Researching Children’s Records

Annie Moore was touted by newspapers as a lone young girl valiantly shepherding her two younger siblings from County Cork to New York City. She was first in line supposedly arriving on her 15th birthday, January 1, 1892. Newspapers stretched the facts to create an attention-grabbing tale of a brave young girl facing the future alone in the world. Many ‘descendants’ have attempted to share the limelight but the truth was finally ferreted out in 2006. The whole story can be found online. The short version at [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/megan-smolenyak-smolenvyak/they-say-its-your-birthda_b_4523793.html] The long version at [http://nymag.com/news/features/65902/] [There is a similar statue at Ellis Island]

[photo from The Irish Times 2 Aug 2017; https://www.irishtimes.com/life-and-style/abroad/the-cork-girl-who-was-first-through-ellis-island-s-gates-1.2958208]
The Irish Ancestral Research Association  
84 South Street  
Waltham, MA 02453-3537  
www.tiara.ie

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THE TIARA NEWSLETTER  
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Assistant Editors  Ann Patriquin  Marie Ahearn  
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The President’s Message  
Virginia Wright #2480

Greetings from your new Co-President. It is now late July, and the third day with temperatures over 90 degrees here in Massachusetts – vacation time. Although the TIARA monthly meetings are “on vacation” until September, the TIARA Executive Board and committees have remained active. At the end of June, the officers and committee chairs attended a transition meeting with the newly elected officers and appointed committee chairs to assure the smooth passage of duties and to begin planning for the upcoming year.

To those officers who have completed their terms and the committee chairpersons who are stepping down, a big thank you for all the time and talent that you have given to TIARA. Returning for a second term is my Co-President, Susan Steele. Pam Holland has assumed the duties of Vice-President and Pat Deal has taken on the position of Corresponding Secretary. Anne Patriquin joins Joanne Delaney as Co-Recording Secretary. Gary Sutherland continues as Financial Director. There are also a few new committee changes. Julie Rizzello is the new Membership chair. Mary Coyne, assisted by Anne Patriquin, Marie Ahearn and Don Ahearn have taken over the Newsletter tasks. We are still looking for someone to fill the Volunteers Coordinator position.

As you read this, the Celtic Connection Conference will be less than a year away. Mary Choppa, Greg Atkinson and their committee members have been busy arranging conference details with our conference co-host IGSI.

The Trip Committee has been busy reviewing the completed trip surveys sent to all members earlier this year. Those who expressed interest in future trips have received a follow-up questionnaire. The committee is using their input to plan the time and details of the next research trip to Ireland.

A new TIARA activity is the Writing Group formed to encourage members to write up their family history research. Facilitators are Marie Ahearn, Kathy Sullivan and Anne Patriquin. The first six sessions filled up quickly and has been meeting bi-monthly since early July. As former Newsletter Editor, I hope that the participants share their research stories in the Newsletter.

Changes are coming to the TIARA website. TIARA has signed a contract with the website developer selected by the website committee to update and add features to the TIARA website. The new features should be online sometime next month. We are grateful for the TIARA member donation that funded this update.

One unanticipated change that impacts TIARA is the Waltham Chamber of Commerce, our landlord, has put its property up for sale. We now need to locate a new home. Please let us know if you are aware of rental space that would meet TIARA’s needs. We currently occupy about 250 square feet of office & library space (a tight fit) and share a conference room and additional storage space. We are flexible and willing to continue sharing space with another organization.

Virginia Wright  
Virginia Wright, Co-President  
president2@tiara.ie
Tracing the Mountbellew Workhouse Paupers Sent to North America during the Great Famine.¹
Gerard Moran Guest Author

On the 16th July 1853 the Primrose left Limerick port for Quebec and among the passengers were fifty girls from Mountbellew workhouse, Co. Galway, who had their passage paid by the board of guardians and who were to start a new life in North America. One of the girls was Jane Kelly from the Mountbellew electoral division, forty years old and a pauper in the workhouse for over five years. Her occupation was listed as tailoress. Instead of a new life in North America, Jane Kelly was committed to a lunatic and idiot asylum in 1857, described as being unsound in mind and remained there until the 1880s when she disappears from the records. She had exchanged one institution in Ireland for one in Canada. Jane Kelly was one of over 15,000 workhouse girls sent to North America in the 1850s in what had been described as ‘the invisible emigrant army’ because we know nothing about them, their names or what became of them. The exception are the fifty Mountbellew girls because of the records kept by the poor law union officials.

While the poor law system in Ireland was established in 1838 to cater for the destitute poor, it was not until the failure of the potato in 1845 that the numbers entering the workhouses exploded. By June 1851 over 256,000 people were pauper inmates in the workhouses, representing over 4 per cent of the total population in the country. The massive increase in the pauper population put pressure on the authorities, in particular the large number of women and children that had to be accommodated. By March 1847, 75 percent of the adult population in both Cork and Nenagh workhouses were women. Some were deserted by their husbands while others used the workhouses as a safety net when the male emigrated in search of work with the intention of remitting the money to the rest of the family later.

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Mountbellew paupers sent to North America
These women tended to be a long term financial burden on the poor law and regarded as a ‘permanent deadweight’, and the authorities were anxious to dispose of them as quickly as possible. It cost £5 to send them to the colonies, the same as their annual upkeep in the workhouse, and long term this would be a considerable saving.

In 1848 the first group of workhouse females was sent to Australia where the authorities were prepared to pay the passage fares and, up to 1850 4,114 girls had been assisted to the colony where there was a major gender imbalance with eight males to every female. As the Australian authorities financed this emigration they kept immaculate records on each girl and among their descendants are the Playwright and novelist, Thomas Kenneally, and the former Australian prime minister, Kevin Rudd. The success of the Australian Female Orphan Scheme persuaded the poor law authorities to look to Canada as a destination for the ‘permanent deadweight’ that still remained in the workhouses. Canada was regarded as the most suitable destination because transport costs were lower and there was a major demand for female domestic servants. While the Australian authorities were involved in the selection of the girls sent to that colony, this was not the case with the Canadian emigration and consequently many, like Jane Kelly, were unsuited to a new life in North America.

