



# THE IRISH GENEALOGICAL QUARTERLY

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## ***President's Message for December 2013***

### **Following Up on My Fay-McNally Case Study Presentation**

While working on the PowerPoint slides for the talk I gave at the Shorewood Library in March, it dawned on me that the tiny blurb my great-great grandmother Mary Ann McNally received in the *Le Sueur News* of Thursday March 9, 1916, just wasn't what a newspaper in her home county of Nicollet, Minnesota, would have published.<sup>1</sup> Audience member Mary Kay Kuhfittig reaffirmed this insight. I decided to dig deeper.

As luck would have it, **The History of Nicollet and LeSueur Counties Minnesota** was published in 1916.<sup>2</sup> In the chapter "Newspapers of Nicollet County", five periodicals then actively publishing are identified: the *St. Peter Tribune*, the *St. Peter Herald*, the *St. Peter Free-Press*, the *Nicollet Leader*, and the *Lafayette Ledger*.

I later thought of another place where this information can be found: the Nicollet County Newspapers web page on USGENWEB. The sources are in agreement.

A check of Ancestry.com, the Library of Congress's Chronicling America site, and Newspaper ARCHIVE showed none of the five newspapers is currently available for on-line searching. The Library of Congress U.S. Newspaper Directory does show the libraries that have the newspapers.

Taking advantage of the Interlibrary Loan service, I picked the *St. Peter Free Press* and the *St. Peter Tribune*, and made a request through my local library. Microfilms from the Minnesota Historical Society arrived a few weeks later and I viewed them on a reader at the Central Library in Milwaukee.

I first tried the *Tribune* getting a sense of how the newspaper is laid out. As I had Mary Ann McNally's death recorded as March 2, 1916 in my tree, I searched issues from around that time without success. Then I tried the *Free Press*. I found in the Saturday March 4, 1916 issue yet another blurb under the "Local News" heading. It read, "Mrs. John C. Fay of Minneapolis, was up Saturday to attend the funeral of the late Mrs. Mary Ann Fay, of Lake Prairie." Eventually, not immediately, a thought occurred to me, thankfully before the library closed. That visit from Minneapolis would have been the Saturday before and thus Mary Ann Fay could not have died on March 2nd.

Now I had some hope and voilà when I went to the previous issue of the *Free Press*, that of Saturday February 26, 1916, I found Mary Ann Fay's obituary on page one! Here is my reproduction transcription<sup>3</sup>:

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<sup>1</sup> "Mrs. B. Fay died at her home in Lake Prairie Thursday morning of last week, after six weeks of illness. She was about 75 years of age. The funeral was held Saturday morning last, Rev. Morgan officiating."

<sup>2</sup> Gresham, William G., editor, **The History of Nicollet and LeSueur Counties Minnesota**, B. F. Bowen & Company, Inc: Indianapolis, Indiana, 1916, 2 volumes.

<sup>3</sup> *St. Peter Free Press*, Saturday, February 26, 1916, Volume XXII, Number 10, page 1.

## **PIONEER RESIDENT DIED THURSDAY**

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**Mrs. Mary Ann Fay of Lake Prairie  
Passed Away Thursday Morning  
After a Brief Illness**  
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In the death of Mrs. Mary Ann Fay of Lake Prairie, relict of Bernard Fay, one of the pioneer women of the county has gone to her reward. Mrs. Fay had been sick only since about the holidays but owing to her advanced years her decline was rapid and she quickly sank into her last sleep Thursday morning at 7 o'clock.

As a young wife she came to Lake Prairie and there she made her home almost continuously since. For a few months she lived in Le Sueur, staying there until the death of Mr. Fay in July, 1913. She then returned to the home place and lived there with her son, Joseph, until her death. Mrs. Fay was a model housewife and her farm home in the early days was famed for its hospitality.

Deceased is survived by six children: Mrs. Thos. Shea, of Le Sueur; Joseph, living on the home farm in Lake Prairie; Mrs. C. W. Osborne, of Lake Prairie; Miss Ann Fay, also living at home; Mrs. H. D. Bloss, of Minneapolis, and Mrs. Robt. Abel of Canton, Ohio.

Funeral services will be held this morning at 10 o'clock at St. Peter's church, Rev. D. J. Moran officiating, and burial will be in Woodlawn cemetery.

After printing a copy of the front page, I rewound the film. Knowing that she died on Thursday February 24th, not Thursday March 2nd, I tried again with the *Tribune*. There was as far as I could tell, after laboriously going through the Wednesday March 1, 1916 issue several times, no obituary story on Mary Ann McNally. However I did find in the Wednesday March 8, 1916 issue the line on Mrs. J. C. Fay of Minneapolis in for Mrs. Bernard Fay's funeral, almost identical to the *Free Press* item.

Maybe timing matters? That is as in how many days between a death (or more generally, any newsworthy event) and when the newspaper is published. For the *Tribune* almost a week had elapsed. These are independent weekly newspapers each with its own editor. But you have to believe that they read each others' papers and most of the time do repeat stories. That the weeklies are published on different days to me lends credence to this theory.

Another possibility is that a relationship with the editor affects the content of the newspaper.

I'd love to follow up further on these ideas and maybe even try to read the other three newspapers. Perhaps another loan - or better yet some day soon all the Nicollet County newspapers will be digitized - and then I can continue the search for more genealogical information such as proof of a relationship with Joseph McNally (I think he is her brother) or even better, Mary Ann's birthplace in Ireland.

For now I am quite satisfied that my ancestor got more than a sentence or two and she received treatment in the press equal to her husband's.

I wish you happy ancestor hunting and the best of holidays,

Gary Shea

## **NEWS FROM THE WEB**

by Mary Kay Kuhfittig

### **IGRS MARRIAGES INDEX**

The Irish Genealogical Research Society [IGRS] has collected and indexed over 50,000 marriages found other than in parish registers and civil registration. Marriages after 1864 are not included, since they are found in civil registration. The index covers only marriages in Ireland and is meant to point to the original record, which will give more information. This index gives names of bride and groom, ages, if known, and the county.

Many sources were consulted, including newspapers, Registry of Deeds, Marriage Licence Bonds, Army Records, family Bibles and letters, published journals, the National Library and the National Archives, as well as many obscure records.

Here is the access: <[http://www.igrsoc.org/members/marriages/search\\_index.php](http://www.igrsoc.org/members/marriages/search_index.php)>  
Or look for it at <<http://www.irishancestors.ie>>

### **Famous Civil War Painting Found**

A painting of "The Return of the 69th Irish Regiment" was thought lost since the 1940s, but has recently been rediscovered.

It portrays the July 27, 1861 return of the 69th Irish Regiment, led by General Francis Meagher, to Battery Park, New York after the first battle of Bull Run. Officers depicted were mostly Irish nationalists who had escaped after the 1848 uprising, and the enlisted men were mainly Famine emigrants.

