

## Fr Patrick Alfred Mullally (son of Bridget Roche & Edward Mullally)



### Chaplain, US Army 35<sup>th</sup> Division - Knights of Columbus

Reverend Patrick Alfred Mullally was the eldest child of Edward Mullally & Bridget Roche. Bridget Roche was the eldest sister of my Great Grandfather Patrick Roche.

**The book UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CHAPLAINS IN THE WORLD WAR, published by the Army and Navy Chaplains Ordinariate, New York City, 1924, contains this information about Rev. Patrick A. Mullally:**

*"Born January 25, 1889, in Killenaule, County Tipperary, Ireland. Educated at Roscrea, Ireland National School, and the College, Mt. St. Joseph's Abbey, Roscrea, Ireland. Received theological training at St. Patrick's Seminary, Carlow, Ireland. Ordained June 4, 1916. Member of the K. of C. Served in France as K.C. Chaplain, October 1918--January, 1920. Administrator, St. Patrick's Church, Weston West Virginia Permanent address, St. Patrick's Church, Weston, West Virginia"*

Patrick Mullally was born at Killenaule in Co. Tipperary on January 25, 1889, his father Edward was an RIC constable and the family moved to Roscrea, Co. Tipperary when Patrick was a child. When he was 25 years old Patrick graduated from St Patrick's College in Carlow in 1916 and he was ordained a catholic priest the same year.

At this time a person studying to be a priest could be financially sponsored in their education by a particular diocese on the condition that once ordained the new priest would serve at this diocese. Patrick Mullally was sponsored by the Diocese of Wheeling, West Virginia, USA, this diocese would have paid for Patrick's room, board and classes at St Patrick's College in Carlow. After his ordination Patrick would have been required to immediately start serving this diocese and so on September 16, 1916 Patrick sailed from the port of Liverpool to begin his appointment at the diocese of Wheeling. His immigration records state that he arrived in New York on 24 September 1916 and his final destination was the home of Dr. O' Donoghue in Wheeling, West Virginia.

The 1917 Clarksburg, West Virginia city directory has an entry for Reverend Patrick A. Mullally, Assistant Rector of Church of the Immaculate Conception, home address was 126 East Pike Street.

**US Army Service:** In 1918 passenger records show that Patrick A. Mullally, priest, age 29, sailed from New York to Glasgow, arriving 16 Nov. 1918. At this time Patrick was a chaplain with the US Army 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry division stationed in France, he was registered with the Knights of Columbus. *(The Knights of Columbus were founded by Father Michael J. McGivney in New Haven, Connecticut, in 1882, originally serving as a mutual benefit society to low-income immigrant Catholics, it developed into a fraternal benefit society dedicated to providing charitable services, promoting Catholic education and actively defending Roman Catholicism in various nations)*

Patrick would have arrived in France just 1 week after the armistice on November 11, 1918. Thus he would not have experienced any battles himself, however he was confronted with many thousands of injured, dying and battle scarred soldiers - his task with the Knights of Columbus was to provide for the spiritual and temporal well-being of the US military personnel. About 80% of the 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry division were Catholic. The Knights of Columbus were involved in military camp welfare work from 1916-19. The Knights' Committee on War Activities provided "huts" with the slogan "Everybody Welcome, Everything Free" and were staffed by a secretary and a chaplain. Stationery, chocolate, cigarettes and entertainment were provided for all, as well as Catholic religious services. Educational programs were also sponsored by the Knights for soldiers. At the end of World War 1, General Pershing, the Commander of the US Armed Forces, said that, "of all the organizations that took part in the winning of the war, with the exception of the military itself, there was none so efficiently and ably administered as the Knights of Columbus."

During his period of service with the Knights of Columbus in France, Patrick's colleague was a Father Matthew Walsh who later became President of Notre Dame University in 1920. Father Walsh and Father Mullally remained lifelong friends after the war and it is from their written correspondence to each other in the 1920's and 1930's that I have obtained most of my information about Father Mullally. The original letters between Father Walsh & Father Mullally are located in the Notre Dame University archives.