Mountbellew workhouse opened in 1852 being one of the additional thirty-two established because of the overcrowding in the existing workhouses. The paupers had previously been housed in Ballinasloe workhouse. The Mountbellew guardians decided to send as many of the young females as possible to the colonies before their transfer to the new workhouse. In November 1852, thirty girls from Mountbellew sailed from Plymouth on the Travencore for western Australia and within weeks of their departure preparations were made to offload another group of young females to Canada. The workhouse master, Mr Joyce, was asked to select fifty of the remaining 125 able-bodied females for emigration and in March 1852 tenders were sought for items such as shoes, towels, cotton stockings, pocket handkerchiefs, combs, soaps, etc., for the girls’ journey. The travel was arranged by a Kilrush shipping agent; Mr Gibson was paid £3/16/6 to transfer each girl to Quebec and agreed to provide additional rations on the journey. Gibson’s inability to secure a suitable boat resulted in the Mountbellew guardians threatening him with legal action and it was not until mid July that positions on the Primrose were secured.

The fifty girls selected provide an indication of the type of workhouse pauper that was sent to North America. They ranged in age from fifteen to forty years, the eldest being Jane Kelly and Biddy Ruane. The Canadian authorities stated they would accept girls from sixteen to twenty-four years, so that the sending of Jane Kelly and Biddy Ruane, both forty years, suggests the official used the opportunity to transfer – and thereby rid themselves of – a small group of older paupers who otherwise would have been permanent residents in the workhouse. The girls had resided in the workhouse for between two and eight years with Mary Clark from Annagh, who was nineteen years, and Mary Killarney aged twenty-one years from Derryglassanun having spent the least time in the institution. Four had been inmates for over seven years: Catherine Connolly, aged twenty years, and Biddy Barrett, aged 16 years, both from Ballinakill, and Janes Murray, aged 15 years from Derryglassanun, and Kitty Rabbitt, aged 18 years, from Castleffrench. The length of time the girls spent as workhouse paupers highlights their ages when they were admitted.
and suggests how in the long term they had become institutionalized and a permanent financial burden. Nine were under 10 years when first admitted: Jane Murray was the youngest at 8 years, while Fanny Geraghty from Tameboy, Anne McGrath from Cooloo and Ellen Egan from Castleblakeney were all aged 9 years. The majority of the girls were orphans as it is unlikely they would have left if they still had family members living in the Mountbellew-Ballinasloe area. That they were orphans is also suggested by the number of sisters who left: Margaret Coffey and her sister, Mary, from Cooloo had been in the workhouse for more than three years, while Mary Dowd from Cloonkeen was 16 years and her sister, Winny, 14 years when they were admitted to Ballinasloe workhouse in 1849. The girls came from 13 of the electoral divisions in the Mountbellew union: 9 were from Derryglassaun, 6 from Castleblakeney, 5 from both Cooloo and Mounthazel.

What became of the girls after they arrived in Quebec on 6th September 1883? According to A.C. Buchanan, the emigration agent in Quebec, they were sent to Toronto and Hamilton where employment positions were available. Fifty pounds had been forwarded to Buchanan in Quebec to pay for their travel to their final destinations. What is unclear is whether they were sent immediately to these locations or stayed with the Sisters of Charity in Bytown (Ottowa, Ontario) to be retrained for work as domestic servants. Some did become domestic servants: Anne McGrath in 1861 was a servant in the house of Joseph Parker in Montreal. Ellen Egan was living in Toronto in 1861 and worked as a baker, but the following year moved to the township of Alice and Fraser in eastern Ontario after marrying William Parker. She died in Guelph in February 1915. Catherine Kilgallon from Derryglassaun was 15 years when she left on the Primrose, having spent 6 years in the workhouse. In the Canadian census in 1861 she was living in Pembroke, Renfrew County, Ontario; married with three children, her occupation recorded as a washer woman. Her husband is classified as absent. There is no trace of her in the 1871 census and like many of the other female workhouse inmates on the Primrose she may have moved and settled in the United States.

Many of the workhouse inhabitants sent to Canada to work as domestic servants gravitated to the large cities where wages were higher and there were more opportunities. Canadian employers also maintained the girls were not suited to domestic work as they had not been adequately trained for this work.

The girls who left on the Primrose provide us with some information about what happened to those paupers that were sent to Canada in the 1850s, but the full story has yet to be told.

1An expanded version of this subject is available in Women and the Great Hunger, Christine Kinealy, Jason King & Ciaran Reilly (eds), (Quinnipiac University Press, 2016); Women and the Great Hunger Paperback, by Dr. Christine Kinealy, (Quinnipiac University Press, 2017).

Dr. Gerard Moran is a lecturer in the Dept. of History, National University of Ireland, Maynooth, County Kildare, Ireland. Dr. Moran would appreciate information on the life history of any of the immigrants mentioned in this article. (Gerard.moran@gmail.com)

Theme for Winter Issue

Early Immigrant Life

What were the living conditions of your early Irish immigrant ancestors and the first-generation families in the US and Canada? Where did they live and find employment? How and where did they move up the socioeconomic ladder? What was their level of education? What records, books or manuscripts have you used in researching these immigrant families?

Send articles to newsletter@tiara.ie
Children’s Social Welfare Records at the University of Massachusetts Boston

Jessica Holden Guest Author

Social Welfare Records
The records of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century social welfare organizations provide us with insight into the lives of the people that they served. These organizations kept fairly comprehensive intake, placement, and discharge records, as well as correspondence regarding clients and administrative reports that sometimes described specific cases. The records can illuminate the personal histories of clients and their families, often including information not typically found in the vital or census records that are the cornerstones of family history research. University Archives and Special Collections in the Joseph P. Healey Library at the University of Massachusetts Boston collects archival materials that document social welfare in Massachusetts, and we hold twenty such record collections that are available for research. The majority of the organizations that created these records focused their services on children.

