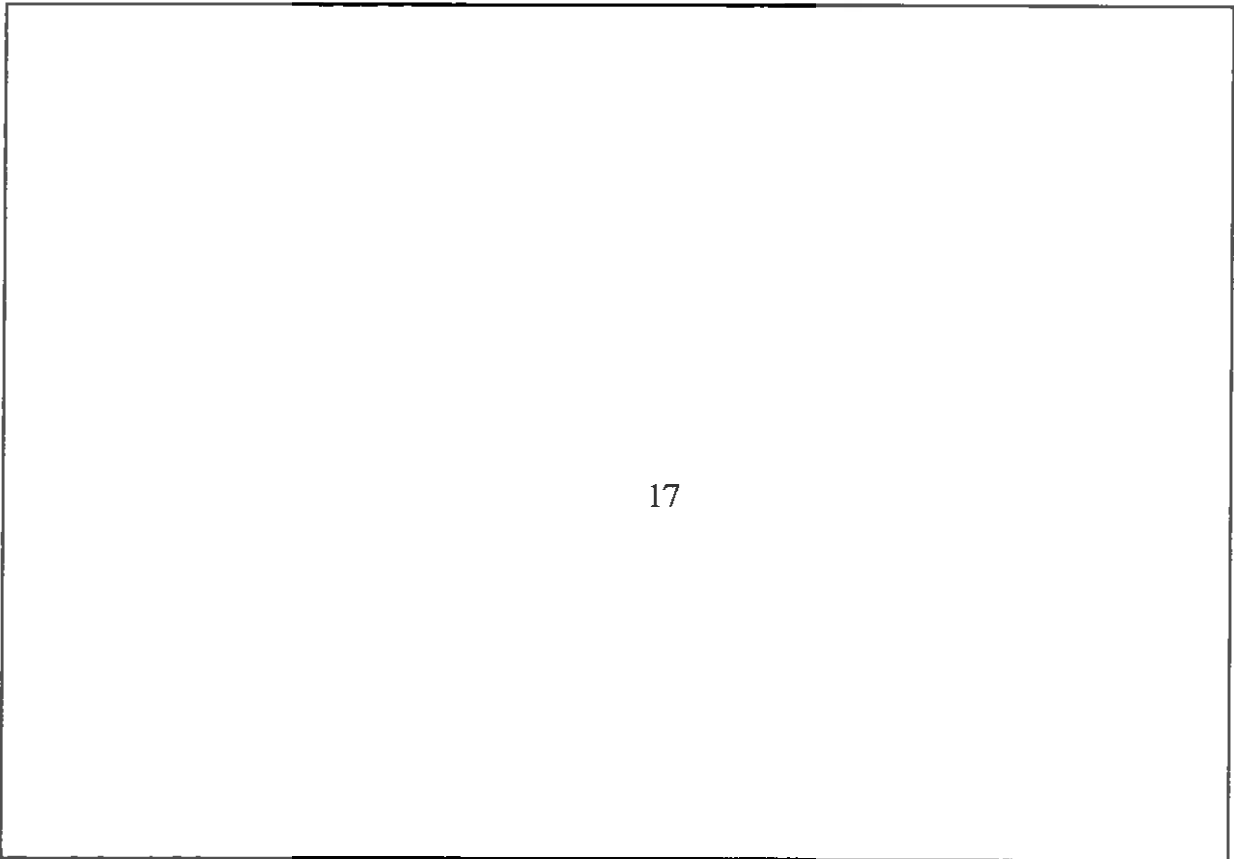
15

John Hugh Brosnahan (H4).



16

Mary Foley, Mrs John Hugh Brosnahan.



17

John Hugh Brosnahan's house Main Point Road, Levels, Deborah Brosnahan (H4.1) and Molly Brosnahan (H4.2) later Mrs Long.

years later the Point Road block was transferred to another brother John Hugh. In 1882 he was listed on the Freeholders List as "Brosnahan, Timothy jun., farmer, Washdyke" the owner of 70 acres valued at £ 810.

It was to this property a good mile or two along Divans Road from John Hugh's farm, where the old man lived, that "Daddy Hugh" is credited with walking before dawn in his 100th year. Arriving at the Timaliza farm he woke the household, demanding to know what they were all doing sleeping in bed all day.

Like elder brother Patrick, Tim and his sister Mary were among the "early settlers" honoured at the Jubilee Celebrations in Timaru in 1909. They were listed among the passengers of the "Barque Rachel" who sat down to the Jubilee banquet and afterwards had their photo taken as a group. Unfortunately neither was among the old settlers interviewed by the newspaper at that time and no accounts have come down through the family of their early colonial experiences. The earliest written record of Tim's presence in South Canterbury, apart from his land acquisitions, is his brief appearance at an inquest following the death of a woman in the bad floods of February 1868. He did not have much to say but his evidence published in the newspaper report is the only written account of what he did and where he lived in his first years in New Zealand.

I am a labourer living on the banks of the Opihi. On Tuesday I was passing along between Parr's farm and Denis Hoare's, about two miles from this, on the banks of the Opihi River, when I found the body of the woman now lying here, ... she was quite dead.

Tim is notable among the Brosnahans for the 'nickname' given to distinguish him from the many other Tim Brosnahans in the family. While most were given their father's name as the extra bit, as in Thady Tim, Tim was called Timaliza. This is intriguing as no other nickname among the Irish settlers seems to have been based on a wife's name. Perhaps this indicates a particularly strong personality for Mrs Eliza Brosnahan, nee Connor. She was also from Co Kerry, from Ballymacelligott parish according to her obituary. She is probably the Elizabeth Connor who arrived in Canterbury as an assisted immigrant in January 1865 with Catherine Barrett on the "Glenmark". She was seventeen and a dairymaid, while her travelling companion was twenty six and gave no occupation on the passenger list.

Tim and Eliza were married at Temuka on January 14, 1872. No ages were recorded and their names appear in the marriage register as "Timothy Brosnahan" and "Lysa Conor" but they signed as "Tim Brosnan" and "Eliza Connor". Tim was a "farmer", Eliza a "serving girl", and their witnesses were Dennis Hoare and Julia Conor. They had seven children: Deborah, born December 20, 1872, who never married; Juliana, born May 16, 1875, who became Sr Agnes R.S.M.; Mary, born March 1, 1879, who died as a child of 9 years; Elizabeth, born August 1, 1881, who also remained unmarried; Hugh, born March 30, 1885, who married Christina O'Brien and had four daughters; Margaret Mary "Dollie", born October 21, 1890, who married Joseph Goulding and had two children, one of whom became a diocesan priest; and Gregory, born May 25, 1894, who never married.

There are no "Brosnahan" descendants from Timaliza.

Eliza died at the relatively early age of 58 on February 6, 1907. She was, said the Tablet, "a true type of Catholic womanhood" who "during her long and useful life was a staunch supporter of the Church and the cause of Catholic education". Tim survived her by fifteen years. He died on June 20, 1922 aged 75 years, one week after his elder brother Patrick and a month before his younger brother John Hugh. Along with all of Hugh and Deborah's family Tim and Eliza Brosnahan are buried in the Temuka cemetery. Their eldest daughter Deborah is buried with them.

John Hugh Brosnahan and Mary Foley

There was a son "John" born to Hugh and Deborah (Gobnait) Brosnahan at Gurrane in Currans parish, Co Kerry in March 1837. This cannot, however, be John Hugh as though the latter's age varies considerably on New Zealand records he must have been born circa 1850. The first John must therefore have died and the name been 'recycled', a not uncommon practice in this period of high infant mortality. John Hugh recorded his birthplace as Ballymacelligott when he got married and this is the only clue to the Hugh and Deborah's whereabouts in Kerry between 1843 and 1873. John accompanied his parents and younger brother Cornelius to New Zealand in 1873 on the "Star of India". He was then 23 years old and is listed as a labourer on the ship's passenger list. The arrival of the ship in Canterbury at New Year 1874 reunited the family for the first time since at least 1862, when Patrick had started the process of emigration to New Zealand.

Within six months of their arrival Daddy Hugh bought a 20 acre section on the Main Point Road, alongside his son Hugh's first 50 acre block. This established a second point of concentration for the family's land acquisition and developments (the first being the original sections around the Kerrytown crossroads). Daddy Hugh, Hugh jnr and Timaliza all bought contiguous sections along the Levels road in the latter part of 1874. Two years later John Hugh joined the ranks of landowners by buying Timaliza's 20 acres here. Within a few months he had added a further 51 acres on the Point side of Tim's land. By 1882 he owned 101 acres, valued at £ 645. His farm remained in the family until the 1950s and both an 1870s vintage wooden farmhouse and an earlier mudwalled cabin still survive in 1992. Daddy Hugh's 20 acres was on the Timaru side of the farm and according to Molly Long, John Hugh's daughter, the "old people" lived in a cabin with an orchard there until their deaths. This ties in with Daddy Hugh's obituary account of his living with a son and John Hugh's evident relationship with his parents. Interestingly though old Hugh's twenty acres did not pass to either John Hugh or his sons but to the eldest grandson - Hugh, son of Patrick.

John Hugh was usually accorded the second name to distinguish him from the other John Brosnahan who was his contemporary in South Canterbury. The other John had been one of the earliest Kerry arrivals in Timaru and had a very successful colonial career. He and his wife Hannah O'Driscoll had a large family and this



18

John Hugh Brosnahan's house at Levels, 1988



19

Remains of original cob structure behind the house, Ray Brosnahan (H4.5.5) 1988.

20

Daniel Brosnahan (H4.5) wedding: Hugh Brosnahan (H4.4), Daniel Brosnahan, Elizabeth Mellor, Teresa Mellor

21

Shona Brosnahan (H4.5.3) wedding: Verdon, Aileen (Keenan), Daniel Brosnahan, Shona (Scannell), Elizabeth (Mellor) Brosnahan, Ray, Mena (Beban), Paul.

family has produced a high proportion of on-going male lines down to the present. The result of this, which is in marked contrast to our Brosnahan families, is that many of the present generation of people bearing the name Brosnahan in South Canterbury are all John and Hannah's descendants. A number of these descendants are also intertwined with one or other of "our" families, however, as will be seen in the genealogical tables in the second part of this book. An unfortunate accident which left this John Brosnahan with only one leg provided his distinguishing nickname - "Peg Leg".