***An extract from a letter by Father Walsh to Father Mullally dated August 03, 1922:***

*"My dear Father Pat: It was a long thought of you to write me as you did. I had taken it for granted that the Black and Tans had subdued you on your trip to Ireland. Like yourself I often think of the days in Paris and the terrible appetite you exhibited when-ever you came in the presence of a gum-drop. Not long ago I had the pleasure of meeting your former over-seas Vicar General. He had tears in his eyes when he spoke of you and referred to you as the most dependable chaplain in the service of the Knights of Columbus"*



***Fr Patrick Mullally (taken 1920's)***



**Father Matthew Walsh in his Army chaplain uniform during World War I.**

## **Clarksburg, West Virginia:**

By 1921 Father Mullally was back in the United States serving the parish of Clarksburg in West Virginia – he is listed in the 1921 Clarksburg City Directory as living at the same address of 126 East Pike Street. The Clarksburg area would not have been an easy posting for any Catholic Priest in the 1920's let alone a young Irish priest of only 30 years. The Ku Klux Klan had re-emerged nationally in the United States in the early 20th century, with a significant revival in West Virginia in the late 1910s and early 1920s. National membership briefly totaled several million. An out-of-state Klan publication carried reports from several West Virginia locations in 1924, including Clarksburg, Parkersburg, Williamson, and McDowell County. The Klan of the 1920s blatantly opposed Catholics, Jews, immigrants, and labor unions as well as blacks. Several Catholic public school teachers in West Virginia were fired at the Klan's insistence. The KKK also dabbled in politics and influenced the outcome of a number of local elections.

In the correspondence between Father Mullally and Father Walsh in the 1920's there are a number of times that Father Mullally's confrontations with the Ku Klux Klan members are referred to:

### ***An extract from a letter by Father Walsh to Father Mullally dated November 26, 1924:***

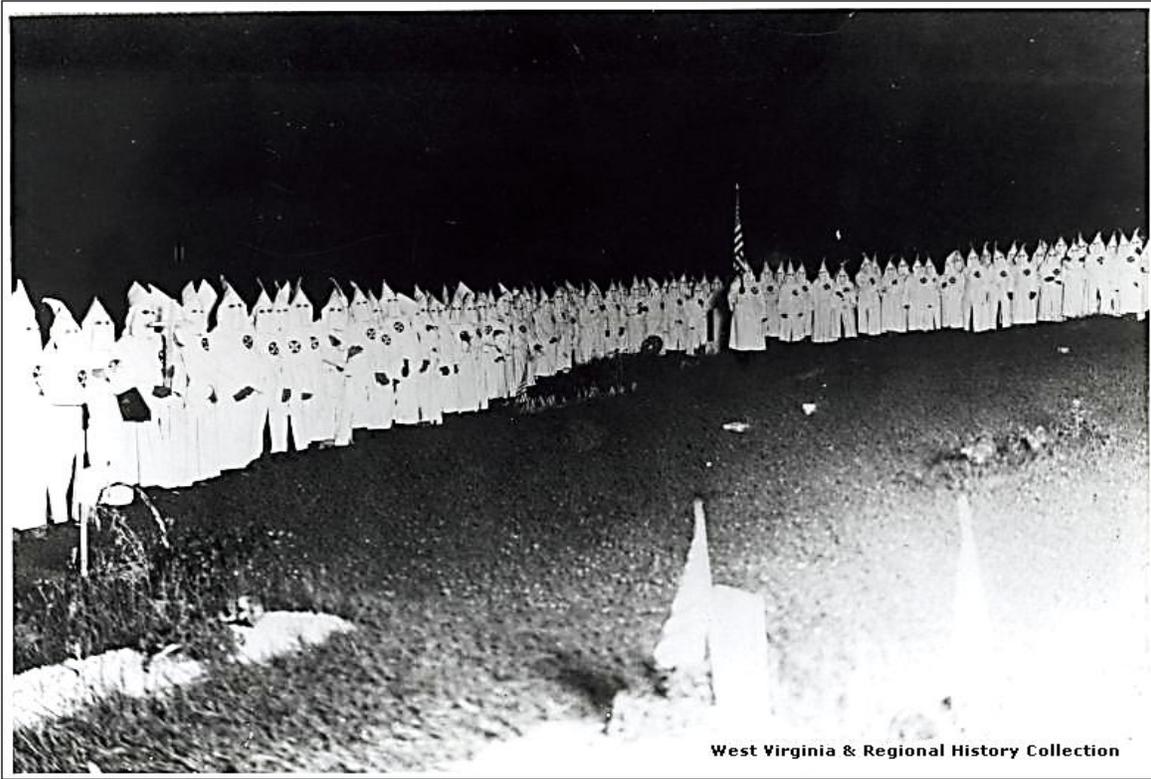
*"My dear Father Mullally: It is too bad that they do not award a Croix du Guerre for services in peace time. You have certainly merited any distinction that may come to you, and I prophesy a rough time for the Ku Klux Klan in your vicinity"*