Notable Collections
One of our oldest children’s social welfare collections is the records of the Boston Female Asylum. The Boston Female Asylum was Founded in 1800 to care for orphaned and destitute girls in Boston. By the end of the century it had become a counseling and placement agency, evident in the change of its name to the Boston Society for the Care of Girls. The society merged with the Boston Children’s Aid Society in 1923 to form the Children’s Aid Association, later to become the Boston Children’s Service Association. Client and administrative records of the organization from 1800-1946 (bulk 1800-1923) are held by University Archives and Special Collections. The collection includes minutes, journals, registers, client histories, placement records, and publications. Related records from the Boston Female Asylum are held at the State Library of Massachusetts, Ms. Coll. 23.

Over the course of several years, researcher Ann S. Lainhart transcribed client information from the two-volume “Register of orphan children admitted to the Boston Female Asylum 1800-1864” and the Board of Managers meeting records, 1800-1866, at the State Library of Massachusetts. She carefully cross-referenced client information from the Register and Board meeting minutes, and added vital record, state, and federal census data where possible. The result is a detailed snapshot of hundreds of impoverished families in Boston in the first half of the nineteenth century, with a focus on young girls ages three to ten. Lainhart’s transcription is available online here: http://bit.ly/2uTmpWE.

Another substantive social welfare collection held by University Archives and Special Collections is the records of the Gwynne Temporary Home for Children. Originally called the Temporary Home for the Destitute, it was founded in 1847 in Boston’s South End to offer temporary shelter to children in
need. The children were returned to their families or friends, transferred to another institution, placed for adoption, or bound out for work. The Home was renamed the Gwynne Temporary Home for Children in 1888, and merged with the Boston Children’s Aid Society in 1915. The collection includes the complete client registers, annual reports, minutes, and a small amount of correspondence.

The Boston Children’s Aid Society was founded in 1863 to provide temporary reformatory care for children and to bind them out to appropriate families. It later also provided homes for destitute children. By 1900 it had closed its three homes and began to provide foster and medical care for indigent children. In 1923 it merged with the Boston Society for the Care of Girls to form the Children’s Aid Association, later to become the Boston Children’s Service Association. The collection consists of corporate, administrative, and client records, including annual reports, minutes, visitors’ books, registers, and scrapbooks. University Archives and Special Collections holds client records through 1929 from the Boston Children’s Aid Association and its successors, the Boston Children’s Aid Society, Boston Children’s Friend Society, and Boston Children’s Service Association. Client records after 1929 are governed by the Home for Little Wanderers, a child and family service agency in Boston.

One of University Archives and Special Collections’ signature collections is the records of the Massachusetts Catholic Order of Foresters, an organization founded by Irish immigrants in Boston in 1879 that offered life insurance benefits to its members. While the Foresters was not a social welfare organization, a wealth of information about members and their children can be found in these records. A typical Foresters mortuary record includes an application, medical examination form, death benefit disbursement checks, and correspondence regarding beneficiaries. University Archives and Special Collections holds 79,000 inactive Foresters records, and thanks to the wonderful ongoing work of The Irish Ancestral Research Association, more than 6,300 of those records have been electronically indexed and are now findable online (http://blogs.umb.edu/archives/collections/foresters/recordsearch/).
Access Guidelines

University Archives and Special Collections follows the National Archives and Records Administration’s “72-Year Rule” which governs access to U.S. Census data: personally identifiable information is not released until seventy-two years after the date on which the data was collected. Similarly, University Archives and Special Collections releases social welfare and other personal records seventy-two years after the death of the individual. In 2017, we can release records through 1945. Most of our social welfare collections predate 1945, which fortunately means that the entirety of the records is open and available for research. One exception is the records of the Massachusetts Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children (MSPCC), which has a donor-instituted restriction stating that records of cases closed less than 100 years ago are the property of the MSPCC and that MSPCC-owned records are available only to former MSPCC clients, direct descendants, and current staff of the MSPCC. The “72-Year Rule” and donor restrictions such as that of the MSPCC protect the privacy of individuals who are documented in these sensitive records, as well as the privacy of their descendants.

About University Archives and Special Collections at UMass Boston

The University of Massachusetts Boston is a public university, and thus University Archives and Special Collections is completely open to the public. Anyone may visit us to consult our collections in our Archives Research Room in the Joseph P. Healey Library – we do not require an affiliation with UMass Boston to access our holdings. We also offer electronic reference services in which we digitize and email PDF versions of records to patrons who may not be able to visit us in person, thereby chipping away at geographic barriers that can often hinder archival research. In order to increase access to these one-of-a-kind materials, UASC recently digitized all of the pre-1923 annual reports from the Boston Female Asylum, Children’s Aid Association, Boston Children’s Aid Society, Boston Children’s Friend Society, Gwynne Temporary Home for Children, Massachusetts Infant Asylum, Society for Helping Destitute Mothers and Infants, and Boston North End Mission. We selected reports from before 1923 for digitization because everything published before that year is now in the public domain and is no longer in copyright. These digitized reports are available via the Internet Archive and are listed in the collections’ finding aids on the University Archives and Special Collections website, http://openarchives.umb.edu. While many of our social welfare collections include client registers, some lack complete or even partial indexes, requiring additional time for our reference staff to search the records. Researchers may contact us at library.archives@umb.edu for assistance or to schedule an appointment for an in-person visit.

While the people who were served by charitable organizations in Massachusetts more than a century ago may be gone, their stories live on in the records that they left behind, stories that are preserved in our archives and ready to be explored.

Jessica Holden is a Reference Archivist, University Archives and Special Collections, Joseph P. Healey Library, UMass, Boston.

Save the Date!