John seems to have been closest in the family, though not in age, to his youngest brother Cornelius. They had both remained behind in Ireland until the final move of their elderly parents to South Canterbury in 1873. They eventually married sisters and were each other's best man, and godfather to each other's first children. John Hugh married Mary Foley, who had emigrated to New Zealand with her parents and family as a thirteen year old on the "Pleiades" in 1874. She was also originally from Co Kerry and from the same parish, Currans, where Hugh and Deborah had lived in the 1830s and 1840s. When they were married in Temuka on October 18, 1883, however, John Hugh identified his place of birth as Ballymacelligott, the neighbouring Kerry parish. He was a "farmer" and gave his age as 31 years, although other evidence suggests he was probably a few years older. Mary was 21 years old and a "servant". The witnesses were Cornelius Brosnahan and Margaret Foley, younger brother and sister respectively who married each other shortly afterwards.

John and Mary had nine children: Deborah, born January 9, 1885, who never married; Mary (Molly), born December 24, 1886, who married Jack Long in 1918 but was widowed after only three months by the "Black Flu" and had no children; Hannah Teresa, born July 18, 1888, who never married; Hugh Joseph, born July 1, 1890, who also never married; Daniel, born August 21, 1892, who married Elizabeth Agnes Mellor and had six children (he was my grandfather); Patrick, born October 21, 1894, who died as a child; Nellie, born October 9, 1897, who married Jack Conaghan and had three children; Lucy, born August 31, 1900, who married Jim Conaghan (Jack's brother) and also had three children; and Clara, born July 1, 1905, who married Richard Carruthers and had one (adopted) child.

The youngest boy in the family died tragically as a two year old in 1896, drowning in a water hole on the farm. The coroner's inquest into the death records in her own words the despairing efforts of his mother and a neighbour, Mary Cassidy, to revive the little body but without the benefit of modern knowledge of mouth to mouth resuscitation:

... I took him inside, and put him into some lukewarm water, and washed him, dried him, and rolled him in a blanket. We rubbed him thoroughly but there seemed to be no life in the body ... Everything was done possible to revive him to life but, without effect.

The water was only 18" deep, a drain from the pig sty two feet wide and four feet long. Though he was only fifty yards from the house the child had been unable to

hear his mother in a howling norwester and nor had she heard him.

In January 1895 John Hugh was taken to court in Temuka by J Sim, the town's jeweller. Sim alleged that John owed him 4 shillings for a clock. When John failed to appear in court judgement went in Sim's favour. Later, however, John arrived at court apologising for his lateness and successfully sought a rehearing of the case. A peculiar tale emerged in the subsequent proceedings with Sim recounting that he had sold John an 11 shilling clock for 7 shillings, giving him a receipt for the full amount, on the basis that John had told him he was about to "file his schedule" - presumably file for bankruptcy. He subsequently discovered that John was in fact "in comfortable circumstances" and had not filed and Sim therefore claimed the other 4 shillings as he felt he was being swindled. John disputed this version of events, having merely complained that times were bad and having paid a half sovereign and 4 shillings for an 11 shillings and sixpence clock. As the case was one oath against another and John could produce the receipt in full the Judge found in his favour.

There are any number of such civil suits in the court news reported in the South Canterbury newspapers of the nineteenth century. Kerry men are notorious in Ireland for their love of litigation and a survey of the court news in Timaru and Temuka suggests that this was a propensity which came with the Kerry immigrants to South Canterbury. Many of the cases relate to the details of contracts and were often petty disputes between fellow Kerry men. Some involved relatively trifling matters such as the dispute between Frank Poff and Patrick Scannell in 1880 over a dog, which just happened to involve John Brosnahan as a witness. The case came before the Resident Magistrate's Court in Timaru in April with both parties represented by lawyers. Poff claimed that he had left a dog at Dinny Heffernan's place at the Levels when he was working there in February. He was subsequently told that it had been killed by a train but in fact it was in Pat Scannell's possession, the latter having received the pup from Mrs Heffernan. John Brosnahan's evidence was brief; "I remember Poff coming to my place at the Levels and asking for Scannell. Poff asked him for the pup but Scannell refused to give it up. I saw a pup there but I took no notice of it". There were further witnesses but the case was non-suited. The surprising thing is that Frank Poff could be bothered pursuing the matter. He had more serious problems at the time, having just gone bankrupt, and was facing a number of law suits including one from his brother James (married to Johannah Brosnahan who arrived in Canterbury with her sister Margaret [Spring] on the "Crusader" in 1872, they were the daughters of Michael and Margaret Brosnahan who followed them to NZ with their other seven children in 1874 on the "Carisbrook Castle").

Mary Brosnahan died of pulmonary phthisis (TB) and asthma in 1912 aged only 50 years. She left eight children ranging in age from 8 to 27. John Hugh died ten years later on May 11, 1922, aged 74 years. His death was the first of three within a six week period; his elder brothers Patrick and Timothy died in June of the same year. None of the brothers were given obituaries in the Timaru or Catholic papers

and neither have their wills survived. Land records reveal, however, that at least the central 50 acre section of the Levels farm was settled on the girls of the family as tenants-in-common, leaving them with some material security. With two spinsters, Deborah and Hannah, Molly the young widow and the bachelor son Hugh, these Brosnahans proved an enduring family group, living together on the original farm on the Levels Road. Hugh and Deborah died in the 1950s and Hannah and Molly finally moved to Timaru in the early 1960s, at which time the farm passed out of the family. A final point about this, my own branch of the family, is that we are the only family descending from Daddy Hugh and Deborah never to have produced a priest or religious vocation - in stark contrast to the other branches of the family.

Hughie "the Pub" Brosnahan & Julia Scannell

Hugh was the fourth surviving son of Daddy Hugh and Deborah Brosnahan and was born in Co Kerry circa 1852. He came to New Zealand on the "Merope" in 1870 accompanying his cousin Nora. He is listed on the ship's passenger list as an eighteen year old ploughman and through a fortuitous interview published in the Dunedin newspaper the Otago Witness in April 1879 we have a very detailed account of Hugh's early colonial career. The interview is worth publishing in full since the outline it gives would be typical of the experience of many of the Irish settlers of this period and in particular for the other Brosnahans.

The Farm

CHATS WITH THE FARMERS

A Visit to the Farm of Mr Hugh Brosnaghan, Levels Flat, Canterbury

Mr Brosnaghan arrived in Lyttelton eight years ago from the County of Kerry, Ireland. He had been used to farm work at home, and he readily obtained employed [sic] as ploughman at 25s per week and his board. Four years ago he purchased 100 acres of shingly land from the Government at £2 per acre. It is perfectly level, the soil being a good mellow mould a few inches in depth mixed with gravel, and below that rounded stones embedded in a little clay. There are probably from eight to twelve inches of free mould mixed with small stones, and below that layer after layer of pebbles, chiefly of bluestone, larger or smaller, as they may have been sorted by the force of water in some remote period. One of the first tasks which Mr Brosnaghan had to undertake was the digging of a well, which he says is the deepest one on the Flat. The first five feet was through soil and stones mixed, and the rest of the sinking through very compact seams of water-worn stones. The well required no slabbing. On the next farm water was obtained at a depth of 20 feet. Fifty acres having been fenced in with a bank, stakes, and wire, Mr Brosnaghan, who had a job of fencing on hand for a settler, paid 10s per acre for ploughing it. He cross-ploughed it himself six months afterwards, and put in 25 acres of wheat and 25 of oats. The wheat averaged 47 bushels to the acre, and the oats 55. After threshing he put up a whare, and broke up 25 acres more. The next year he had 50 acres of wheat, 25 of oats, and half an acre of potatoes. The wheat averaged 30 bushels, and the oats 35. The first paddock was laid down in grass, and another of 25 acres was fenced in and broken up. Last year there were 50 acres of wheat, 25 of oats, and 25 of English grass. The season having been a dry one, the wheat and oats did not yield more than 10 bushels to the acre. This season there were 25 in wheat, 25 in oats, and 50 in grass. The wheat and oats average seven bushels to the acre; and now Mr Brosnaghan is in a bit of a puzzle, not knowing whether it will be best to try wheat and oats again, to put the whole into grass, or sell

Lucy (Conaghan) Brosnahan (H4.8) and Clara (Carruthers) Brosnahan (H4.9).

Last Mass at Kerrytown June 18, 1967: Molly (Thompson) Brosnahan [H6.3], Mrs McCabe, Cis Connell, Hannah Brosnahan [H4.3], Molly (Long) Brosnahan [H4.2], Clara (Carruthers) Brosnahan [H4.9]

24

Hugh 'the Pub' Brosnahan [H5].

25

Hugh's wife Julia nee Scannell.

out altogether. He is most inclined to put it all in grass, and add to his stock, which consists of four milch cows, a fine team of four horses, and a few pigs. Upon our asking him if there were insect plagues, he replied: "Och, divil an insect; its only the drought that troubles me."

A couple of years ago he put up a neat frame house, which cost £100, and got married, and he thinks now that by going in for dairy farming, feeding a few cattle and pigs, and growing potatoes, he may do better than by giving up the whole of his land to grain. Besides, he can always make a little in the course of the year by reaping and ploughing for some of the settlers, as he has a fine team and a reaping machine of his own. He has to haul his firewood from Geraldine, a distance of 18 or 20 miles, where it costs £1 2s per cord. Posts for his fencing cost 35s per hundred in Geraldine.

The farm is a short distance from the Levels railway station, adjoins the Levels Estate, and is about 7 miles north of Timaru.

[My thanks to Mr Frank Tod of Dunedin for supplying me with this reference]

The land in question adjoined that already owned by his father and brothers along the Main Levels Road to Point. Hugh was on the Timaru side of the row of sections. His marriage took place at Timaru on June 15, 1876. He was then about 24 years old and his bride, Julia Scannell, was perhaps a year younger. Julia's arrival in New Zealand is not recorded but she had a number of family members in South Canterbury. The witnesses were John Brosnahan, Hugh's brother, Johannah Scannell and Mary Crowley, who later married Hugh's cousin Tim. Hugh and Julia had thirteen children: Deborah, born April 1, 1877, who never married; Hugh, born May 25, 1878, who married Sara Devery and had eight children; Julia, born September 30, 1879, who became Sr Lucien; Johanna Mary, born December 28, 1880, who became Sr Fergus; Patrick, who married Edie McDonald but had no children; Emma, born June 15, 1882, who married Patrick McEvedy and had two children; Daniel Joseph, born May 20, 1884, who died young; Mary, born March 7, 1886, who married William McGrath and had six children; Honora Agnes, born September 3, 1887, who married Bartholomew McGrath and had four children; Timothy John, born May 21, 1890, who was killed on active service in France on July 16, 1916; Margaret Mary, born December 22, 1891, who became Sr Rita; Aloysius (Louis) "Geordie", born August 1, 1894, who married Norah Leary and had one daughter; and Joseph Patrick, born in 1897, who married Waiwera Hawkins and had five children.

