Researching Working Lives of Women

Decorators at the Boston & Sandwich Glass Company

Workers at the Kerr Thread Mill, Fall River, MA
Lewis W. Hine Photo, www.loc.gov

Nurses of Base Hospital 68, AEF at Unit Flag Dedication, 12 Sept 1918
President’s Message
Susan Steele #1025

Hello from your new Co-President! I’ve connected with many of you through past roles of Co-Recording Secretary, Director of Mass. Memories and the Foresters Project and further back... co-editor of the Newsletter. As I contemplate those various roles my first thoughts are how enriched my life has become since I started volunteering at TIARA. I’ve honed some old skills, acquired a number of new skills and met some wonderful folks along the way. I encourage those of you who haven’t volunteered in the past to jump in and reap the benefits! Those who have volunteered in the past... we look forward to welcoming you back.

The first folks I would like to welcome are the new Executive Board Officers: my Co-President, Greg Atkinson; Vice President, Kathy Sullivan, Co-Recording Secretaries, Joanne Delaney & Molly Walker; Corresponding Secretary, Pam Holland; and Financial Director, Gary Sutherland. We have already met once this summer and will be meeting again as this newsletter goes to press. As we talk about the coming year, Committee Chairs will report in with plans and possible needs for volunteers. Watch this space and the TIARA website for updates. We will also make announcements at meetings. Here are some volunteer opportunities that are already on our schedule:

- Sept. 12-13 The South Shore Irish Festival, Marshfield, MA
(Continued on page 59)
Mothers, Daughters, Wives, Sisters: Machine Operators, Doffers, Weavers and Shoe Workers
Susan Steele #1025

We've all spent some time thinking about the lives of our women ancestors at home – how they coped with births, deaths, migration and other significant events. You have perhaps spent less time thinking about female ancestors working outside the home. In addition to their domestic roles, our female ancestors were also nurses, factory and mill workers. An 1892 description of women breadwinners in the city of Brockton, Massachusetts adds to the list. “They are teachers, saleswomen, stenographers, office girls, dressmakers, stitchers, pasters, heel makers, box makers, operators in telegraphy and telephone, candy makers and servants.” These workers included both married and single women and often were the sole financial support or an important contributing support for their families.

Many of these women were members of the Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters (MCOF). The Foresters life insurance policy provided a one thousand dollar death benefit. This benefit was of great significance to extended families that often depended on the salary of these women. These records offer a good starting point – especially for researching numbers of women who worked in the same industry. The Forester records examined for this article cover the time period from the mid 1890s through 1935 and concentrate on two Massachusetts cities: Holyoke and Brockton.

By 1880, Holyoke, Massachusetts was a city with a large industrial workforce. About half of Holyoke’s work force was employed in paper or textile mills. Six out of every ten workers were female; a significant number of workers were children under 15. Beginning in the mid 1890s, a large number of the Catholic women workers belonged to two Forester courts (chapters). Some court members such as Catherine and Nora Raferty worked in both the textile and paper mills. Catherine spent at least ten years in the Farr Alpaca Mill. Katherine Keefe worked in the thread mills. Annie Dillon, Elizabeth Healey and Ellen Moriarty worked at the Skinner Silk Mills. All of these women were helping to support families when they joined the MCOF. These women’s jobs ranged from cloth inspector, sorter and thread winder to silk spinner and warper.

Forester records only give an occupation at the time of a member’s initiation. So I followed these women in the census and in city directories – some like Catherine Raferty worked well into their 60s. Some left their industry jobs when they married. Others returned upon the death of a husband and some had working lives cut short by illness. The Forester records do give us cause of death but can’t tell us specifics about workplace conditions. I found other sources that did describe the workplace.

One source was Wistariahurst Museum Research Archive in Holyoke. Wistariahurst was the home of the Skinner family who owned a large mill. Archives in the carriage house contain records of the Skinner family, as well as a textile and a Holyoke history collection. I found photos, city directories and perhaps the most pertinent source – oral histories. The oral histories included women who had begun working at the Skinner Mills in the early 1900s.
Dorothy Hamel’s oral history gives information about pay scale and work hours from 1916 – 1928. Dorothy, whose parents were Irish immigrants, started work at age 16 in the Skinner Mills. She worked as a quiller supplying yarn onto the ends of the winding units or quills. Quilling was a piecework job. A beginning quiller would make around $4.20 a week. Dorothy worked until she married in 1921 and began a family. When Dorothy attempted to go back to work in 1928, she was assigned piecework from 7:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. with an hour off for lunch. She was now making between nine and fourteen dollars a week. Dorothy was only able to work for three weeks before family responsibilities intervened.

The subject of another oral history was Anna Burns Sullivan who began working at age fourteen to support her mother and four younger siblings after her father died. Anna began working in the carding room of Holyoke’s largest cotton mill, American Thread. Her job was to remove large wooden bobbins spun full of yarn and replace them with empty ones. In an interview in the 1970s, Anna looked back on her time at American Thread, “I don’t think many kids went for this work. You came out looking like Santa Claus. Your hair was covered with cotton, your clothes with cotton, you ate cotton. It was, you know, all cotton... they didn’t have such things as vents in those days. Believe me, you just swallowed the cotton... It was, always was, a bad job.” Anna spoke about other physical hazards. “The machines were huge. When your bobbins filled up, we had to doff (remove) them and put them in a truck.” The bobbins were heavy and when reaching in to place them in the bottom of the truck, Anna would struggle to maintain her balance. Later Anna was able to move into the packing room where there was no lint in the air. Her pay rose to twelve dollars a week compared to previous salary of two dollars and fifty cents a week. Anna recalled that was “A big difference for me. And it was a big difference for my mother.”

Other women talked about grueling conditions: overheated air full of lint and unrelenting noise. Most women were on their feet all day – the breaks were few & far between. Foresters Catherine Raferty and Julia Dwyer would have experienced the bad air and loud noise at the Farr Alpaca Mill. Hearing about these conditions makes it easy to believe that Julia Dwyer’s workplace was a factor in her death. Julia worked at the Farr Alpaca mill for at least ten years and died in 1923 at age 33 of Pulmonary Tuberculosis – this was most likely a work related illness. She worked as a spooler and would have experienced the “lint snow” that Ellen Burns Sullivan described. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, Holyoke had a death rate from tuberculosis that was 20 – 25 percent higher than the state as a whole. When Anna Burns Sullivan was in her early 30s she became a union organizer and worked tirelessly to change working conditions for women and men in Holyoke and beyond.

