Early Immigrant Life

Three immigrant stories in this issue tell about families in early Lowell, Worcester and New York City. The three-family home shown on the right is related to a story while the other two images are examples from Lowell and New York City.

Living conditions in the Acre in 1912, the section of Lowell where Irish immigrants first settled.

John Couming searched for this house in Worcester when he arrived in the United States.

A tenement kitchen in New York City Lower East Side. Photo from Tenement Museum, New York City.

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I'm writing this in the weeks before the Thanksgiving and contemplating traditions. When my family discussed the menu for this year's feast, we talked about the possibility of eliminating the turkey. Over the last few years, we've developed a new tradition - salmon for the semi-vegetarians. In the end, we decided to keep the turkey option - mixing old and new traditions.

TIARA has been following a similar pattern - maintaining some familiar programs and instituting some new ones. We will have met once again at the Wayside Inn for our annual Banquet in November. At last year's Banquet, TIARA honored over forty long term members. Those members who were present received pins and certificates and posed for a group photo. Other members received their recognition through the mail.

This year we will continue the tradition of honoring those who have been members of TIARA for twenty-five years. Our new group is as follows: Edward Clark, Eleanor Correia, Bernie Couming, Carlyn Cox, Paul Danahy, Allis Edelman, Robert Fitzgerald, Maryann Flaherty, Eleanor Fusoni, Robert Gallagher, Richard Hayes, Marion Huard, Nancy Kane, Richard Kaplan, Daniel & Denise King, David & Julia Riley, Claire Rodley, Mary Ann Scheiner, David Timpany and Alice Wadden. We are so glad that all these folks have made TIARA membership a long-standing tradition!

Another tradition that will continue is the Celtic Connections Conference taking place August 10-11, 2018. As in the previous two conferences, there will be a fantastic lineup of national and international speakers: Kyle Betit, Audrey Collins, Marie Daly, Bruce Durie, Fiona Fitzsimons, Nora Galvin, Maurice Gleeson, John Grenham, Donna Moughty, Chris Paton, David Rencher, John Schnelle, Darris Williams and Christine Woodcock. At the 2016 Celtic Connections Conference, our partner organization, IGSI (Irish Genealogical Society, International) instituted a very successful pre-conference city tour. TIARA has decided to make this a conference tradition and will offer an August 9th bus tour of Lowell. The tour will include the Lowell National Historic Park, the Boott Cotton Mill and the Immigrant Girl Experience. We hope to include a stop for ice cream and a possible drive by Concord Old North Bridge and Walden Pond if traffic allows. Check the conference website [www.celtic-connections.org](http://www.celtic-connections.org) for more details as they develop. (CONTINUED ON PAGE 69)
The Coumings originated from a small dot on the map of Ireland in Bansha, County Tipperary but now they populated three continents, Europe, Australia and North America. Ireland called two of the seven children back home and several American offspring served the church.

John Joseph Couming was the first son of Irish Constabulary (RIC) Chief Constable Mathew Couming and his wife, Mary O’Donnell of Bansha, County Tipperary. He was the first of his siblings to emigrate to the United States, although his older sister Catherine had previously migrated to Charters Towers, Queensland, Australia in 1888.

John Joseph in 1895 at the age of 26, sailed on the ship St. Paul, from Queenstown County Cork for Ellis Island. He had a letter, directing him to take the train to Union Station, in Worcester, and then walk two miles to a residence at the corner of Lincoln and Catherine Streets, there to knock at the rear (servants) door, to ask for his “cousins”, Margaret Shaw, Mary Drohan, and Delia Wharton, servants employed in the household of the Barnard Family. They were expecting him.

John’s initial employment in Worcester was as a wire-worker at the Wickwire-Spencer Steel and Wire Company on Grove Street. It was not long before he was made a shop foreman. This proved a beneficial position, as he later hired his younger brothers as they arrived from Ireland, first Matthew, the youngest, in 1898, then Michael in 1900, and finally Thomas in 1904. None of these brothers seemed well suited for the wire works employment, perhaps due to John’s reputation as a tough task master, and all three worked there for only a short period.

“But on arrival there, they were collared by a “big Irish cop” who pointed toward the bridge across the river to Cincinnati.”

John’s Brothers

Second born brother, Michael, achieved his U.S. citizenship in Worcester in 1905, but shortly thereafter returned to Bansha. He was working as shop assistant at his parents’ grocery and pub in the 1911 Irish census. He died in 1914 at the age of 39, unmarried and childless.

Younger brother, Thomas, left Worcester and moved to Merrimac, Mass. working for the Forestry Department. He had married Cathy Murphy in 1908 in Manhattan, where their first son Thomas was born. A second son, Gerard, was born in Worcester but died in infancy. The infant death precipitated a move to Providence, RI, where their third son, Matthew was born. Eventually they made a final move to Merrimac on the NH border. Once there, Thomas changed his family’s surname to Cummings. Family oral history held that the surname change was due to some legal issue. His sister-in-law, Anastasia Couming recommended the identity change, perhaps prompted by the fact that her husband had been “mislabeled” as Corporal Matthew “Cummings” by the U.S. Army during his tour of duty in Cuba.

John’s youngest brother, Matthew, settled in Worcester after a stint in the U.S. Army. He married Anastasia Wall, an immigrant from Waterford. They raised their family in Worcester, first at 12 Hooper Street (around the corner from his brother John at Catherine Street), and later at Blossom Street. Matthew was employed briefly as a wireworker with brother John, then as a motorman for the Worcester County Street Railway. They had two boys, (besides a third who died as an infant). The younger of the two, William R. became a diocesan priest in Maryland. The older of the two, Donnell M. married Grace I. Stewart...
and they had three sons and three daughters.

