

The following are the old family letters of the Swift's

Bally Lee March 18, 1877

My dear John:

I write you these few lines hoping that they will find you in good health as the departure of this leaves us in at present. Thanks be to God!

John, my Mother feels fully obliged to you for your kindness to her for letting her know of Thomas' death and she feels very delicate(health) for a long time and was coming . . . to herself now until she heard of Thomas' death. May the Lord have Mercy on his soul. Even we were always expecting that we would hear from him some time but now we never will. We never got a letter from him these many years, nor from his sister, Margaret, since she landed, I may say. Indeed to tell the truth, they were very unkind to their mother. She did not expect anything from them but to write to her to let her know how they were and to know the same from them. So now her hopes are all over as Poor Thomas is Dead.

Dear John, my Mother would feel very thankful to you if you would tell Sister Maggy to write to her now, and send her likeness home, and if convenient to please could you get Thomas' wife and children to do the same. I want to know from you where is she from and what is her name. She is in a poor case now, the Dear Girl. And who is Maggie's husband and what county man is he?

Also, John Day, he proved very unkind to her and it is well she earned himself and his Sister Kate, and now they disremember her, so they say that out of sight is out of mind.

Dear John, your Uncle Patrick is getting on right well and is glad to hear that you are all well, and so are all of us. But he does not feel thankful to Miss Malone for not writing to him. He got a letter from his daughter Catherine today and they are all right. Mary wrote to them about Thomas' death and they wrote home, and so your letter was over a week in Gort. You forgot to put Bally Lee on the outside of the letter, on the 17 we got it.

When Catherine Connell was going to America I was going to go with her, and there was not a good account of it at that time. So please God, I will go this year or if not, I will go for certain next year if I am alive. I am the second youngest and I am taller than my Mother. If you have any daughter, tell me her name and I will send her some little token. My Mother is very glad to hear that you are well. She sends you all her Blessen. I must conclude, God be Good until the next. Write soon and direct please to

Mary Cusack
Bally Lee Pet erswell

Letter to John C. Swift from Bert Connell

Bally Lee, Ireland
15th May, 1880

I think this is an error and should be Patrick Connell.

My dear Nephew:

I received your very kind and welcome letter and check, value four pounds. And my dear nephew, I return you my best thanks, and love for your kindness in those trying times. May you or yours never want for health or means is the humble prayer of your fond uncle.

My dear Nephew, your kind remittance is of the greatest service this hard time. May God bless you and yours.

My dear Nephew, I am delighted to hear that both you and family are enjoying good health. As the departure of these lines leaves me and family at present, Thank God, for all his kind benefits.

My dear Nephew, this country is in a very poor way. In all the relief that came, we did not get as much as one stone of India Meal, and the people are getting the relief that is better off than what we are. However, we had to struggle on with many thanks to you as you are the best reliever to us. Indeed I may say nearly all the parishes are in need of relief. But please God, in eight or ten weeks more people will be expecting their own relief, with God's blessing. All provisions are very dear but the potatoes are all done up now. On the Fair Day of Gort, 10th May, when I received your letter, I went to pay my rent, I was short of the 10 which I

had to borrow to pay up my half year's rent or else we should give up the land. I received ten from my daughter two months ago. Mrs. Mary Malone and I was most thankful to her for it. My dear Nephew, I am sending you my love and blessing on my bended knees, for your very great kindness. I never shall forget you or your family.

You see the landlords are not the best in these hard times. They have to get the rents, work or play.

I called on William John Nolan. He told me he received your letter but did not answer as yet with regards to sending you a boy. My dear Nephew, if you wish, I have a young man who I could recommend to you. A good working young man in case it would answer. Now, his name is Michael Walsh. If you wish to pay his passage, he will have no further delay.

Patrick Linskey's address is Boston, Massachusetts-Mtford. If I had Martin's address, I would like to write to him. Let me know how all of you are looking or are ye getting old looking?

