



ÉDITION 2025 : « Héritage(s) »

ANGLAIS

COLLÈGE

TEXTE EN PROSE

Speaker, Chair, Taoiseachs all, and I — Deputy Prime Minister, TDs, senators, people of Ireland: It's so good to be back in Ireland.

If you'll forgive the poor attempt at Irish: *Ta me sa bhaile*. I'm at home. I'm at home.

I only wish I could stay longer.

But I always have a little bit of Ireland close by, even when I'm in Washington. In the Oval Office, I have the rugby ball signed by the Irish rugby team — the ball the team played when they beat the All Blacks in Dublin in 2021.

And, by the way, my cousin, one of Ireland's greatest rugby stars, Rob Kearney, brought it to D.C. on St. Patrick's Day in 2022 to give me.

[...] In 2016, I came to Ireland as Vice President, bringing most of my family with me: my sister Valerie, my brother Jimmy, my daughter, and my five granddaughters — and grandchildren. And my granddaughters are crazy about me, I might add, because I talk to them every single day; I send them a note.

Together, we explored our family history, visiting the Cooley Peninsula — where the Finnegans' ancestors earned their living on land and in sea — and walking the streets of Ballina, where my great-great-great-Grandfather Blewitt lived with his family before relocating in 1851, eventually settling in my hometown of Scranton, Pennsylvania.

Yesterday, I returned to County Louth, where I toured the Carlingford Castle, likely one of the last glimpses of Ireland my Finnegan ancestors saw as they gazed on their way out in what, in those days, was referred to as a "coffin ship." And they sailed out of Newry in 1850. [...]

Tomorrow, I will also revisit County Mayo and remember the history and hope and the heartbreak my Blewitt ancestors must have felt leaving their beloved homeland to begin their new lives in America.

I say all this not to wax poetic about bygone days but because of the story of my family's journey — and those who left and those who stayed — is emblematic of the stories of so many Irish and American families, not just Irish American families.

And these stories are the very heart of what binds Ireland and America together.

They speak to a history defined by our dreams. They speak to a present written by our shared responsibility. And they speak to a future poised for unlimited, shared possibilities.

So, today, I'd like to reflect on the enduring strength of the connections between Ireland and the United States, a partnership for the ages.

It begins in our shared history, dating back to the very founding of the United States.

The Irish hearts that helped kindle the torch of liberty in my country and fire its revolutionary spirit.

The Irish blood from across this island that was willingly given for my country's independence.

The Irish hands that laid the foundations of a new kind of future, one from the bottom up and the middle out, one built on freedom. [...]

PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN, *Remarks by President Biden to the Houses of the Oireachtas*, April 13, 2023