August 10-11, 2018

Celtic Connection Conference

Internationally and nationally known speakers
4 tracks over 2 days

Additional activities include:
Bus Tour on Thursday and Trivia Night on Saturday
Boston Marriott Newton, Auburndale, MA
Parish records, the family bible and my grandmother’s stories led me to believe that her grandfather, William Jaques, and his first wife, Catherine Scally, had six children all born in Boyle, Roscommon. His second marriage to my ancestor, Bridget Murrin, produced four children born in New York. This family group was complete – or so I thought.

In 2003, I discovered early passenger lists for the port of New York. The list was on a CD that was part of a Family Tree Maker package. One manifest was for a ship, the LUNAR, that had sailed from Sligo in April, 1835 and arrived at New York on June 8th. On a whim, I typed in the name of my second great grandfather and was pleasantly surprised when his name appeared on the list. My great great grandmother and William’s five surviving children from his first marriage were all listed below his name. At last I had a date for the immigration of the Jaques family. Just as exciting was seeing “stone cutter” listed as William’s occupation. Three of his sons had been stone cutters and I had long suspected that William had worked at that trade as well. I could add another detail to the sparse timeline of his life.

Years later, I was researching another immigrant ancestor. The New York passenger lists have been scanned and are on line at familysearch.org. A search for that ancestor led nowhere. Frustrated with that search, I typed in the information for the LUNAR and began scanning the list for names of friends or relatives of the Jaques family, something I had neglected to do previously. On the last page of the manifest, my attention was drawn to the bottom of the list.

The last recorded passenger, #114, appeared to bear the Jaques surname. Next to the name was the notation: Born May 15th, 1835. I scrolled back through the previous pages of the manifest to see if I had overlooked another family with the same surname. There was no other Jaques family on that ship.

Next, I went to the Castle Garden website. Castle Garden, known as Castle Clinton in the early part of the 19th century, was New York’s first immigration center. This earlier immigration center known as The Emigration Depot began operation in August, 1855. Prior to 1855, ships entering the port of New York City landed at docks on the eastern tip of Manhattan. Castlegarden.org is a free website which contains transcriptions of surviving passenger lists for immigrants entering New York between 1820 and 1913.

Typing Jaques in the LAST NAME box and adding the year 1835 produced eight names. The third name from the top was Lunar Jaques, obviously named for his birthplace, born at sea. This child was 24 days old when the family arrived in New York City.
My grandmother, who often spoke about her father's youngest brother who died on their voyage to America, never mentioned her mother's older brother born on a two masted sailing ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. The last four children of William and Bridget, whose births were listed in the bible, were born in New York City, Schenectady, Utica and the Bronx. How long Lunar Jaques lived is a mystery. During my childhood, my grandmother shared stories about her grandmother so it is puzzling that Bridget never shared with her granddaughter the story of her first child's birth aboard the ship bound for America. The only record of Lunar’s existence is an entry on a passenger list.

Sources:
- Boyle, Diocese of Elphin, County of Roscommon Catholic parish registers at the NLI http://registers.nli.ie/parishes/0548
- Jaques family Bible
- www.castlegarden.org

Finding Cousins
Joanne Delaney #2850

My mother’s maternal grandparents were always a “brick wall”. I knew James Dwyer and Maria Loughlin (pronounced Ma Rye-ah) were married in Stoneham Mass. 3 May 1875, and their marriage certificate named their parents as Patrick Dwyer and Margaret, and Bartholomew Loughlin and Mary. Death records gave mothers’ maiden names: Margaret Keaney and Mary Clerkin. According to the 1900 US Census James was born in March 1848 and Maria in June 1853 James’ naturalization record listed County Sligo as place of origin, but no townland or parish was identified. There wasn’t a naturalization record for Maria. James died in 1906, and Maria in 1919; mother had not yet been born and so she knew very little about these grandparents. Her mother died in 1972, before I started my genealogical journey, so I never asked her the questions I should have. A search in FamilySearch.org found several Dwyer families in Sligo during the right timeframe.

In 2014 I went to the County Sligo Heritage & Genealogy Centre, and met an extraordinarily helpful staff member, Teresa Eakins, who found much more on the Dwyers, in the records there that are NOT online! However, still no info on the Loughlin side. Teresa theorized “I think they may have been from Leitrim, you should look there.

Back home, I dug into the paper files, and found a memo I had written after a conversation with my mother. She had told me that her cousin Helene’s grandmother (who was the sister of my mother’s grandmother) had remained in Ireland, no identifying name of course! She also knew that Helene’s mother, Mary (Gormley) Cunningham, had a brother Michael who also emigrated in the early 1900s, and provided names of some of Michael’s children.

Utilizing the FAN principle, I searched for Mary & Michael Gormley in US Census records and in passenger records on FamilySearch.org. I found Michael in 1908 and Mary in 1910, arriving in Boston.
Thankfully at that time, passenger records had begun to list not only who the immigrant was going to, but also the next of kin left behind, with an address. Michael was going to his uncle, Thomas Loughlin whom I had already identified and Mary to her brother Michael. Cue the happy dance: both listed as nearest relative in Ireland: mother, Ellen Gormley, in Ballintogher, Sligo!

Turning to the National Archives of Ireland, I looked up the 1901 and 1911 Census, and found in 1901, Thomas and Ellen Gormley, and children, including Mary & Michael; in 1911, Ellen Gormley, widow, and several children. Fast forward to Sept. 2015: My husband and I returned to Ireland, and went to Sligo again, determined to at least visit Ballintogher. As you enter the village on the R290, there’s a church (R.C.), some houses, a shop on the corner, two pubs, a few more houses. Then you’re out of the village! There are a few more houses up the side street beyond the shop, but then it’s countryside again. Having had good luck at the parish church in Galway on another family line, I decided to visit the church, while my husband opted for Moran’s pub, since there was a football game on!