It had been put in a New Jersey warehouse after World War II when modern art was more in favor. It was found in poor condition, but has been restored and will be shown by the New York Historical Society.

### **VA NATIONAL CEMETERY LEDGERS**

The VA National Cemetery Administration is partnering with Ancestry.com to place and index its cemetery ledgers on line. So far 36 national cemeteries have been covered with 113,000 individual records. The records give name, rank, company/regiment, date of death and burial, age at death and grave number. Ancestry.com is a site requiring

pay; however, VA personnel and other federal agencies that keep national cemeteries will have free access.

## **ACCESS TO ARCHIVES**

There are fifty state archives in the U.S. and you can access them at  
< [http://genealogy.about.com/od/united\\_states-Online.htm?nl=1s/tp/State-Archive](http://genealogy.about.com/od/united_states-Online.htm?nl=1s/tp/State-Archive)>

You can see what their holdings are and, in many cases, view some of their digitized historical and genealogical records. Or try: <<http://tinyurl.com/nxkoplj>>

There is a comprehensive list of Irish archives at:

<<http://www.learnaboutarchives.ie/index.php/archive-services/archive-services-pdf>>

## **MARIE ANTOINETTE AND COUNTY KERRY: COULD SHE HAVE BEEN SAVED?**

The French Royal Family, realizing their number was up in Revolutionary Paris in 1792, made an attempt to flee, but were captured and ultimately guillotined.

Things could have turned out differently if three Kerry men, a Kerry woman and her Cork-born husband had accomplished their plan. They were going to rescue Marie Antoinette only, not her husband nor her two children, and they planned to bring her to the town of Dingle in a wine merchant's ship. After refuge in Dingle she was to be taken to London, then Brussels, then Vienna, her original home.

The leader of the rescue plot was James Louis Rice, a Dingle man who had entered the service of the Emperor of Austria, Joseph II, eventually becoming a close friend of the Emperor. Joseph was Marie Antoinette's brother.

James Rice brought helpers to Paris to facilitate the rescue. They bribed the guards and had teams of horses set in relays to take the Queen away. When Marie found out that her husband and children were to be left behind, she refused to go. Louis XVI was executed January 21, 1793, and Marie was beheaded ten months later on October 16, 1793.

## **RESEARCH IN LIMERICK**

The Limerick's Life website has a guide to research in that county. There are directions to resources such as Electoral Registers, Trade Directories, transcription of graveyard headstones, and the Mount St. Lawrence Burial Register, 1855-2008. There are hyperlinks to other useful websites, both free and paid. This site is: <limerickslife.com/limerick-family-history>

## **SOLDIERS IN KING WILLIAM'S ARMY**

When Belfast Hall was being renovated earlier this year, workmen stumbled across a valuable parchment document stored and neglected for the past 320 years. It is a detailed record of the 35,000 men who fought with King William at the Battle of the Boyne against King James. It has been presented to the Orange Order, and will go on display at their headquarters in East Belfast.

## **DRAPER MANUSCRIPT COLLECTION ONLINE**

The Draper Manuscript Collection is now available online for free at [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org). Lyman C. Draper (1815-1891) collected information on America's first frontier and its notable figures and events, such as Daniel Boone, George Rogers Clarke, and The Battle of King's Mountain. Draper's papers include a treasure trove of information on the frontier settlers of the Carolinas, Virginia, Kentucky, Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania. The original papers are held at the Wisconsin Historical Society. They include thousands of handwritten letters of correspondence comprising nearly 500 volumes of information not available anywhere else about the pioneer settlers of the trans-Allegheny West.

The papers are now available online free for the first time at [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org). Find them in the ["United States, Draper Manuscript Collection, 1740-1892"](#) browse collection. For further details, see the [collectiondescription](#) and [coverage table](#).

The collection consists of nearly 500 volumes of manuscripts, papers, and books collected by Lyman Copeland Draper about the history of the trans-Allegheny West, a region including the western areas of the Carolinas and Virginia, all the Ohio River Valley, and part of the upper Mississippi Valley from the 1740s to 1830. The collection is divided into 50 series. Some series are

titled by geographic area, some by the names of prominent frontier leaders, and some by topic. The bulk of the collection consists of notes from interviews, questionnaires, and letters gathered during Draper's extensive travels and research to learn about frontier history.

## **HELPFUL GENEALOGY TIP**

Don't just google a name. Put the name in quotes and add ~genealogy. This will filter out a lot of unhelpful hits, and fine-tune your search.

## **FAMILY BIOGRAPHIES ONLINE**

A new and free site offers family biographies taken from county histories printed between the 1870s and early 19000s. They now have biographies from ten states: Arkansas, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Tennessee. New states and counties are constantly being added.

At last count there are more than 20,000 pages with more than 13,000 biographies. There are also more than 400 county maps.

The site is <[www.MyGenealogyHound.com](http://www.MyGenealogyHound.com)> Check back often to see updates.

## **IRISH QUOTE**

### **The British Government on the Famine:**

"The judgement of God sent the calamity to teach the Irish a lesson, that calamity must not be too much mitigated.... The real evil with which we have to contend is not the physical evil of the famine, but the moral evil of the selfish, perverse and turbulent character of the people"

Sir Charles Trevelyan, head of famine relief in Ireland



# Thoughts On The Tithe War In Ireland

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by Jon R. Domencich

My ancestors Michael, William and Patrick came to Wisconsin in the 1830s. The family story says the four brothers blew up an English building. Three of the brothers escaped one was caught and hung. I know not if this story is true, but we do know The Sheahans came to Wisconsin via Montreal, Canada in the 1830s. They were the first European settlers in what was to become Franklin, Wisconsin in about 1834 -1836. Why did they leave Ireland? What made them come to the Wisconsin Territory, the end of the world? I believe it was The Tithe War.

The Tithe War in Ireland was a revolt that started about 1830 and ended about 1839. All people on the land were compelled to pay a tithe to The Church of Ireland. A tithe is a ten percent tax donation to the church. This added tax put an extra hardship on Catholic peasants and the poor as they now had to support two churches.

The tithe was first used to support the Temple of Jerusalem as mentioned in the Old Testament. In the Sixth Century the Roman Catholic Church authorized clergy to request tithes. The Pope in the Thirteenth Century made tithes mandatory throughout Europe. During the Sixteenth Century when The Tudors dissolved the monasteries and reformed the church, the property and tithes were supposed to go to the new Anglican Church. Tithes of goods was starting to be replaced by money in the Eighteenth Century. In 1735 grassland was exempted from the tithe in Ireland. Which relieved wealthy land owners raising live stock from paying the tax. This put a heavier load on poor farmers who had most land under tillage.