Hugh solved his "bit of a puzzle" in 1879 by embarking on a short and not particularly successful career as a publican. It was from this that he received his nickname "Hughie the Pub", which will be used hereafter to distinguish him from the other twelve Hugh Brosnahans in the family. A few months after his interview with the paper the following advertisement appeared in the Timaru and Christchurch papers,

Orari Hotel, Orari

Hugh Brosnahan begs to inform the public that he has taken the above Hotel. He reminds passengers on the South Line that all Trains stop at Orari for five or more minutes, and the Hotel being close to the station, there is time for Refreshment Tea and Coffee always ready, Wine Beer and Spirits of the best Brands. Excellent Accomodation.

26

Hughie the Pub's children: At Back ; Emma , Norah , Louis, Mary, Hugh jnr, Paddy, Margaret, Deborah, Timothy John. At front; Hugh the Pub, Joseph Patrick.

27

Hughie the Pub's daughters: Emma (McEvedy) Norah (McGrath), Mary (McGrath), Deborah , Julia (Sr Lucien), Margaret (Sr Rita), Hannah (Sr Fergus).

28

Wedding: Hugh Brosnahan [HS.2] and Sara Devery.

29

Wedding: Mary Brosnahan [HS.8] and Bill McGrath.

He had in fact taken the hotel on a temporary transfer of the licence in April. His predecessor was A Wadsworth who had gone bankrupt, an ominous sign. He sold at least half of his farm land at the Levels in June 1880 and it is possible that he sold or gave the "neat frame house, which cost £100" to his elder brother John Hugh. John did not marry until 1883 and the house in which he raised his family seems to fit the description of Hugh's residence as outlined in the 1879 interview. This house still stands today and has a mud-walled cabin or "whare" behind it. If it is Hugh's original house then its construction is quite precisely dated at 1876. It is one of the very few surviving relics of the Kerrytown community and seems to me worthy of notice as an historic place.

Hugh's tenure at the Orari hotel was quite brief but it gave rise to a couple of newspaper references including the inevitable court case. In this instance it related to an A Austin who sued Hugh over £5, which had been "taken" off Austin at the hotel on April 2, 1880 in payment of his bar debts.

A Austin: On the night of 2nd instant I was at the Orari Hotel and asked for two glasses of beer. On my taking out my purse to pay for the beer Mrs Brosnahan took it out of my hand and took a £5 not out of the purse ... I enquired of Mrs Brosnahan what had become of the £5. She said that there was an account against me and her husband kept the money to pay it. The defendant has never furnished me with an account. I spoke to the defendant and he asked me if I was willing to let him keep the money against the account that he said I owed him. I told him no. I saw Mrs Brosnahan in the morning, and asked her if she was going to give it back. She replied "No, I have given it to Hugh, and he intends to stick to it."

The case extended over three court sittings and judgement was reserved in the light of legal uncertainty over the recoverability of the debt in this manner. Hugh's lawyers presented legal arguments to show that he was entitled to "detain the money to settle a grog account owed". The court ultimately found in Austin's favour though it noted that he was not "to be complimented for pleading the Tippling Act so as to evade payment of a just though not a legal debt."

Overall Hugh and Julia seem to have done quite well at Orari. Hugh even joined the South Orari School Committee. The Hotel may have been a little run-down after Wadsworth's tenure because at the Temuka Licensing Court hearing in March 1880 Hugh was ordered to paint his hotel before the next licensing day. For whatever reason the Brosnahans made a bold move south in 1882 taking over the Robert Burns Hotel in George Street, Dunedin. The Orari licence was transferred back to Mr Wadsworth in March and the Brosnahans took over the Robert Burns licence officially in early June. The previous licensee was James Liston, father of the famous Archbishop of Auckland. The Brosnahans seem to have come to grief almost immediately in Dunedin and must have been undercapitalised. By the middle of June 1882 Hugh was declared insolvent with debts of £ 333 0s 9d and assets of £205. At the next licensing court hearing the licence of the Robert Burns was transferred again. In the family history notes put together a generation ago this episode was summed up thus:

... [Hugh] went to a hotel in Dunedin, where he struck a bad run, and eventually returned to

Kerrytown to live in the old Pub at the corner... He built a two room cottage at the Cross, Kerrytown and eventually died there. A couple of years later Pat had a two room lean-to added to the cottage soon after he married.

Whether Hugh and Julia returned to Kerrytown immediately is not quite clear. Their daughter Emma's birth was registered in Temuka in February 1883 but the birth was recorded as having taken place in Dunedin on January 10. Hugh's residence is recorded as being at Temuka, though this probably means the district rather than the town. However Emma's baptism took place at St Joseph's Cathedral in Dunedin on July 31, 1882 and the baptismal register gives her date of birth as June 15, 1882. Now you cannot baptise a child six months before she is born. Hugh must have neglected to register Emma's birth in Dunedin within the statutory three month period and simply fiddled the details to suit when he did register the birth in Temuka. At any rate the family must have been back in South Canterbury by February 1883.

Given the reduced circumstances it is most likely that Hugh went back to farming, probably working with his brothers and for others. He put a biographical entry about himself in the Kerrytown section of the Cyclopaedia of NZ: Canterbury Volume published circa 1905. In it he stated that he had been in the Kerrytown district since 1882 and had had the Kerrytown Post Office at his residence since 1885. In fact Hugh was appointed as the post-master to Kerrytown on May 1, 1887. His house at the Kerrytown crossroads was on the opposite corner to the original Kerrytown sections bought by Pat Brosnahan and Dinny Hoare in the 1860s, on the Timaru and coastline quarter of the cross. This place was known as the "pub" but in fact it never operated as such, officially at least. I have heard a number of stories about this but I have not so far pin-pointed the real story behind this pub which never got a licence. It had been said that Fr Fauvel, the French Marist pioneer priest at Temuka, put his foot down and gave his Kerrytown parishioners an ultimatum - they would have to choose between the pub and a convent school. If so it is a tribute to the value that the pioneers attached to education for their children, that they chose to forego the hotel. The Kerrytown convent was established by the Sisters of St Joseph in 1884.

The site of the "pub" was earlier owned by one Charles Lewis who was a hotelkeeper at Manaia in Taranaki and it did not become Brosnahan property until 1896, although since the intermediate owners were not Kerrytown residents they probably lived there as tenants before that. Hugh took out mortgages on this land in 1901, 1905 and 1911 and finally sold it in 1916 to the wife of his nephew Hugh Hoare. She sold it on within the year to Timothy Michael Brosnan, son of Michael and Margaret Brosnahan and ancestor of the notable horse-racing family of Brosnans. As for Hugh, he had lost his wife Julia to cancer in September 1898. She was only 45, and left twelve children, the youngest of them only an infant. Hugh survived her by 26 years and died aged 71 on February 19, 1924. He had spent his last eight years at Oxford, where he lived with his daughter Nora McGrath and her family. Both Julia and Hugh received obituaries in the Tablet (they had three daughters who had become nuns). Hugh's noted that he was "one

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Hugh Brosnahan (H5.2) family: Cyril, Margie (Daly), Hugh holding Leo Curry, Beryl (Rennell), Fr Ted, Sarah, Julie (Curry), Arthur, Hugh.

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Molly McGrath family (H5.8): Patrick, Fergus, Molly McGrath holding Betty (Sr Patrick Joseph), Molly (Kelly), Sheila (Coman), Bill McGrath, Kevin.

Cornelius Brosnahan [H6] family group: back; Helen (Cheethan), Johannah (Mechen), Mary (Thompson), Deborah, front; Hugh, Agnes, John, Cornelius holding Leo, Frank, Margaret (nee Foley).

of the old identities of Kerrytown". They are buried in the Temuka cemetery along with their son Timothy, who died in France during the Great War.

Cornelius Brosnahan and Margaret Foley

Cornelius was the youngest of Hugh and Deborah's children who came to New Zealand. He was born in Co Kerry circa 1859. He was listed as fifteen years old on the passenger list of the "Star of India" on which he accompanied his parents and elder brother John Hugh to New Zealand in 1873. Cornelius was the first of the Brosnahan children to die, on November 27, 1911, and also by far the youngest at death at only 52 years. His daughter Agnes remembers him as being bed-ridden for a couple of years before this and being nursed at home. The original farm of the Con Brosnahan family was at Rangatira Valley and in the 1893 Sheep Returns Cornelius was listed as running from 130-200 sheep there over the year. Yet by the time he died in 1911 Cornelius' estate was worth £5995 7s 7d, quite a considerable sum. His son Hugh took over this original farm, while Con's widow Margaret bought a second farm at Hilton nearby for a younger son, Frank. By 1905 Con had moved to a new property at Beaconsfield near Timaru, and it was here that he died.

Cornelius had been his brother John Hugh's best man at the latter's wedding to Mary Foley in 1883. Some time later - I have not found this marriage registration - he married Margaret Foley, who was Mary's younger sister and had been her bridesmaid. The couple had ten children: Deborah (Cis), born March 9, 1886, who married Tim Shannahan and had four children; Hugh, born March 26, 1888, who married Harriet Robertson and had one daughter; Mary (Molly), born February 3, 1891, who married Neil Thompson but had no children; Johannah (Hannah), born April 14, 1893, who married John Mechen and had two children; Helen (Nellie), born September 13, 1895, who married John Cheethan and had three (?) children; Daniel Joseph, born January 1, 1898, who died the next year; Francis Daniel, born May 24, 1900, who never married; Agnes, born March 20, 1902, who never married; John, born December 12, 1905, who never married; and Leo Sarsfield, born January 24, 1908, who married Mary Smith and had five children.

The last child's name is a radical departure from the strict naming pattern evident in the rest of this and all the other families. It is also the solitary indication that any member of the Brosnahan family ever evinced any interest in Irish political affairs, which were at fever pitch throughout this period and of real impact in New Zealand, with its large population of Irish immigrants. Delegations of Irish Nationalists toured New Zealand in 1883, 1889, 1895, 1906 and 1911 and at a South Canterbury meeting of one of the delegations (presumably the 1906 one but I have lost the reference) Cornelius Brosnahan made his donation to the cause. No other Brosnahan appeared on the list of subscriptions. And for the name - Patrick Sarsfield was an Irish hero of the seventeenth century, a Protestant who won an heroic victory for the Irish forces at the siege of Limerick.

