


Learning Our History

Why is it important to know where we came from?

What does it have to do with our lives today?



Where Are We From?

Most of our family originated from Ireland.

A smaller percentage were from England and consisted mostly of males on the Simkiss side, though many of them married Irish women.

Emigration from Europe

Except for the Carryls and Hannums, every single branch of our family came to the United States in the mid-19th century.

The Simkiss paternal line came from England while most other branches of the family came from Ireland.

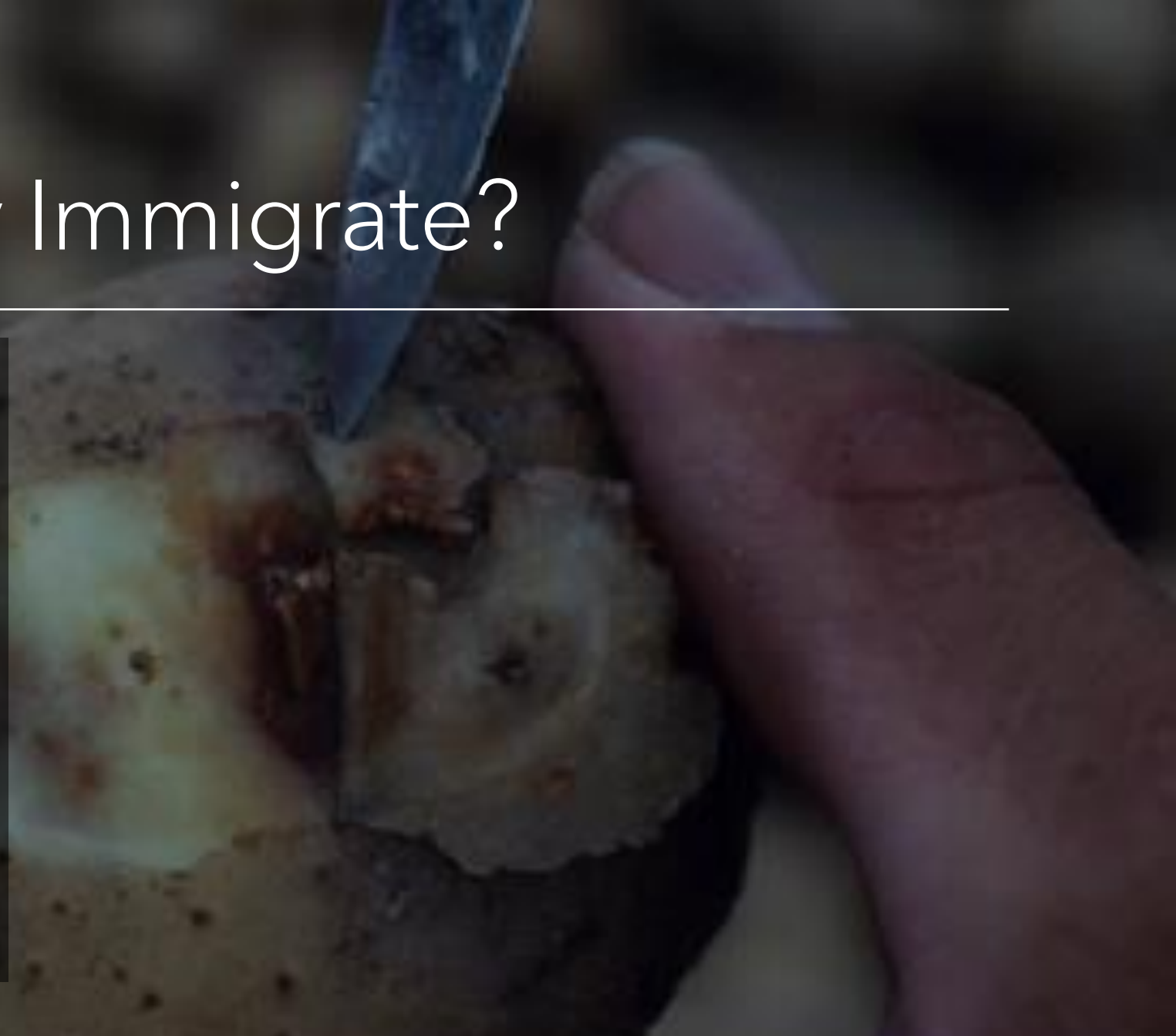


Why Did They Immigrate?