Brockton was another city dominated by industry – shoe manufacturing. There were 91 shoe factories in Brockton at the turn of the century. Many women shoe workers belonged to St. Rose’s Court of the Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters. Mary O’Connell was 21, working as a heel tacker in Brockton when she joined the Foresters in 1902. She was single and the oldest of five children living at home with her parents. In the 1900 census Mary, her father and younger brother all worked in Brockton shoe factories.

Being such a large shoe manufacturing area, Brockton and similar shoe manufacturing towns such as Lynn and Marlboro became the subject of a study done by the Women’s Industrial and Educational Union in Boston and published by the U.S. Department of Labor in 1915. This was written ten years
after Mary’s time in the shoe factory but still gives us a fair picture of conditions in the industry. What would Mary’s workday have been like? The fifty-four hour workweek law passed in January of 1912 so it is likely Mary’s workweek would have been longer. The Boot & Shoe Industry booklet describes the workspace.

Mary would have been working on an upper floor – probably the fourth with no elevator access for workers. Shoe machinery and racks of shoes often blocked light and air coming in from windows. On March 20, 1905 Mary was working in the sole leather room with her friend Emma Tolman. On that day, a steam boiler used for heating the R. B. Grover shoe factory building exploded, shooting up through three floors and the roof. The building collapsed with floors and walls falling in. Hot coals from the boiler started fires that were fed by broken gas lines. Broken beams and heavy machinery trapped workers. Mary O’Connell was one of 58 people killed and 150 injured when the shoe factory was leveled. A newspaper article about the event explains that Mary and Emma were found with arms clasped around each other perhaps attempting to provide comfort.

The Holyoke and Brockton examples of women in industry depict daily working conditions that were difficult – repetitive, dirty tasks, long hours, lack of ventilation and other hazardous conditions. Mary O’Connell’s death in an industrial accident was not a singular incident. However her death, that of Emma Tolman and the 56 other workers did bring about change. Brockton was a town of 35,000 shoe workers and sympathy ran high. There were many cries for improved safety regulations for steam boilers. The Brockton explosion and another shoe factory explosion in Lynn prompted passage of a Massachusetts act regulating operation and inspection of steam boilers. The Massachusetts laws eventually led to passage of a national boiler safety code.

I began my research with little real knowledge of the conditions endured by working women in industries such as these. The sources I list below gave me many facts that helped me put together a more detailed vision of daily labor in mills and shoe manufacturers. I end this article with admiration for these mothers, daughters, wives and sisters who labored at home and in other workplaces.

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- Mortuary Records of Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters at the University Archives & Special Collections, Joseph P. Healey Library UMass Boston
  [blogs.umb.edu/archives/collections/foresters/](blogs.umb.edu/archives/collections/foresters/)
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From Shoe Worker to Army Nurse
Virginia Wright # 2480

Mary C. Burke was a shoe worker in the A. G Walton Company in Chelsea, Massachusetts when she applied for membership in the Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters (MCOF) on July 12, 1912. The mortuary file lists her cause of death on Oct 5, 1918 as “in service”. A letter from the War Department’s Office of the Surgeon General included in her mortuary file stated that Nurse Mary C. Burke, Army Nurse Corps, died while serving with Base Hospital #68, American Expeditionary Forces in France. I wondered how she went from “ironing the transfers and uppers of shoes” to a trained nurse and wanted to learn about her Army service and how she died.

Perhaps her military record could answer some if not all of my questions. Though I knew that WW I records were destroyed in the 1973 fire at the National Archives in St. Louis, it was possible that her file might have been reconstructed from other sources. I mailed a request for Mary Burke’s military record to the National Personnel Records Center—Military Personnel Records, in St. Louis, Missouri. The reply a few months later was disappointing. They had no record for her but requested more information so they could check other sources. Even with the additional information and a copy of the letter from the War Department that I supplied, no records for Mary were found in other sources.

So time to look elsewhere for answers. The first step was to learn about the Army Nurse Corps (ANC) history and the requirements for enlisting. In 1901, the Army Reorganization Act passed by Congress established the Army Nurse Corps (female) as a permanent corps of the Army’s Medical Department. The ANC expanded during the early years of WW I and once the US entered the war the need for nurses became even greater. The Red Cross assisted in recruiting trained nurses for the Army. Eligibility for appointment in the ANC included physical, professional, moral and mental qualifications. The professional qualifications required graduation from a “training school for nurses giving a thorough professional education, both theoretical and practical, and requiring a residence of at least two years in an acceptable general hospital of 100 beds or more: except that graduates of training schools not meeting the above requirements may, upon submitting proof of at least six months subsequent experience in a large general hospital, be put on the eligible list if found otherwise qualified.”

Congress authorized the Army School of Nursing in May 1918 and courses of instruction didn’t start until July 1918. By that time Mary had already enlisted in the Army Nurse Corps. So she would have been in a nurse training program by 1915 or early 1916 to have met the Army’s professional requirements.

The first nurse training school in the US began in 1872 at the New England Hospital for Women, a maternity hospital with an all female physician staff. Other hospitals soon followed, opening their own training programs. In 1880 there were about 15 nursing programs in the US; by 1900 there were over 400. Most likely Mary trained at one of the nursing programs that existed in many Boston area hospitals by 1915.

Perhaps Mary answered an advertisement like ones that often appeared in Boston papers in the early 20th century. While I was not able to determine exactly where Mary received her nurses training, I did learn what her training would most likely have included by looking at what several local hospitals offered at that time. Training programs were similar and usually had a probation period of several months, with students receiving classroom instruction and put on the wards making beds and performing other simple tasks.
Once accepted into the two or three year program, candidates would receive instruction from the nursing staff and also lectures and clinics from the various medical departments. The trainees were given a monthly stipend to cover the expenses of uniforms, personal clothing and other items. The 52nd Annual Report of the Trustees of the Boston City Hospital contained a section on the hospital's Nurses Training School that offered more insight into the life of a student nurse. The report included the requirements for admission, the application process, description of housing accommodations, required articles accepted candidates were to bring with them (“Three gingham or calico dresses, made plainly; dresses to be made high neck, long sleeves...”), and duty hours and time off. It also gave a week by week description of the Probationer's Course and a detailed listing of the subjects taught in the three year course of instruction.