Johannah [T1] Leonard's five sons: Maurice (Mossy), Timothy (Ted), Joseph (Silky), Thomas (Tossy) and William (Doctor).

Con's will made his brother Timothy an executor along with Margaret and in 1905 a codicil added the name of his son Hugh. The estate was to be divided up between the children after Margaret's death or remarriage, with 2 shares each per son and one per daughter. When Margaret Brosnahan died in 1953 this arrangement led to a family conflict and a court case followed. I know nothing of the details of this but can only assume that residual ill-feeling from this unfortunate affair is at least partly responsible for the great difficulty experienced in obtaining information on parts of this family for the genealogical tables in the second section of this book. It seems a shame. Margaret had come to New Zealand with her family as a six year old on the "Pleiades" in 1874. By the time she died at 85 on June 8, 1953 she must have been one of the last of the immigrant generation of Irish pioneers in South Canterbury.

Tim Brosnahan senior and Catherine Keefe

Tim and Catherine came to New Zealand as relatively old people; there is obviously some doubt about the ages they stated on the passenger list of the "Zealandia" in 1871. Catherine was still young enough, however, to bear children and she bore her last child at Kerrytown in 1872. He was a son, Cornelius, destined to be a great character among the South Canterbury Irish communities and known far and wide as "Cuddy of Ma Waro". More of him later. Three of Tim and Catherine's elder daughters had preceded them to the colony and as we have seen one of them had married "out" soon after her arrival. I think it quite likely that they never saw her again.

The Family History notes referred to above state that "Hannah Brosnahan bought Leonard's place. Old Tim lived there when he arrived and eventually shifted over the road to a Cob House he had built." I have not been able to pin this down through the land records. Hannah Brosnahan was issued a crown grant for a 20 acre section (18590) on October 6, 1873. It was a curious L shaped section on the fourth corner of the "Cross" at Kerrytown directly opposite the site of the "Pub". With this purchase land around all four corners of the Kerrytown crossroads had come into the Brosnahan family at some time, in three cases as the original purchasers. Hannah still owned the section in 1882 but by 1893 it belonged to old Tim. It may have been left to him when Hannah died in 1887.

It is a family story that old Tim visited Daddy Hugh on his deathbed in July 1895. Daddy Hugh told him that he would be dead himself within the month. Tim returned home to bed and sure enough died three weeks later on August 8, 1895. He was ninety two years old and had spent nearly a quarter of a century in South Canterbury. Unlike his elder brother, who seems to have disposed of his estate prior to his death, Tim left a will. It reveals that he had added to his Kerrytown holdings with the 20 acre section (20689) adjoining the original corner section on the road towards Pleasant Point. This additional section he bequeathed to his son Hugh ("Hughie Tim"), while Catherine was left all of his remaining property and

the original 20 acre section. In fact she lived with Hughie Tim and his family so in effect old Tim's 40 acres passed to his second son. Hughie and Catherine were named as the executors of the will in its original 1889 form but in 1894 Tim added a codicil replacing Catherine as executrice with his son-in-law John Murphy. To both documents he affixed his mark X, "he being unable to write". The estate was valued at under £250.

Catherine survived her husband by twenty one years. She lived in her own cottage between her son Hughie Tim and her daughters Norah Breen and Mary Scannell on the Kerrytown Road and according to one of her granddaughters "seemed to live forever". Not surprisingly she is said to have been a tough old character and a hard taskmaster, particularly for Hughie's wife Mary. A number of photographs of Catherine survive and she appears in two of the group shots in this book. She was a sprightly old woman, wore a big leather belt and kept her hair up in a bun. She told her grandchildren stories of Ireland and of the journey to New Zealand and how long it took. She died at Kerrytown on April 10, 1916, aged 90. Her passing was noticed by the Timaru Herald which called her one of the oldest residents of the district and noted that having survived her husband and three daughters (actually four daughters and a son) she left 80 grandchildren and seventy great-grandchildren. This is a formidable tribe by any standard.

Johannah Brosnahan and Thomas Leonard

Johannah, or simply Hannah, Brosnahan was the first of her family to emigrate. She was then twenty years old and was listed on the passenger list of the "Himalaya" in 1866 as a dairymaid. Her younger sister Margaret, 18 years and also a dairymaid, accompanied her and they were part of a Kerry party of ten on the vessel. All of them had been nominated for assisted passages by people already in New Zealand and the girls all came for free. The nominator was almost certainly their cousin Timothy Brosnahan (Timaliza). Margaret was married in Lyttelton the following year but Hannah was not a witness to the marriage. She did not marry herself until much later and the first of her five children was born in 1881. She was then about 34 years old and only had another six years to live. They were a productive six years, however, with another four children born before Hannah died on June 22, 1887 aged 38 years.

Hannah's husband was another Kerry immigrant Thomas Leonard. His parents were Maurice Leonard and Catherine Lynch from Lavahre, Co Kerry and Thomas had two brothers and a sister in the Waimate district. Thomas and Hannah's children were: Maurice (Mossy), born August 13, 1881, who married Mary Kine and had two sons; Timothy (Ted), born November 25, 1882, who never married and died in 1957; Joseph (Silky), born March 4, 1884, who married Mary Tobin and had ten children; Thomas (Tossy), born August 23, 1885, who married Mary-Ellen O'Reilly and had nine children; William (Doctor), born October 24, 1886, who married firstly Christina McGregor Steel and had five children, and then on her death married Alice Hanham and had another two daughters.

The oldest of these sons was only five when Hannah died and Thomas remarried Emily Goodwin by whom he had a further nine or ten children. They subsequently moved to Ngatea, apparently without the five boys. I do not know who brought them up but they remained in South Canterbury and all five are buried with or near their mother in the Temuka cemetery. It is interesting to note that Hannah appears in the 1882 List of New Zealand Freeholders on her own account as Hannah Leonard, farmer of Kerrytown, owner of 20 acres valued at £500. She must have been an independent sort of woman.

Margaret Brosnahan and William Eden

Margaret Brosnahan is a bit of a mystery. She was baptised at Castleisland, Co Kerry on February 23, 1851, Tim and Catherine's second daughter. She accompanied Hannah to Canterbury as an assisted immigrant on the "Himalaya" in 1866/67. On December 1, 1868 she married William Eden in an Anglican ceremony at Holy Trinity church, Lyttelton. Margaret was unable to sign her name in the marriage register. It is my understanding that Margaret was ostracised from the family after this marriage "outside the Church", but at least some contact must have been maintained since the family tree put together some years ago lists her with seven children and gives their names and the names of their spouses. My research suggests that Margaret actually had eight children and I would tentatively list them as: Carol Letitia, born 1871, who married Lawrence Worthington; William Nelson, born February 5, 1873, who died at Lyttelton in 1892 aged 19 years; Thomas Francis, born 1874; Amelia (Millie), born 1876, who married somebody Bath; James, born 1878; Albert Ernest, born 1882; Catherine Gladys, born 1887, who married Dennis O'Loughlin; and Harriet Brenda (Dollie), born 1891, who married somebody Cornish.

The list of names is interesting in the absence of all the Brosnahan family names and consequent abandonment of the strict Irish naming pattern evident in all the other families.

Norah Brosnahan and Michael Coughlan/Jeremiah Breen

Norah was the third daughter of Tim and Catherine, baptised at Castleisland, Co Kerry on May 24, 1853. She came to New Zealand in 1870 with her cousin Hugh (the Pub) Brosnahan on the "Merope". She married Michael Coughlan three years later on May 20, 1873. She was a servant girl of 20 and he was a "proprietor" ten years older. The priest listed her in the marriage register as "Hanora Brosnan" and her bridesmaid/sister as "Hanh Brosnan" but she signed herself as "Norah Brosnahan". Michael Coughlan was the "proprietor" of land at Kakahu, northwest of Temuka, and there they settled and Norah had her first four children. Michael died on October 14, 1878. Norah moved to Kerrytown and bought 50 acres of land, which was valued in 1882 at £800. There she remained for most of the rest of her long life.

Coughlan/Breen family group 1903: Eugene Breen, Norah [T3], Br Borgia, Jeremiah Breen, Mary (Stewart) Coughlan, Dymphna Breen, Gus Breen, Hilda Breen, Jerome Breen, Tim Breen.

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Coughlan family group, Temuka Christmas 1904: Br Borgia, Kit Coughlan (nee Barrett) holding Michael Coughlan, Mary Coughlan (later Stewart), Mary Coughlan, John Coughlan, Patricia Coughlan (later Davin).

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John Coughlan (T3.1) family: Mary Coughlan, Dympna Breen, Mick Coughlan, Patricia (Davin) Coughlan, Madeleine (Fitzgerald) Coughlan, John Coughlan, Br Borgia, Rita Coughlan.

In 1883 Norah remarried. Her second husband was Jeremiah Breen, a 31 year old labourer born in Milltown, Co Kerry. Together they had another nine children and a long life together on their farm near the convent on the Kerrytown Road. Jeremiah died on February 27, 1924. His obituary in the Tablet spoke of his "kindly nature and warm-heartedness [which] endeared him to a wide circle of friends, among whom the priests and nuns always took pride of place." Coincidentally Jeremiah's death followed by a week that of Norah's cousin and ship-board companion Hughie the Pub Brosnahan. Norah lived a further twelve years and was 83 when she died on November 19, 1936. Only her younger sister Mary Scannell and her youngest brother Cornelius "of Ma Waro" survived her. She had two children who had achieved distinction in religious orders and accordingly her passing received comment in the Tablet.

The Kerrytown district has lost one of its oldest and most esteemed pioneers by the death of Mrs Norah Breen ... Mrs Breen was remarkable for her piety and charity. To many a home visited by sickness or death she was an angel of mercy. In her business relations with her neighbours and with commercial firms of Timaru and neighbouring towns she was the soul of integrity. She knew personally every child of every family in the district and they in their turn knew and loved her. She leaves a large family to mourn her loss. Messrs Dan and Jerome Breen and Miss Dympna Breen of Kerrytown, Mr Joe Breen of Winchester Settlement, Mrs Eb Stewart of Darfield, Mrs Frank Friel of Pleasant Point, Mr Tim Breen of Stratford, Mr Gus Breen of Lake Waikare Moana, Sr Francis Borgia of St Joseph's Convent Gisborne, and Br Borgia who returned home only four weeks ago after completing a six year term as Provincial of the Marist Brothers of South Africa.