France and England were at war from the start of the Seven Years War (1756 - 1763) through The Revolutionary War (1778 - 1783). Following The French Revolution The Napoleonic Wars (1793 - 1815) restarted this conflict. Sixty years of warfare drove commodity prices through the roof easing the effect of the tithes on Ireland. However by 1820 the world economy collapsed and the price of grain halved.

The failing agricultural economy caused many riots in the 1820s. There were the actions of The Rightboys and The Rockites. The first Tithe riots came in County Limerick in 1821 and County Cork in 1822. The Insurrection Act of 1822 led to many Irish men being rounded up and tried. Few were convicted. Many of the tithe warrants were created illegally by magistrates who had an interest in tithe acquisition. The Tithe Composition Acts of 1823 - 1827 allowed tithes to be compounded.

In 1830 sixty percent of the parishes were compounded. The friction between Catholics and Anglicans increased in 1829 when the Anglican Clergy voiced against emancipation of Catholics. The Tithe War began in 1830 when a priest refused to pay a tithe on church owned farm land. The tithe amount was raised by the Anglican Bishop when he decided the agreed amount was insufficient. After many parish meetings the local farmers demanded a reduction in the tithe. At this time they decided that confrontation should be avoided and that tithe payments be put into parish funds for the poor.

Assemblies being against the law, started an Irish tradition of the hurling match. Hurling is a singular Irish sport played with a hard ball and a stick called a hurley. Hurling matches were used up until the Twentieth Century as a cover for what would be illegal assemblies. There might be as many as three thousand hurlers outside an Anglican Bishop's rectory or a magistrate's house. Often these officials feared for their lives. These hurling meetings broke the Riot Act of 1787 and the constabulary was engaged to suppress the matches.

The government by 1832 observed the strength of opposition to the tithe and increased pressure on the farmers. This changed the farmers tactics into passive resistance. They copied the Quakers who paid no tithe as a matter of religious faith. This effort did not break the law and effectively ruined the tithe system.

In 1833 violence returned to Ireland as tithe collectors began to use the police or the military for protection on tithe duties. This ruined any goodwill between the police and the populace. Angry mobs started showing up as collectors tried to complete their duties. In County Wexford the Protestant Yeomanry were used to stop a tithe riot and fifteen people were killed including a pregnant woman. The split between Catholic and Protestant became an issue on top of the economic one.

The following years violence increased. Large crowds armed with clubs and forks attempted to interfere with further collection. Police men and tithe collectors were stoned and sometime killed. All this time the government was getting more concerned about Anglican Clergy accompanying the tithe collectors on their rounds. More and more The Parliament, both Whig and Tory, began to realize the depth of animosity toward the tithe and The Church of Ireland.

1835 was the year of change. No longer were the police or the military allowed to escort church officials on tithe duties. The changes had an effect and the last tithe riot was in 1836. The Tithe War ended with The Rent - Charge Act of 1838.

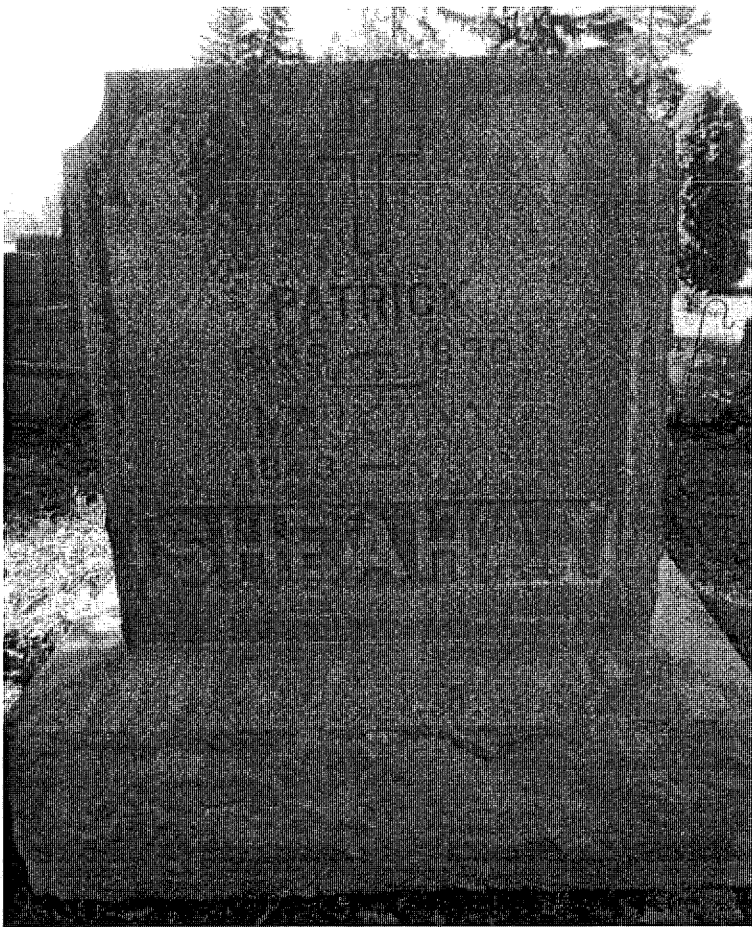
My ancestors lived in Cork City, County Cork. Patrick Sheahan son of Michael Sheahan and Margaret Hanrahan was born in Lachine, Montreal, Quebec, Canada in 1834. We believe the brothers Sheahan left Ireland because of the tithe. They went to

Montreal and worked their way to Wisconsin by 1834. Did they blow up a building? Were they insurrectionists or did they leave just to avoid paying the tithe? Was one of them actually hung? The search goes on.

One of the benefits of this great hobby, genealogy, is the historical education one gets by researching ones family. I never heard of Tithe War until exploring my family history. There are many documents written about this violent time. The two I found most useful are:

The 1830s Tithe Riots, Noreen Higgins-McHugh, Tipperary Historical Journal

Politics and Political Culture in Britain and Ireland 1750-1850, Blackstock and Magennis, Ulster Historical Foundation



**PATRICK**

**1835 – 1890**

**MARY ANN**

**1843 – 1910**

**SHEAHAN**

## SOUPERISM IN DINGLE

by Mary Kay Kuhfittig

The Dingle Peninsula is the westernmost part of Ireland. Locals sometimes call it the next parish over from Boston. The movies *Ryan's Daughter* and *Far and Away* were filmed there. The *National Geographic* once cited it as "the most beautiful place on earth."

Dingle and Ventry, harbor towns 4 miles apart on the southern coast of the peninsula, are part of the Gaeltacht, meaning Irish-speaking area.

Before the Great Famine, Catholics and the few Protestants there got along amicably.