Although the Military Personnel Records Archives did not have information on Mary C. Burke, I was able to learn more about her time in service. Many of the Army’s WW I base hospitals wrote memoirs or unit histories. I found one for Base Hospital Unit #68 online through Internet Archive. While more was written about the officers and enlisted men, there is a section on the unit’s nurse corps. It gave details of the military training and preparation the nurses received before their departure overseas.

One hundred nurses who had been stationed at various cantonments and forts across the United States for their initiation and training period were assigned to base hospital #68 and received orders to mobilize in New York City on August 20, 1918. They were quartered at the Van Renselaer Hotel in NYC, and spent the next four weeks with daily drills, fittings for uniforms, being photographed and fingerprinted, and details such as allotting their incomes, making wills and signing up for the War Risk Insurance that the government offered to military personnel about to be sent abroad. When I learned that records of this government insurance had survived the 1973 fire, I sent another inquiry to NARA but no insurance records for Mary Burke were found. Perhaps she did not purchase this term insurance since she had the MCOF insurance policy and her monthly premium on the policy was guaranteed by the US Government if she was unable to send in her payment while serving overseas.

The 100 nurses of Base Hospital #68 departed from New York on September 16 on an army transport for Europe, the exact location not yet disclosed to them. Their duties began early while still on board the transport ship, caring for soldiers who had become ill with influenza. They arrived in Glasgow, Scotland on September 29 then traveled through England to Southampton. By the time the unit left England eleven nurses had influenza and were sent to a hospital in Portsmouth. The rest of the unit departed on September 31 for Le Harve, France. Two more nurses contacted the disease while crossing the Channel and had to remain at Le Harve while the rest continued across France for a day and a night’s journey on a French train to Nevers. There they learned that they would travel by army truck to their final destination, Mars-Sur-Allier the site of the huge American Hospital Center and their duty station, base hospital #68.

Eighty-seven nurses reported for duty on October 4, 1918 but within 2 days of arriving at her duty station, Mary had succumbed to influenza. Nine other nurses from this unit would also die from influenza. During WW I more than 200 Army nurses died from disease, mostly influenza.

It was the duty of the individual units to bury the dead as soon as possible, usually within 24 hours and to take care that the graves were properly marked. So Mary’s initial burial was likely the American Cemetery at Mars-Sur-Allier. After the war ended the Office of the Quartermaster General asked each family if it would like the body of the deceased to be brought back to the United States for final burial in a family plot, non-military cemetery, or National Cemetery (such as Arlington) or buried in an American military cemetery in Europe. Mary’s parents must have requested that her body be returned for burial in a family plot. On Janu-
Mary's MCOF application stated she was born in Ireland; the 1900 US Census recorded Mary’s, her brother’s and mother’s arrival date as 1889, one year after her father had immigrated. Although few other specific records could be found for Mary Burke, going beyond the traditional genealogical records helped bridge the gap and provide more context for her life. The sources list below helped put together a detailed picture of Mary’s journey from a Chelsea shoe worker to a WW I Army nurse.

Sources


52nd Annual report of the Trustees of the Boston City Hospital, City of Boston Printing Department, 1916 (accessed 3-July-2015 on Google-Books.com)


The American colonies in the 18th century were dependent upon imports, primarily from England, for many household goods, including glass. The initial glass factories in New England made just window glass and bottles used by the pharmaceutical industry. As conflicts with Great Britain continued into the 19th century, the new nation looked to manufacture their own products. In 1807 Congress passed an Embargo Act which prohibited the import of specified goods, including glass. Tariffs on imports were in place during the War of 1812 through 1816. These policies spurred American manufacturers to source domestic raw materials, seek experienced glass workers and invest capital in building factories capable of meeting the demands of a growing nation. Massachusetts was on the forefront of this industry with several glass companies founded early in the 19th century, most notably glass works in South Boston, the New England Glass Co. in Cambridge and the Boston and Sandwich Glass Co. (B&SGC) in Sandwich.

Finding skilled workers, experienced in all phases of glass making from factory design to mixing raw materials to glass blowers, or gaffers, was the initial challenge. England had such workers and though it was illegal to recruit them to America, it was done. Ireland also had several glass houses notably in Belfast, Cork, Dublin, Newry and Waterford. A high excise duty placed by England in 1826 on Irish glass led to a decline in glass manufacturing in Ireland. Several displaced Irish workers immigrated to America, finding ready employment in the glass houses of Massachusetts including the Boston and Sandwich Glass Co. Of the 33 men listed on the first B&SGC payroll in 1826, nine are identified as being from England and five from Ireland. Irish workers and their families continued to come to Sandwich through the mid 19th century. The 1860 Federal census for Sandwich enumerates almost 700 men, women and children living in households headed by an Irish born individual.

Entrepreneur Deming Jarves, who founded B&SGC, selected the Sandwich location for its access to water transportation and the availability of wood to fire the furnaces. As he built his factory, Jarves also created a community to encourage workers to come to the area. This included building houses that workers could rent or purchase. A school was funded and, in response to increasing numbers of Catholic workers, land was donated for a church. The area near the factory was called “Jarvesville”. The company led in developing molds for producing pressed glass which required less skill than blown glass; and, the demand for employees increased as the company grew.