Norah had thirteen children altogether. With Michael Coughlan: John, born March 18, 1874 who married Kitt Barrett; Catherine, born May 17, 1875, who became Sister Borgia; Mary, born February 10, 1877, who married Ebenezer Stewart and had five children; Michael Simon, born October 10, 1878, who became Br Borgia. With Jeremiah Breen: Daniel Joseph, born October 8, 1884, who died as a child in a dray accident in 1889; Joseph Timothy "Ponty", born April 24, 1886, who married Louise Murphy but had no children; Eugene born 1887, who married Annie Davis; a second Daniel Joseph, born August 18, 1889, who never married; Timothy Gregory "Tigeen", born November 17, 1890, who married Ina Doyle and had at least one child; Jerome Francis, born May 18, 1897, who never married; Augustine Jeremiah "Gus", born August 2, 1898, who married Phyllis File and had one daughter; Norah Mary Hilda (known as Hilda), born November 14, 1892, who married Frank Friel and had six children; Dympna Frances (and a twin who died at birth), born May 7, 1895, who never married.

Catherine Brosnahan & William Perry

Kate Brosnahan had come to New Zealand with her parents as a seventeen year old in 1872. Four years later, on June 1, 1876 at Timaru, she married William Perry, a 23 year old farmer, who could not sign his name in the marriage register. Kate signed as "Kate Brosnan", although the priest recorded her as "Brosnahan". The witnesses were Daniel Scannell and Julia Scannell of Kerrytown, the latter perhaps the Julia Scannell who married Kate's cousin Hughie the Pub a fortnight

later.

Kate and Bill Perry had thirteen children: Catherine, born October 2, 1877, who married John Kyne and had five children; Fanny, born February 26, 1879, who married Thomas Sheen; Mary (Polly), born January 18, 1881, who married firstly J Sandilands, and then Robert Shortall; Annie, born February 22, 1882, who married Thomas Jessep; William, born April 1, 1883, who was killed in an accident in 1921 and never married; Bridget, born July 3, 1885, who married Hylton Reid; Norah Teresa, born February 3, 1888, who married Jeremiah Hanifin; Teresa Margaret (Tessie), born January 28, 1890, who married Alfred Keefe; Timothy Joseph, born April 13, 1893, who was killed in 1917 on active service in France; twins who died at birth; Arthur Hugh, born October 8, 1895, who died in 1913 aged 17; Josephine Veronica (Bon), born April 11, 1898, who married Alister Kennedy.

Obviously I know very little about the Perrys. Bill Perry was not a landowner by 1882 and appears in an 1887 directory for Kerrytown as a contractor. Kate died on February 26, 1921 aged 63. She is buried in the Temuka cemetery with her three sons who died young.

Mary Brosnahan & John Scannell

Mary also came to New Zealand in 1872 with her parents. She was then fifteen. Her husband was some sort of family connection, arriving in the colony as a "nominated immigrant" in 1866, the cost of his passage guaranteed by Tim (Hugh) Brosnahan. John was an early settler at Kerrytown purchasing two sections along the Kerrytown Road in 1869 and 1874. By 1882 he owned 120 acres valued at £1460. Mary was his second wife. The first, Catherine Neal, died in January 1877. They had married in July 1869 at Dennis Hoare's house in Kerrytown and had three children together. Two of these children had already died in infancy (Julia and Daniel) by the time Catherine died but one boy, Patrick, remained and John remarried very quickly.

John and Mary had another eleven children: Julia, born April 8, 1878, who became Sr Lorenzo and died during the Influenza epidemic of 1918; John (Webb), born August 9, 1880, who married Kate Leary and had five children; Timothy, born July 1881, who died young; Jeremiah, born August 13, 1882, but died at 5 weeks; Stephen, born December 26, 1885, who never married and died in 1935; Mary (Polly), born January 25, 1887, who married Michael O'Driscoll and had ten children; Daniel, born August 26, 1888, who married Connie ? and had eight children; Timothy (2), born September 20, 1890, who also died during the 1918 epidemic unmarried; Christopher Joseph, born March 22, 1894, who married Lucy O'Driscoll and had six children; Augustine (Tiny), born June 7, 1898, who never married and died in 1979; Joseph (Snowy), born July 11, 1901, who was the third family member to perish in the 1918 Flu' epidemic.

Three of John's children married members of the O'Driscoll family (Patrick the only survivor from John's first family being the third). John Scannell died on April 28, 1919 aged 82 years. Mary, who was considerably younger, survived John by 23 years and died at her son Daniel's house in Temuka on December 18, 1942 aged 87 years. She was a little lady and reputedly smoked a pipe. Mary was the last of the emigrants to die, only her New Zealand-born youngest brother Cornelius survived her, and her passing was the end of an era. Some of Mary's descendants still live in Kerrytown.

Timothy Brosnahan & Mary Crowley

"Teddy Tim" was the eldest son of Timothy and Catherine, baptised November 29, 1855 at Castleisland, Co Kerry. According to the passenger list of the "Zealandia" he was 11 years old when the family arrived in New Zealand in 1872 but he was nearer seventeen - their was a lower price on offer for those under twelve. He must have looked young. The "Teddy Tim" or "Thady Tim" was used to distinguish him from both his father Tim and cousin Tim, and in later years from second cousins, nephews and grandsons also called Tim. This Tim opted to go by the shorter version of the name "Brosnan" and was followed in this by his younger brother Patrick but no other members of the family.

The Tim and Catherine family is interesting for the way in which there were first born five girls and then three boys, one girl and a final two boys. This meant that all of the boys in this family were relatively young when they arrived in the colony. They were too late for the initial division of land along the Levels plain and were part of a second wave of settlement spreading up the river valleys and along the borders of the large estates. Only one, Hughie Tim, stayed in Kerrytown, he having the benefit of the small sections which came to him from his father in 1895. Teddy Tim, as the oldest, might have been expected to inherit these sections and the fact that he did not is probably an indication that he did not need them rather than that he was out of favour with his father. This Tim is usually referred to as "of Conoor" and I gather that he had a pretty decent sort of holding at Conoor to the southwest of Timaru with a substantial home at its centre.

Teddy Tim married Mary Crowley in Oamaru in 1878. They had eleven children: Mary, born March 23, 1879, who married John Lawler and had eight children; Kate, born March 1881, who died as a child in 1885; Timothy, born January 19, 1883, who died aged 19 in 1902; Daniel, born February 1, 1885, who never married and died in 1945; Hannah, born July 10, 1887, who married Thomas Casey and had three children; a second Kate, born February 17, 1891, who married Dan "the Moke" Brosnan but had no children; Norah, born March 16, 1893, who married Matthew Coffey and had four children; John Joseph, born June 22, 1894, who never married; Agnes Bridget, born September 15, 1896, who died unmarried in 1929; Margaret, born April 1, 1899, who married Joshua Hamlyn and had one son; Patrick, born July 18, 1901, who married Minnie Gowan and had four children. After Norah Coffey's death in 1929 her husband

Mattie remarried her niece Julie Lawler.

Mary (Crowley) Brosnan died on February 23, 1915 aged 59 and Teddy Tim died on May 16, 1930 at 76. They are buried in the Temuka cemetery.

Hugh Brosnahan & Mary Sullivan

Hughie Tim Brosnahan was born at Fieries, Co Kerry and baptised at Castleisland on September 14, 1862. He was listed as 7 years old on the passenger list of the "Zealandia" in 1872 but was really ten and the downward shift in age must have been simply to help his 17 year old brother Tim pass as an 11 year old. Hughie Tim must have been particularly close to his parents. In any case he remained at Kerrytown when his brothers moved out to new areas of settlement around the district and looked after the old people. When old Tim died in 1895 his small landholding at the crossroads in Kerrytown [see map p 6] passed to Hughie Tim, though he was in fact the second son and seventh child. There he grew wheat and potatoes and raised pigs to supplement his earnings as a raceman, keeping the water races clear right down to Seadown.

With the farmstead he also had the responsibility of looking after his mother old Catherine and she lived beside the Hughie Tims until her own death in 1916. Hughie Tim married Mary Sullivan, a fellow immigrant from Ireland and probably from Kerry, in 1890. They both lived in Kerrytown as did their witnesses, Cornelius, Hugh's younger brother, and Ellen Sullivan. They had nine children: Kate (Kit), born 1892, who married Walter Wyatt and had four children; Timothy Joseph, born July 23, 1893, who was killed on active service during the First World War in 1913; Mary Ann, born April 16, 1895, who married Daniel Leary and had eight children; Angelina, born 1897, who married Nathan Williams and had six children; Annie Cecilia (Cissie), born August 22, 1900, who married Robert Day and had nine children; Eugene Jerome, born July 20, 1899 who married Annie Ashen and then Jean ? but had no children; Hugh, born 1903, who died on active service in 1942; Patrick, born 1904, who also died as a soldier in 1943; Christina, born 1909, who married Michael Kerr and had seven children. They also raised their granddaughter Rita as a tenth child.

Hughie Tim died in May 1926 and Mary died twelve years later on September 14, 1938 aged 68 years.

Patrick Brosnan & Margaret Horgan

Paddy Tim Brosnan was born at Fieries, Co Kerry and baptised at Castleisland on February 19, 1865. He was therefore seven years old when he came to New Zealand in 1872 but for reasons already outlined his age dropped a couple of years to 5 for the official passenger list. Paddy Tim came to maturity after the first burst of settlement in South Canterbury and for young men of that time there was no new land to take up on the Kerrytown flat. A new avenue opened in the

1890s however with the Liberal Governments legislation to "burst up" the great estates and make their land available for the small farmer. Paddy Tim was one to benefit from this movement and settled in Rocky Gully Road near Albury on a farm still worked by his grandson Tom Brosnan.

Paddy followed his brother Tim in opting for the shortened spelling "Brosnan". He married Margaret Horgan on April 10, 1888. Margaret was fellow Kerry immigrant, born at Castlemaine, Co Kerry, on April 27, 1861 the daughter of Bart Horgan and Mary Teahan. They had eight children: Timothy, born September 16, 1888, who died in 1903 aged 14 years; Katie, born March 17, 1890, who never married; Patrick, born October 20, 1891, who married Mary Kelliher [she was a great granddaughter of Daddy Hugh, the granddaughter of Paddy Hugh Brosnahan, daughter of Mary Brosnahan/Thomas Kelliher] and had six children; Mary, born September 12, 1892, who never married; Nellie, born December 29, 1895, who married Thomas Prendergast and had four children; Bartholomew, born May 24, 1897, who never married; Margaret, born November 16, 1899, who married John Gallen and had three children; Hannah, born November 23, 1904, who never married.