It was Ireland's west where people suffered most during the Famine. In the Dingle Peninsula a quarter of the population was dead from starvation or disease by July 1847.<sup>1</sup> Religious conflict added to the distress. Some Church of Ireland pastors offered free soup to starving peasants. There was a catch---they had to convert. Even though this practice preceded the Famine, the term "souperism" has become inextricably tied to it.

### LORD VENTRY

The principle land owner in Dingle and Ventry was Thomas Townsend Aramberg, better known as the third Lord Ventry. As a young British soldier he was severely wounded at New Orleans in the War of 1812, and retired to live in England. In 1827 he inherited his title and a bankrupt estate. The estate was put in trust for 41 years because Lord Ventry was an absentee landlord for most of those years. He appointed David Thompson, a staunch Protestant, as his land agent with full power over the estate. Thompson, as well as his wife, who appears not to want to be known by her first name, as she is known in records only as "Mrs. D.P. Thompson," were great proponents of converting Kerry people to the Church of Ireland. Mr. Thompson organized the soup kitchens and put in place a new distribution of land. A farm next to the church and school was turned over to trustees to provide work and benefits for the converts. Naturally, this did not sit well with the Catholic locals.<sup>2</sup>

There had been trouble in 1793 when the tenants of an earlier Lord Ventry rose up in protest of excessive rents. There was a British army post in Dingle, and they were

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<sup>1</sup> Desmond Bowen, *Souperism: Myth or Reality, A Study in Souperism* (Cork: The Mercier Press, 1970), 99

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, 83-4

called out to suppress the uprising with gunfire. Fourteen people were killed and many others wounded.<sup>3</sup>

### Reverend Charles Gayer

Proselytism had begun in the Dingle Peninsula years before the Famine. In 1833 Lord Ventry appointed the Protestant Rev. Charles Gayer, an Englishman, as the estate chaplain. There had been earlier limited efforts at conversion, but Rev. Gayer went full force at it. He aimed to establish a large Protestant colony where there had been only 30 members before. He was not conversant in Irish, so, In 1836, the Irish Society in Dublin sent out 20 Irish-speaking teachers to form a school to teach Bible-reading in Irish. The class was entirely of men, perhaps more interested in learning to read than in converting.<sup>4</sup> Further help for Rev. Gayer came when Rev. T. Moriarty, a Dingle native and convert from Catholicism began preaching in the area. Rev. Moriarty was referred to by the Dingle Catholics as "Tom the Liar."<sup>5</sup>

Up to 1833 there had been little religious conflict in the Dingle Peninsula. At that time there were about 30 Protestants in Dingle and their ministers did not seek converts.<sup>6</sup>

In 1834 there was outbreak of cholera in the town of Dingle, causing many deaths and many more to flee the town.

As of 1835 the number of Protestants increased to 244, and the Catholics to 6,650. The Protestants were mainly the local gentry, and coastguards, police, and military men stationed in Dingle.<sup>7</sup>

By 1838 there was an active Protestant mission, supported by funds from England, and headed by Church of Ireland clergyman, Thomas Moriarty, sent from England for the purpose. Two British navy ships were moored at Dingle Harbor, and troops lined the Dingle streets upon his arrival, since Moriarty was a Dingle convert from Catholicism.<sup>8</sup>

With some success in gaining converts and the help of the Coast Guard, Rev. Gayer established a separate colony in the town of Dingle, because, needless to say, the

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<sup>3</sup> T.J. Barrington, *Discovering Kerry: Its History, Heritage and Topography* (Dublin: Blackwater, 1976), 234.

<sup>4</sup> Mrs. D.P. Thompson, *A Brief Account of the Rise and Progress of the Change in Religious Opinion* (Seeley, Bunside and Seeley, 1845), 46.

<sup>5</sup> Bowen, *Souperism*, 85

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. 100.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas F. O'Sullivan, *Romantic Hidden Kerry* (Tralee: The Kerryman, Ltd., 1931), 98.

<sup>8</sup> Steve McDonogh, *The Dingle Peninsula* (Dingle, Co. Kerry: Mount Eagle Publications, Ltd., 2000), 98.

converts, called "jumpers," were not popular with their neighbors. 15 houses on Strand St. were given to converts with no rent charged. Inhabitants were also given a wage of 7 shillings a day. There was also a school where children studied the Bible.<sup>9</sup>

The push on behalf of the British Bible societies to convert the Irish, was not totally religiously- inspired. There was a general plan to change the entire culture to what was considered a better way of life, the English life.

*The Kerry Examiner* went on an attack of Rev. Gayer in a series of articles in 1844. Such terms as 'souper'. 'soup gang', 'soup-fattened followers', and 'soup perverts' caused Rev. Gayer to sue Patrick Byrne, the proprietor and editor for libel. The jury voted to award him lb 40 Gayer won another case the next year which allowed him to eject one of the "souters" who had reconverted back to Catholicism.

The local dislike of Rev. Gayer is shown by an anonymous death threat sent to Lord Ventry:

Take Notis

That if you do not send Gayer the bastard out of this country,  
from a quiet and pensible people, and discountenance all  
blackguards that deny their holy religion for soup: this do,  
and you will do it right. By the eternal God I will drive a brace  
of balls through your carcass privately, otherwise in the noon-  
day if not.<sup>10</sup>

Other colonies were established in Ventry, Kilmalkedar and Dunquin. The pious Mrs. D.P. Thompson remarked that Ventry had "not so much as one resident gentleman. Ventry was superlatively wretched and squalid." <sup>11</sup>

Between 1838 and 1845, the Rev. Gayer increased Protestant conversions from 170 to around 800<sup>12</sup>

## THE GREAT FAMINE

John Kavanagh, of Ventry Cottage, wrote a letter dated 24 Mar 1847 complaining of ague, pestilence and famine sweeping everything before them. "There is not a part of

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<sup>9</sup> Tim Pat Coogan, *The Famine Plot* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 54

<sup>10</sup> Micheal O'Mainnin, "A Post-Mortem on the Protestant crusade in Dingle," *Journal of the Kerry Archeological and Historical Society*, NO. 29, 1996,

<sup>11</sup> Thompson, *Brief Account*, 49

<sup>12</sup> Coogan, *The Famine Plot*, 154

Ireland so destitute and ill-fated as the West of Dingle and the Parish of Ventry in particular..”.<sup>13</sup>

## NEWSPAPERS GET INVOLVED

The *Kerry Examiner* in 1847 reported”

i “The State of the people in Dingle is horrifying. Fever, famine and dysentery are daily increasing, deaths from hunger daily occurring...from all parts of the country they crowd into the town for relief and not a pound of meal is to be had in the wretched town for any price.”

The parish warden of Dingle wrote to the Tralee Board of Guardians in 1847:

...there have been made to me over a hundred applications by parties seeking to be sent to the Workhouse in Tralee. They say they are satisfied to die after going there as they are sure of getting something to eat while life remains and of being buried in coffins.