Because most of our ancestors were from Ireland, they were likely trying to escape the Great Potato Famine (1845-1852).

Ireland was comprised mostly of poor, unskilled laborers whose livelihoods depended heavily upon the potato crop. When that failed in 1845, it led to a famine that lasted for seven years. Conditions were extremely dire.

Making matters worse, the British continued to export food from Ireland during the famine while also over-charging their Irish tenants, rendering it practically impossible for many Irish people to afford basic food and shelter.



Irish Immigration

The conditions were so bad that they had no other choice than to leave everything and everyone they ever knew in search of a better life elsewhere.

It was an incredibly difficult decision to make, especially amid such poverty. It also meant making a harrowing trip by boat across the Atlantic, which could take up to three months.

It was a choice that came at a significant cost, and they did what they had to do to survive.





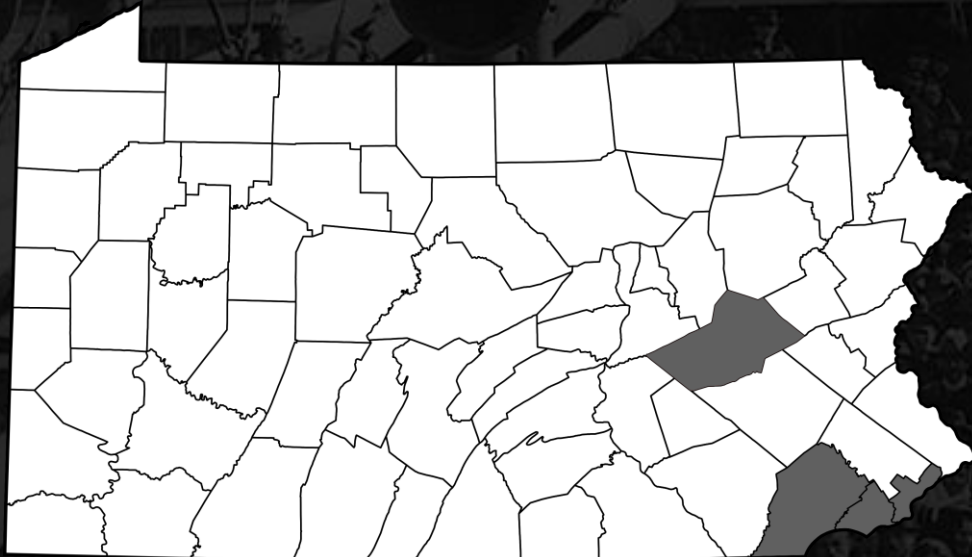
Irish Records

In 1922, an explosion at the Public Records office in Dublin (at the start of the Irish Civil War) started a fire that destroyed nearly every census record that had ever been recorded in Ireland.

Civil registration did not begin until 1864, which means that no government-issued Birth, Death, or Catholic marriage records exist in Ireland before then. You may find ancestors in church records, however, there is a lack of those records as well, and the ones you *can* find often don't have a lot of information in them. You'd also need to know which parish your ancestor was from, which can be difficult to decipher if that information is not readily available in the US.

Therefore, you will find that information for many branches of our family does not go much beyond our immigrant ancestors.

19th Century Immigration



For those branches that came to the US in the 1800s, this is where they migrated:

SIMKISS

South Philadelphia, PA to Delaware County, PA to Chester County, PA

MEEHAN

Branchdale, PA to Mahanoy City, PA to Philadelphia, PA to Delaware County, PA to Chester County, PA

Simkiss Arrival in the US

There's good reason to believe that our immigrant ancestors, led by Catherine (Reagan) Simkiss, arrived in Philadelphia, PA (from England) with her children, Elizabeth and William, on the Ship Tonawanda on August 25, 1863.

To the right, you can see captured what is likely the exact moment they arrived in America.