Margaret died on July 14, 1928 aged 65 years and Patrick on October 27, 1936 at 71 years. They are buried in the Temuka cemetery with their eldest son Timothy.

Bridget Brosnahan & John Murphy

Bridget was born at Fieries, Co Kerry and baptised at Castleisland on January 3, 1868. She is listed as two years old on the 1872 passenger list of the "Zealandia" but was actually four. She did not have a long life, dying on February 20, 1900 at 32 years. She did however marry and had two children. Her husband was John Murphy, the second son of Josephus Murphy an early Pleasant Point hotelkeeper and Harriet Wesley. John was born at Ovens on the Victorian goldfields but was clearly of Irish extraction. He was a blacksmith by trade but followed in his father's footsteps as a hotel-keeper as well. Bridget Brosnahan was the second of his three wives (the first was Lucy Irwin from Ballymacelligott, Co Kerry) and the only one to bear him children. They married at St Joseph's Cathedral, Dunedin on April 18, 1890. John was a 31 year old livery stable keeper, then living in Dunedin but usually of Timaru and Bridget was 22. The witnesses were Mary Ann and Katie Hoare of Kerrytown. The couple subsequently lived in Kerrytown and the Pleasant Point area and had two children: Ann Harriet, born March 25, 1891, who married Arthur Funston and had six children; and Rupert Joseph, born November 3, 1892, who married Elizabeth Carson and had four children.

After Bridget's death John married for a third time and their children had to contend with the tensions, which sometimes arise with step-mothers. For whatever reason the Murphy children drifted away from the Irish Catholic community and their relations at Kerrytown. A photograph of Bridget can be found in the large group shot near the end of this book.

John Brosnahan

John was an infant when he arrived in New Zealand with his parents in 1872 and died in January 1874 aged 3 years and 10 months. He was the first member of the family to die in New Zealand and is buried with his parents in the Temuka cemetery.

Cornelius Brosnahan & Ellen Murphy

Cuddy of Ma Waro. The only Brosnahan of his generation born in New Zealand. Cornelius grew up nonetheless in a thoroughly Irish and overwhelmingly Kerry environment. As the youngest member of the family he had few options of taking up land in Kerrytown by the time he came of age in the late 1880s. Like his brother Patrick, however, Cuddy was around at just the right time to benefit from the Liberal government's land policies in the 1890s and early 1900s. Under the 1900 "Land for Settlements Consolidation Act" the axe fell on the once great Levels Estate owned by the NZ & Australia Land Company. Apart from a 10,000 acre block around the homestead the Estate was subdivided, dividing almost 38,000 acres into 128 farms. The subdivisions extended along the railway line from Levels to Albury and were available on lease in perpetuity (999 years). Cornelius was the successful bidder for Section 37, Block VIII of the Opawa Survey District comprising 269 acres along Monavale and Nelson Roads and just one and a quarter miles from the Coal Creek railway station. His immediate neighbours were John Barry and Mick Scannell and brother Patrick was only a few miles away. And so he took up land in his own right, fulfilling the Irish dream, as had all of the family in this generation, save for John and the others who never made it to New Zealand.

Like his siblings and cousins Cornelius succeeded on the second count too, marrying Ellen Murphy at Timaru on June 1, 1897. He signed himself Cornelius "Brosnan" on the marriage register but did not follow his brothers Tim and Pat in consistently using the shortened version of the name. Cornelius and Ellen had nine children: Timothy Rowland "Roly", born March 30, 1899, who married Kathleen Nolan and had one son; Katherine Josephine "Kitt", born August 17, 1901, who married Thomas Dwan and had two sons; Nellie, born June 8, 1904, who became Sr Cornelia; John James, born 1906, who never married and died in 1959; Cornelius Michael, born 1907, who also never married and died a month before John; Frederick, born 1910, who was killed in a car crash in 1939 and never married; Francis, who became Br Cornelius of the Marist Brothers; Margaret, who became Sr Celestine; and Peter, who married Mamie Scott and had four children. Cornelius was a notable character. I have heard from more than one source that as an old man he would hobble in to Mass at Cave and race out with the best of them afterwards en route for the Cave Arms.

The cover photograph of this book, showing Cuddy atop his white horse leading a jubilee procession into Pleasant Point, seems to capture a perfect image of "Cuddy of Ma Waro". It is also a useful symbol of the colonial achievement of the

emigrants. Within a generation of the Great Famine Brosnahans had won a modest independence in a new land and could walk (or ride) tall, tipping their hats to no-one save as a free gesture of respect. They had moreover established a special community in the new society, preserving their identity as Irish Catholics and laying the foundations of the New Zealand Church: thirteen of the first New Zealand-born generation of the family became priests or religious, and an even larger number of the next generation followed their example.

In closing this account of the "colonial careers" of the emigrants I would like to add a note about the Irish naming pattern. This was a system for naming Irish Catholic children, which became quite uniform in the mid-nineteenth century and which can be clearly discerned in most of the families above. By this system the first male child of a couple was named for the father's father. The next male child was named for the mother's father, then for the father's eldest brother, then the mother's eldest brother and so on. Likewise the first daughter received the father's mother's name, the next the mother's mother's name and on down the line. It was not therefore lack of imagination which saw the proliferation of "Hugh" and "Tim", "Deborah" and "Kate" Brosnahans but a faithful application of the custom. One advantage of this custom is that birth orders and family connections can be quite easily unravelled. Fortunately/unfortunately (?) the system was abandoned by the next generation and we have a huge diversity of first names represented in the family tree.

Kerrytown group: back; Julia Scannell, -, John Coughlan [?], -, Teddy Tim Brosnan [T6], Hughie the Pub Brosnahan [H5], Hughie Tim Brosnahan [T7], Mary (Stewart) Coughlan, Bridget Murphy [T9], middle; Paddy Tim Brosnan [T8], John Scannell holding ?, Norah Breen [T3], Jeremiah Breen holding ?, old Catherine (Keefe) Brosnahan, -, Mary Scannell [T5], Patrick Scannell [?], front; Mary (O'Driscoll) Scannell [?], Gus Breen [?], Jerome Breen [?], -, -, Tim Breen [?], - .

Chapter Six.

"A COW OR A BROSNAHAN"

Other Brosnahan Families

Brosnahan, or Brosnan, or Bresnihan, or Brusnahan, or Bresnihan, or Brusnan, or however you like to spell it seems to be a reasonably distinctive name but by no means uncommon. In Ireland it remains a "great Kerry number", as I was told in Cork, and there are now many Brosnans all over Ireland (most of them using this shorter spelling of the name). Wherever Irish migrants went in the nineteenth century there seem to have been a few Brosnahans among them and a flick through British, North American or Australian telephone directories will often show some Brosnahan entries. In New Zealand too there are numerous Brosnahans quite apart from those described above. This concluding chapter of the book will cast the net a bit wider and look at the other Brosnahan families - firstly those in South Canterbury and then Brosnahans in other parts of the country. I cannot claim to have them all pegged down but over several years I have gathered, and been given, information on many of these "other" families and it seems worthwhile to set it down.

South Canterbury Brosnahans

It is an old joke that there were so many Brosnahans in Kerrytown that if you were to throw a stone there you would hit "a cow or a Brosnahan". The Pleasant Point parish jubilee booklet of 1963 had this to say:

We have the Murphys, Hoares (Richard and Denis), Breens, Leonards, Stacks, Heffernans, Keifs, O'Connells (Frank, Dinnie, Patsy, Fitzgeralds (William and W D), Coughlans, Kellys, Naughtons, Days, Flemings, Sullivans, Scallords, Coffeys, Nolans, Kynes, and last but not least the Brosnahans. Ye Gods, the Brosnahans! It has often been said if you threw a stone over a fence in Kerrytown you would hit either a cow or a Brosnahan. There were the Hughie Brosnahans, Tim Brosnahans, T M Brosnahans, Jeremiah Brosnahans, Benjamin Brosnahans, John Brosnahans and Cornelius Brosnahans.

Names were similar so nicknames were necessary.

Hughie the Pub - Shaun Hugh - Con Hugh - Timaliza - Tady Tim - Hughie Tim - Paddy Tim - Cuddy Tim - Tady Mick - Old Davie - Peg Leg - Jerry Brosnahan - Cuddy the Moke and Ben Brosnahan and Corneen the Fiddler.

Many of these names should now be readily identifiable as members of the extended family of old Hugh and Tim. They made up the largest single group of Brosnahans. But there were other large families too. The most intriguing question is surely how the various families were related to each other, if at all, but this seems sadly beyond the realm of certitude. We can only make the assumption that the common point of origin, communal experience of emigration and clustering together around Kerrytown bespeaks some sort of relationship, a point which could be extended to other "non-Brosnahan" families. Here I shall merely attempt to set out what I know about the various families and identify the families

behind the nicknames.

John Brosnahan was the "Peg Leg" Brosnahan of the above list. He came to New Zealand on the same ship as "our" Patrick, the "Echunga" to Canterbury in 1862. With him was a sister Margaret and they were full fare paying passengers (rather than assisted). Though John's farm in Levels was named "Aghadoe" after his father's birthplace in Co Kerry the family must have lived in Ballymacelligott parish in the 1840s as John went to school with his future bride Hanorah O'Driscoll who came from Ashill, Ballymacelligott. His younger sister Kate was born "near Tralee" (according to her own declaration on the birth of a son in 1881) which also points to this area. In March 1865 the rest of John and Margaret's family followed them to South Canterbury, arriving on the barque "Rachel" at Timaru with "our" Tim and Mary. This was James Brosnan, his wife Annie Collins, Kate, Annie and Elizabeth. The newspaper account referred to four Brosnahan children arriving on the "Rachel" but there is no memory of any fourth child.

Old James Brosnan used the short spelling in contrast to his son's version. He farmed at Seadown and died in 1890 aged 76 years. His parents names are not recorded. His wife Annie Collins died in 1902 aged 86. Her parents were Patrick Collins and Ann Seeler. Their children were John, who married Hanorah O'Driscoll and had 13 children: Patrick, James, Matthew, Ellen, Thomas William, Michael, Bridget, Mary, Margaret, Anne, Katherine and John Joseph. Many of the present day Brosnahans in South Canterbury are John "Peg Leg" descendants and a family tree of his clan has been published by Mrs Marie Greaney in her book on the O'Driscoll family. John's sisters were Margaret, who married Michael Gaffaney and had 14 children; Kate, who married Michael Gaffaney's brother Frank and settled in Dunedin; Annie, who never married and died at Temuka in 1944; and Elizabeth who married Daniel Bryant.