Susan Steele, coordinator of TIARA’s Forester project, has researched records of immigrant workers in specific industries including Irish workers at the B&SGC. Susan selected this company because the Sandwich Glass Museum has extensive information on workers which the company had kept on individual cards and in family file folders. The Sandwich Archive also contains records of town residents compiled on family sheets and in files. In addition, author and researcher Joan Kaiser compiled a Roster of Personnel listing each identified employee with birth and death records where available, their years of work and position(s) held.¹

Among those who came to Sandwich from Ireland was John Kelleher (b. approx. 1823) from County Kerry arriving about 1850. In Sandwich he met and married Ellen Connell (b. approx. 1824) from County Cork. A house still standing in the Jarvesville area has a historical marker reading “John Kelleher 1854”. In this home, purchased from Deming Jarves, John and Ellen raised five sons and two daughters. The Personnel Roster contains the names of five of these children who at some point were employed by the glass factory. Included are daughters Mary (b. 1861) and Ellen, ‘Nell’, (b. 1867) listed as Decorators from 1885 to 1900 at the B&SGC and its successor companies.

There were many categories of skilled labor at the glass factory but the decorating department was unique in that the employees
were predominately women. By the second half of the 19th century, decorative items such as vases, plates and lamp globes of painted frosted ware were very much in demand. From an article on women workers in the Museum publication, The Acorn, we read that “In 1872, Edward J. Swann, a talented artist from England, came to Sandwich to head the decorating department. Swann sought out young men and women with artistic talent whom he trained to paint delicate designs in enamel on translucent or opaque glass”.²

It was found that women had the skill and sense of color to master the painting of these delicate items. An example of work by the Kelleher sisters: a plate with a colorful finch, possibly painted by Mary, is on permanent display at the Museum. The job of decorator held status for the women; their work was valued and they were paid a good wage, usually by the piece. A Sandwich resident remembered “The decorators were the best dressed women in town. We all envied their beautiful gowns”.³ This is illustrated in an 1885 photo of the women decorators (see cover photo) showing Nell Kelleher seated on the far left and Mary Kelleher, seated third from the left. Many of the decorators were daughters, sisters and widows of male glassworkers reflecting the company policy of hiring from established glass worker families. Like the Kelleher sisters, they were often daughters of Irish immigrants who grew up in Jarvesville and were familiar to management.

By the latter part of the 19th century, the B&SGC was impacted by cheaper manufacturing costs in states such as Ohio and Pennsylvania and, by a nationwide strike called by the American Flint Glass Workers union. In 1888 management allowed the furnace fires to go out for the final time. As the town’s largest employer the impact was profound. Several workers left Sandwich for work at factories in New Bedford, and Somerville while others moved to western states. For the next several years there were short-lived efforts to produce glass in Sandwich. Specialties such as cutting and decorating continued but on a smaller scale. Mary and Nell Kelleher are listed as decorators in the 1900 Federal census and in a 1908 town directory but, by then, their days as full time decorators were behind them.

On September 13, 1910 there was a small notice in the Sandwich Observer, “Miss Mary Kelleher and Mrs. Thomas Kelleher (nee Margaret McLaughlin) went to New Bedford last Thursday to visit their sister, Miss Nellie, who is at the hospital”. On October 11, 1910 the Observer noted that “Miss Nellie Kelleher has returned from St. Luke’s Hospital after her long absence from home, somewhat improved in health.” Then in her early 40’s Nell Kelleher suffered an illness that left her confined to a wheelchair for the remainder of her long life. Relatives later speculated it may have been an early instance of polio. The notices in the Observer may have marked the occurrence of the disease for Nell.

The Kelleher family was a close one and active in Sandwich life. Brother William lived in the family home until his passing in 1903. Brother James cut ice and delivered ice and coal locally. He and his wife Alice Montague had two daughters who were close to their family throughout their lives. Both James and Mrs. Thomas Kelleher (Margaret McLaughlin) passed away in 1932. For over 30 years Margaret McLaughlin Kelleher had been Chief Ranger of the St. Agatha Court of the Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters. Mary Kelleher died in 1934 at the age of
72. John, who never married, ran the town hardware store and lived with his sisters until his 1937 death. By the 1940 census, three Kellehers remained. Daniel, a printer was married and lived in New Bedford until his 1962 passing. Thomas, a contractor, built many churches including Corpus Christi in Sandwich. Thomas, a widower, lived with Nell in their childhood home until both passed away in 1952.

The Kelleher family file at the Museum holds a great deal of information including newspaper clippings and obituaries. One file item provides insight on how Mary and Nell used their artistic talents in their post decorator years. A photo of a quilt was included, labeled “Flying Geese”. It is a pieced comforter, attributed to both Mary and Nell Kelleher probably from the 1930s. It is in the collection of the New England Quilt Museum in Lowell. A picture of the quilt and a short essay on the Kelleher sisters is included in a 2009 book on Massachusetts quilts. It is an example of the fine sense of color and design the sisters applied through the textile medium.

Mary and Nell Kelleher belonged to a generation of women who found opportunity as skilled workers in an established Massachusetts industry. As decorators they used their artistic talent to earn their own money and provide for their support. They continued to develop skills through their needlework. It is quite remarkable that the work of these sisters, representing two phases of their lives, is included in the permanent collections of two fine museums: the Sandwich Glass Museum and the New England Quilt Museum.

Repositories and Sources:
Sandwich Glass Museum, Sandwich, MA: Worker cards and family files and set of worker cards compiled by Joan Kaiser.

Town Archives & Historical Center, Town of Sandwich, MA: Files including family sheets, correspondence, clippings and town maps.


3 Barbour, Harriot Buxton, Sandwich, the Town that Glass Built. Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1948

Domestics
Mary Peters #1758

Recently the topic of Irish domestics has been popular. Since my mother and her sisters were all domestics, this topic never interested me. We knew all about their jobs and the families they worked for. They had learned a lot and put into practice many of the lessons they learned. In the spring and fall, our house was cleaned with a vengeance. Curtains were washed and put on stretchers to dry. The windows were washed on Good Friday in silence and the winter clothes were put away in moth balls: - the spring and summer things brought out. The reverse was done in the fall.
Domestics worked long hard hours. My aunt had worked for years as a personal maid for Mrs. Lewis of Providence, Rhode Island. Before she left on a planned trip to Ireland, my aunt had helped to close the Providence house and to move Mrs. Lewis to her summer home in Wakefield, RI. One of the first entries in her diary from that trip was complaining of how exhausted she was from all the hard work she had done before she left.