John’s Family

The children of John J. and MaryAnn Keenan, who immigrated from County Louth, were bright and ambitious, as shown by their educational and occupational success. First born (1898), Matthew J. started a family tradition of college attendance, graduating from Holy Cross College in 1920.

His wife, Anna (Glavin), and Matt had one son and one daughter. The next three boys followed Matt to Holy Cross College; John F. ’24, Aloysius “Al” P. ’26, and Paul B. in the class of 1928. Rev. Fr. Paul had no progeny, nor did the two middle sons, John and Al, who married, but remained childless.

The occupations of John and MaryAnn’s sons reflected their educational achievement as Matt went into teaching, and eventually was the Headmaster of Classical High School in Worcester. John “Jack” worked up the ranks of management at New England Telephone, finally appointed as Treasurer of the Telephone Workers Cooperative Bank. Aloysius “Al”, was an entrepreneur and owned several gasoline stations for Texaco Oil Corporation. Paul, as a “late vocation” to the priesthood, joined the Edmundite Order in Vermont from whence he served the black community in Selma, Alabama, followed by Diocesan assignments in various Florida parishes.

John J.’s youngest son, Thomas M. was of a “different mold”. Although bright and successful through high school, he chose to seek other occupational pursuits rather than college. After a brief stint at a boxing career, (Boys Club Flyweight Champion), he tried being a “lamplighter” for the city, a clerk in a liquor store, and a grocer at Hickey’s Market.

At the age of 21, the conditions during the “Great Depression” had him chasing farming labor across the midwest via boxcar transit systems, i.e., “riding the rails”. He told how he and a companion targeted the Kentucky Derby as a likely money maker, but on arrival there, were collared by a “big Irish cop” who pointed toward the bridge across the river to Cincinnati. The two lads protested that they hadn’t a dime between them to pay the ten cents toll required for pedestrian passage.

The cop gave them a shiny silver dollar and said “March”. They were thrilled and went happily to Cincinnati where they got a great meal and had change left over from the dollar.

In 1934 Tom had settled down enough to marry Rita M. Leonard and by 1942, with wife and five children in tow, took wartime employment at the Fore River Shipyard in Quincy as a pipe-fitter. They moved into the newly opened Boston Housing Authority Project, Orchard Park, Roxbury.

Two years later, Rita’s father, Peter J. Leonard, bought a two-family house at Moultrie Street, Dorchester and invited his daughter Rita and family to “share” the new home with him. His expectation was to be “cared for in his old age” by his daughter, Rita. Nine years later, Peter changed his mind and sold the house, effectively evicting Rita’s family. At age 72 he may have started to
become confused. Less than a year later, he passed away at a nursing home in Boston.

Tom also was battling the demon, rum, but was rescued by “Father Bill’s cure”, Alcoholics Anonymous and its “12 steps program”. Tom’s epiphany generated a lifelong support system for similarly addicted victims, Tom becoming a “go to” supporter for the afflicted.

After Peter Leonard sold his house, Tom, who now worked in maintenance at the Boston Housing Authority managed to arrange new living quarters at Franklin Hill Project on American Legion Highway, Dorchester in St. Leo’s Parish where their seven children grew to maturity.

John J. and MaryAnn’s oldest daughter, Mary V. entered the Congregation of St. Joseph convent and graduated from Our Lady of the Elms College in Holyoke. As Sister Bernard Marie, she taught in the Springfield Diocese eventually becoming the Mother Superior of her order dying at age 96, the longest lived of the eight siblings. Meanwhile, their second daughter, Alice G. graduated high school at age 16, but was denied admittance to the Memorial Hospital School of Nursing as “too young” for admittance. She went to work for a local doctor for the two year “wait time” and obtained a Bachelor and Masters degrees, in addition to her R.N. She had a lifelong career as Nursing Administrator at Memorial Hospital, and was the “matronly” medical resource for the entire family of siblings and their families, as well as her parents.

The youngest of John J. and MaryAnn’s children, Agnes C. had a rough start, as at age five she was diagnosed with diphtheria in 1915, an era when the disease was considered extremely dangerous. Doctors expected she’d not survive but she was made of better mettle than they expected and she recovered most of her strength and vitality. Her education was directed to Girl’s Trade High School, where she learned the millinery trade and at age 28 she married J. William Murray of Franklin, NH.

The couple moved in with her parents at 117 Paine Street. The household at Paine Street was not only composed of the Murray parents, Agnes, Bill and their two girls, but also Agnes’ sister, Alice G, and Bill’s father, Michael “Mike” Murray. Tom & Rita’s three girls and two boys lived across the street at 114 Paine Street. With seven grandchildren, all born between 1935 and 1941 on Paine Street, the two households with three grandparents, two sets of parents and one maiden aunt had their hands full.

Bill’s dad, Mike, was befuddled by Grandpa John’s popularity with all these grandkids, until he discovered his “Pied Piper” routine to the local ice-cream shop.

**John’s Sisters**

Although John’s second sister Mary, aka “Polly”, emigrated to Worcester in 1903 via Boston, she returned to Bansha to run her parent’s pub and grocery shop. She married but had no children.

John’s third sister, Ellen, (known by most as Nellie) arrived in the early 1900’s, actually traveling more than once back and forth according to the passenger records. She married Charles S. P. Reardon of Worcester. They had 5 children, including a pair of twins who died in infancy. First born was Frank J. who became a printer, and worked that trade for 35 years at the Worcester Telegram & Gazette, then several other newspapers. He also married and had two sons and one daughter. He lived his life in Worcester and died in 1995 at 86 years of age. His two sisters never married, but Mary, the oldest had a career as a teacher and school administrator after acquiring her teaching and master’s degrees at Worcester State. Her younger sister Loretta worked until retirement in Boston.

