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Description

NBC's Mike Leonard goes to Ireland in search of distant relatives. Leonard is able to trace his lineage back several generations and discusses the hard lives of his ancestors.

Keywords


Citation

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"Correspondent Mike Leonard Traces His Roots in Ireland." Mike Leonard, correspondent. NBC Today
JANE PAULEY (anchor): President Reagan leaves tomorrow on a trip that many Americans have made, back to Ireland to look for the places the family once called home. On his Cross Country this morning, Mike Leonard takes us on a similar voyage of rediscovery that he made recently.

MIKE LEONARD (reporting): In the Dublin National Library, it starts with just a name in a book, and from there the anticipation builds. What should I expect to see?

Unidentified man: About your family? They expected that they were just human beings and they lived a hard life.

MIKE LEONARD: In the ensuing search, counties were narrowed to cities, then to town lands and to parishes. An old priest goes back a century to find the handwritten registration of a baptism. And then I find…Hi, Martin Leonard?

MARTIN LEONARD: Hello.

MIKE LEONARD: I’m Mike Leonard.

MARTIN LEONARD: Hi son, how are you?

MIKE LEONARD: How are you? My father’s first cousin, with a son my age, pictures, and a grandfather’s birthplace. Two hundred miles away, the family tree bends in another direction, around faces young and old, to a cemetery overgrown, and back to the rocky field, the abandoned houses and the old man left behind with the bittersweet memories of a family’s and a nation’s flight, for Today, Mike Leonard, NBC News, Newcastle, County Sligo, Ireland.