I am not a fan of the 1940 US Census. It has left out too much information as far as I am concerned. I use it to check if someone was still alive and where that person was living. Other than that, it has not been very useful to me. Out of curiosity, I looked up my parents on the census. They were married in 1934 and had moved to a relatively new house that my father had acquired because of his investment in second mortgages. After they were married, my father lost his job. My mother went back to work as a cook for the Malcolm Chace family in Providence, RI. There were five in the family and a staff of five - the chauffeur, nanny, upstairs maid, downstairs maid and cook. During the week, the laundress came and worked for three days, as did the gardener in season. My mother had off Sundays after breakfast, as well as Thursday afternoons. She lived in a room in the attic. She went with the Chace family to Great Island, off Hyannis, Cape Cod for the summer; my father would visit her there every other Sunday. She earned $100 a month and did this work for about six years.

By 1940, my mother and father were living at their house in Pawtucket, RI. I wasn’t born yet but my mother was pregnant. My father had earned $1000 that year as a grave digger. I decided to check the census for the Chace family to see who had my mother’s job. When the census was taken, the family was living in a new house in West Palm Beach, Florida. They had the same chauffeur, nanny and one of the maids. I read across the line for the new cook. At one column, there was the number 80. I scrolled up to see what the number signified. It is the number of hours this person had worked the previous week. It brought tears to my eyes. I knew my mother had worked hard cooking and cleaning the dishes, utensils and pots and pans. Her days were long and exhausting, but she never regretted doing the work. She had a goal and by the time I was born, the house was paid for and there was money in the bank.

Through it all, I never heard my mother or relatives complain about the work they did or the families who employed them. In their jobs, they found their identity. My mother became a gourmet cook, one aunt became a nurse’s aid in a hospital, and others were just good – at anything they tried. They knew how to maintain beautiful, well-decorated homes - a long way from the thatched houses they had grown up in Ireland. My mother was always grateful for everything she learned while she was in service.

The 1918 Influenza Pandemic — a Life-Changing Event
Erica Dakin Voolich #3540

On 11 February 1886, Marion Elizabeth Evans was born in Sherman, Connecticut in the house that her father Charles Harold Evans had built for his wife Caroline Matilda Helsten. The family lived next door to her uncle and aunt, Edward Beers and Aurilla (Wooster) Evans, and her Evans grandparents, Charles and Hannah (Radford) Evans lived at the top of the hill. On the other side of the hill, Marion’s maternal grandparents, Eric Adolph and Mary (Hearty) Helstein lived in Gaylordsville.

The Evans family had been in America since the mid 1600s, settling in Sherman around 1801. In contrast, her maternal grandparents were immigrants who had

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1 Photocopy of Town Clerk’s Original Record book, Sherman, Fairfield County, Connecticut.
come from “hard times back home.” Eric Adolf Helsten was born in Uppsala, Domkyrkoförsamling, Sweden on 27 February 1822. He was the son of Eric Hellsten, a tanner who had died in 1839, leaving his wife, Lovisa Charlotta Robbert with 13 children, the youngest only 4 months old. In 1842, Eric Adolf had apprenticed as a tanner. He spent 1844 traveling around Sweden from town to town with his Journeyman’s book, finding work where he could. In 1845, he set off for New York City to look for work, finally getting a tanning job in Haviland Hollow, New York. Eric’s wife, Mary Hearty had come to New York City as a result of the famine in 1848. Mary was born in March 1823 in the townland of Dorsey, Creggan parish County Armagh, Ireland. Her father, Owen Hearty, a poor tenant farmer, was listed in the 1827 Tithe Applotment Book farm no. 91 in Dorsey with a half-yearly rectorial tithe of 3s. 8 1/2d. Mary Hearty found work in Haviland Hollow, probably as a maid, for Benjamin Cowl, the owner of Cowl’s tannery where Eric was already employed. They married in 1849, saved their pennies and bought their own tannery in 1852, moving 15 miles away to Gaylordsville, in New Milford, Connecticut, where they lived the rest of their lives.

Charles Evans and his brother Edward started a construction company, and built various buildings around Sherman and Gaylordsville, including the Sherman Town Hall (1886) and the Congregational Church Chapel. In the late 1880s, they decided to move their families and their business to Great Barrington, Massachusetts where there was a boom in construction.

Marion grew up in Great Barrington, graduating from Searles High School in 1904. As Marion’s Helsten grandparents aged, her father and mother spent time helping them run their grain mill and farm. After Mary Hearty Helsten died 17 September 1902 and Eric Helsten, on 4 January 1903, Charles bought their home and business from the estate. By 1905, Charles Evans had sold his share of the construction company and moved the family back to Gaylordsville into the Helsten family home.

For so many young unmarried women, teaching was one possible career prior to marriage. Marion attended Pratt Institute in Brooklyn from 1906 - 1908, followed by three years of teaching domestic science in Saginaw, Michigan (1908-1911), and a year at Columbia Teachers College (1911-1912). In the summer of 1912, she was hired by philanthropist Helen Gould, the daughter of Jay Gould, to give nutritional cooking lessons in Roxbury, NY and then to help with the newly formed Camp Fire Girls; Marion also typed sermons for a minister in Irvington, NY. Meanwhile, her future husband, Robert Edward Dakin, who had

6 Eric Adolf Hellsten’s journeyman book and in-country travel visa in collection of author.
9 Handwritten on back of wedding certificate given to Mary Hearty and Eric Helsten by the pastor, Abram Davis, 12 August 1849, Patterson, New York. Benjamin Cowl was one of the two witnesses.
10 Owen Hearty, no. 91, Tithe Applotment, Creggan, Darsey, Armagh, accessed online 11 June 2014.
11 New Milford, Litchfield County, Connecticut Land Records, volume 45, page 44, recorded 12 July 1852
12 Marion’s education was detailed in a letter to me, Mark Alznauer, University of Chicago Library, Special Collections Research Center, dated 28 January 2002.
13 Mitchell, Rachel “KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR… A Chat with Marion Evans Dakin,” The Sherman Sentinel, (Sherman, CT), vol 27. no. 7, pp 15-18
grown up in Gaylordsville, graduated from New Milford High School and then from Yale with a degree in civil engineering. He was hired by power companies, and worked all over Connecticut. About this time Marion moved back home to Gaylordsville.