Family name		Given name			
SIMKISS		CATHERINE			
Accompanied by					
FAMILY					
Age	Yrs.	Sex	M. S.	Occupation	Nationality
Mo.	F	W. D.	NGIVEN	ENGLAND	
Last permanent residence (town, country, etc.)					Destination
					U.S.
Part of entry		Name of vessel		Date	
TONAWANDA		SHIP		8-25-1863	
Form 548-C					

Family name		Given name			
SIMKISS		WILLIAM			
Accompanied by					
FAMILY					
Age	Yrs.	Sex	M. S.	Occupation	Nationality
Mo.	M	W. D.	CHILD	ENGLAND	
Last permanent residence (town, country, etc.)					Destination
					U.S.
Part of entry		Name of vessel		Date	
TONAWANDA		SHIP		8-25-1863	
Form 548-C					

Ship Tonawanda

Manifest for the Ship Tonawanda
which arrived in Philadelphia, PA
in August of 1863.

270	23	Thomas	Ireland	Labour	1.	1.
271	24	Mannah	"	"	"	"
272	25	David	"	"	"	"
273	26	John H. Field	"	"	"	"
274	27	Henry	"	"	"	"
275	28	William Mahan	"	"	"	"
276	29	James	"	"	"	"
277	30	Richard Casey	"	"	"	"
278	31	Mary Ann Roberts	"	"	"	"
279	32	James Kirkman	United States	Carpenter	1.	1.
280	33	William Smart	England	Glassblower	3.	
281	34	Esther	"	"	"	"
282	35	Robert Rozzell	"	"	"	"
283	36	Catherine Simkins	"	"	"	"
284	37	Elizabeth	"	"	"	"
285	38	William	"	"	"	"
286	39	Mary Houston	"	"	"	"
287	40	James	"	Weaver	"	"
288	41	William	"	"	"	"
289	42	George Coburn	"	Miller	6.	
290	43	Frances	"	"	"	"
291	44	Alfred	"	"	"	"

SCHEDULE 1.—Free Inhabitants in *Pully Township* **in the County of** *Schuyl* **State**
of *Penn.* **enumerated by me, on the** *13* **day of** *July* **1860.** *N. C. Stinson* **Ass't Marshal.**
Post Office _____

Meehan Arrival in the US

The very first census record on which our immigrant ancestors, Edward Meehan and Esther (Lynch) Meehan, appeared was in Branchdale, PA in 1860.

Based on this record which shows that their daughter, Mary, was born in Scotland about two years earlier, we can assume that the Meehan's immigrated around 1858.

Dwelling-houses— the numbered in the order of visitation.	Families numbered in the order of visitation.	The name of every person whose usual place of abode on the first day of June, 1860, was in this family.	DESCRIPTION.			Profession, Occupation, or Trade of each person, male and female, over 15 years of age.	VALUE OF ESTATE OWNED.		Place of Birth, Naming the State, Territory, or Country.	Married within the year.	Attended School within the year.	Persons over 20 yrs of age who cannot read & write.	Whether deaf and dumb, blind, insane, idiotic, pauper, or convict.
			Age.	Sex.	White, black, or mulatto.		Value of Real Estate.	Value of Personal Estate.					
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
2558		Vacant			✓								
2559	2419	Mrs. Ryan	35	m	✓	Seaman		40	Ireland				
		Esther	40	f	✓				do				
		Thos	9	m					Penn.		✓		
		Patrick	5	m					do				
		Thomas	3	f					do				
2560	2420	Edw. Meehan	35	m	✓	do		40	Ireland				
		Volter	34	f	✓				do			✓	
		Mary	3	f	✓				Scotland				
2561	2421	James Poffert	42	m	✓	do			Ireland				
		John	40	f	✓				do				
		Mary	15	f	✓	Domestic			Scotland				
		Robert	17	m	✓	Seaman			do				
		Jane	15	f	✓				do				
		Slide	13	m	✓				do				
		Agnes	5	f	✓				do				
		Mary	3	f	✓				do				
2562	2422	Thos. Ryan	30	m	✓	do		40	Ireland				



To the Honorable the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas of the County of Schuylkill.

The Petition of Edward Meehan

Ireland

a native of

Respectfully Sheweth,

That your petitioner is a free white person, and an alien, and is desirous of becoming a CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA; that in pursuance of an act of Congress, entitled "An act to establish a uniform rule of Naturalization, and to repeal the act heretofore passed on that subject," and the supplement thereto, he made a declaration of his intention to become a CITIZEN OF THE UNITED STATES, before the Judges of the Court of Common Pleas on the Fourteenth day of September A. D., one thousand eight hundred and sixty-five a certificate whereof is hereunto annexed; and that he has resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States for FIVE years last past, and for ONE year last past within the State of Pennsylvania; that he has never borne any hereditary title, or been any of the Orders of Nobility in the kingdom whence he came, or elsewhere. He, therefore, prays he may be admitted to become a citizen of the UNITED STATES.