As I was lurking in the lobby of the church, hoping to find a Gormley on the bulletin board, Ann, the woman doing flowers, came and asked if she could help with anything. When I mentioned the name, she said, "Hmmm…wonder if that’s any relation to Tom Gormley in Sligo town? Well, I know who will know. You come with me; we’ll go down to the pub and ask Hughie". Despite my reluctance to impose on her time, she headed out the door, and we walked across the street and down the block, to Moran’s, the pub where my husband was having a pint. She explained my story to the bartender, and then hustled back to church. Hughie behind the bar pulled out his laptop, pulled up the 1901 census on the National Archives website, turned the laptop to me and asked "Are these the people you want?" Yes, I said, barely breathing. "Hold on a minute" he said, turning to the phone, and dialing. "Hi, Kathleen, is Frankie around? Wasn’t his mother a Gormley? Yeah? Well, tell him to come over, I have his cousin from the States here at the pub". Five minutes later, in walks Frankie Carney, my third cousin! By this point I was almost speechless and anyone who knows me knows THAT doesn’t happen often. We established that his mother’s father was Thomas Gormley, brother to Mary & Michael; he left Sligo after his wife died in childbirth in 1923 or so. Frankie didn’t know what happened to him, but I had found him listed in US Census records, living with Michael in Dorchester in 1930 and with a new wife, Sarah in 1940. Very satisfying to be able to share that with Frankie.

After pints all around on us, and much conversation, Frankie sent us to his wife who was “minding the store” across the street. Turns out they own the shop, and the whole family pitches in there. Kathleen welcomed us with open arms (Frankie called her while we were crossing over!) and had more details to share. But, she told us, their daughter Agnes was the one to talk with as “she is the genealogy person” in the family. Agnes was at a wedding, could we return tomorrow to meet her? We certainly could and we did!

Agnes was even more welcoming and enthusiastic, inviting us into the “back room” at the shop, which functions as a family room, with kids doing homework, a grandchild running about, family members in and out, and computers where we immediately pulled up my Ancestry tree. Agnes pulled out papers she had started on her side, and we had an
all-around wonderful time connecting everyone up. They taught me the townland names, and the parish to use in future research. I learned about another of Mary & Michael’s siblings, James Gormley, who had died during the 1916 Easter Rising at 25 years old.

Everyone kept telling me I looked like Frankie’s sister, Mary, who sadly had passed away from cancer a year before. They even sent us to the local golf club where she had led the Ladies’ League, to see pictures of her there. While there I met an employee who knew her, and he agreed “You do look like her!” A little eerie, but it sure cemented the idea that I was, indeed, related. The next day, Agnes took us on a tour of her grandmother’s now derelict house, the cemeteries where various relatives were buried, and then back to the shop for tea with everyone. She even contacted a Loughlin relative, Gary Keegan, who met us at Moran’s that evening with his binder of genealogical information. He hadn’t looked at it in a while, and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to do so. He also had a copy of Griffith’s which showed his ancestor with two neighboring brothers, one of whom was my 2nd great-grandfather. This really established where to do further research, as his land was in Leitrim, next door to the Gormley land in Sligo! The parish of Killanummery straddles the border, and that is where I have since found a marriage record for my 2nd great-grandparents, Bartholomew Loughlin and Mary Clerkin, in 1848, and a number of other records as well.

I would never have found all this without going to Ireland. These were serious genealogy-minded people, including the bartender! Where else would there be such a warm welcome to a complete stranger? BTW: Moran’s pub has been in the family for over 200 years, so would have been where my ancestors went for a pint! Hugh, and his mother Mary, who fills in at the bar, entertained us with the history of Moran’s. It started out as a small room in his several-times-great aunt’s home, and while a little bigger, and modernized over the years, the old fireplace is still there. So is a high-def. TV! Hugh makes a fabulous Irish Coffee, so if you’re ever in Sligo….

Since then, another cousin, Annie, has contacted me via email (Agnes gave her my address) and we have corresponded repeatedly. Thomas Gormley is also her grandfather. She has provided some more links, including the death date and burial place of Grandfather Thomas in Boston. Had I known all this a few years ago, we could have met when she came to visit Boston. We do plan to get together when I return to Ireland in May of this year. The Irish part of my family tree has grown exponentially since that trip. I’ve been able to take advantage of all the church and civil records on www.irishgenealogy.ie to find Frankie’s grandmother’s death information, and other birth and death records. Most important of all, it has been a thrill to meet the cousins, to know they too were delighted to meet us, to deepen my knowledge and understanding of those who came before me, and to have validated my visceral connection to Ireland. It feels like home away from home to me now after five trips, and I’m so looking forward to returning, and deepening the familial ties.

I can’t recommend travelling to Ireland strongly enough: even if “everything is online”, which it isn’t, there is nothing like being there, meeting the people and walking the land where your ancestors walked.
In 1988, my mother, Mary Elizabeth Smith, told me for the first time that she had been adopted. It was not until the fall of 2015, after both my parents were dead, that I discovered more information from file folders left in my parents’ home. To join the Navy in 1943, she had to produce a birth certificate, but had none. Instead, she had to request that the Holy Innocents’ Home of Portland, Maine (also called “The Creche”), provide a notarized affidavit attesting to her birth. The document confirmed Mary’s birth in January 1916, and her adoption in November 1916. This document also provided the name of the birth mother, nationality (Irish), and occupation (maid). It also provided the name of the birth father, but only his occupation. Since I had a little more information about the birth mother, my Irish grandmother, I began by researching her. I have left names out of this article to protect privacy.

Here is the research process I followed to find out who my Irish grandmother was. A different process may be appropriate depending on individual circumstances.

Found over two-dozen possible candidates looking at Ancestry.com census records, passenger lists, and city directories.

To narrow the focus, had my DNA analyzed by Ancestry.com and uploaded the results to FamilyTreeDNA.

Made contact with a FamilyTreeDNA-matched second cousin, who told me her grandfather’s name; he would have been my great-uncle; unfortunately, she had no information directly about my Irish grandmother.

Examined passenger lists and found a matching name for my great-uncle and the village he came from in Connemara.

Used the 1901 Irish Census data for the village (from the Irish government website) to confirm that my maternal grandmother lived there, as well as to confirm the names and ages of her siblings and father.