All of these Coumings on three continents shared their lives with each other by regular correspondence and shared photos via postal mail. Sadly, only tidbits have survived. These vignettes complete a capsule view of “one man’s family” in this new world. Further research and stories await, especially the collateral families of those domestic servant “cousins” who greeted John J. Couming on his arrival in 1895.
Along one shore of Marblehead Harbor, wealthy Bostonians built mansions on Marblehead Neck to enjoy the cool summer breezes. On the inner side of the Harbor, a cluster of Irish immigrants established a community and struggled through sultry summers with the odors of horse dung and open sewers, and cold winters in unheated houses. This was the ‘Shipyard’ where John Downey and Rose Monaghan lived.

John was baptized in 1839 in the local church in Kingscourt, Co Cavan, Ireland. Two younger brothers, James Jr (1842) and Mathew (1845), were subsequently born to James Downey and Catherine Farrelly during the hard times of the Great Famine. Tragedy followed two years after Mathew’s birth with the death of their father in 1847 just when times might have been getting better.

Their mother, Catherine Farrelly Downey first appears as a widow in the 1854 Griffiths map of Rathloughan (Rathloughan), Co Meath, a small rural village within the Diocese of Kingscourt. She is living in a small cottage on one-third acre of land including a garden, which is leased from John Farrelly. Her husband was listed as a laborer so this house was one that would have been leased to a cottier or hired worker on the farm. Whether the Downey family lived there before his death is unknown. Perhaps her landlord is a brother or her father. Family may have been looking after her during the famine and helped with raising the boys. John, being the oldest boy, was probably put to work without schooling since he never learned to read and write. His brothers, James Jr. and Mathew, were more fortunate as was his wife, Rose. Most likely the boys had to haul water daily from the local well just as the son, James Jr., did when he later built a stone cottage on an adjacent piece of the same land.

John’s granddaughter tells the story that John was in love with a local girl named Rose Monaghan, but Rose wanted to go to America. John was reluctant. However, he finally made the move at the age of 29 and arrived in New York City, June 13, 1868 aboard the ‘SS Louisiana’ from Liverpool. Rose, at 17 years of age, arrived a few months later, September 18, 1868, on the same ship with her brother, Patrick. She found work and board as a domestic in Marblehead, Mass. working for the family of Richard Evans, a master mariner, while John was living in a boarding house in Lynn. John and Rose were married at the Star of the Sea Church in Marblehead May 9, 1871. His younger brother, James, remained in Ireland, was a farmer, and we never knew he existed until 2014. The youngest, Mathew, became a shoemaker, married in 1871 at the age of 26 after John had left Ireland, and had a son, James (III) in 1872.

John and Rose must have settled in Marblehead after their marriage. He appears in a list of taxpayers in the 1875 City Directory but is not listed in the main body of the directory until 1882 where his occupation is teamster and his address is 37 Commercial Street. He remained at this address the rest of his life. Commercial Street and the surrounding area which bordered on Marblehead Harbor was called the
children. Two days after Christmas your first-born, Catherine, expires from whooping cough but you still must tend to a five-year old with the same infection and a three-year old with diphtheria in a cold drafty bedroom. Perhaps you are hauling bowls of steaming water to alleviate the coughing spasms of Mary Ann in bed beside her brother, John, languishing from diphtheria. No time to cry over your lost Catherine. But two days later Mary Ann is gone, then another two days and three-year old John has passed on. You are left holding your baby James, exhausted, staring off into the distance, wondering if James will be lost too. How do you carry on?

But they made their way and had three more children, Annie (1880), Thomas (1882) and Rose Helena (1885). While John started out as a laborer, by 1882 he was a 'teamster'. As a teamster, he managed a horse-drawn wagon and was one of a cadre of men who were the life-blood of the local economy by delivering raw goods from trains to factories and finished goods from factories to stores.

The average day for a teamster began before dawn as he fed and harnessed his horse, attached the wagon, drove to his first assignment, loaded the wagon, then unloaded the goods at its destination. Often, he repeated this scenario for 12-hour days for a daily rate of $2. If the goods were damaged he was financially responsible.

Christmas of 1879 turned out to be a devastating time for the family; the three oldest children all died within several days. Just imagine yourself as a parent of four children ages 7, 5, 3 and 10 months. It is cold; days after a rugged Christmas with three sick children.
Then he ended the day with the care and feeding of his horse and bedding him down for the night. At first, John was employed as a teamster by a local company but by 1900 at the age of 61 he listed himself as self-employed. By 1903, when John was tapering off his working hours, the teamsters unionized and became a formidable advocate for the hardworking delivery men. Trucks were now replacing horse-drawn vehicles and yet the term ‘teamsters’ remained in the union’s title, The International Brotherhood of Teamsters.

John had prospered and saved because he not only owned the two-family house at 37 Commercial St, but also three other properties at 35, 54, and 56/58 Commercial St. It appears that the early Irish in the Marblehead Shipyard area were a frugal group, saving their money to purchase several lots of land and houses. In turn, the rental incomes added to enhance their economic status.