Paul Weygant a citizen of the United States, being duly sworn according to law, saith that he is well acquainted with the above-named petitioner, and that to his knowledge and belief, he has resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States for FIVE years last past, and for ONE year last past within the State of Pennsylvania; that during the same period he has behaved himself as a man of good moral character, attached to the principles of the Constitution of the United States, and well-disposed to the good order and happiness of the same.

Sworn and subscribed in open Court, the day of Sept. 23d A. D., 1867

Paul Weygant

Thos. J. McManus Prothonotary.

I, Edward Meehan the above-named petitioner, do, on my solemn oath declare that the contents of my petition are true; that I will support the Constitution of the United States; that I do hereby renounce and relinquish any title or order of nobility to which I am, or hereafter may be, entitled; and that I do absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign Prince, Potentate, State or Sovereignty whatever, and particularly to Victoria, Queen of Great Britain & Ireland.

of whom I was before a subject

Sworn and subscribed in open Court, the day of Sept. 23d A. D., 1867

Edward Meehan

Thos. J. McManus Prothonotary.

Meehan US Citizenship

This certificate captures the exact moment our immigrant ancestor, Edward Meehan (and by default, the rest of his family), became a US citizen in 1867.

Non-UK Direct Ancestors

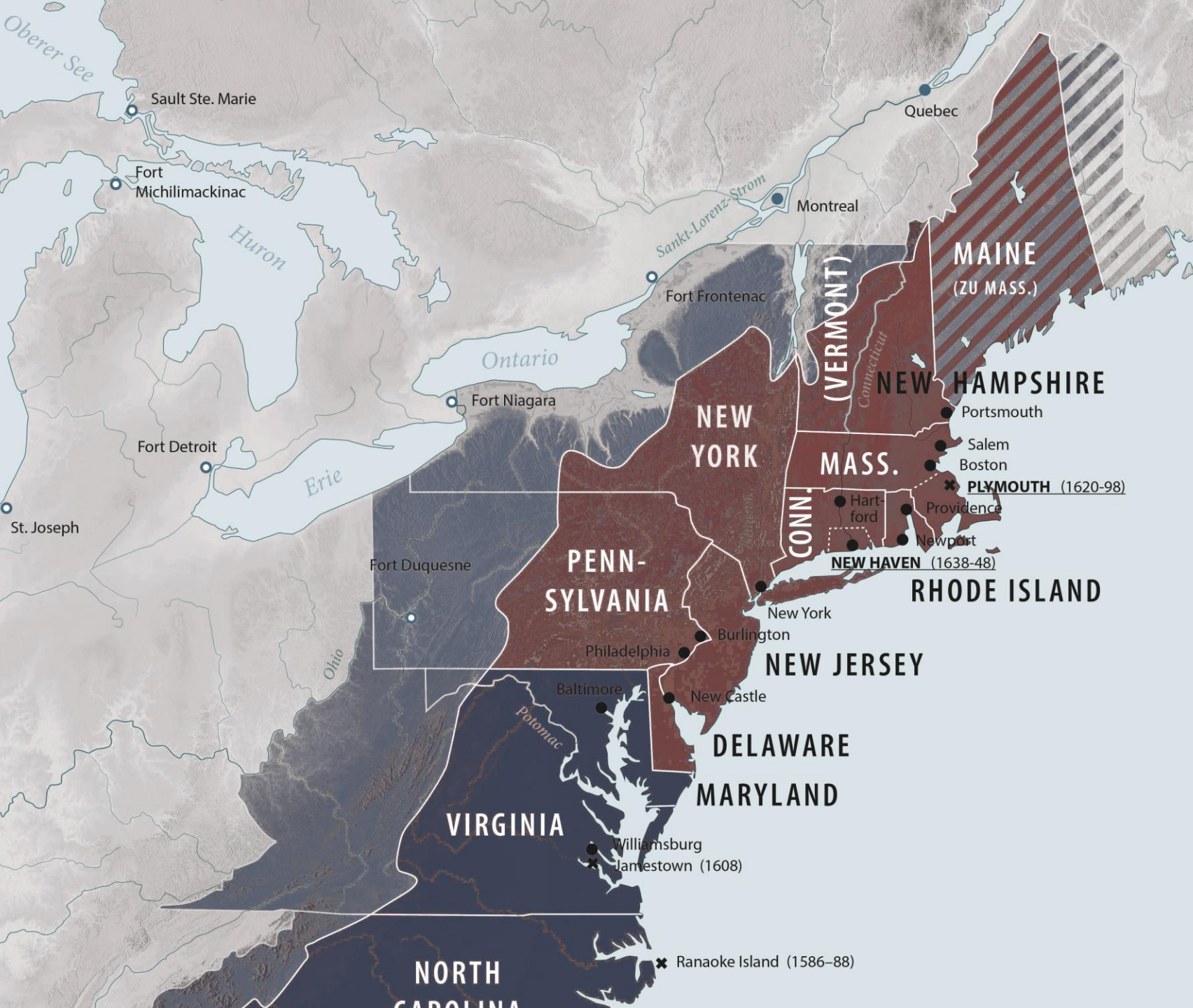
SIMKISS SIDE

HOLLAND Pierre Montfort (6X great-grandfather)

GERMANY Frederick Gaul & Anna Walter (6X great-grandparents)

GERMANY Matthias Bernard (5X great-grandfather)

ITALY Peter Naucett (7X great-grandfather)



Deep American Roots

Several of our ancestors on the Simkiss side were among the earliest American settlers and were responsible for establishing the Massachusetts Bay Colony, parts of Connecticut, New York, and Pennsylvania.

BORN IN THE USA

James Parker Carryll (1770)

John Hannum (1637)

Ann Naucett (1743)

Alice Michener+ (1781)

LET'S MEET

OUR ANCESTORS



John Augustine Simkiss

GRANDFATHER
(1916-1973)





Mary Therese (Caryl) Simkiss

GRANDMOTHER

(1916-2004)



Michael Francis Meehan

GRANDFATHER

(1927-2013)



Mary Sloan (Harrington) Meehan

GRANDMOTHER

(1928-2003)

Went by "Molly"

William Francis Simkiss

GREAT-GRANDFATHER
(1886-1958)

Went by "Will"





Genevieve Mary (McMullen) Simkiss

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER
(1886-1956)

Went by "Jennie"

Henry Gratz Carryl

GREAT-GRANDFATHER
(1884-1962)





Anna Marie (McConlogue) Carryl

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

(1882-1973)

Went by "Anne"

James Henry Meehan

GREAT-GRANDFATHER
(1893-1964)

Went by "Jim"





Loretta
Gertrude
(Donnelly)
Meehan

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

(1895-1986)

John Joseph Harrington

GREAT-GRANDFATHER

(1894-1973)

Went by "Jack"

