

# Mrs. Nixon's ancestral home is in Limerick

THE ancestral home of the Ryans—Mrs. Nixon, wife of the United States President, is a descendant of the family — has been discovered in Co. Limerick following exhaustive research and investigations into the background of the family.

Throughout the past week, research work on records, files and newspaper cuttings has been going on to establish the exact location of the ancestral home of Mrs. Nixon on the Limerick-Tipperary border.

The search had commenced after I had telephoned Tipperary, seeking the location of the family roots.

Later in the week, I was present in the town when John D. Moore, the American Ambassador, came through personally on the phone to seek assistance in tracing the "Ryans of Tipperary" or any descendants of the family linked to the United States President's wife.

Mr. Moore said that they were interested in tracing the

relations as the Presidential group intended travelling to Kilfrush House by Tipperary and would be anxious to meet some of the Ryans.

## The call

The call was made to Michael Ryan, Annville, Tipperary, a rate collector and member of the Festival of Tipperary committee, who had as their guest, the Ambassador, last June.

During his brief mid-summer visit, Mr. Moore had learned of some records linking the family to the Nixon family.

Mr. Ryan spent a number of days tracing the relationship, and here, I want to acknowledge his invaluable assistance to me in filling in the picture.

From worn files and records of long ago, it has been proved, as far as can be ascertained, that the family in question originally lived in the village of Bانشa.

The priest of the parish, at the time, was in need of a site to build a new church.

No suitable site could be obtained.

The Ryans offered to have their own home knocked and

the church built on the site.

I understand that the church of the present day in the village is standing on this site.

The family moved to live at Gurnakisteen, a few miles from Pallasgreen, in the Parish of Nicker, and it was from Gurnakisteen that Mrs Nixon's ancestors emigrated.

## Anxious

The house is situated just over a mile from the main Limerick-Tipperary road, at the Cross of Cluggin, and is now occupied by William Ryan, his wife and family.

William was seated by the fire when I called, and was already aware of the interest which was developing around the single storey, thatched, Irish home.

He related to me his belief of the family connections.

Earlier suggestions that the Ryans had come from the well-known "Ice House" opposite Limerick Junction, and once known as Ryan's Hotel, or from the Parish of Solohead, were discounted.

William proved earlier mentions that both these families had their origins at Gurnakisteen, confirming a claim

that Mrs. Nixon's grandfather was a first cousin to the late owner of the "Ice House."

William told me that he had had no communication from anyone about the visit, and was still wondering if the President's wife would be their guest this week-end.

By this time, it had been established beyond reasonable doubt that this was the Irish home in question.

His brother, Patrick Ryan, who lives at Lower Hartstonge St., Limerick, is a mine of historical information on the subject, and told me that last year he had contacted an American who was trying to trace the ancestors of Mrs. Nixon in Ireland.

Another brother, Denis, is farming at Killonon, and there are numerous other connections on both sides of the Limerick-Tipperary boundary.

Full documentation of the relationship has been forwarded to the American Embassy in Dublin, and all interested families of Ryans in the area are anxiously awaiting further communication to confirm this Saturday as one of the most memorable days in their lives—with a visit by one of the world's leading ladies, Mrs. Nixon.

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Little Donal Ryan knows nothing about the fuss, but his father, Michael, was contacted by the American Ambassador to trace Mrs. Nixon's relatives.



Patrick Ryan, Limerick . . . one of Mrs. Nixon's relations.