In 1876, his youngest brother, Matthew, still living in Ireland lost his wife. He emigrated with his son, James (III), aged 7 in 1879. He left his 5-year-old daughter, Catherine, in Ireland with relatives. In the 1882 and 1884 City Directories, Matthew and James (III) are living at 37 Commercial St with John Downey. Within a few years Matthew purchased a home at 20 Prospect St, about 2 blocks away from his brother. His daughter, Catherine, did not emigrate until she was about 16 years old. In the meantime, Matthew had remarried and produced another set of six children. Catherine married Andrew Pendergast, a liquor merchant, and lived in Boston. Matthew’s son James (III), married Elizabeth Heffernan from Ballyfruta, Co Limerick. He was employed in a shoe factory in Lynn, Mass and his salary was based on the number of leather shoe pieces he cut per day. They lived in Swampscott, Mass. and had three boys, the youngest of which was the author’s father.

John’s children grew up in the Shipyard area of Marblehead. James, called Henry, owned a grocery store at the corner of Barnard St and Atlantic Ave and was also the janitor in Star of the Sea Catholic Church, the same church where he had been the head altar boy. He married Elizabeth Nealin and they had one child, a son, John Henry, who had 9 children. He served in the US Navy and ran a diaper service in Arlington, Mass. The motto on his trucks - “We’ve got you covered”. Daughter, Annie, married Joseph Callahan and lived across the street from her parents at 32 Commercial St. It was claimed that she “was a beautiful girl with a beautiful voice and sang in the church choir for many years”. They had no living children. Son, Thomas, became the local blacksmith and had a large barn and shop nearby on Atlantic Avenue. Having a blacksmith and barn must have been a help to John in the upkeep of his teamster horses. Thomas’ grandson remembers the blacksmith shop as the ‘hangout’ for the local men. Thomas married Helen Mullen and had twin girls. He enjoyed children and his grandchildren spent much time playing in his shop and watching events unfold. Thomas became totally deaf most likely from the pounding of metal on metal in the shop. The youngest child, ‘Lena’, married James Corbett and, lived in Salem. Her son, Carroll,
became a successful business man and daughter, Doris, was a nurse.

As of 2014, I did not know anyone from John’s family but since that time I have connected with his grandson, John Henry ‘Hank’ now 89 years old, and his granddaughter Doris who was 92 at the time but has since died, as well as all their children and grandchildren.

Sources
- Baptismal and death records from Kingscourt Parish Church, Kingscourt, Co Cavan
- Personal communication from Seamus Monaghan whose job was to bring water from the well for James Downey Jr.
- Reading skills, immigration dates, addresses from US Census, Irish Census, Salem/ Marblehead City Directories
- Immigration from New York Passenger lists
- Marriage record John & Rose, Archdiocese of Boston
- Living conditions and personal notes on John’s children from, Cudihy, Edward J., Memories of the Marblehead Irish, Marblehead Messenger, photocopy, date unknown.
- History of teamsters - https://teamster.org/about/teamster-history/early-years

Watch for another change on www.tiara.ie in early 2018. A generous donation allowed TIARA to hire a designer to update our website. Much time was spent by Donation Committee & Website Committee members studying our existing site considering what to keep, and what to change. Thanks to all who have contributed to this effort over many months. A special thanks to Dick Wright who has worked closely with the web designer to develop concepts and translate technical issues. Thanks also to Virginia Wright who has spent hours checking old links and adding new ones. When our new website makes its debut there will still be areas needing additional work. Volunteers will be welcomed.

So as we approach the holiday season of traditions and the upcoming new year… TIARA will continue to honor tradition while embracing change!

Susan Steele
Susan Steele, Co-President
president@tiara.ie

Recipients of TIARA 25-Year Pins and Certificates

Longstanding members of TIARA were recognized at the annual banquet held November 11, 2017.

First row L to R: Bernie Couming, Carlyn Cox, Eleanor Correia. Second row L to R: Dan King, Denise King, Richard Kaplan, Alice Wadden, Mary Ann Scheiner; Co-Presidents: Virginia Wright, Susan Steele.
John Finnegan, my third great grandfather, was born about 1839 in the province of Connaught in Ireland. As a young man, he went to Oldham, England to work in the textile mills. John became a cardroom jobber in a cotton factory. He met and married Mary Ann Meyers from County Galway and they had seven children. Maria, Finneghan, my great, great grandmother, born in Oldham in 1859, was their oldest child. According to UK census records the Finnegans lived in an Irish neighborhood and the children attended school, as later documents show that they were literate.

On May 3, 1886, Maria's 16-year-old brother, John Willie, arrived in New York City. Maria followed her brother to America and by 1889, her father John and three younger brothers (Owen b. 1873, Edward b. 1875, Patrick b. 1877) had immigrated. Sadly, Mary Ann had died of a stroke in 1886. Two sisters, Catherine and Margaret, stayed in Oldham. Maria, her father and four brothers settled in the Centralville section of Lowell, Mass.

The family first appeared in the Lowell City Directory in 1891. Their father, John, worked at Lawrence Factory, as a cardroom jobber and he worked at the same place through 1906. Owen and John Willie worked as machinists and Edward was at Lowell Mfg. Company. The youngest, Patrick appeared in the directory in 1893 & 1894. He started work at the Merrimac Print Works at about age 15.