### ***An extract from a letter by Father Mullally to Father Walsh dated December 13, 1925:***

*"On 11<sup>th</sup> November I dressed in uniform & marched in the Clarksburg parade. I did so to get even with some KKK's. I stepped in behind them and reminded them "you lot are out of step, not only here but everywhere, don't get nervous I am behind you""*

### ***An extract from a letter by Father Walsh to Father Mullally dated December 31, 1925:***

*"My dear Father Mullally: Your recent letter would indicate that you are more than holding your own in the neighbourhood of Shinnston. It would seem also, that the Bishop realises that you are doing a good job of it." "You have my hearty good wishes for a joyous and prosperous New Year, and I pray that your right arm may be strengthened in the event that the K.K.K. attempt to cause you any further annoyance."*



West Virginia & Regional History Collection

*1920 Ku Klux Klan Meeting at Lowndes Hill, Clarksburg, West Virginia*



West Virginia & Regional History Collection

*1929 Ku Klux Klan Rally Outside, Clarksburg, West Virginia*

**Early in 1923**, hoping to arrange for the service of a priest, even on a limited basis, several interested Catholics in the area of Shinnston (located 11 miles from Clarksburg) visited Reverend Father P. H. McDermott, then pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Clarksburg. Through his intercession, arrangements were made for his assistant, Father Patrick A. Mullally to come to Shinnston each week by street car to minister to the community. Sometime early in 1923, by decree of Archbishop Swint, St. Ann Parish of Shinnston was established as a separate entity.

Before the institution of St. Ann Parish, the Catholic people of Shinnston were faced with three difficult options: travel to the nearest Catholic churches which were in Monongah and Clarksburg, attend the services of other Christian faiths, or lose out altogether. By 1924 Father Mullally's permanent mailing address had changed to St Ann's rectory, Shinnston. Records indicate that he served as pastor to the people of St Ann's parish in Shinnston from 1923 to 1938.

*From St Ann's Parish Website - "The first Masses in Shinnston were held at the funeral-parlor of the Shinnston Furniture and Undertaking Company. Due to the swift increase in numbers of people attending, arrangements had to be made for a larger room which was found at the Rex Theatre. Soon a committee was formed to search for a suitable property to build upon"*

*"A harness shop which stood on the site of the present Church was purchased and converted into the first Catholic Church in this entire area extending as far as thirty-six miles on one diagonal. The acquisition also contained a residence which served many years as a rectory. Within a few years, the little wooden building needed an addition to accommodate its growing body of worshippers. This elongated rectangle, this long, low, glorified harness shop served the community for nearly thirty years. The present church was built in 1952".*

**In 1938**, Father Mullally was appointed to the new posting of Chaplain of St Mary's Hospital Clarksburg, West Virginia. Records show that while chaplain of St Mary's he wrote to the Bishop asking for permission to say a midnight mass for patients *"it would be open to patients of all creeds and a sprinkling of Ku Kluxer's"*.

In 1929 Patrick wrote to the Bishop of Wheeling Diocese asking for permission to return to Ireland as his mother Bridget (nee Roche) was unwell. We also know from correspondence that he was in frequent contact with his sister Catherine who had married a man named Clarke Lundell and she lived in the Bronx area of New York. Patrick's letters to Fr Walsh imply that his sister Catherine visited him in Clarksburg regularly. The records also indicate that by 1936 Father Mullally was not in good health, and we know from his 'Old Man World War 2 Draft Card' that by 1942 he was walking with a cane. He served in the post of chaplain at St Mary's in Clarksburg until 1945.

Another detail that emerges from the letters between Fr Mullally and Fr Walsh is that both were very interested in American Football. Fr Mullally frequently refers to the Notre Dame University team and he also mentions a number of young men in Clarksburg who he suggests to Fr Walsh would be good prospects for the team. He also talks about an interest in boxing and what fights he has recently seen.

***An extract from a letter by Father Walsh to Father Mullally dated October 17, 1927:***

*"My dear Father Mullally:*

*I am glad that you will be on for your visit a day or two prior to the game so that we may have a little time together. There is always a great jam on the days of the big games and the best one can do is to hover around a bit and get in a word here and there. Your coming early and staying over a while will make your visit more than merely attending a football game. In regard to your friend Father O'Brien, be sure and bring him along. I am sorry that it will not be possible to have him with us at the game itself, as the seats in my own box have long ago been taken care of by yourself and by other celebrities, but I shall see that Father O'Brien is in a position to enjoy the game. We will of course be crowded at the time but I would not think of your staying outside the University. If you are willing to put up with a little inconvenience. I am sure that you will more than compensate yourself by being in closer touch with the school activities. Let me know the time of your coming and I shall be glad to be on hand to pilot you to Notre Dame*