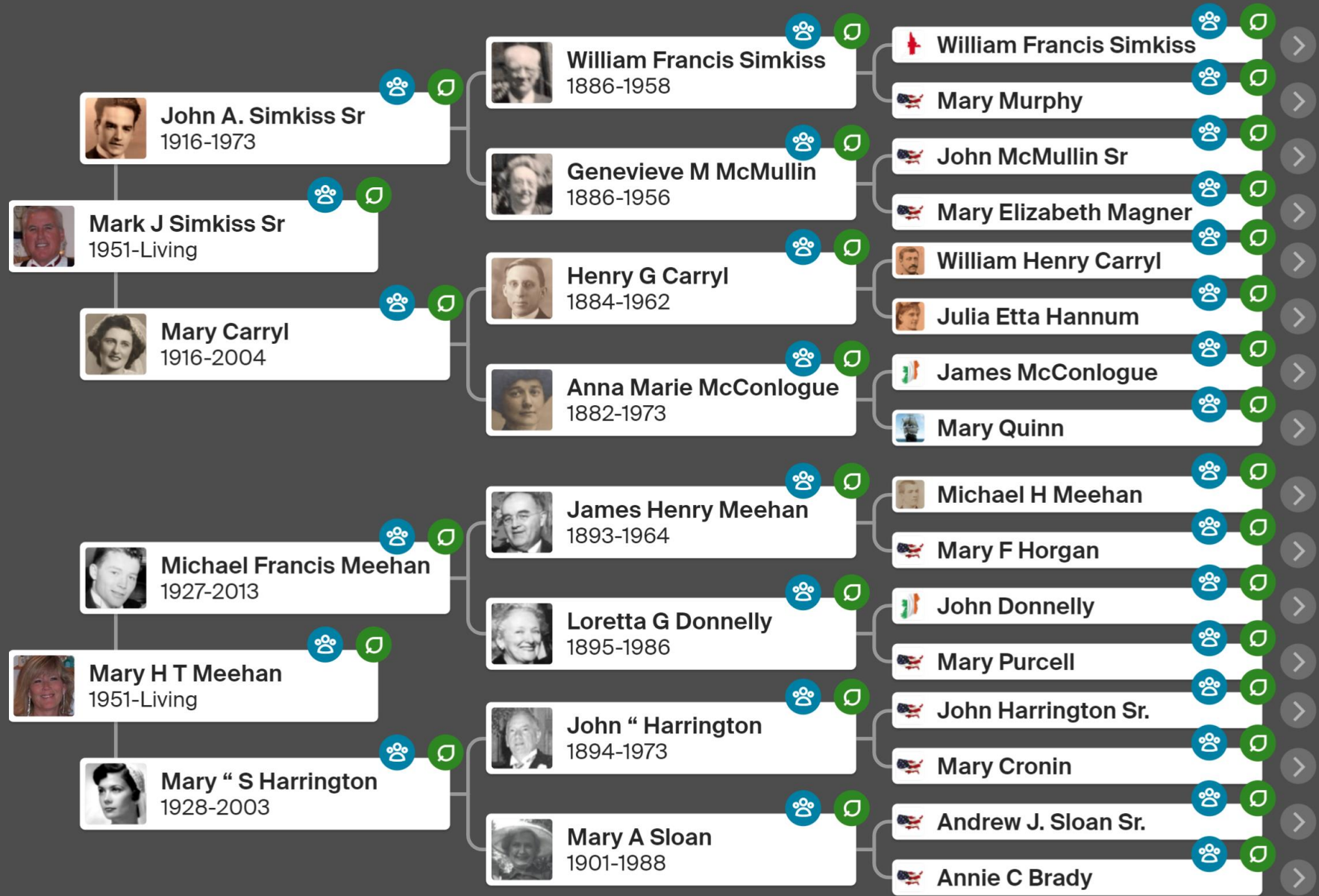




Mary Agnes (Sloan) Harrington

GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

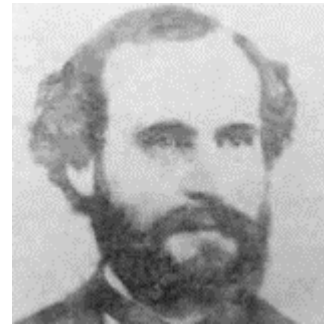
(1901-1988)



Photos of Direct Ancestors: Simkiss



WILLIAM HENRY CARRYL
2X GREAT-GRANDFATHER

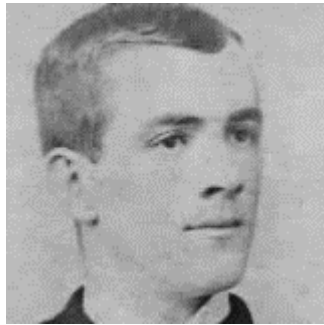


NATHANIEL TAYLOR CARRYL
4X GREAT-GRANDFATHER



JULIA ETTA (HANNUM) CARRYL
2X GREAT-GRANDMOTHER

Photos of Direct Ancestors: Meehan



MICHAEL HENRY MEEHAN
2X GREAT-GRANDFATHER



MICHAEL CRONIN
3X GREAT-GRANDFATHER



Known US Military Service

Colonial Wars

Sergeant Robert Lockwood (9X great-grandfather)

Lieutenant Jonathan Lockwood (8X great-grandfather)

Captain Reuben Lockwood (6X great-grandfather)

American Revolution (1775-1783)

Colonel John Hannum

Civil War (1861-1865)

Timothy Sloan ARMY (4X great-grandfather)