Maria was not listed in the Directory, she was probably keeping house for her father and brothers. She was 35 years old and unmarried in May 1894 when she gave birth to my great grandmother, Mary. The father was James Dwyer, a clerk, who lived on the same street. He was at a different address by the time Mary was born. Mary was baptized in Saint Michael's Catholic church in Centralville about 6 months after she was born, late for an Irish baby. The godparents were not fam-

“A carding machine cleans masses of cotton and aligns individual fibers to produce a single fiber which is prepared for spinning. It is the most important factor for spinning.” [http://textilefashionstudy.com/?s=carding](http://textilefashionstudy.com/?s=carding)

Difficulties for the family appeared when Owen and Patrick were absent from the household in the 1900 US Census. In the 1900 Lowell Directory, Owen’s entry was “removed to Worcester”. Owen was listed in the 1900 Census as a patient in the Worcester Insane Hospital. I cannot find Patrick in 1900, but in 1910 he was in Gardner State Colony and then other institutions through 1940. Owen’s institutional records were filed in The Massachu-
have not found a death record for him in either Oldham or Lowell, MA. The fate of John Finnegan is still to be discovered. In the 1910 US Census, Maria and Mary, age 15, were the only family members left in Lowell.

Both worked as weavers at the Boott Textile mill. In 1916, my great grandmother Mary married another first-generation American with family from County Limerick. Maria lived with her daughter and son-in-law until her death in 1921; she lived to see the birth of 2 grandchildren. Mary did not work after getting married and raised 7 children in Lowell. Her husband had a successful, stable career as a lieutenant fireman and was a veteran of both WWI and WWII. Mary was a respected and active member of the Sacred Heart church in Lowell until her death in 1960. Her children were college educated and had successful careers, including an engineer, teachers, several lawyers, Deputy Fire Chief, civil service leaders, and a business owner. Uncovering the hardships of early immigrants, it is difficult to imagine that this was a better life for them than staying in Ireland. But the suffering and hard work of my immigrant family laid the foundation for the success of future generations.

The 1905 Lowell Directory stated that Maria’s brother, Edward died on June 2, 1904. A graphic story on the front page of the Lowell Sun reported his death. While Edward searched for work, he hopped a freight train heading north. He held onto the outside of the train and lost his grip and fell off the moving train. The story included details of items in his possession, a purse with an aluminum medal of the Virgin Mary, eyeglasses, a cap, and keys. He was buried in Saint Patrick’s Cemetery in an unmarked grave. Edward was obviously desperate for work to go to such measures that led to his tragic death.

We did not find any passenger records for their father John, but assumed that he also traveled to Oldham in 1907. At that time he was 68 years old and had stopped working, so another assumption was that he would need to live with a family member for support. He was not found with family in either the 1910 US census nor the Irish 1911 census. I
The Lost McGinns
Kevin Cassidy #3806

Families come and go. Over the course of immigration families may move thousands of miles but tend to maintain close contacts with relatives and neighbors. Even with the best of intentions, as years pass, bonds weaken, contacts diminish and connections cease. This weakening of family bonds can sometimes lead to lost children that no family member remembers.

The McGinns
Owen McGinn (1862-1926) was an Irish immigrant who settled in the Hell’s Kitchen area of Manhattan by 1892. Hell’s Kitchen is a neighborhood from West 34th Street to West 59th Street flanked by the Hudson River. He was the godfather at his nephew Owen Goodwin’s christening on 13 Sept 1892. A few years later Owen moved in with his widowed sister, Kate Goodwin, and her children. They lived at 554 West 46th Street in the 1900 US Census.

Family tradition stated that Owen married a much younger woman. Their 1902 marriage record in the Bronx (familysearch.org) confirmed a nineteen-year age gap indicating the truth of the family tradition and raising the possibility of a large family. Searching the St. Raphael baptismal register uncovered a potential lead on Owen and his lost family. Three children of Owen McGinn and Mary Mahoney were baptized there in 1903, 1907 and 1912, Johannah, Margaret and John respectively. The eldest child, Johannah, did not have a civil birth certificate, therefore, the baptism is the only known record to substantiate her exact date of birth, March 9, 1903. Margaret McGinn’s date of birth (June 2, 1907) was recorded both on a civil birth certificate and in the baptismal register. John McGinn was born on February 1, 1912 according to the baptismal register. Civil birth records after 1909 are not yet in the public domain.

The baptismal entries recorded exact dates of birth which were crucial in tracking these three individuals in the Social Security Death Index. Johannah McGinn died February 4, 1984 and John McGinn on September 28, 1997. Margaret’s 1930 marriage record on Family Search revealed her married name enabling the finding of her death date as September 17, 1982. The large gaps between their births hinted that the McGinn children may have had missing siblings.
Owen and Mary McGinn were enumerated in censuses in 1905 at 543 West 43rd Street, in 1910 at 604 West 45th Street, in 1915 at 265 West 40th Street and in 1920 at 633 Columbus Avenue near West 91st Street. Family lore suggested that families would move regularly to get a freshly painted apartment.

A search of more records indicated that the McGinns had a total of six children: 5 daughters and a son. As noted earlier three were baptized at St Raphael, two at Holy Cross (1905, 1914) and one at St. Ambrose (1909), i.e., Catherine, Alice and Mary. The godparents chosen revealed family connections; Hugh Goodwin and Patrick & Sarah Goodwin were baptismal sponsors for their first cousins, Catherine and Mary McGinn.

The three daughters that died young had each been enumerated in at least one census. Catherine was counted in the 1905 NY state census, Alice in the 1910 US census and Mary in both the 1915 NY census and the 1920 US census. Curiously, this family was not enumerated in the 1925 NY census.

In the 1910 federal census Owen and Mary McGinn were enumerated as having been married 8 years. Mary was recorded as having delivered 4 children: (Johannah, Catherine, Margaret, Alice) and all except Catherine were named in the census. These answers aligned perfectly with the non-census records.