The *Kerry Evening Post* reported that even a pig was affected by the conflict. Trouble started when a Protestant convert tried to sell a pig at a fair. When a bystander called him a “souper,” the potential buyer let the pig go. While the pig was running loose its seller was “shouldered, thumped, and pelted with mud.”<sup>14</sup>

The proseletysers were sincere in believing that their methods of conversion were the right thing to do. They shared a prevalent belief that the Famine was “God’s Judgement” and connected to the government’s giving a grant to Catholic education at Maynooth College in 1845. *The Northern Whig* referred to “the present unfavorable crisis” as an opportunity “for conveying the light of the Gospels to the darkened minds of the Roman Catholic peasantry.”<sup>15</sup>

A report from the “General Irish Reformation Society,” 1848:

“...If ever there was a time for England to make a great effort for the evangelizing of Ireland it is the present – the poor are ready – the great distress has softened the heart of

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<sup>13</sup>Thompson, *A Brief Account*, 49

<sup>14</sup> *Kerry Evening Post*, 25 January, 1845

<sup>15</sup> Coogan, *The Famine Plot*, p. 155

the poor. A famine shows the poor Romanist the incapacity and tyranny of their priest, and the humanity and integrity of the Protestant clergy."<sup>16</sup>

## EVICCTIONS

*The Limerick Chronicle in 1849* published the "black list" of evictions in Dingle, all from property owned by Lord Ventry. The total of evictions from Lord Ventry's property near Dingle was 170 families, 532 people.<sup>17</sup>

## PROTESTANT OPPOSITION

An American woman, Asenath Nicholson, travelled over Ireland in 1844-5 to study conditions affecting the poor, which she tried to alleviate. Although Protestant, she severely criticized Rev. Gayer's schools in Dingle, noting that a teacher told her girls were not taught geography because "they are daughters of the lower orders and we do not advance them." Nicholson concluded after her study of the schools that their aim was to keep the Irish poor subject to the landlord system by teaching them to meekly accept their lot in life.<sup>18</sup>

Upon arriving at Dingle, she went first to visit the Catholic priest, then the Gayers. Asenath and Mrs. Gayer did not hit it off. Mrs. Gayer was upset that her visitor had been to the Catholic priest first. Asenath Nicholson felt that Mrs. Gayer was a bigot and too much concerned with social status, attitudes which she believed were contrary to Gospel teaching.<sup>19</sup>

## THE VINCENTIAN FATHERS FIGHT BACK

This trend to conversion was reversed by a Roman Catholic counter offensive. Through the assistance of Daniel O'Connell, the order of Vincentians was invited to hold a mission in Dingle.

The Vincentian Order of priests had been strongly influenced in the goal of combatting Protestantism by the 16th century Council of Trent. Their method was a blitzkrieg kind of attack, and their sermons were were searingly dramatic. Those former Catholics who

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<sup>16</sup> Rt. Rev. Patrick Francis Moran of Ossary, ed, *The Letters of rev. James Maher, D.D.*, 1848 p. 135.

<sup>17</sup> *London Times*, "Evictions in Dingle," January 6, 1849

<sup>18</sup> Coogan *The Famine Plot*, 154

<sup>19</sup> Asenath Nicholson, *Annals of the Famine in Ireland, in 1847, 1848, and 1849* (New York: E. French, 1851)p. 87



recanted their conversion to Protestantism were welcomed back with a public ceremony.<sup>20</sup>

### THE DECLINE OF PROSELETYSING IN DINGLE

Proseletysing was at its peak in 1846 when 142 in Ventry and 245 in Dingle converted. Many of these, faced with animosity, decided to emigrate, with support of Protestant missionary societies. Others slowly returned to the Catholic faith.

Reverend Charles Gayer, the estate chaplain who had engineered much of the religious trouble, died of cholera in 1848. The row of houses in Dingle which he set up for the Protestant colony still exist and are known by his name.<sup>21</sup>

Lord Ventry donated land for a workhouse in Dingle in January, 1848. Before that time applicants had to go to Tralee, about 30 miles away. By June 1851 there were 4,740 inmates at Dingle. (Irish Mediacl Directory) A new workhouse was built in 1852, that year housing 6,068 people.

In 1851 the Catholic chaplain of the workhouse, Fr. Eugene O'Sullivan sent a letter of complaint to a Captain Spark, Poor Law Inspector. Referring to Catholic converts as "perverts" he charged that they had been bribed with money. He stated that since a Protestant had been appointed Master, "perversions" were on the increase. He complained that "a very suspicious character from Ventry, the hotbed of perversion," had been admitted to the Workhouse for no good reason.

Captain Spark launched an inquiry by summoning two Protestant ministers and a gentleman of the parish, and took evidence from two women who were former inmates of the workhouse, Mary Breen and Johanna Lyne. These two ladies testified that they had changed from Roman Catholic to Protestant while living in the workhouse, and that they were given small amounts of money after Protestant prayers on Sundays. The ministers indignantly denied that the money was bribery, rather charity to help them get a little bread or milk for their children. The Rev. Gayer won the case.<sup>22</sup>

5,000 people died in Dingle Workhouse during the Famine years. They were buried in pauper's ground on the foot of a hill overlooking the town, Cnoc a' Chairn.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Coogan, *The Famine Plot*, 158-9

<sup>21</sup> Irene Whelan, *The Bible Wars in Ireland: the Second Reformation and the Polarization of Protestant-Catholic Relations, 800-1840* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2005), 260

<sup>22</sup> William J. O'Neill Daunt, *Eighty-five Years of Irish History: 1800-1865* (Ireland: Ward and Downey, 1888), 173

<sup>23</sup> McDonogh, *The Dingle Peninsula*, 127

## AFTER THE FAMINE

After the Famine Protestantism diminished greatly. Some of the converts to Protestantism emigrated, and others returned to their original Catholic faith. The term “souperism” continues to arouse bitterness in Ireland. It should be remembered that the Church of Ireland had never approved the practice of souperism, and that many Church of Ireland ministers helped people during the Famine without forcing a change in religion.

As for the Lords Ventry, Dwight Radford and Kyle Betit, noted genealogists, tracked down the current Lord Ventry some years ago. Disappointingly, there appear to have been no estate records handed down.



some still-standing Protestant row houses provided for converts in Ventry

IGSW Roundtable October 7, 2013

## “Is Too Much Information Holding Back Your Research?”

The exponential growth of online genealogical resources — and how to manage it

Roundtable Moderated by Michele Patin

Online genealogy sources have grown exponentially, and the number of indexed records and documents has soared. Nowadays we can quickly and effortlessly gather so much data that we can bury ourselves in detail in no time. But you can accumulate plenty of genealogical data *without advancing your research one iota*. At this roundtable, we'll discuss approaches for data collection, techniques to manage retrieved information, and strategies for turning scattered facts into a useful assembly of conclusions — conclusions that can give you a sense of completion.

