

## Assisted Ireland To Gain Freedom

**Col. Dalton, Whose Father  
Was Born Here, Pays Vis-  
it to New England.**

Visits with friends and relatives in Somerset, the birthplace of his mother, were included on the itinerary of Col. Charles Dalton of Ireland, son of Mr. and Mrs. James F. Dalton, 71 Ashland street, Taunton, an ex-officer of the Intelligence department of the Irish Republican Army, (1918-1921), and author of the book, "With the Dublin Brigade." Most of his time after arriving here on the second trip of the Queen Mary to New York was spent in Taunton where his parents have made their home for several years. A day was spent at the homestead where Mrs. Dalton, formerly Catherine Reilly, his mother, was born. The home is now occupied by Charles Reilly, superintendent of streets in Somerset. A cousin of the visitor, John Lynch, plant superintendent of the Somerset Water Works, also entertained them.

## Visits Mother's Birthplace in Somerset



## The House of Representatives

This post is about working with the system in mind. It is my attempt to describe something that, frankly, is probably better understood as experienced and embodied than in its indescribable form.

Yes, I know, cryptic stuff.

A little background to this - I am currently enrolled on a Practitioner course in facilitating systemic constellations for (usually) organisational or business coaching contexts. This is being run by a very gifted facilitator named [John Whittington](#), and is proving to be the most amazing space for developing knowledge, understanding and experience of a very particular way of working with issues, problems or unresolved and unwanted patterns in career, team or organisational life. We're 2/3 of the way through the course now, and in our most recent sessions we have been looking at family constellations. Inevitably this brings one's thoughts around to what is really important in life, and in what it really means to you achieving everything your life has to offer. I already know from the Personal Development module on the MBA that a lot of people are puzzled by their rational but frustrated attempts to resolve

(or even understand) the weird and wonderful barriers in their working lives. This approach has given me fresh insight, ways of working and energy to take into my workshops.

A constellation is the arrangement of the key elements in a system such that new information is revealed. It can be as simple as a moving few inanimate objects that represent people, ideas, events (or anything you can imagine) on a table top, or as complex as using actual people to represent systemic elements (including, of course, other people). In the latter case, the issue or problem holder is asked to choose someone to represent a critical part of their system and then move them gently into a given space to a position that their "felt sense" understands to be true. Once all the representatives have been placed, and are standing in relation to each other in the boundary (e.g. the circle of chairs) surprising things happen. New information about hitherto unacknowledged truths or realities is revealed. This happens because these connections are already part, at some level, of the field of knowing that the system uses to maintain its status quo as a system. In so doing, constellations offer the chance to affirm and re-affirm healthy relationships. And they can be eye-opening. They are not formal diagrams or charts but rather an embodied way of understanding hidden dynamics and entanglements.

Now all this, of course, is hard to explain and I won't blame you if you think it definitely all sounds a bit "woo-woo". It does. But, properly done, it isn't. Frankly, you just have to go with the experience and be respectful of what comes up. And come up it does! Systemic elements that are excluded or forgotten are always *re*-remembered by the system at an unconscious level, even if those elements have lain lost in the systemic memory for some time. Business systems with former entanglements or unspoken secrets will tend to remain disruptive and troublesome, despite the best efforts of plenty of intelligent people to 'fix' things. Time (who came first?), belonging (who has been excluded?), and the balance of exchange between give and take, these are all powerful principles in organisational health (or the lack of it). Where there is a glitch, the system will 'recruit' someone else to carry that earlier ignorance, trauma or violation. This, of course, can make it very hard for current or future members of an

organisational system to find their place, achieve their potential or complete their tasks and succeed.

Systemic constellations were first developed by a group of people in application to Family Therapy, and in particular by a German called [Bert Hellinger](#), who drew on his own life story and a lifetime of learning to realise that every system has certain universal ordering principles, especially families - and even societies. He describes this work as applied philosophy rather than therapy, which I think is correct, though the outcomes are often so therapeutic that they are life-changing. The loving and respectful reconciliation or return of responsibility and order to where it belongs in a family system is important if you want to be free to be you while still acknowledging the great chain of being that made you.

The value of my recent training, aside from the incredible coherence and strength of bond with the learning group, is the re-examination of the concept of the self. As this is a core idea of the MBA PD module, I am very grateful for the chance to sit on the other side of the learner fence. It made me reflect on the difficult balance between being solitary and separate from others, while at the same time needing "the other" in order to know what it is to be solitary. In point of fact, it is precisely our points of contact with other people and enables 'selflessness' (a new word). At the macro-level the great chain of being is the great chain of **us**, and this means we must develop a proper understanding of the other to be ourselves. This is what I think the word compassion actually means; a positive regard for the self/other polarity.

*[the photo at the top is my grandfather standing with his hand on the shoulder of my father]*



---

## Chris Dalton

Learning Expert, Tutor, Educator, Facilitator and  
Associate Professor at Henley Business School, FHEA