Marion and Rob married on 13 September 1913. Marion settled into married life as the wife of an engineer whose construction jobs required them to move around Connecticut. Their first son, Robert Edward Dakin, born on 25 May 1915 in Danbury only lived one day. Their next son, Theodore Robert Dakin was born 11 November 1916, in New Haven, followed by Edward Evans Dakin who was born 28 January 1918 in Derby. By August 1918, they had moved again to Danbury while Rob worked on engineering the dam across the Housatonic River at Stevenson.

The influenza pandemic was spreading around the world, and reached the Dakins in Danbury. Rob was the first to get sick on Saturday 30 November, Marion’s mother, came from Gaylordsville to help Marion with the children and to nurse Rob. By Wednesday, both her son Edward and and her mother were sick. Teddy was taken to Gaylordsville to be cared for by an aunt while Marion nursed everyone else. Marion’s mother died on Tuesday December 10, followed by Edward the next day. They held a double funeral on Thursday. On Sunday 15 December her husband Rob died. The headline of The New Milford Times: “ROBERT DAKIN ALSO DIES Third Death in Family Within a Week’s Time.” tells it all. Marion and Teddy went to live with her father in Gaylordsville. What was a widow to do? It was time to update her skills and find a job.

Her sister Clarice was teaching industrial arts at the University of Chicago Lab School. Marion enrolled in the nutrition program at the University of Chicago, taking her father along as “baby tender” for Teddy. They all moved into Clarice’s apartment for the spring 1919 semester.

She was hired by Pratt Institute to teach home economics in 1919. Starting in 1921, she went to work at Connecticut Agricultural College at Storrs (now the University of Connecticut) in their new nutrition program, a part of the Extension Service. With this new job, she moved with her son into a duplex on the Storrs campus. College students traded room and board for childcare services, enabling Marion to do her job. For the next 25 years, Marion worked as the first Extension Nutritionist traveling all over Connecticut giving talks. Later some of the local meetings were taken over by the Home Extension Agencies and Marion wrote Farm Bureau articles and hosted a radio program on WTIC on Saturday mornings called “What’s Cooking in your Neighbor’s Pot.”

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16 Mitchell, “KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR”[note 13]
Ironically, when her father Charles died on a train in 1928, one of his obituaries said: “Charles H. Evans, 74, who died on a train Saturday … In Storrs, he made his home with his daughter, Mrs. Marion Dakin, whose husband is an extension professor at the Connecticut Agricultural College.” HER HUSBAND is the professor!!

Marion had studied at numerous schools over many years but had never completed her bachelor’s degree. When she realized she was just a few credits shy of a B.S., Marion took a sabbatical from her extension work and graduated from Connecticut Agricultural College in 1930. After graduating, her title at the college was Associate Professor of Nutrition. She retired from UConn in July 1946.

When I was young, Marion was just “Nana”, my grandmother who came to live with us each winter and whom we visited occasionally on family trips east. She seldom talked about her earlier life until I grew up and would travel to Connecticut to visit and help out as she aged. I wrote down some of her stories before she died at age 88 on 4 July 1974.

As her executrix I had the job of cleaning out her home. I saved every scrap of paper that might be related to the family — reading things later made me wish I had known about these tidbits when she was alive! Among the things I found were a pile of Bulletins with articles she had written for the Extension Service. I found newspaper announcements of upcoming talks, even after she “retired”, not only on nutrition but also dealing with timely topics such as shortages around World War II. Making a timeline helped to put her life into perspective.

On 22 October 1991, a garden and Plaque outside of Holcomb Hall at UConn was dedicated to ten “Pioneer Women Educators” including Marion Evans Dakin. The garden was the gift of three UConn women: two members of the Class of 1944, Gertrude Lathrop and Patricia Thevenet, and an anonymous UConn Professor emerita. In the ceremony’s program, Thevenet was quoted. “These women were part of the progressive wave who were seeking to carve out new opportunities and careers for educated women, says Thevenet. “Home Economics was one of the new areas and these pioneers taught our generations of women to reach beyond the accepted roles of teacher, nurse and librarian.” Only one of the 10 women, (Wilma Keyes), lived to see the garden. I can only imagine that all of the women would be have been pleased to see their hard work acknowledged -- I know Wilma was.

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17 Clipped newspaper obituary, no newspaper identified. It was dated 20 February 1928.
18 “IT WAS VOTED: (On recommendation of Mr. Works) that Miss Marian Evans Dakin be given sabbatical leave with pay for the first semester of the academic year 1929-30. The time to be spent in study at some educational institution to be approved by the Director of Extension.” “Minutes, July 19, 1929” (1929). Agendas and Minutes. Paper 802. http://digitalcommons.uconn.edu/bot_agendas/802.
19 Town of New Milford, Litchfield County, Connecticut, Town Clerk’s records.
With the end of Charles II’s reign and the succession of his brother James II in 1665 we reach a major turning point in Irish history. Beginning in 1688 with the Williamite Revolution (aka “the Glorious Revolution”) any true autonomy in Irish society ended for nearly 200 years. This dominance of British rule was in fact the third point in 650 years of Irish history when English intervention altered the natural development of Irish society and distorted its culture.

In 1152 Diarmait Mac Murchada, King of Leinster, famously abducted Derbfogaill the wife of the King of Brefnie. (Derbforgaill was a willing participant who acted for political reasons and was later ransomed back by a very annoyed husband.) The abduction caused Diarmait to be removed from his kingship in 1167 by the High King, Ruaidri Ua Conchobar. As a result Diarmait needed help to recover his kingdom so he appealed to Henry II to send troops to reinforce his clan members. In return he pledged his allegiance to the English King. Henry II used this request as a means of shipping a group of nobles, who were challenging his reign, off to Ireland with the promise of land and bounty. The result was the early colonization of parts of Ireland by families who later became known as “Old English”. It also started the erosion of the clan system because Irish chiefs began to pledge allegiance to the English King in return for English titles.

