

# MAMA –intends to rob the Government!

*Ann O'Hagan*

ALICE O'HAGAN of Glenboy, Manorhamilton, Co Leitrim (known affectionately as MAMA), my darling mother-in-law, will celebrate her 100th birthday on 6th of Jan 2016. One of the many stories she told to me was in relation to the day she was born. Her father, Mickey Harte, walked the whole way from Glenboy to Sweetwood in Killargue, to his sister's house to bring down a niece of his to help out with this new baby. Walking long journeys is thirsty work, so Mickey had brought a wee naggin of whiskey in his pocket for the journey. After a short visit with his sisters, off Mickey set and his niece walking alongside him. Whatever about Mickey, I'd safely say it would have been 'aisy' talking to the niece when she landed in Glenboy.

Mama, always and ever, speaks of her father with the utmost respect and admiration. Boys oh boys, how she loved her father. She was his shadow - they worked together outside on the farm. Mama tells of times her father talked to her, discussed what had to be done and asked her opinion on how to go about doing it. This act of thoughtfulness and confidence building I'm sure was the preparation for a very strong relationship, one that she still loves to speak of. Mama told of one time she landed home late from school, and her mother, Bridget Harte (Née Mc Dermott from Cornastalk), a very practical lady, knew what had to be done and got it done, no time for dossing, enquired as to what kept her. Mama gave her explanation. Later on herself and her father were heading out the hill to milk the



■ **Mama with her grandson Tony and his girlfriend Yvonne, having a wee chat before they head on their journey back to Australia.**

cows. Her father, stood for a moment, turned to mama and said "Now Alice, I heard what you told your mother - SHE might have believed ya". That's all he said and just walked on. Well, to this day, mama would say "If he beat me black and blue, it couldn't have hurt half as much!" To think that she had upset her father or done anything to alter in anyway, the concrete relationship they shared, caused her pain. Another wee story she told me recently, was of a time when she, as a child, cut her hand with

an empty tin. The cut was situated between her thumb and her index finger. It was bleeding badly. A neighbour man got a ladder, headed off to the byre, and brought down some cobwebs to put on the cut—to prevent the bleeding. Sure enough, that's exactly what it done, so if ever you happen to see any cobwebs in any house which you visit, just remember their probably stocking up for a bleeding accident!

Mama has always joked about the fact that she intends to rob the government. Last week when the

BIG birthday was mentioned she asked "How many children do I have now?" I said "5". She thought about it for a minute then she perks up and smiles: "I've a good bit taken off them already at that rate!" We had a good laugh at that. I thank God for the wonderful times myself and Mama have enjoyed, the opportunity I've had to hear her priceless stories which I've written down, and mo of all for the love we share for each other, right up to this very day. Mama's dementia has deteriorated, her eyesight and hearing are failing, but I have no doubt that Mama knows my voice to be that of someone she is glad to have around. She loves a wee chat, a wee laugh, and so do I. Our time together has always been precious. Mama's dementia causes her to forget and so I'm delighted to be able to relate her stories to her. This brings a smile to her face and lifts my heart. Doing this I feel I'm carrying out Mama's own motto in life, which is: "One must accept what cannot be changed". Love you Mama.

## ANN O'HAGAN

### TOO BLESSED TO STRESS

Did you dress yourself this morning  
Put your shoes on your own feet  
Walk to your kitchen, eat your breakfast  
Brush your hair, wash your own teeth

If you answered "Yes" to these questions  
Congratulations, you've passed this wee test  
Your reward is that now you will realize  
That you are much, much