Re-examined Boston passenger lists on Ancestry.com and found the records matching the same village for my Irish grandmother, and her siblings, and discovered when they arrived, and what their American destinations were.

Used city directory data from Ancestry.com to determine where my Irish grandmother and her siblings lived in America in 1915-1916.

I also went through a similar process for my maternal grandfather, who was not Irish, but Lithuanian.

Using all the results above, I was able to piece together a chronology. My Irish grandmother arrived in Boston in 1914 and lived with her sister and brother-in-law in South Boston. She found work as a maid. At the same time, my Lithuanian grandfather worked in the main food market in Boston, which corresponded to his occupation listed on the affidavit. She probably met him while shopping for food there. In the spring of 1915, she found herself with child. Being pregnant with a child out of wedlock entailed social stigma, so the sister and brother-in-law probably decided to send her to Portland to live with her older brother, and have the baby there. The brother in Portland arranged for her to stay at a nearby boarding house and to get a job. After the birth, my maternal grandmother tried to raise the child on her own, but after 7 months, she gave her up for adoption at the Creche. According to the city directory, my Irish grandmother lived in Portland in 1916, but was no longer there from
1917 onward. So, I was faced with a further problem: what happened to my Irish grandmother after she gave up the baby for adoption?

Using census records, city directories, marriage records/indexes and death records/indexes from Ancestry.com, I was able to rule out candidates in all New England states except Massachusetts.

Searches in Ancestry post-1915 only yield the marriage indexes and death indexes, but no detailed information. Therefore, to gain access to primary records, I had to visit both the Massachusetts Archive (records from 1925 and earlier) and the Massachusetts Vital Records office (records after 1925). By doing so, I was able to come up with a handful of possible candidates.

To make further progress, I decided to try to find some living relatives in Ireland who perhaps had maintained family contacts. The Maine Irish Heritage Center recommended a couple of people in Connemara who were familiar with families living in that region. I went to Ireland and followed five leads by meeting or calling them, and finally hit the jackpot. One of them recollected an aunt who had lived in South Boston and the name of the man she married in the early 1920s. I circled back to look at the marriage records I had previously researched and found the exact match. I then researched the descendants of my Irish grandmother in Boston, and found four still living in the Boston area. I contacted a lady in Dorchester who agreed to talk with me. All the facts lined up, and she arranged to meet with me at her sister’s house in South Boston.

When I met them, they got out a box of old photos their grandfather had saved. One was an old photo of an infant in a stroller. I was shocked, because I had the exact same photo in a family album of my own. Beyond that, inscribed at the bottom was my mother’s name, “Little Mary.” Along the side was written her birth date! On the back, written in pencil was the name of my mother’s adoptive mother and the town in Minnesota where she lived. My search ended in success!

Lessons Learned for Irish Genealogy Research

- Original records, such as the census and passenger lists, often have misspelled names and incorrect ages. These records were completed by third parties who took varying degrees of care in doing so. And they had varying degrees of penmanship! Keep your mind open to possible variants of spelling, and view ages as approximate, and sometimes just wrong!

- City directories have a wealth of information about when people lived in certain places and who lived in the houses with them (or near them). However, third parties compiled these records, so errors can be present.

- Records that have been converted from the original forms to typewritten or computerized form may contain transcription errors. Don’t rule out a possibility because a name is somewhat different than what you are looking for.

- Do not shy away from looking through original documents in state archives and vital records offices.

- When the online research and paper trail both run into dead ends, don’t despair. Talking to knowledgeable people, even ones peripherally connected to your research, can lead to surprising discoveries.

- Wherever possible try to talk to people face to face. If you can’t, try calling them. Emails and letters are too easy to disregard. It is not easy to “cold call” and you may experience some rejection. But, by staying with it, you may find that one fact leads to another leads to another and finally to success.

This research effort allowed me to honor my mother’s desire to know more about her birth family, even though she passed away 10 years ago. It has been one of the most fulfilling experiences of my life.
My grandmother, Lizzie, lived with me and told me many stories of the “old country” but never mentioned Bridget’s story! The Irish are great at keeping secrets...well this is one of them. My great grandparents, Margaret Kinnane and Martin Noonan, lived on a large farm in Derryvett, Co. Clare and had nine children. The first three children were girls, Bridget (1873), Ellen (1874) and Elizabeth (1875), my grandmother.

The farm is high up in the hills of Clare near Crusheen. It was and is today a very bleak and barren townland. There was no indoor plumbing, running water, electricity or central heat. It was a large, one-room thatched roof farmhouse with a detached barn. Today the shell of the old homestead remains with a family living in the old barn - "polished floors on top of many years of compressed manure". My cousins refer to these people as “gypsies”.

I have been researching my family for many years but my research on Bridget Noonan began in 2008 when I hired Antoinette O’Brien from the Clare Heritage & Genealogy Centre in Corofin, Clare. I was told by Antoinette to send all the information I had on the Noonans and the Kinnanes. Antoinette turned out to be a valuable source of information and a good friend.

I was excited to receive my booklet on the Noonans and Kinnanes. The research was thorough. It listed births, marriages, deaths, land records and much more. This was a great way to begin my journey! Bridget was listed as the first born. She was baptized on January 5, 1873. Only baptismal records were found which means she was born sometime between the 1st and the 5th of that month. I had never heard my grandmother mention a sister called Bridget. I wondered why? Her death certificate took me by surprise. Bridget, age 24, died on the 12th of April, 1898 at the Ennis Lunatic Asylum. The cause of death was recorded as phthisis which she had for 3 months and asthenia which she had for 1 month.

“The Irish are great at keeping secrets...well this is one of them.”

The Ennis Lunatic Asylum, known as Our Lady’s Hospital first opened on May 21, 1868 and the “hospital” closed for good on March 28, 2002. All records have been archived by the County Clare Library but they are not available online. The large dark grey buildings with broken windows are now abandoned. *Are the broken windows the broken dreams of so many women?* Walking around the grounds I try not to think of the patients who were put in there “never to be visited and forgotten.” There is a statue erected as a memorial. It reads “We dedicate this sculpture to all those who were associated with this hospital during that time”.