Captain Timothy Sloan ARMY (3X great-grandfather)

World War I (1917-1918)

James Henry Meehan NAVY (great-grandfather)

John Joseph Harrington (great-grandfather)*

Henry Gratz Carryl (great-grandfather)

William Francis Simkiss (great-grandfather)

World War II (1941 -1945)

James Henry Meehan NAVY (great-grandfather)

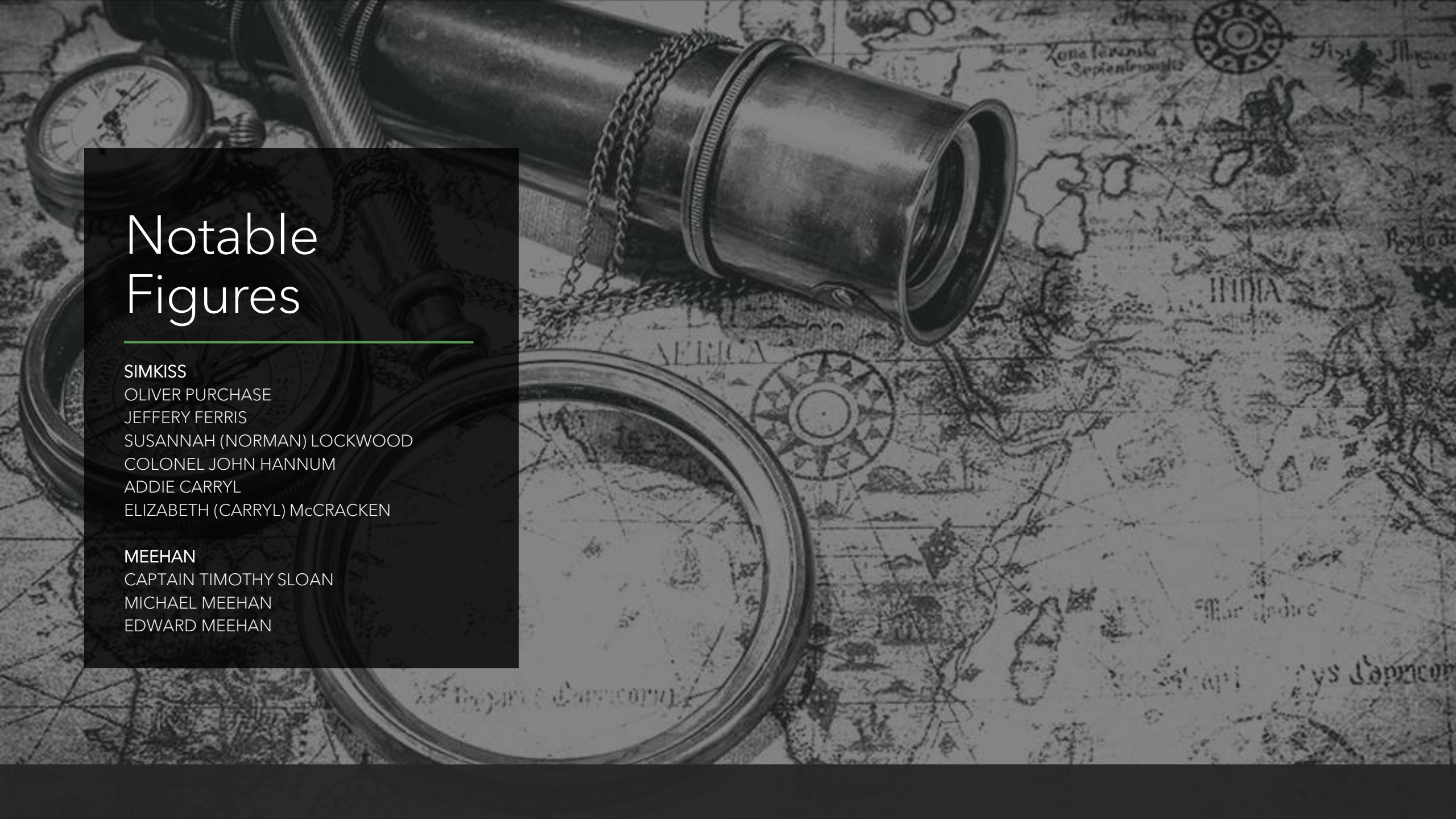
John Joseph Harrington (great-grandfather)*

John Augustine Simkiss NAVY (grandfather)

Michael Francis Meehan NAVY (grandfather)

Elizabeth (Carryl) McCracken NAVY (great aunt)

*Double-check

A vintage map with a telescope and a compass. The map shows continents like America and India, and oceans like the Indian Ocean. A telescope is lying on the map, and a compass is visible in the bottom left corner.