I'll begin with a confession: I myself have drunk too much from the online trough of information, and I have a bad hangover! The following suggestions are one way forward (my own), and only a work in progress. It's a discipline I am working at (not quite there yet!), which can perhaps serve as a starting point for our discussion. Some of it is hardly new, some of it might be.

### PART ONE: I AM CHANGING HOW I GATHER INFORMATION

- **The "shopping trip" gone haywire:** You know, you head to Sears to buy a microwave — but you get distracted by the bath towels, the Craftsmen tool set, those pretty high heels, etc. And you head home with a car full of stuff you never intended to buy! Online genealogy lets me accumulate a lot with only a few clicks, too. How can I help myself?
  - *Always bring a "shopping list."* To focus my attention, I have a list of specific records I am seeking, and tick them off as I find them. This classic rule-of-thumb applies to conventional research at the LDS, courthouse, IEL, etc. of course, just as much as online research.
  - *Save "receipts."* Documenting sources and keeping a *research log* is tedious, but more essential than ever. The only way to manage it is to RECORD AS YOU GO. I note where I searched, what I found (or didn't), citing the source and/or URL, in case I must return.
  - Do information collection in *manageable chunks of time*. For every minute spent finding cool stuff, I \*force\* myself to spend another minute compiling and analyzing the information later. 90 minutes browsing at ancestry.com = 90 more processing it. A grand bargain.
  - After/during each session, *compile findings*. I transcribe, abstract, or copy & paste each record with its citation directly into my research log — which I keep as a text file, to make the content searchable later. I now only print/photocopy those items that I can't retrieve again (e.g. repository records or originals NOT available online), or that must be inspected visually like maps, photos, hard-to-read handwritten documents, etc.

### PART TWO: I AM RE-PROCESSING THE INFORMATION I'VE ALREADY GATHERED

- **The hoarder's dilemma:** Our best-intentions for future research will help, but what about all this stuff we already have — the mounds of printouts, binders full of notes, dozens of bookmarks in our browser, archived files taking up hard disc space? Gotta clean up! But where to start?! The key is to turn my raw information into evidence. *Information becomes evidence only when it can be related to and evaluated with respect to a research goal.*
  - *State the research goal(s).* These can be specific questions like, "Who were the parents of Naomi Shaw?" or more complicated issues like, "Is the family story true, about the two brothers sentenced to transportation to Barbados?"

- *Compile and combine.* Wherever possible, I do "reverse paperwork." I turn existing paper records into an electronically searchable form (again, transcribe, abstract, copy & paste). I also turn my old notes and musings into an electronic form (for me, a text file), that can be searched for names, places, dates, keywords. Where does this all go? The next step!
- *Analyze.* I start a *research narrative* to form the basis for my synthesis (see below). The narrative states each research goal and reiterates what I found, taken from research logs. Once findings from the log have been copied into the research narrative, I toss the original log. The narrative includes my evaluation of the quality of the information, its relevance, reliability and completeness of the source. The narrative also discusses, in the context of the stated research goal: what does the information imply? Does it fit with the timeline, migration path and personal profile for my ancestor/family? Do I have multiple sources showing consistent information for the same events? How can I now amend or extend my research goal? What is my next step for new searches? The *research narrative* begins to build a case by turning information into evidence and generates new, improved research goals for me. I like to combine many research narratives into one metafile for each family, containing numerous statements of research goals, each followed by its log findings and narrative. This can get unwieldy, but for me it has the advantage that I have everything in one place for that family. Like a big, fat detective novel with all the clues within its pages!

### PART THREE: I AM USING THE INFORMATION TO REACH MY RESEARCH GOALS

- **Synthesis** is the brainwork that lets you tie together loose ends, see patterns and draw conclusions. The objective of synthesis is to create a *genealogical proof argument* to solve questions and reach the stated research goal. *And synthesis lets you conclude your work.*
  - *Review what is known.* I eliminate distractions and sometimes even set an alarm to force myself to spend the time I've allotted. I re-read my research narrative and let the ol' noggin do what it's good at: making leaps among sparse clues, forming intuitive hunches.
  - *Form hypotheses.* I operationalize my hunches into a logical set of arguments to explain (or test against) the evidence. For example: Two men share a surname and live in the same place for several consecutive decades and census enumerations reveal that many of their children share given names. Hypothesis: they are brothers. Test the evidence: marriage or death records might show parents' names in common, wills might name each other's children as beneficiary or executor, land might be deeded from one to the other, etc.
  - *Write the proof.* But what constitutes "proof" in genealogy? I must rely on "abductive" reasoning, using the "best available information." The proof is the *logical set of arguments by which a conclusion is reached that reconciles all the evidence.* I write the proof argument as if I were going to publish it or subject to the scrutiny of another researcher. And I model my proof using the "Genealogical Proof Standard" developed by the Board for Certification of Genealogists. This standard includes *five criteria that should be met*:
    - Reasonably exhaustive search for a wide range of high-quality sources
    - Complete and accurate citation of sources
    - Analysis and correlation of the collected information
    - Resolution of any conflicting evidence
    - Soundly reasoned, coherently written conclusion
  - *Close the file.* I hesitate about this step the most, reluctant to decide I am ever "done." But all good detective novels must end. If I've recorded and cited my evidence with care, assessed its quality and used sound, logical reasoning, I can't have gone too far wrong.

## RESOURCES:

### Examples and discussion of research logs and forms:

Familysearch.org WIKI: [http://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Research\\_Logs](http://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Research_Logs)

### Ways to organize files for more productive research:

Familysearch.org WIKI: [http://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Organizing\\_Your\\_Files](http://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Organizing_Your_Files)

### Evaluating evidence:

Familysearch.org WIKI: [https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Evaluate\\_the\\_Evidence](https://familysearch.org/learn/wiki/en/Evaluate_the_Evidence)

Elizabeth Shown Mills, CG, CGL, FASG, is a historical researcher and author of numerous reference works for history and genealogy. Her book, *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace* (Genealogical Publishing 2009, 2d ed., ISBN-13: 978-08063178162009) is the standard for understanding, evaluating and citing historical sources. Learn about the book and preview content at <https://www.evidenceexplained.com/>.

Shown Mills developed the widely-cited "Evidence Analysis Process Map" (EAPM) to guide evidence assessment (currently being enhanced to add a third dimension). The original EADM (1998) can be found at: <http://historicpathways.com/download/hpprocessmap.pdf>

### The "Genealogical Proof Standard" and writing a proof argument:

An excellent discussion of principles can be found in several works. See especially, Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Professional Genealogy: A Manual for Researchers, Writers, Editors, Lecturers, and Librarians* (Genealogical Publishing, 2001, ISBN-13: 978-0806316482; see Chapter 17). Also helpful is her article "Building a Case When No Record 'Proves' a Point," *Ancestry* Vol. 16 pg. 29 (April-May 1998).