Dying in an asylum! Really! I had to read this section again; my hands were shaking. The word “lunatic” popped off the page. I was shaking and asking myself many questions. Many still remain unanswered. I had a hard time digesting this information. That evening at the dinner table when I told my husband and two of my adult children the information, I pronounced the word lu-NA-tic, not LU-na-tic. I called Antoinette to discuss this information and to thank her for her hard work. I needed to find out why Bridget was in the asylum and who had committed her. I was told to contact Rene Franklin at the Archives Office in Clare for Bridget’s committal records.
When I spoke with Antoinette about the Asylum she mentioned that the majority of the patients were not mentally ill. Records showed many were listed as having dementia, melancholia, epilepsy. They were mostly women. Families didn’t know what to do with their female family members! Women had no rights and there were no employment opportunities for them. To be accepted, a farm girl would be “lucky” to find a farmer to marry. Most times these were arranged marriages. The only problem with this is that the farmer was usually 10-20 years older than the girl.

Bridget might have been a little feisty or maybe there was a marriage being arranged for her which she did not want. I do not believe Bridget was a dangerous lunatic. My mother often told me the story that my grandmother overheard her father arranging a marriage for her with an “older farmer”. It is interesting my grandmother and her sister Ellen both emigrated very soon after Bridget died in the asylum. Records show that my grandmother arrived in Boston in 1899. Is it a coincidence she arrived a year after her sister died?

Thomas had additional skeletons in his closet - secrets which sent me back a few years ago to meet his only surviving heir. Someone who was banished to anonymity because of the horrendous patriarchal society of the Emerald Isle - a place I now look at without the use of rose tinted glasses.

TIARA Help Wanted

**Refreshments Coordinator/s**

- Organize refreshments for meetings
- Send emails to volunteers
- Responsible for supplies (cups, plates, napkins - reimbursed)
- Set-up & clean-up

*Attendees always willing to help before and after meeting*
In addition to databases available at Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.org, it is beneficial to check library, archive, and genealogical/historical society websites for digitized or transcribed databases that may be of value to your research. The list below is by no means comprehensive, but it provides examples of databases available online for research.

**United States**

The American Female Guardian Society, a temperance organization, established an orphanage called Home for the Friendless in New York in the 1840s. This institution took in both boys and girls. A number of the Home’s records have been digitized and are available at FamilySearch.org (American Female Guardian Society Records, 1849-1917). Ed. Note [only viewable at Family History Library, Center, or partner library]

**Muskogee County Index to Probates and Guardianships, 1907 - 1930**, available on the Muskogee County (OK) Genealogical Society website
http://www.muskogecountygenealogicalsociety.org/probates--guardianships.html

**Orphan Trains**

Between the 1850s and the late 1920s, approximately 250,000 children were sent by train from eastern cities to other parts of the country, in particular to rural sections of the Midwest.

A number of orphan train riders sent to the Midwest from New York are listed in the database.
http://orphantrainridersofminnesota.com/riders.html

Certain entries contain basic information such as birth name, year, and destination, while other entries include more detailed biographical sketches.

The South Bend (Indiana) Area Genealogical Society has made available on their website a database containing a partial list of children sent to the South Bend area. The information is searchable by both the child’s birth surname and foster surname: [http://www.sbags.ororphantrain.htm]. Their website also contains an index of names pertaining to adoptions in Saint Joseph County, Indiana, as well as information about the Orphan Train Project.

For those researching Nebraska-bound orphan trains, the following database contains a partial list of names:
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~neadoptn/riders.htm

Partial list of Kansas orphan train arrivals:
http://www.kancoll.org/articles/orphans/or_child.htm

**Canada**

Between the late 1860s and the 1930s, approximately 100,000 abandoned and orphaned children from the British Isles were sent to Canada. The hope was to provide them with a better life, and to have area families take in these children to assist with farm and housekeeping work. The Home Children Records are held at the Library and Archives, Canada, with a database available on their website at [https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/immigration/immigration-records/home-children-1869-1930/immigration-records/Pages/immigration-records.aspx]

In September of 1847, an Asylum was put into operation for the widows and orphans who sailed from Ireland to Toronto and needed assistance. It was shut down by May of 1848, but this database contains the names of about two hundred women and children who utilized the Asylum’s services. Information in this database includes the names and occupations of those who either provided these individuals with apprenticeships or adopted them: [http://jubilation.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/papers/children1847.html].

**Ireland**

Deserted Children Dublin (database available at FindMyPast.ie). This database contains details of children taken into the custody of the Dublin Metropolitan Police in the early 1850s. Information in this database includes the final disposition of the child, whether he or she was placed into the care of a local parish or work house.


**Australia**

Between 1848 and 1850, over 4,000 young women residing in workhouses throughout Ireland were sent to Australia in what is known as the Earl Grey Scheme, named after the Secretary of State for the Colonies who developed the idea. Most of the girls were between fourteen and twenty years of age. The Famine Orphan Girl Database, available on the Irish Famine Memorial Sydney website, contains information about a number of these young women: [http://www.irishfaminememorial.org/en/orphansdatabase/].

Note that not all 4,000 women are listed in this database due to the loss of some records:

New South Wales, Australia, Applications and Admissions to Orphan Schools, 1817-1833 (Ancestry.com): This database includes records from both the male and female orphan schools in Sydney, Australia for the years 1817-1833. The bulk of the records date from 1825-1833. Ed. Note membership required: [http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=1676]
The Irish in America

The Pension Crisis of 1893
Blogger Damian Sheils of The Irish in the American Civil War blog has a guest post on the Clara Barton Museum Blog. The dependents of Irish American veterans had their pension payments suspended, simply because they resided outside of the United States. The subsequent outcry resulted in the repeal of this law in 1895.

http://www.clarabartonmuseum.org/pension-crisis/

Methodology

Thomas “Tommy” Rot and the Trouble with Transpositions
Blogger Mary Kirchner Roddy shares some examples of the pitfalls of searching online for what should be a simple surname and how to avoid them.