The next family to consider is the Michael Brosnahan and Margaret Collins family. They too came to New Zealand with their family following older children who had gone ahead. In this case the fore-runners were Johannah and Margaret Brosnahan, who arrived in South Canterbury per the "Crusader" in 1872. They were then 18 and 16 years old respectively and had both been nominated by someone already in the colony. In 1874 the rest of the family arrived on the "Carisbrook Castle". They were Michael aged 45 years, Margaret 40, Timothy 17, Mary 14, James 12, Anne 10, Kate 8, Patrick 5, and an infant Ellen. On the same voyage were Patrick and Catherine Collins and their four children, and a 20 year old Margaret Collins, who were probably Margaret Brosnahan's brother and niece. Two of the three youngest Brosnahan children died on the voyage, Patrick and one of the girls. Margaret Brosnahan may have been a sister of James Brosnan's wife Ann, nee Collins. On their respective death registrations the parents are stated as Patrick Collins and Margaret Leeler on the one hand and Patrick Collins and Ann Seller on the other. It seems probable that one or the other confuses the mother's name. This is of course pure speculation but

underlines the complex interrelationships of the Kerrytown community.

Michael and Margaret's eldest daughter Johannah married James Poff, a Kerryman who arrived in Canterbury with "our" Tim Brosnahans on the "Zealandia" in 1871. They had 16 children. Margaret married John Spring, also a Kerryman, and they too had 16 children. Timothy Brosnahan is the well-known Kerrytown identity "Thady Mick" Brosnan. He opted for the shorter spelling. Thady Mick married twice, firstly to Mary Sullivan, who was from Kiltallagh, Co Kerry, and after her death to Bridget O'Neill. He had 10 children, four girls and six boys. The distinguished Kerrytown horse training family are Thady Mick's descendants. Mary Brosnahan married Michael Lynch, a North of Ireland man. James, known as Jim "Wigg" Brosnahan, married Margaret Hoare and so became part of "our" Brosnahan clan. Their children are listed in the table of Mary (Brosnahan) Hoare's descendants. Annie Brosnahan married Charles Joseph O'Reilly, a blacksmith from Akaroa.

Various birthplaces in Kerry are given for members of this family but all of them lie within the Currans/Castleisland parishes. Thady Mick's obituary stated his birthplace as "Kilfilmn, Co Kerry", and this is probably supposed to be Kilfelim, a townland in the Killentierna/Currans parish. Michael snr was the son of Timothy Brosnahan and Johanna Aherne. In New Zealand he farmed a 50 acre section on Brosnan's Road between the Old Seadown school road and Lynchs Road. He died in 1890 aged 70 years and left his land to his wife Margaret, who died in 1919 aged 88. When he made his will in 1888 he was unable to sign his name and the witnesses to his "mark" were John "Peg Leg" Brosnahan and Frank Connell. The executors to the estate however were Jeremiah Brosnahan and Patrick Connell. This raises some intriguing questions about the interconnections between the various families and introduces Jeremiah Brosnahan.

Jeremiah was of the same generation as Michael's children. He was the son of James Brosnahan and Mary Scanlan, born at Kilfallin in Currans parish, Co Kerry and baptised at Currow in November 1858. He arrived in Canterbury as a nominated immigrant on the "Otaki" in 1876. He stated his age at 21 years and with him were Michael Brosnahan, aged 21, another Michael, aged 20, and Johanna, aged 18. These were surely siblings and cousins and common Christian names and the fact that all were nominated for assisted passages from Timaru suggests that Jeremiah and the others were close kin of the Michael Brosnahan family. I would guess that Michael was their uncle. The family tie is corroborated by Jeremiah's status as Michael's executor and his acting as best man for Thady Mick's marriage to Bridget O'Neill. Jeremiah himself married Hannah Breen in 1887 and needless to say they had a large family of 5 sons and 3 daughters. Jeremiah farmed at Arowhenua and Seadown and earned a high reputation as an exhibitor at A & P shows.

There are two other large families to fit into the Kerrytown puzzle. The first is the Davie Brosnahan family. Old Davie was the son of David Brosnahan and

Johannah Crowley, born in the Castleisland parish, Co Kerry in 1840. The family lived in close proximity to "our" Timothy and Catherine in Kerry and Davie and his future wife Mary Scollard were witnesses to the baptism of Paddy Tim Brosnahan in 1865. David and May married in Kerry in 1872 and came to Canterbury on the "Rakaia" in 1875. David was then 35 years old, Mary was 21 and they had an infant son David. With them on this voyage were Mary's parents Michael and Elizabeth Scollard and her brother Barry, who was one of the teachers at Kerrytown before the nuns arrived. David jnr eventually married Anne Harper and had four children. His parents had a further eight children born at Kerrytown: Elizabeth in 1876, who married Charles Weavers and had four children; Mary, born 1879 who never married; Catherine, born 1881, who married W P Hand and had at least two children; Theresa, born 1885 and Michael, born 1888, neither of whom married; Barry, born 1890, who married Paddy Hugh Brosnahan's granddaughter Mary Foley and thus tied into "our" clan; Maurice, born 1892, who married Ann Day and lived in Dunedin; and Robert, born 1894, who never married. Davie Brosnahan's descendants had a family reunion at Oamaru in 1991.

The final large Brosnahan family is the Cornelius and Ellen Brosnahan family of Pleasant Point. Con and Ellen were another couple of the older generation, who presumably followed their grown up children to South Canterbury, though there is no record of their own arrival. Probably the first of their children to come were Hugh, Johannah and Mary who arrived in Lyttelton per the "Dilharee" in 1874. They were however nominated for assisted passages by someone already in Timaru so there may be other members of this family I have not traced. On arrival Hugh was supposed to be 21 years old, Johannah 19, and Mary 18 but these ages are quite different to those given by the latter two when they married. With the three Brosnahans was Johanna Scannell. Two years later their brother Benjamin followed them to Canterbury on the "Otaki". He was a 20 year old farm labourer and came on his own. At some stage the parents arrived, possibly bringing other family members with them. This family settled at Pleasant Point. Old Cornelius died there in 1902 and Ellen, whose maiden name was also Brosnahan, had predeceased him in 1890 at the age of 65 years.

Ben Brosnahan married Ellen Sullivan at Temuka in 1882 and they had at least one daughter, Mary, born 1883. Ben died at Pleasant Point in 1930 aged 76 years and Ellen nine years earlier aged 57. Hugh Brosnahan, who was perhaps the oldest member of the family married an Anglican, Fanny Chadwick Downes. They had three children: Ellen Mary, born 1893, who married John Clarke and had six children; Sarah, born 1895, who died in 1898; and Hugh Cornelius, born 1897, who married Gladys Sanders and had five children. In 1898 Fanny and Sarah Brosnahan both died and were buried by the Anglican minister at Pleasant Point. Hugh then took the two surviving children to the priest at Temuka and had them "conditionally" baptised. This is noted simply because it suggests that Hugh had had to marry "outside the Church" and have his children baptised in the Anglican church. At the same time his younger sister Mary had married Fanny Downes'

brother Thomas at Timaru in 1885. In this case, however, Thomas Chadwick Downes made an oath agreeing to bring his children up as Catholics and did so. There were at least eight children born to this couple: John Downes, born 1886; Cornelius Francis Downes, born 1887; Hugh Charles Downes, born 1891; Thomas Downes, born 1892; Ellen Downes, born 1894; Henry Silvestre Downes, born 1895; Joseph Downes, born 1896, Benjamin Frederick Downes, born 1897.

Johannah Brosnahan married James Grace at Temuka in 1881. They lived at Pleasant Point and had a very large family. Their first child was Ellen, born in 1882 and a succession of children followed. I do not have the names of the remaining children until 1894 when James John Grace was born. Thereafter twins John Joseph and Margaret Anne Grace were born in 1897 and Agnes Grace was born in 1898. The Con and Ellen family also came from Castleisland in Co Kerry but as with the other families it is not clear what relationship either parent may have had with other Kerrytown Brosnahans. There seems to have been a link with the Scannells, however, which was also true for "our" Brosnahans.

With the outlines above it is possible to make some sense of the list of Brosnahan families and nicknames from the Pleasant Point Jubilee record. Even then, however, the tally of Brosnans and Brosnahans is far from complete even for South Canterbury. I will mention just one more couple, who do not feature in the list. They are James and Julia Brosnahan, who came to Canterbury on the "Tintern Abbey" in 1875 professing to be a "dealer" aged 48 years and his 45 year old wife. Bearing in mind the age limit for assisted immigrants I think it is safe to assume that these ages are quite false. When James died in 1896 he was actually 86 years old, which would have made him 65 in 1875. Similarly Julia Brosnahan was 80 years old when she died in 1895 and would have been more like 60 years on arrival. The couple came as nominated immigrants and had at least one daughter, Mary O'Connell in the colony. Our family historical notes record one James Brosnahan as "Jim 'Sticks' Brosnahan [who] walked with two sticks, his wife spoke no English, they milked fifteen cows". I suspect that this refers to this particular family.

Before moving on to consider other Brosnahans in New Zealand it seems worthwhile to reflect briefly on the community life of Kerrytown and to record from two sources something of the celebrations laid on when young Kerrytown folk were married. This may add a touch of life to what has of necessity been a dull recitation of names and dates.

Our own family notes record, "The weddings were big ones. All the boys would pair off and hire Buggies for the occasion. After the Ceremony they would race for home to beat the bridal party Buggy and horse. All Gigs and Buggys in Temuka and Timaru would be hired for the day. They would form up in procession. No wedding presents were given as the money went on hiring these buggies and seeing there was plenty of food and drink for the occasion ... " Helen Wilson's novel Moonshine tells a similar tale of "Corktown", the name used for

Kerrytown in her fictional tale.

This afternoon it happened that there was a grand wedding at Corktown, and they were anxious to be there in time. It must indeed have been worth the haste. Mrs Doyle gave me a description of it later.