In 1530, the rebellion of Silken Thomas, Earl of Kildare, caused Henry VIII to be declared King of Ireland. However, nearly 60 years passed before James I was recognized as the titular monarch of the country. This period involved the legal fiction of “surrender and regnant” in which clan titles were converted to crown grants and titles. A series of clan wars resulted, leading to the Desmond Rebellion. The Reformation led to the growth of Protestant religions and the separation of England from Rome. The formation of the Church of England under Henry VIII created two separate religious environments in England and Ireland. The Pope’s subsequent declaration of Queen Elizabeth as a heretic triggered the Second Desmond Rebellion which was followed in 1585 by the Nine Years War, part of the English-Spanish War of that period. The Flight of the Earls in 1607 represented a major blow to the clan system.

The rebellion of 1641 and the invasion of Cromwell continued the process of English incursion. This phase came to a final head in 1685 when James II, the younger brother of, and successor to Charles II, became king. James was a Catholic and was believed to be both pro-Catholic and pro-French. James had two adult daughters (who were Anglican) by his first wife, who was a commoner. In 1688 James produced a male heir (James Francis Edward Stuart) with his second wife who was Catholic. This immediately produced a rebellion among the Protestant nobility who asked William of Orange, James’ nephew, to assume the English throne. In 1689 William landed in England, and assumed the throne as joint sovereign with his wife, Mary, in 1689. In 1690, William defeated James in the Battle of the Boyne. James fled to France and lived his life out as pretender under the protection of his cousin King Louis XIV.

James II married his first wife, Anne Hyde, in 1660. Several children died in infancy. Only two daughters, Mary and Anne survived to adulthood. Their mother Anne died in 1671. Following his experience in France James had apparently converted to Catholicism in 1668 or 1669 but continued to attend Anglican observances. His Catholicism was publicly confirmed when he refused to take the oath under the Test Act of 1673 requiring a repudiation of Catholic beliefs.

In 1673 James married his second wife, a 15 year old Italian princess Mary of Moderna who was a Roman Catholic. The couple was perfuntorily remarried in an Anglican ceremony in London but Mary was widely considered to be a spy for the Pope. James then consented to the marriage of his first daughter Mary to William of Orange after it was agreed to by both Charles II and William. Meanwhile, Charles’ inability to sire an heir with the Queen and the occurrence of the
“Popish Plot” caused further disruption. The “Plot” fabricated by Titus Oates, a defrocked Anglican clergyman, claimed the Pope planned to assassinate Charles II and have James ascend to the throne. The effect was widespread anti-Catholic hysteria that swept across England and Scotland between 1678 and 1681. Twenty two persons, including eight Jesuits, were executed and the turmoil led to the “Exclusion Crisis”.

An exclusion bill was filed in Parliament to bar James from taking the throne. Charles responded to this by dissolving Parliament and repeated this action until the bill lost traction. The debate, however, shaped the formation of the Whig and Tory factions and helped to entrench anti-Catholicism in British society. In fact, before the growth of Orange Societies in Ulster the nascent Whig Party began annual demonstrations replaying the allegations of the Popish Plot to stir up hatred and fear of the Catholic Church. Nevertheless James took over the monarchy on the death of his brother in 1685.

James’ reign demonstrated ambiguous policies. He was tolerant of Catholics and Protestant nonconformists but he waged a persecution against Presbyterian Covenanters in Scotland. Parliament on the other hand opposed his desire for an absolute monarchy and preserved the structure of the Church of England. Thereafter he increased his support of Catholics, including them in his government. The birth of a son with his second wife Mary became the trigger for his overthrow. The public’s fear of the establishment of a Catholic succession was widespread and caused demands for William of Orange to take the throne.

The history of James’ reign has been subject to much political interpretation. Whig historians have painted him as an absolutist and exhibiting symptoms of insanity. Between 1889 and 1900, historians who seemed motivated by their personal beliefs (Macaulay, G.M. Trevelyan, and David Ogg) published various accounts of James II arguing that he was a tyrant and an aberration in the line of British royalty. Much of the negative characterization was attributed to his Catholicism. In 1928 this interpretation was challenged when the historian Hilaire Belloc, who was Catholic, portrayed him as a true advocate for freedom of conscience who had been attacked by a small clique of wealthy nobles for narrow reasons not beneficial to the crown.

In 1152 the drivers were politics and economics. All the actors were Roman Catholics and the crucial issue was Henry II’s need to secure his authority among his nobles. In 1530 the driver was the growing power of England’s economy and the need to expand its markets. The nascent Reformation also drove this process as Roman Catholic Ireland became isolated from Rome. Henry VIII and his successors were influenced by religious intolerance and the need to profit from the assets of the Church. By 1650 religious intolerance had risen to a peak and reconciliation was essentially impossible.

This quick sketch provides a sense of the evolution of the anti-Catholic and anti-Irish sentiments that permeated much of the period from 1690 to 1830 and beyond. Understanding the ascension of James II, the politics of the period and the Glorious Revolution will help define the experience of the Irish in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the next few columns we will consider the relevant events in detail and try to connect them to our families’ histories.

NEXT: The Popish Plot and James II
Questions/comments to Dathi2010@gmail.com

Library update
Joan Callahan #3491

Thank you to the following TIARA members for their donations to the TIARA Library:
Susan Steele: Glassara, Henry H., Passing the Time in Ballymenone: culture and history of an Ulster community, University of Pennsylvania Press 1982
Learn the Language of Your People!
Mary Ellen Doona #1629

TIARA aims to develop and promote the growth, study and exchange of ideas among those interested in genealogical and historical research. TIARA members have fostered that aim as they have found their Irish ancestors and restored them to their rightful place on family trees. In doing so, they have learned a good bit of Irish history, especially about the Famine (1845-1852) during which so many native Irish perished. Their language almost perished with them and suffered further decline as the Irish began to prefer English to Irish. Pádraig Pearse warned the Irish: “Tír gan teanga, tír gan anam,” telling them that a country without a language is a country without a soul. In 1892 Douglas Hyde, later the first President of Ireland, founded the Gaelic League aimed at de-Anglicizing Ireland and restoring its language and customs.