The Spelling of Irish Townlands in Deeds
Blogger Chris Paton shares some tips about the spelling of Irish townlands and the possible variants when searching in deeds.

O’Sullivan Kerry and Beara
Blogger Kay Caball explains the use the “branch” names by the O’Sullivans when searching for ancestors.
http://mykerryancestors.com/osullivans-kerry-beara/

Organizing

Don’t Lose Track of Your Digital Records – Give Them Distinctive Names
The Genealogy Girl. Amberly has a couple of organizing hints to share. The first is one is labeling your digital records in a way that makes them easy to find and retrieve.
https://thegenealogygirl.blog/2017/05/24/dont-lose-track-of-your-digital-records-give-them-distinctive-names/

Creating Free, Beautiful Charts on Treeseek
Amberly walks us through creating some nice charts!
https://thegenealogygirl.blog/2017/05/17/creating-free-beautiful-charts-on-treeseek/

Records and Databases

Genealogy—Free or Fee: Detailed NYC Marriage Records Worth Paying For
Blogger Marian B. Wood strikes gold in the new records made available through Reclalm the Records
http://climbingmyfamilytree.blogspot.com/2017/06/genealogy-free-or-fee-detailed-nyc.html

St Mary’s (Charlestown) Browsable Catholic Records
From the American Ancestors database news blog, the parish of St Mary’s in Charlestown, Massachusetts has recently been added to the Massachusetts: Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston Records, 1789-1900 database. St. Mary’s was the first parish established as a separate parish from the Cathedral of the Holy Cross, in 1828. Read more here:
https://dbnews.americanancestors.org/2017/06/15/st-mary-charlestown-browsable-catholic-records/

Death Reports of American Citizens Abroad 1835-1974
Blogger Claire Santry highlights this Ancestry database on her blog, Irish Genealogy News. I even found my great uncle, who died in Le Havre, France, while in the Merchant Marines in 1960.

Sanborn online at LOC - The Legal Genealogist
Judy Russell blogs about the first installment of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps that are being uploaded by the Library of Congress.
http://www.legalgenealogist.com/2017/05/26/sanborn-online-at-loc/

Research Tools

Genealogy, Free or Fee: Checklist for Ancestor Resources
Marian B. Wood shares a handy checklist. This may remind you of some places you hadn’t thought to look for ancestral information.
http://climbingmyfamilytree.blogspot.com/2017/05/genealogy-free-or-fee-checklist-for.html

Technology

Transform Any Document into a Searchable PDF With Adobe’s New FREE Scan App
Blogger Dick Eastman shares information on a new free app on his blog, Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter

Writing

How to Write Family History More Powerfully: Tips from a Master Storyteller
Blogger Sunny Morton from Genealogy Gems shares tips on writing from one of my favorite authors, Fanny Flagg.
https://lisalouisecooke.com/2017/05/write-family-history-2/
As a new feature, Tiara Library will provide a listing of research sources related to the theme of the newsletter. Sources may include articles, websites, books or data sources. Most – if not all – will be available in the library or online (some sites may require subscription). Info on additional places of access will be noted (see explanation of codes at the end).

**Articles**

*Care of the Poor*


Good overview of the various types of records available for children raised in care and how to access them. Provides a history and explanation of poor care system in Ireland during 19th and early 20th centuries. [T, N, BC]

*Schools*

Fiona Fitzsimons, “Irish School Registers,” *History Ireland* 24, no. 1 (Jan/Feb 2016)


Describes school records held by the National Archives of Ireland, including links to list of school records by county. Cautions that not all school registers are in the NAI -- some are still held at the local level.


Lists names of students who attended Artane Industrial School for poor children; located in Dublin but students came from across Ireland. [T, N, BC]

**Social Conditions**


Historical background on employment of children in the Industrial Revolution taken from government reports.

(No genealogy information). [T, N, BC]

Richard Hayes Phillips, “Index To Irish Slave Children In Colonial Court Records Explored,” *Irish Roots* no. 1 (Jan 2014): 6-7

Explains how Irish children were sent to US as slaves and the existing related records. [T, N, BC]

**Adoption**


Summary of recent changes to Irish law regarding increased access to family information for adoptees and relatives.

**Online Resources**

Sources for Ireland National Schools

FindMyPast - listing of schools

Ireland National School Registers

Searchable 19th century school records from across Ireland, north and south

T = TIARA Library
N = New England Historic Genealogical Society, NEHGS (requires Membership)
BC = Boston College Library (open to the public)

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**TIARA NEEDS A NEW HOME!**

TIARA currently sublets space from the Waltham Chamber of Commerce. The Waltham Chamber has made the decision to downsize and sell their business condo space. TIARA needs to start looking for a new home! We do not have a firm timeline for the possible sale or TIARA’s notice to quit.

We need to be prepared and ask for your help! We currently occupy about 300 square feet of office & library space (a tight fit) and have access to a conference room. We need an additional 150 square feet of storage space. We are willing to look at various options and are open to sharing space with another organization. Please contact president@tiara.ie and president2@tiara.ie with any leads!
Upcoming Conferences, Workshops and Events

**Western New York Genealogy Conferences “Finding Home and Forging the Future”**
Embassy Suites, 200 Delaware Avenue, Buffalo, New York 14202
Saturday, October 7, 2017
8:30—4:30 p.m.

**Dorchester Irish Heritage Festival**
Florian Hall – McKeon Post 55 Hallet St., Dorchester Center, MA 02124
October 8, 2017
[www.dorchesteririshheritagefest.com](http://www.dorchesteririshheritagefest.com)

**Back to Our Past and the Genetic Genealogy Conference**
Shelbourne Hall, RDS Dublin
Oct 20-22, 2017
[backtoourpast.ie](http://backtoourpast.ie)