Your step-mother is well and in good health. Her daughter is gone to Queensland twelve months since. All the Cusacks are well, also the Cooneys are well.

All my family joins me in love and blessing to you all. No more at present from your fond uncle. Thanking you again, my dear Nephew, I remain your very affectionate uncle
Bert Connell

probably actually
Patrick Connell

March 6, 1909

My Dear Cousin:

I take the pleasure of writing to you a few lines. Hope the arrival of these lines will find you and all your family enjoying good health, as I would be glad.

Dear Mr. Swift, we are all well except myself, M.(Mary) Larkin. I never got well since I was in America.

I am real sorry for my soul trouble. I trust you will remember to say (a) prayer (for) me. God's will be done - everywhere praises his glorious name.

I intended sending you the shamrock. I hope you will have received (it) before St. Patrick's Day. Please write and let me know if you got (it), if pleasing to you, when convenient.

Do you hear from your friends in Boston now? Mr. Swift, how is Mrs. Quinn and family? Also your sister Mary? I sent you the shamrock last year (and) I do not know whether you got it or not.

I hear from the boy and girl that are in America. He is working for a farmer out in the country. He is doing well. He may go out where you are some time.

Your friend John Cooney is living yet - himself and your brother Martin were nearly the same age. Mother says he often inquires about you, Mr. Swift.

I trust you will get this letter and three leaf shamrock to remind you of old Ireland. I have not much to say. Trust your are all well. I will conclude, wishing you all happiness. Goodbye with love and regards from your cousin Mary Larkin and Mrs. M. Larkin Drumore.

Peterwell P. O.
County Galway
Ireland

To John C. Swift from Mrs. Bridget Larkin

Peterswell, Ireland
July 3, 1911

My dear Cousin, Mr. Swift,

I am writing to you a few lines. Hope the arrival will overtake you in the former state of health and all your family. Sorry to say that I am after burying my husband. He was not long complaining. He got the rites of the Church. We are feeling lonely after him. I hope to hear from you soo .

Your friend, John Cooney is buried also lately. There are a few of your friends still living, the John Nolan family.

Please give my best respects to your wife and family. Is there any of your family married? How is your sister? There are two boys of mine in Boston and one girl. She spent this winter in New York. I have a boy in a shop in County Galway in drapper shop. I have two boys in the home, two girls. The girl that come home from America is poorly able to do for herself. I am sorry my sister, Mrs. Malone is not living to write to you. Does Will ever write or his brother, James? How is Mrs. Quinn and family? The weather is very cool here at present and the crops are poorly yet.

Well, hope I will hear from you soon. Your friend, John Cusack, is keeping his bed and his wife is striving to do business the best way she can.

I am going to send a short account this time. I hope I hear from you after this and have the sure address as I would be glad. I will conclude sending you my best regards. I sent you two letters and got no account. Hope this letter will enlighten me in some way.

I will send you my address: Peterswell P. O. Co. Galway, Ireland

Mrs. Bridget Larkin

Boston, Mass.
Mar. 24, 1908

Dear Cousins,

I suppose you think you would never hear from us again. Well, when you know why you will not blame us. My dear old Father has passed to that great beyond after over seven months in bed. He died the 26 day of Jan. then my little boy took sick and it kept me busy those few months with sickness and a tending to my work. My boy is well now and going to school.

I hope all of you folks are well. I wish you would give me Mrs. Quinns address (Street number). Also let me know if John Quinns in St. Louis if so is he living at the old address.

Times are very dull here but James and I are on the go all the time. We have the N New England district to look after and sometimes we have New York. We are away from home quite a lot. James is now in Chiloppe, Mass.

I wont write any more this time but will write a longer and newsier letter next time as I am tired having just come home from New York City and I also have to get acquainted with the family. Aunt Maggie, Aunt Kate, James and family are all well, as far as I know.