As they have done their research, perhaps some TIARA members have wondered about the language of their ancestors. Perhaps other TIARA members have caught a whiff of ancient Ireland in such words as, “Conas atá tú?” or “Cén chaoi a bhfuil tú?” The first greeting is in Munster Irish and the second is in Connemara Irish, but both are asking, “How are you?” Boston’s Mayor Martin Walsh who is fluent in Irish would probably answer, “Tá mé go maith,” I am good,” or “I am well.” And perhaps still other TIARA members have enjoyed the warm “Céad míle faílte!” a hundred thousand welcomes! when they arrived in Ireland to do their research.

Boston’s Ár dTeanga Dhúchais (Our Native Tongue/ Language) extends a céad míle faílte to TIARA members who are interested in learning a cúpla focal, a couple of words that their ancestors probably spoke. There are classes for all levels of students that start again September 15, 16 and 17, 2015. Beginners’ classes are held in Dedham Tuesdays from 7PM-9PM and in Dorchester (St. Gregory’s) on Thursdays 7pm-9pm. Classes for those at an intermediate level are held in Dorchester (St. Gregory’s) on Tuesdays 7pm-9pm and in Brookline on Wednesdays 7pm-9pm. Still another class for advanced learners is held in Brookline Thursdays 7:30 pm-9:30 pm.

The classes are small providing a comfortable learning environment. As would be expected the instructors: Tommy King, Jim Murphy and Peggy Cloherty are fluent in the language as well as experienced in helping students to master Irish. Tuition is $150 for twelve sessions. Parking is available. For additional information contact Jim Murphy: greenane@comcast.net or 1-781-205-4779.

After a few classes a TIARA member will be talking about “mo mhuintir,” my people, on their family tree.

Upcoming TIARA Meetings

Friday, September 11, 2015, 7:30PM
Brandeis University, Mendel Center for the Humanities, Rm. G3.
Joanne Riley, “Online Mapping Tools for Family Historians”
Maps help to orient genealogists in space and time as they study their ancestors’ immigration, migration and residence patterns. Paper maps can be works of art and are a joy to pore over and study. Still, digitized maps offer exciting advantages over paper maps, and digital maps that are backed by “data” are more exciting still. In this presentation, Joanne Riley, University Archivist at UMass Boston, offers an overview of various types of maps useful to genealogists, key online mapping collections, and demonstrations of fire insurance maps, geo-coded maps, satellite maps, overlay maps and customization map tools.

Friday, October 9, 2015, 7:30PM
Brandeis University, Mendel Center for the Humanities, Rm. G3.
Speaker: TBA

Saturday, November 14, 2015 Wayside Inn, Sudbury, MA TIARA Annual Banquet,
Speaker: Sheila Connolly, author of genealogy mysteries set in County Cork.
Details to follow. This is a ticketed event.
**Newsletter Opportunities**

The newsletter needs a lot of help, and offers varying degrees of time commitment and geographical location - there’s something for everyone! We have the following volunteer opportunities both for members in the Boston area, or outside of the Boston area. To volunteer, send email to volunteers@tiara.ie or by post to TIARA, 2120 Commonwealth Ave, Auburndale, MA.

**Local Requirement:**
Newsletter Coordinator - Be the liaison between the editor and those submitting materials (see list below). Does not involve writing or editing, but requires being organized.

**No Local Requirement:**
1. Calendar organizer - Maintain calendar of events and/or maintain list of publications: Do you read several genealogical publications? Requires keeping an eye out for events and publications of interest to TIARA members.
2. Assistant Editor – Proof read articles for inclusion in the TIARA newsletter. Help match articles to space available. Make sure article is in correct final form for insertion in the newsletter. Select topics for newsletter themes.
3. Nuggets - Contributing those “tidbits” you read, hear about, or experience, which may be useful to someone else.
4. Writers - Write articles either on the suggested theme or a topic of Irish or genealogical interest. Review a genealogy or Irish history book.

**President’s Message (Continued)**

*Sept. 17-19* The New York State Family History Conference, Syracuse, NY
For both of these events, volunteers are needed for our vendor tent to help greet guests, sell books and perhaps provide genealogy guidance.

*Sept. 26* Chelmsford’s Fall Genealogy Conference, No. Chelmsford, MA. TIARA will be sponsoring a Genealogy Road Show with free 15 minute consultations for conference attendees for both Irish and general research. We are looking for volunteers to provide these consultations. Conference attendees will be asked to provide their research questions in advance so there will be plenty of time to prepare your responses.

For full descriptions of events and volunteer coordinator information see the TIARA website Events Page [http://www.tiara.ie/events.php](http://www.tiara.ie/events.php). Events in the North, in the South and a bit farther afield - hope to connect with you at one of these locations. If you can’t volunteer, please stop by the TIARA booth and say hello.

We are also busy planning our own TIARA schedule for 2015 - 2016. Joanne Riley will be speaking about “Online Mapping Tools for Family Historians” at our first meeting in September. She presented this topic to a packed audience at the National Heritage Museum last fall. TIARA’s annual banquet will be held at the Wayside Inn in Sudbury on November 14th. Sheila Connolly, author of the County Cork Mysteries, will be our after dinner speaker. Vice President, Kathy Sullivan, is working hard on scheduling the rest of our 2015 - 2016 events. Check the TIARA website for future dates. It's not too soon to think about fitting 2016 events into your schedule. The Trip Committee, headed by co-chairs, Marie Ahearn and Janis Duffy is working on plans for research trips to Ireland in April 2016. Mary Choppa, Greg Atkinson and a number of other TIARA representatives are working with our Irish Genealogical Society International cohorts to plan the second Celtic Connections Conference. The event will be held in Minnesota on August 5th & 6th, 2016. Do consider this event when making vacation plans and watch our website for more details. Looking forward to a busy and stimulating term!
Next Issue

The suggested topic for the Winter Issue of the newsletter focuses on **Canada**. Have you researched an Irish emigrant ancestor who arrived in Canada? Was this an intermediate destination or perhaps a permanent residence? What sources did you use in your research? Share your story and write an article for the next issue of the TIARA Newsletter.

Articles on other topics of family research are also welcome.

Have a research tip, new resource or database to share with TIARA members? Submit your **nugget** of information to the newsletter.

Please send submissions to the newsletter to newsletter@tiara.ie or mail to the above address. Submissions for the Fall Issue are requested by October 30, 2015.