Christine Rose, CG, CGL, FASG wrote an entire book on this subject: *Genealogical Proof Standard: Building a Solid Case* (CR Publications, 3rd Ed. 2009, ISBN-13: 978-0929626192). You can listen to a discussion with Christine Rose on this topic at: <https://familysearch.org/learningcenter/lesson/genealogical-proof-standard/350>

### Abductive reasoning:

<http://www.wisegEEK.com/what-is-abductive-reasoning.htm>

"I have no data yet. It is a capital mistake to theorize before one has data. Insensibly one begins to twist facts to suit theories, instead of theories to suit facts." — Sherlock Holmes, in "A Scandal in Bohemia" by Arthur Conan Doyle, first published in *The Strand Magazine*, 1891.

### Citations standards:

A good reference work with helpful suggestions for data entry and citation is *Getting It Right: The Definitive Guide to Recording Family History Accurately Paperback*, by Mary H. Slawson (Deseret Books, 2002, ISBN-13: 978-1570088872)

## October 7, 2013 Roundtable on Civil War Records

by Gary Shea

I saw this Roundtable as a follow up to Russ Horton's September talk "The Irish in the Civil War" and a way of recognizing of the 150th anniversary of the Civil War.

The records I brought in on Joseph McNally and Thomas Shea were obtained from NARA. Both men served in Minnesota regiments. Thomas's story is a confusing and sad one. The file shows he was a deserter arrested at the Baltimore train station in civilian clothes and that he had an honorable discharge. He died in a military hospital in Virginia and was buried in a military cemetery. His surviving wife was unable to get a pension because the discharge appears not to have been in the records that were used in an appeal she made (with the assistance of two of Thomas's brother-in-laws). Joseph survived two tours of duty and obtained homestead land in Minnesota.

Bob Towne cautioned that he received a very sparse packet from the archives by mail and found there was lots more information on file when he visited NARA in person.

Jane Maher shared a booklet that her grandfather received in 1902, titled "Personal Military and Civil History". It contains his personal and complete military history. The date and location of every battle he was in is listed. He was a Corporal, a Division Wagon Master. The Ammunition Train of which he had charge comprised 325 heavy army wagons, each drawn by three teams. He had under him 13 Assistant Wagon Masters, each in charge of 25 wagons. His name is Henry Edward Mahar. He enlisted September 19, 1861, from Dane County Wisconsin in Company H, 8th Regiment Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. The 8th Infantry was known as the "Eagle Regiment" because of the live American eagle it carried on a staff perched conspicuously beside its regimental colors. He was mustered out of service with his company at Demopolis, Alabama on September 5, 1865, at the close of the war. Believe it or not, because he lived so long and Jane is as old as he was, she remembers him very well.

Many books have been written on the Civil War. They help us understand those times. I brought up two of my two favorites. Stephen Crane's **The Red Badge of Courage**, a nonstop novel of a raw recruit's thoughts and actions, has been in print since 1894. Crane was born in 1871, after the war. He drew on conversations with veterans and written accounts. **A World on Fire : Britain's Crucial Role in the American Civil War** by historian Amanda Foreman is an amazing reading journey (about 900 pages). For me it filled in the blanks of my spotty knowledge of the Civil War.

As a postscript, while recently browsing at Barnes & Noble here are the titles and authors of three new books on this subject that caught my eye: **The New York Times: Disunion: Modern Historians Revisit and Reconsider the Civil War from Lincoln's Election to the Emancipation Proclamation**, by The New York Times, Ted Widmer, and Clay Risen; **Lincoln's Citadel: The Civil War in Washington, DC**, by Kenneth J. Winkle; and **Mathew Brady: Portraits of a Nation**, by Robert Wilson.

## **A Review of the November Meeting – From a Story to a Family Tree by Sue Dolinar**

As children we heard the story about our ancestors. "Four brothers from Ireland, did something bad. One of the brothers was caught and hanged and the others fled to America."

In February of 2009, my brothers and I went to the West Allis Historical Society. They had gotten a new program for their computer and asked me if I had anyone I knew who might be on the 1880 Census. I gave them the name of my grandfather, William F. Sheahan. Seconds later, I knew more than I had ever known in my life about my grandfather's family.

On the same day, in Waukesha, my cousin Ann Sheahan found the family farm, while looking for her mother's homestead. It was on the same plat map. Ann called me to tell of her discovery and we exchanged stories. This started a search for our direct family which resulted in 831 members and 9 generations.

The purpose of this talk wasn't to tell you that I found kings or emperors, or how to search and how many hours you can spend seeking, but to tell you about the joy in surprises you never expected.

At one of the Nights of the Round Table meetings, someone suggested we go to the Franklin Library. At the information desk, we asked for information on the Sheahan family. He asked us if we had seen the cabin? "What cabin", we asked dumbfounded. "The one in Legend Park", he answered, "you can see it from the front door." The Godsell-Sheehan cabin led us to the Godsell family and Joan Thompson. Quite a find!

Out driving one day in the Holy Hill area, we stopped to check out a cemetery. And didn't we accidentally find the grave of our great-great grandmother and her son, a Civil War Veteran. This discovery led to a deeper investigation and a love of the Civil War, which led to Wood, WI and an investigation of Soldier's Home.

Looking for what had to be the 400<sup>th</sup> time for our grandfather's sister, Clara, who died at age 8, I found a Glara E. Shan. Now, why you ask would I have looked at that? Because of the "Luck of the Irish" or the "Hand of God". And it was Clara.

In the same manner, I was looking for any information on grandad's sister, Bridget Ellen, who they called Delia. For years I had been searching for her information. And one morning, up popped Nellie Sheahan's wedding information. Not under Bridget or even Delia...but NELLIE. And it was Bridget Ellen.

Checking out findagrave.com for the millionth time, I discovered an incorrect entry for Michael Sheahan. I sent off at least 4 emails before I realized that the person I was seeking was a second cousin...Cindy Kennedy. She has given me so much information on Grandpa Sheahan's sister, Josephine, and her gang that I lost count. And what a find to have found, accidentally!

Deciding to call Sandy Sheahan Culbert, for info on Great-uncle Dan and his crew was miraculous. She, too, has been a font of information. And a newfound friend. Miracle of miracles. Luck of the Irish?

The moral of the story is don't ever stop seeking or rechecking. Look at even the most ridiculous. Be courageous and contact people you don't know. And you can find the glory in the cabin with the family tree in the foreground and some cousin's gathered round.