*Sincerely yours, President"*

#### **Death:**

**Father Patrick Alfred Mullally died on January 29, 1961 in Clarksburg, West Virginia**

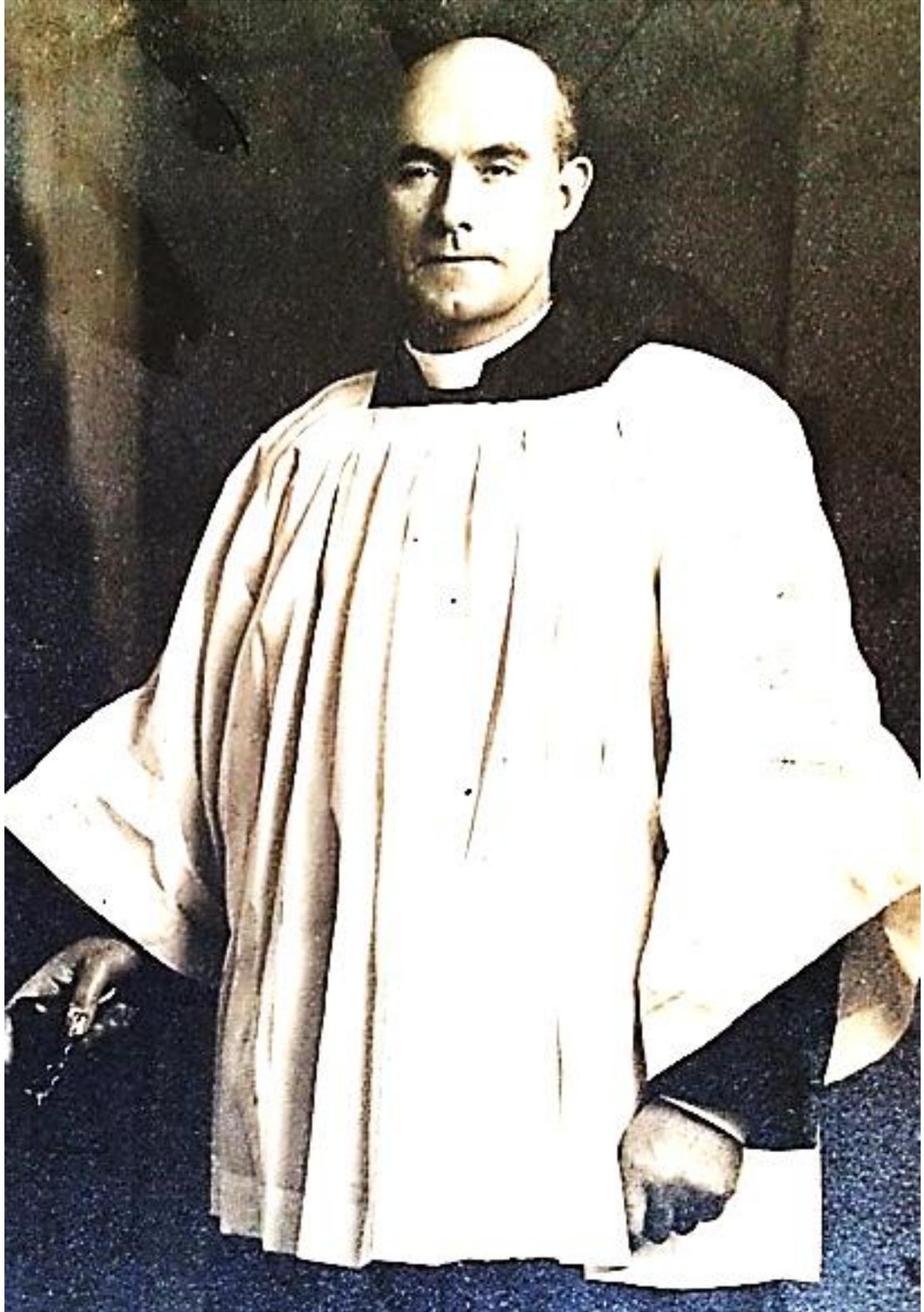
He died of a Myocardial Infarction (heart attack) aged 72 years.

He was serving at the time as the Pastor at St Ann's Church, Shinnston, West Virginia

His sister Katherine Lundell in New York is listed as the Informant on the death cert.



**Holy Cross Cemetery (Section A-Priest's plot) Clarksburg, West Virginia**



*FATHER PATRICK ALFRED MULLALLY*