Owen McGinn purchased a grave at Calvary Cemetery on 29 Nov 1905. Each of their death certificates listed their mother’s maiden name which previously was not done on NYC death certificates Those buried there follow:

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date of Birth</th>
<th>Date of Death</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Catherine McGinn</td>
<td>29 Nov 1905</td>
<td>27 May 1911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice McGinn</td>
<td>27 May 1911</td>
<td>18 Feb 1926</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary McGinn</td>
<td>12 Oct 1921</td>
<td>7 Oct 1950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owen McGinn</td>
<td>16 Jan 1926</td>
<td>6 Feb 1984</td>
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Alice’s baptism was very difficult to track down. The family lived at 608 West 47th St. when she was born 17 Nov 1909. In the Apr 1910 census, they lived at 604 West 45th St. At the time of her death on 26 May 1911 they resided at 529 West 40th St. Finally, her christening at St Ambrose, was discovered. Her godparents were Patrick & Bridget Mulcahey. How might they be connected to her parents?

**The Mulcahey Connection**

Owen McGinn’s niece, Sarah Goodwin, was baptized at St. Raphael in 1896 and her godmother was Bridget McGinn. In the Goodwin family plot at Calvary was a 1902 burial for a month-old boy named Patrick Mulcahey. His death certificate listed the place of death as 444 West 46th Street and named Patrick & Bridget Mulcahey as his parents. Might they be Alice’s godparents?

A baptismal registration was found for Patrick Mulcahey at Holy Cross. He was the son of Patrick Mulcahey & Bridget McGinn, making Owen McGinn his uncle. No civil birth registration was found for this child. Nor has a marriage record been discovered. Hopefully, when the Archdiocese of New York sacramental records become available at www.findmypast.com this will change.

In the 1910 US Census, Bridget Mulcahey, of 1681 Lexington Avenue, between East 105th & East 106th Streets, answered that she had delivered two children and zero were living. It wasn’t until James Mulcahey’s abstracted birth record “The large gaps between their births hinted that the McGinn children may have had missing siblings.”
was found at FamilySearch, that it was certain that this couple in the 1910 federal census was the right one and that there had been a missing child to find.

The 1905 birth and death records for baby James helped to definitively find his parents in the 1905 NY state census. This couple had been at 528 West 47th Street in Jun 1905 but left Hell’s Kitchen by Apr 1910. Usually an immigrant family would initially move to either the west side of Manhattan or the east side. They generally remained on the same side of the island and moved north as their economic prospects improved. Once the Mulcaheys “moved on up” near East 105th Street by 1910, they made a lateral move near West 103rd Street by 1915. They did not return south to Hell’s Kitchen.

Bridget McGinn Mulcahey (1866-1925), a widow, remarried in 1920 to John Meade. They were issued a marriage license which named her parents as Patrick McGinn & Alice McWilliams. These were the parents’ names that were listed on the 1902 marriage certificate for Owen McGinn & Mary Mahoney. They were also the names listed on the 1911 death certificate for Catherine McGinn Goodwin Gormley (1860-1911). By using marriage and death certificates, three siblings were connected – Owen, Catherine and Bridget McGinn from Co Tyrone.

Catholic church marriage records after 19 Apr 1908 (when the ’Ne temere’ decree took effect*) should include notations of where a bride or groom was baptized. The Ascension Church marriage register from 1920 revealed that Bridget McGinn Mulcahey had been baptized in Clogher parish, County Tyrone. Checking the baptismal and civil birth records of Clogher parish I found the eight children of Patrick McGinn & Alice McWilliams born between 1860-1874 at Tamlaght townland, Newtonsaville village, Clogher parish in County Tyrone. We now had a townland location for further research.

Burial records are not always as expected. The Mulcahey family was buried in four separate graves at Calvary Cemetery. Their first son was the infant Patrick Mulcahey buried in the John Goodwin family grave, mentioned above. He was buried in that grave because he was their nephew. Second son, James, was buried in a grave set aside by Calvary for the indigent. Bridget had purchased a different grave in 1916 to bury her first husband. Lastly, Bridget McGinn Mulcahey Meade was buried in a grave her second husband had purchased to bury his second wife.

The families of the three McGinn siblings, Owen, Kate and Bridget, provided a fuller picture of immigrant life in a poor Manhattan neighborhood. Developing the complete picture provided multiple routes to determine a place of origin for these families regardless of where one started searching this jigsaw puzzle.

*For full explanation of Ne temere, a decree issued by the Roman Catholic Church regarding marriage, see: https://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/dictionary/index.cfm?id=35103

For more on Hell’s Kitchen and 1890’s NYC.
With the vast number of records available online, one may feel that visiting an area library or archives is not necessary for conducting research. However, although digitized records are added online daily, it is still important to make use of the many resources available at repositories both in the United States and abroad. Countless manuscript collections and other resources not available online may hold the key to tearing down your genealogical brick wall, or help you uncover interesting details about an ancestor’s life. If you are at a point in your research where you wish to plan a trip to Ireland, consider including the National Library of Ireland (NLI) as part of your itinerary.

The NLI is located on Kildare Street in Dublin, in close proximity to Trinity College. It was established by the Dublin Science and Art Museum Act of 1877. The library houses approximately ten million items, including newspapers, manuscripts, drawings and photographs. Search the library’s online catalog prior to your visit, since some items may require submitting a request in advance. The NLI also offers a free Genealogy Advisory Service, both in person (no appointment necessary) and via email at genealogy@nli.ie. The Genealogy Advisory Service is a valuable resource for researchers of all levels of experience. It is important to note that the NLI librarians do not perform in-depth genealogical research. However, the Genealogy Advisory Service, comprised of professional genealogists from Eneclann and Ancestor Network, can provide guidance about which sources to consult and the direction to take with your research.