This is a picture of the Godsell-Sheehan cabin located in Franklin, WI, in Legend Park across from the Franklin Library. It was built in 1836, by Michael and William Sheahan who were the first non-Native American inhabitants of Franklin. Some of the Sheahan cousins are holding the family tree which was prepared for the family reunion at Irish Fest. It contains 831 direct descendents, 9 generations and is 60 feet long. It was signed by all of the family members who attended the reunion. The plan for the future is to take the chart to any large family gathering and have more people sign it. Then, who knows.



## Seeking Volunteers for Officer Positions

THE IGSW is seeking volunteers to serve as officers on the board of directors. We are looking for a President and Recording Secretary.

The duties of the President include presiding at board meetings (eight or nine per year), making announcements and introductions at the general monthly meetings and writing the President's Message for the Quarterly.

The Recording Secretary is responsible for taking the minutes of the board meetings and general meetings.

No previous experience is required for either position.

Thank you to these recent volunteers: Maura Bournique for Corresponding Secretary and Sue Dolinar for Director at Large.

Come and join us on the board! If you are interested, please contact Carl or Ellen Baehr (414-302-9411) or [baehr@wi.rr.com](mailto:baehr@wi.rr.com))

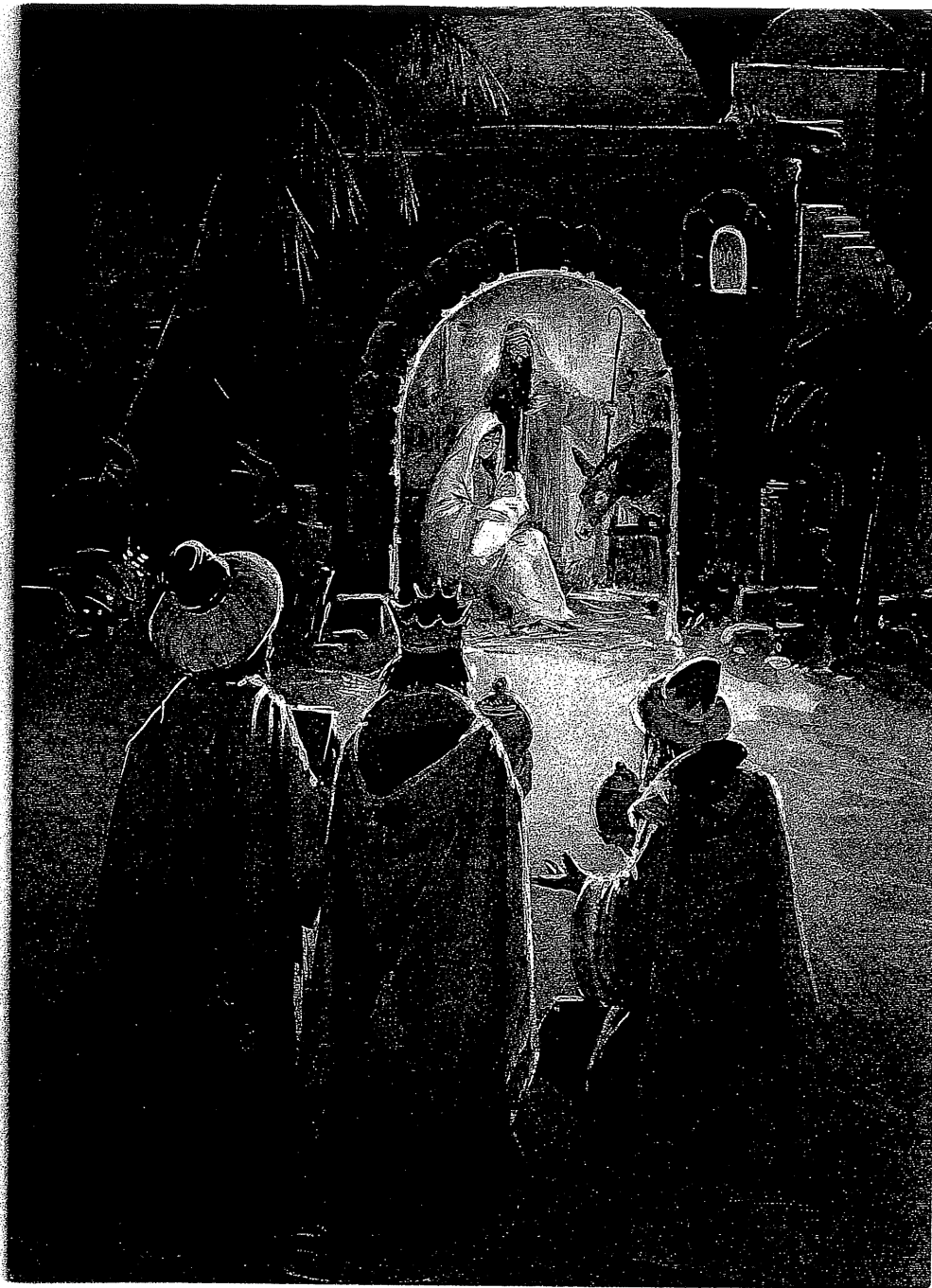
## IN MEMORY

During the past year two Charter Members of IGSW have died

Catherine Donovan

John N. Shanahan

We extend our sincerest sympathy to the their families and friends and to all IGSW Members who have lost loved ones this past year. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.



**OUR VERY BEST WISHES TO ALL THE FAMILIES OF  
IGSW MEMBERS FOR A BLESSED CHRISTMAS  
AND A NEW YEAR FILLED WITH PEACE AND LOVE**



# Upcoming Programs

## **Monday, January 6, 2014 – 7pm**

Shorewood Public Library – 3920 N Murray Ave – Shorewood

Barb Henzelman, a past president and a past speaker at the IGSW,

will present “Yesterday & Today in Ireland”,

covering past, present and future topics

## **Monday, February 3, 2014 – 7pm**

Shorewood Public Library – 3920 N Murray Ave – Shorewood

An Ireland Reaching Out Experience

Debbie and Patrick Larsen will talk about their visit to Ireland,

and the Reaching Out Program which was created to help Americans

connect with the Irish community.

## **Monday, March 3, 2014 – 7pm**

Shorewood Public Library – 3920 N Murray Ave – Shorewood

Tim May will present “Genealogical DNA Testing”

Tim will cover how to go about testing, some of the different tests, things test results

show and how this information helps aid the genealogical search.

## **Monday, April 7, 2014 – 7pm**

ICHC – 2133 W Wisconsin Ave - Milwaukee

## **A Night of the Round Tables**

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Watch *igswonline.com* for further information as to time and place.

IGSW Programs are free and open to the public.

Irish Genealogical Society of Wisconsin • P.O. Box 13766 • Wauwatosa, WI 53213-0766

2133 W. Wisconsin Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53233



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