Hoping all of you folks are enjoying good health.

I remain
Yours truly
William E. Mal one
14 Savin Hill Ave.
Dor.

Letter dated 18 March 1877 is written by Mary Cusack. Mary is actually of no blood relation to John C. Swift, but she is the daughter of John's stepmother, Bridget Fahy Swift Cusack. John's parents were Thomas Swift and Mary Connell. Mary Connell died, and Thomas remarried to Bridget Fahy. Then Thomas died, and Bridget remarried to John Cusack. Mary is the daughter of this latter marriage. Though he had no blood relation to the Cusacks, John C. Swift paid for passage to America for Mary and two of her siblings -- Winifred and Patrick. Mary returned to Ireland, and possibly also Winifred. I cannot find a definitive record for Patrick, but he spent some time in America. He went to Iowa where John C. Swift was living at the time to thank him for his kindness. In Mary Cusack's letter, she mentions "your Uncle Patrick" and this is referring to John's uncle Patrick Connell. She also mentions Patrick's daughters Mary Malone and Catherine. Mary's letter thanks John on behalf of her mother (Bridget Fahy Swift Cusack) for letting her know about Thomas's death. This refers to Thomas Swift, half-brother to John C. Swift (being a son of Bridget Fahy and Thomas Swift.) Thomas (Jr.) traveled to America, married and settled in Iowa not far from his half-brother. He worked for the railroad and was murdered by one of his employees who felt that Thomas had shorted him 75 cents on the payroll. He left two sons, and there may be living descendants.

The letter dated 15 May 1880 written by "Bert" Connell is almost certainly written by Patrick Connell. He writes thanking John for money that was sent because it helps him stay on the land. The letter mentions the writer's daughter, Mrs. Mary Malone. We know from family stories that John C. Swift was close to his uncle Patrick and lived with him and his wife prior to emigrating. I have understood that this was partially due to John not getting along well with his father, but it is hard to know the substance of that because John was a teenager at the time he lived with Patrick and Mary, and it is not unheard of that a teenager does not see eye-to-eye with his father. (I believe that John's mother had died when he was young, but I do not think that his father's remarriage was cause for any hard feelings since John maintained contact with Bridget Fahy Swift even after his father had died.)

The letter dated 6 Mar 1909 written by Mary Larkin is from a daughter of John's first cousin, Bridget Connell Larkin. (Bridget was a daughter of Patrick Connell and Mary Hynes. She married Michael Larkin. They lived in Dromore.) In the letter, Mary says that she never got well since she was in America and that she is "real sorry for her soul trouble." Those are intriguing remarks, but I don't have anymore detail about what they refer to. Mary also asks after John's sister, Mary, and Mrs. Quinn (also John's sister -- Bridget Swift married Thomas Quinn and lived in Iowa.) John's sister Mary, whom the family always called "Little Aunt Mary" because she was a tiny woman, did not marry. She lived in Iowa and supported herself with work as a seamstress, housekeeping or caring for others.

The letter dated 3 July 1911 is from Bridget Larkin (and her daughter Mary). Bridget was a daughter of Patrick Connell and Mary Hynes so a first cousin to John C. Swift. She states that her husband (Michael Larkin) had died recently, mentions some of her children though not by name, and also refers to her sister, Mary Malone, and her sons Will and James. She tells John that "your friend John Cusack" is not well. I believe this would be the John Cusack who is the son of John's stepmother Bridget Fahy Swift and her second husband John Cusack (John Cusack Sr. died 1902.)

The letter dated 24 March 1908 is from William E. Malone, son of Mary Connell Malone and Patrick Malone (and grandson of Patrick Connell and Mary Hynes.) He is writing from Massachusetts, and mentions that his father has died. He also mentions his brother James. Records show that William and James were both born in Washington, Iowa, the same place where John C. Swift lived, so I believe that Mary and Patrick Malone settled briefly there but then moved to the East Coast.