Newspaper Research

Taking the time to search old newspapers oftentimes leads to the discovery of interesting stories about an ancestor, and provides a snapshot of the community where he or she lived. Various free and subscription-based databases help to provide online access to a wide array of newspapers, but there are still a large number of newspapers that have not been digitized. According to the NLI website, of all the collections available at the library, the newspaper collection is one of the most heavily used by patrons. Several newspapers in the NLI’s collection are in microfilm or digitized formats, but there are certain newspapers available only in hardcopy form. A search of the library’s newspaper catalog [http://www.nli.ie/en/catalogues-and-databases-printed-newspapers.aspx] will allow you to determine whether a particular newspaper of interest is available on microfilm or in hardcopy format. If the library has both a microfilmed copy and a hardcopy version of a newspaper, patrons must use the microfilm. If it is only available in hardcopy format, you will need to request it five working days prior to your visit.

Estate/Family Records

The library’s manuscript collection contains approximately one million items, dating as early as the eleventh century. This collection includes a variety of estate records. The NLI catalog entries for the estate records include guides in PDF format which provide detailed information about the items contained in a particular set of estate records. A number of
these guides also include biographical information about the family who owned the estate. In addition to estate records, the NLI’s manuscript collection contains several family records and correspondence.

Other examples of manuscript items of interest for genealogical research include *St. Catherine’s Girls National School, Dublin Roll Book, 1905-1909; A Collection of Royal Irish Constabulary Manuscript Documents Concerning Events in the County of Westmeath, 1852-1877; and Men’s Bill Book of Webb’s Letterpress Printing Office, Dublin, Showing the Employees’ Rates of Pay for Time and Piece Work, 1846-1850*, to name a few. The holdings of the NLI also include numerous documents pertaining to politics, economics, and social issues that impacted the citizens of Ireland, all of which can enhance a researcher’s understanding of the lives of his or her ancestors.

Along with manuscript materials, the NLI has an array of books, maps, and periodicals dating from the seventeenth century through the present day. The library has approximately one million books, a number of them being out-of-print and difficult to find elsewhere. While these books are not available for loan, they may be used in the library’s reading room.

**Planning your visit**

According to a notice on the NLI website, improvements are underway at the library to increase the amount of space for library materials and public areas. Due to the construction associated with this project, beginning 14 August 2017 the Main and Manuscripts Reading Room will be closed on Mondays. Check the NLI website for any alerts regarding additional library closures due to holidays or special events.

national Library of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin

Prior to your visit to the NLI, be sure to review the library’s policies about accessing the material. There may be instances where you need to request materials ahead of your visit. For instance, some of the newspapers available at the library are in hardcopy format only and require an appointment if you wish to access these materials. Information on these policies may be found at [http://www.nli.ie/en/accessing-material.aspx](http://www.nli.ie/en/accessing-material.aspx).

With the number and variety of materials available at the National Library of Ireland, one can look forward to an interesting day of research at this Dublin facility.
My maternal grandmother, Elizabeth Noonan, was the third child of nine born to Martin Noonan and Margaret Kinnane in Derryvet, Clare, Ireland. Martin was a farmer and he and his wife had 4 girls and 5 boys. Of all the children, Elizabeth and her sister Ellen were the only ones who emigrated to America. My grandmother lived with my family and I often heard her talk of the “old country”.

On a trip to Ireland in 2006 I found the church in Crusheen which I had been told was the Noonans’ church. On this particular day, I found an older gentleman at the rear of the church cleaning up. I inquired where would I go and whom I would speak with to obtain a baptismal record of my grandparent. The man, who turned out to be the priest, looked up and asked me many questions. He handed me a bulletin and told me to list the information I had just given him in the margins of the bulletin. He then said he would look into it and would send me the certificate in a “few” weeks. I left feeling that bulletin would end up in the trash.

The certificate came and listed her birth date to be September 12, 1875 and baptismal date was September 13, 1875. I knew she had emigrated to Boston but now I needed to find out more. Elizabeth arrived in Boston on a ship called the Bothnia on April 28, 1896. She came out from Ireland to her maternal uncle Lawrence Kinnane who lived in Somerville. She worked as a domestic like most Irish girls.

Elizabeth married Martin Rogers in Saint Raphael’s Church in West Medford on November 21, 1906. Her husband, Martin, had emigrated from County Clare, Ireland with his three brothers and worked in his brother’s brass foundry in Boston. Martin was the molder and designed the items to be made. Her sister Ellen was listed as a witness on the marriage certificate from the church. Elizabeth and Martin lived in Dorchester, St. Peter’s Parish. Here they raised a family. Mary Ann was born in 1910, Anna in 1912 and Evelyn (my mother) in 1916. Life was good. Then in 1912, They lost their child, Anna at 2 ½ from diphtheria.

Elizabeth’s husband, Martin, died on May 26, 1921 from an accident at the foundry and, a year later, on May 25, 1922 her oldest child Mary Ann died from rheumatic fever. Suddenly my grandmother found herself alone with a four-year-old child. She felt desperate! She wanted to go back “home”. A good friend convinced her to stay in America where there was more opportunity for her little girl.

Elizabeth went to work for her friend, a realtor, searching titles. My mother remembered going to the registry and playing with the big books. Elizabeth eventually bought real estate. At one point, she owned a block of three-deckers in Dorchester. This never would have been possible in Ireland.

Elizabeth married a second time to Thomas Burns on April 20, 1924. He too was from Clare. They returned to Ireland with my mother for a month to visit both families. They had a happy marriage but he died in 1942. Elizabeth died on March 2, 1963 at the age of 88.