'It was fine doings we had and nothing lacking at all. It was as tasty a wedding as ever you saw. Arra, poteen! it was like water itself for plentifulness, and bottled porter, and whisky, no less, and all standing on tables open for the good of all comers and no stint. They were after hiring every trap they could lay their hands upon in Selwyn [Pleasant Point] and in any place else, and all the horses in the place to be drawing them. For a guard of honour it was, to speed the bride and bridegroom, God bless them, on the way of their lives. And they drove this way and that and round about, till they had all the traps broken up and lying by the wayside, and themselves funning and lepping and tricking one another. Oh, but it was a great night for the Flat and for all comers, and it's long till it'll be forgotten and a body to have been there. There was no soul left to be rising in the morning, and the cows standing in the bails and not milked at all, and the pigs springing and squealing the way you'd think they would die of the drouth them to be waiting longer.'

I had always heard the doings of Corktown spoken of with relish. I began to understand why.

Brosnahan/Brosnan/Bresnahans in Other Parts of New Zealand

The first Brosnahan in New Zealand was Patrick Brosnan, born in Co Limerick circa 1815, the son of James Brosnahan, a steward, and Sarah Ryan. Patrick arrived in Wellington on the "Martha Ridgway" in November 1840. He had a fairly colourful life in the colony. In 1847 he married Jane Barr in Auckland and eventually they had seven children: James Matthew, who married Elizabeth McCarthy; Jane Josephine, who married Thomas Hewitt; William Patrick, who married Annie Jarvis; Ellen, who married William Simmonds; Mary, who married James Stewart; Alexander, who married Elizabeth ?; and Margaret, who never married. The family had an adventurous life and travelled widely through the North Island before settling in Auckland, where Patrick bought a butchery business. This was later sold and Patrick became a teacher in the Waikato, teaching both Maori and Pakeha children for a number of years. He then returned to Auckland and managed a flour mill and a hotel. There was at least one trip to Melbourne. Finally when news reached Auckland of the gold strike in Otago in mid-1861, the family packed up and headed south.

Patrick Brosnan was one of the first miners at Gabriels Gully and the family remained in the south thereafter. In the earliest days of the goldrush the Brosnan girls and their mother were among the very few women in the Tuapeka area. After a successful period as a miner Patrick ran another butchery in Lawrence and farmed at Kuri Bush. He died at Lawrence in 1892 and Jane died two years later. His son James Matthew Brosnan was a pioneer settler in Waikaka and Tapanui. A very useful account of this family, with genealogical tables, has been deposited in the Otago Early Settlers Museum by Mrs Connie Spears of Dunedin.

Patrick was not the only Brosnahan attracted to Otago by gold. Jeremiah Brosnan arrived in Otago per the "Dunfillan" in 1874 as a twenty year old labourer from Kerry. He settled at Blue Spur, near Lawrence, and was a miner in the district for

nearly forty years. He married Annie Gregan in 1878, and they had a number of children. I am not absolutely sure that all of the following were Jeremiah's children but they were all born in the district and I do not know of any other Brosnans to account for them: Mary, born 1879, who married William Ferguson; John, born 1880, who married Margaret Hardman; James, born 1881; Maurice Jeremiah, born 1883, who was definitely a son and died unmarried in 1906; Denis Patrick, born 1884; Ellen Catherine, born 1886; Annie Cecilia, born 1888, who married Robert George Kilgour; and Johanna Monica, born 1895. Jeremiah died at the Little Sisters of the Poor Home in Dunedin in 1918 aged 63 years. He received an obituary in the Lawrence newspaper which remarked of him that "he was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, and though he took no active part in local affairs he was always keenly interested in current events and politics generally. He was a of a kindly and genial disposition and was highly esteemed by all who knew him for his many sterling qualities." Annie had predeceased him in 1905 and three daughters and two sons survived him.

Another Patrick Brosnahan arrived at Lyttelton per the "Lady Jocelyn" in 1875. He was from Co Kerry and a 39 year old farm labourer. He was accompanied by his wife Margaret (Monaghan) 37 years, Mary 16, John 13, Bridget 10, Fanny 7, Thomas 4, and an infant Margaret. A 22 year old Maria Shanahan accompanied the family, while a Daniel Brosnahan also arrived on this ship. I think that the family settled around Kaiapoi where a Patrick Brosnan died in 1885. The son John married Jane Jeffrey at Kaiapoi in 1891.

Benjamin Bresnihan settled in Dunedin. He was a Corkman who arrived in Otago on the "James Nicol Fleming" in 1875 with his wife Catherine, nee Hogan, and children; Bridget, Agnes, Patrick, Catherine, Ellen, and Margaret. I suspect that Benjamin may have been a former soldier since one of his children, Catherine, was born in India, and another, Agnes, was born on the Isle of Wight in England. They had at least one more child in New Zealand, Alice, born in 1876. Bridget Bresnahan married Joseph John Bonney in Dunedin in 1882 and Agnes married Matthew Dundas there in 1886. Catherine Bresnihan died in Dunedin in 1894 aged 57 years and Benjamin died four years later aged 70. They are buried in Dunedin's Northern cemetery along with their daughter Catherine, who died unmarried in 1926. There were other "Bresnihans" in Napier, Palmerston North, Wanganui, Wellington, Waihi and Thames before 1900 but I have little information on them.

Timothy Brosnahan was born in Co Kerry circa 1839 and married Julia O'Sullivan at Firies, Co Kerry in 1867. They had four children (Margaret born 1868; Mary born 1870; Michael born 1872; and John born 1875) before emigrating to New Zealand on the "Mataura" in 1875. Given their connection with Firies and presumable familiarity with "our" Brosnahans settlement in South Canterbury it is surprising that Timothy and Julia settled instead in the Wairau district of Marlborough. They had a further eight children in New Zealand: Nora, born 1876; Julia; Patrick, born 1880; Catherine Mary, born 1882; Timothy, born 1884;

Jeremiah Francis, born 1886; Denis, born 1890; and Agnes Mary, born 1892. Only four of these children had families of their own and there were few boys. Sr Eileen Brosnahan RSM, granddaughter of Tim and Julia, has researched this family and tells me the Brosnahan name will die out with her in this family.

A second Timothy Brosnahan family settled in the Poverty Bay area. Their patriarch was born in Co Cork, but just over the county border from East Kerry, circa 1840, the son of Thomas Brosnahan. In 1868 he married Ellen Bluet at Kilbrin, Kanturk district and the couple had three sons (John, Thomas and James) when they emigrated to New Zealand per the "Waikato" in 1879. Another son, Timothy, also came but is not recorded on the passenger list. In New Zealand Tim and Ellen had more children including Kate, William, Eliza, and Patrick. Tim was a roading contractor and worked on the first survey of the Gisborne district before buying a farm at Ormond where he remained until his death in 1923. Ellen had predeceased him in 1920 and nine children survived him. His daughters were Mrs M Brady, Mrs K Winter and Mrs J Bartlett while the surviving sons were John at Puha, Timothy at Patutahi, Thomas at Poawa, William in the Waikato and James and Patrick. Tim's grandson Leonard Timothy Brosnahan came to Timaru as an engineer at the Smithfield freezing works for eight years in the late 1920s. He was the President of the Timaru Catholic Club for many years and made a big impression on the district. It would be intriguing to know what the South Canterbury Brosnahans made of him and he of them. His daughter Mrs Marie Byrne of Wellington is sure that there is a strong physical resemblance between Gisborne and South Canterbury Brosnahans and we met each other quite by chance in Dunedin a couple of years ago. Leonard was promoted to Burnside in Dunedin in 1934 but died the next year aged only 37. He is buried in Timaru amongst his long-lost "relations".

Samuel Brosnahan came to an unfortunate end at Ahuriri in the Hawkes Bay in 1880. A report of his death was printed in a temperance newspaper's "Links for the Devil's Chain" column as a warning of the evils of alcohol:

A man named Samuel Brosnahan, a blacksmith at Petane, is reported missing, and it is feared that he has been drowned in the Ahuriri lagoon. He came to town on Thursday, and after drinking a good deal went down to the Spit, and was put to bed at the Railway Hotel. He got up again at ten o'clock, and insisted on going home. It is surmised that, not seeing the ferry boat, he attempted to cross on the bridge, and was drowned at the opening where the turntables are to be erected. Messrs Light & McAuley, who were staying on the Western Spit, heard someone scream out loudly at about a quarter past ten that night. They went outside, but not seeing anybody, returned inside again. The tide was coming in at the time, and, if drowned, his body would be carried up the lagoon. The police went out in the pilot boat on Saturday, but could find no trace of the body. Mrs Brosnahan had been in ill-health for some little time, and the supposed death of her husband distressed her so much that yesterday afternoon she became suddenly worse and expired. By this double stroke five children are left fatherless and motherless. The two eldest boys are old enough to do a little work, but the others cannot possibly support themselves. Major Scully is making arrangements to get the two girls into the Convent schools, but something will have to be done for the boys. The case is a very distressing one. Brosnahan was always regarded as a good workman and an upright man, but occasionally he would give way to drink for some days at a time. It was during one of these drinking bouts that he is supposed to have met his death.

Samuel's wife was Ellen. She was 45 years old and was from Limerick in Ireland. She had married Samuel in South Africa at the age of 23 (circa 1858) and they had been in New Zealand for fifteen years at the time of their deaths. I can find no record of this family's arrival in New Zealand. The newspaper article gives the impression that there were 3 boys and 2 girls in the family but the death registration suggests that it was the other way round. Michael Brosnahan registered her death and I presume that he was one of the sons. The Major Scully referred to was the head of the Hawkes Bay police force and I suspect that another son was the Denis Brosnahan who became a constable at about this time. He resigned from the force at Woodville in 1909. The Brosnahans born in Hawkes Bay after 1883 (John in 1884, Kathleen Agnes in 1886, Michael Joseph in 1889, Denis in 1891, Mary St Germaine in 1894, Samuel Vincent in 1895 and Laura Teresa in 1898) are probably children of Samuel's sons. There was also a Cornelius Brosnahan, a swagger and local identity, who died after a heart attack in 1905 at Te Aute in the Hawkes Bay but I cannot say if he was connected in any way with this family.

There were certainly other Brosnahan families in New Zealand in the nineteenth century but I have little information worth imparting on any other family. Brosnahans (under the various spellings) other than those detailed above were born in Christchurch, Wellington, Masterton, Napier, Palmerston North, Eketahuna and on the West Coast before 1900 and others died in these areas and at Kaikoura and Thames in the same period. This underlines the fact that the name though distinctive is not so uncommon and I only hope that the details above may prove useful for descendants looking for their particular Brosnahan ancestors.