

**Remarks By Michael McDowell**  
**on the**  
**Unveiling of a Commemorative Plaque at the**  
**Birthplace of**  
**Patrick MacCarvill**  
**at**  
**Blackraw, Threemilehouse, Monaghan,**  
**Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> July, 2015.**

It is truly a great honour to be invited by the extended clans of the MacCarvills and the Moynaghs, and particularly by Niall MacCarvill, to speak on the occasion of the unveiling of a memorial plaque to the late and great Patrick Mac Carvill here at his birthplace and family home at

Blackraw, Threemilehouse, in County Monaghan, one hundred and twelve years after his birth.

As someone who has “married into” the MacCarvill side of the clan - by marrying his grand-daughter Niamh Brennan – I am proud that my three sons have the blood of such a patriot, scholar and gentleman in their veins.

Indeed, my own sons have among their eight great-grand parents on both sides three who were imprisoned in the course of the War of Independence, one whose own home was officially demolished by explosion by order of Crown forces invoking martial law, and three who served in the Oireachtas.

Paddy MacCarvill was born into a small farmer’s family here in Blackraw. His father was Michael MacCarvill and his mother was Susan Moynagh. He was a lucky beneficiary of his uncle Monsignor Michael Moynagh’s great beneficence in the form of financial support sent home from Canada for his education at St Macartan’s in Monaghan and St Michael’s in Enniskillen and later in UCD medical school which he joined as an undergraduate in 1911 and from which he graduated with huge academic distinction in 1917, just as the Sinn Fein movement was gathering strength in the aftermath of the 1916 Rising.

I was delighted a number of years ago to be able to present Mackie Moynagh with the gold watch of Monsignor Michael Moynagh at a family re-union here in Monaghan a number of years ago.

Paddy and his brother Johnny joined the national struggle and played very different roles. Paddy was appointed the commanding officer of a flying squad in the IRA in North Monaghan, South Fermanagh and

South Tyrone; Johnny was infiltrated as an agent of Michael Collins into the RIC. Both played a very full role in the War of Independence.

Paddy was captured by Crown forces in Belfast and sentenced to 6 years imprisonment on 18<sup>th</sup> November, 1920, and was eventually released from Dartmoor at the request of Michael Collins, a jail in which my own grandfather had been held in 1916 and 1917, in October 1921 in the context of the Truce and the commencement of the Treaty negotiations. Collins arranged that he would be transferred to Mountjoy jail from which he was given parole to attend his mother, Susan's, funeral on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 1921. The funeral was attended by a huge number of mourners.

Paddy, like his fiancée Eileen McGrane (who had been captured and imprisoned by the British for her role in Cumann na mBan and as secretary to the fugitive Michael Collins) took the Anti-Treaty side and were interned for their strong support of the Anti-Treaty side in the Civil War.

Paddy and Eileen corresponded during this period and their letters make remarkable reading.

Paddy was released in the course of a lengthy hunger-strike in Kilmainham Jail in November 1923, and was restored to full health after a lengthy convalescence. He had been elected as an Anti-Treaty TD for Monaghan in 1922 and had been re-elected in 1923.

He was elected as a Fianna Fail TD in June 1927 but decided to leave the Dail and not to stand for election later in 1927 when the Cosgrave government narrowly scraped home.

From then on he concentrated on his stellar career as a medical specialist, but sought unsuccessfully to become a TD for Clan na Poblachta in 1948.

Truly , Paddy MacCarvill was a patriot, a great figure in Ireland's struggle for independence, a true Republican, and a true son of his beloved native county, Monaghan.

It is most important that his memory and great patriotism be kept and observed here in his native county, especially in this decade of centenaries.