My grandmother was a very strong, generous woman with a keen sense of humor. She also had the gift of gab. Leaving home at a young age to come to a different country must have been very hard and lonesome for her. It meant never seeing her mother and father again although she did return to see her brothers and sister. She never forgot her family.
**Blog Watch**

Kathy Sullivan #3009

**Research Tools**

Find the Hidden Original Records for Ancestry’s Indexes With This Smart Technique

Charles McGee gives step-by-step instruction on how to use Ancestry’s indexes to find original records.

https://familyhistorydaily.com/genealogy-help-and-how-to/ancestry-research-technique-indexes-original-records/

**Using Surname Distribution Maps**

Linda Stufflebean demonstrates how she found surname distribution maps to be useful in her research, especially when working with an uncommon surname.


**Volunteer Opportunities**

Digital Maine & More – Crowdsourcing to Make History More Accessible!

Do you have Irish ancestors in Maine? Diane L. Richard at Upfront with NGS blog writes about a volunteer opportunity that may uncover them.

http://upfront.ngsgenealogy.org/2017/06/digital-maine-more-crowdsourcing-to.html

**Irish in America**

Ireland's U.S. Navy War Brides Exhibition Booklet

Damian Sheils booklet on Irish War brides is a selection from his website Midleton Heritage and the U.S. Military in Ireland Centenary Project


**Writing**

Supercalifragilisticexpialidocious!

The surest way to draw your reader in is with an intriguing opening sentence. Lucy Anglin has some great genealogy examples.

https://genealogyensemble.com/2017/06/21/supercalifragilisticexpialidocious/

**Records and Databases**

Working with Yearbooks and Navy Cruise Books

Lois Mackin shows how she processed and donated her parents large collection of year- and cruise books.


**Current Issues**

A Christmas Request, Answered a Century Later

Dick Eastman shares a story from the NY Times, with a genealogy twist.

https://blog.eogn.com/2016/12/21/a-christmas-request-answered-a-century-later/

**Family History**

Stranger Than Fiction

Pamela Ahearn Filbert writes about a random act of genealogical kindness on NEHGS’ Vita Bevis blog

https://vita-brevis.org/2017/09/stranger-than-fiction/

*This website provides links to several government documents that list wages as well as the price of various household goods dating from the 1700s to the present: https://libraryguides.missouri.edu/pricesandwages/home.*

Biographical sketches and photographs of various Erie Railroad employees, some dating back to the mid-1800s, primarily obtained from Erie Railroad Magazine, is available at http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~sponholz/erie.html

The Library and Archives Canada website includes a database pertaining to the Employees Provident Fund of the Intercolonial and Prince Edward Island Railway. These employees received funds after working for the company for many years, or if they were permanently disabled from an accident on the job: http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/railway-employees-provident-fund/Pages/railway-employees.aspx#b

The Texas Transportation Archive website provides links to a variety of photographs, maps, and databases containing biographical sketches and other employee information pertaining to those who worked in the railroad, stagecoach and steamboat industries in the state of Texas: http://www.ttarchive.com/

The Denver, Colorado Public Library has created a list of Colorado mining employees who died on the job starting in 1844, which includes ages, employer names, nationality, date of death and cause of death, available online at: https://history.denverlibrary.org/sites/history/files/COindexMine1_0.pdf.

**Theme for Next Issue**

**Irish Summer Enclaves**

As conditions improved for early Irish families, summer vacation became possible. The Irish Riviera developed as an Irish enclave along the coast south of Boston as well as other areas. Tell us your stories of these summer gathering places with family and friends—memorable moments; types of entertainment; photos. Other topics also welcome.

Send submissions to newsletter@tiara.ie
Tiara Library provides the following list of research sources related to the theme of the newsletter.

**Articles:**

**Books:**

**Periodicals:**
Full-text and indexes of journals written by “Mill Girls”.
The Lowell Offering (1840-45)
https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:26715498i

Index by Judith A. Ranta
http://library.uml.edu/clh/offering.htm

The New England Offering (1847-50)
https://iiif.lib.harvard.edu/manifests/view/drs:266806684i

Index by Judith A. Ranta
http://library.uml.edu/clh/NewOff.html

**Online Sources:**
The Center for Lowell History
www.library.uml.edu/clh
Includes city and business directories, local history collections, and research links.

T = TIARA Library
N = NEHGS (requires Membership)
BC = Boston College Library (open to the public)
BPL = Boston Public Library
PL = Available in many public libraries

**TIARA Office Update**
TIARA has not moved but we do have a new landlord. Our current lease (ending April 30, 2018) will be honored. The new owners of 84 South Street are Peter & Gloria Ryan who are in the process of developing their own plans for the space. TIARA needs to be prepared to move to another site if necessary.

**Needs:** 300 square feet (office/library), conference room, 150 square feet storage. Contact president2@tiara.ie or president2@tiara.ie with any leads.
The Irish Ancestral Research Association
84 South Street
Waltham, MA 02453-3537

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL

Upcoming Conferences, Workshops, and Events

Massachusetts Genealogical Council
Courtyard by Marriott Hotel Marlborough, MA
April 7-8, 2018
   Saturday - 4 hourly sessions, 3 different tracks including Jennifer Zinck
   Sunday – All day seminar with Dr. Thomas Jones FASG, FNCS, FUGA
   Each day is a separate registration with lunch included.
For more information - www.massgencouncil.org

Back To Our Past Meeting
February 16-17, 2018
Titanic Suite, Titanic, Belfast, Ireland
For more information - www.backtoourpast.ie