

Limerick hero's descendant comes back

BY RICHARD NAUGHTON

MEMORIES OF STAKER Wallace, the Kilfinane '98 hero, and of the eminent churchmen, Cardinal Cullen and Cardinal Moran, were recalled by the visit to Limerick last week of Mr. and Mrs. Mauritz de Blanc from The Hague, Holland.

Mrs. de Blanc is a descendant of Staker and a relative of both Cardinals, and is anxious to add to the file of information she already has on these national personalities.

Her father, the late John Brophy, was one of four brothers who emigrated from Ballyglass, Co. Wicklow, to Arizona in the late 1870's and helped pioneer this vast Indian territory. They prospered in the copper mining industry, and John, on his retirement, settled in San Francisco. There his daughter, Helen, met her future husband Mauritz de Blanc, an executive of the Shell Oil Company, who was on a business trip from the Dutch East Indies to the United States.

Escaped

Helen and her husband, Mauritz, were living in Singapore when the war broke out. They escaped to England and during the hostilities, Mauritz served as a Major in the Dutch East Indian Army. After the war he worked with Shell for a short period in Washington and then moved to the Hague offices of the company where he remained after his retirement some years ago.

Staker Wallace, who has now attained an identity with the E.E.C., may well be proud of the new generation that wears his blood if not his name; Mauritz junr., Singapore-born son of Mauritz and Helen de Blanc, is a Master of Business Administration, and his younger brother, Paul (named after Cardinal Cullen), who was born in Arizona, is a Master of Chemical Engineering, and is now studying law at Columbia University.

Married

Mauritz junr. is married to the former Miss Patricia Wallace, who is a pretty, red-haired descendant of the famous Staker.

Cardinal Cullen is a great-grand uncle of Mrs. Helen de Blanc. He was, as history tells, the first member of the Sacred College in Ireland, and

his nephew, Cardinal Moran, was the first Cardinal in Australia. During their visit to Ireland, the de Blancs met Rev. Peadar Mac Suibhne, who is writing a series of books on Cardinal Cullen and his contemporaries. They were told at the Irish Embassy in The Hague of Fr. Mac Suibhne's interest in Cardinal Cullen.

Staker Wallace, as every Kilfinane schoolboy knows, was a member of the militant Whiteboy organisation which waged war on oppressive landlords. He later became local leader of the United Irishmen—a militant republican movement founded by Wolfe Tone. On a day in 1798 Staker was run to ground in a bog by pursuing yeomen, brought to Kilfinane, hanged and beheaded. His head was mounted

on a spike above one of the town gates as a warning to would-be rebels.

A beautiful, haunting and descriptive air, "The Lament for Staker Wallace," is played by folk musicians throughout Ireland. One of them is Roy Ó Gealbhaín (Roy Galvin), and he, too, is a descendant of Staker.

It was too late for Mr. and Mrs. de Blanc, when they learned of Roy, to meet him, as they had to leave Limerick that afternoon with their touring party. But there is a compensation: Roy, an Irish champion exponent of the tin whistle, will record "The Lament" specially for the de Blancs, and soon this melody which commemorates the patriot Staker Wallace will be heard for the first time in The Hague.

Married in Limerick

WELL-KNOWN wholesale businessman, Mr. Pat Canny, son of Mr. and Mrs. Michael Canny, Clonlara Post Office, was married at the Church of the Holy Rosary, Limerick, to Miss Cora Hayes, N.T., eldest daughter of Mrs. Elizabeth Hayes, Caherdavin.

The officiating clergyman was Rev. Father Dan Lane, C.C., Mountcollins, and also present were Very Rev. Fr. John Hannon, P.P., Clonlara; Very Rev. Father Joseph Hayes, P.P., Cloughjordan; Very Rev. Father John Brown, P.P., Caherdavin; and Rev. Fr. Brendan Cleary, C.C., Clonlara.

Bestman was Mr. Donal Honan, who also read the epistle, and the groomsmen were Mr. John Gale and Mr. Francis Moloney. The bridesmaids were three sisters of the bride, the Misses Margaret, Tempy and Milly Hayes.

The bride looked charming in a gown of white silk trimmed with lace, with veil and train to match, and the pretty bridesmaids were in pink and white dresses, with picture hats to match, and carried baskets of flowers.

Mrs. Maureen Cummins presided at the organ and Mrs. Marjorie Bergin was the soloist.

A reception was held for more than 120 guests at the Hotel Greenhills and after the breakfast, music for dancing was provided by Bud Clancy's Orchestra. Many of the guests also contributed musical items.



Mr. and Mrs. de Blanc at Limerick's Intercontinental Hotel.

Picture: JOHN F. WRIGHT