Notable Figures

SIMKISS

OLIVER PURCHASE

JEFFERY FERRIS

SUSANNAH (NORMAN) LOCKWOOD

COLONEL JOHN HANNUM

ADDIE CARRYL

ELIZABETH (CARRYL) McCRACKEN

MEEHAN

CAPTAIN TIMOTHY SLOAN

MICHAEL MEEHAN

EDWARD MEEHAN



Oliver Purchase

12X great-grandfather on the Simkiss side. Born in Dorchester, Dorset, England. He was a Puritan who came to Massachusetts during The Great Migration. Through him, we are related to the following people:

Millard Fillmore, 13th U.S. President

Joseph Glidden, Inventor of Barbed Wire

Ulysses S. Grant, Union Army General & 18th U.S. President

Francis Harrington Glidden, Co-Founder of Glidden Company

Admiral George Dewey, Admiral of the Navy

Sir Winston Churchill, Prime Minister of the UK

Willis Carrier, Inventor of Air Conditioning

Calvin Coolidge, 30th U.S. President

Edgar Rice Burroughs, Author of Tarzan and John Carter

Allen Dulles, 5th Director of the C.I.A.

John Foster Dulles, 52nd U.S. Secretary of State

Tennessee Williams, Author of A Streetcar Named Desire

Henry Fonda, Movie Actor

Norman Rockwell, American Artist

Rob Schneider, Comedian, TV and Movie Actor

Jane Fonda, Movie Actress

Peter Fonda, TV and Movie Actor

Zac Efron, Movie Actor

John Cena, Movie Actor and WWE Pro Wrestler

Bridget Fonda, Movie Actress

Billy Bush, TV Personality and Host



Jeffrey Ferris

9X great-grandfather

One of the founding settlers of Stamford, Connecticut; Greenwich, Connecticut (named after his hometown in England); and Eastchester, New York.

Mary, Jeffrey's first wife, was the mother of all his children. A tradition claims that she was of noble birth and married Jeffrey against the wishes of her family, and so they fled to New England. She was once suggested to have been Anne Howard of the British aristocracy, though that has not been confirmed.

Through Jeffrey Ferris, we are related to:

P.T. Barnum

Co-Founder of Barnum & Bailey Circus

Amelia Earhart

Aviation Pioneer

Nancy (Davis) Reagan

First Lady of President Ronald Reagan

Glenn Close

Movie, Television, and Stage Actress



Jeffrey Ferris
First Congregational Church of Greenwich, Connecticut



Colonel John Hannum

1st cousin, 8X removed on Simkiss side. From Concord, Chester County, PA.

My 8X great-grandfather was his grandfather and Chester County Settler, John Hannum.

Patriot in the American Revolution who was closely connected to George Washington, the first President of the United States. Colonel of the First Battalion of Associate Battalions of Chester County. Delegate to the Ratification of the U.S. Constitution.

Helped establish Chester County, PA as well as West Chester, PA: defended against people from Delaware County who were not happy with them trying to establish their own county; renamed Turk's Head to West Chester; built the town's municipal building, jailhouse, and named several streets in the town, including High, Gay, Chestnut, Walnut, Church (Nield).



*Col. John Hannum House
547 Concord Rd, Glen Mills, PA 19342
Part of the National Register of Historic Places*



Lady Elizabeth (Carryl) McCracken

Great Aunt Beth on the Simkiss side.

Was a Pharmacist's Mate, Petty Officer, 1st Class who served in WWII.

Buried at Arlington National Cemetery.



THERE IS A DAUGHTER IN THE SERVICE—
WAVE Mary L. Livigood of Wyomissing, Penn., visits the home of Mr. and Mrs. Henry G. Carryl, 436 SW 26th road, to give them the window marker which shows that their daughter is in the WAVES. The

daughter, Elizabeth Carryl, a pharmacist's mate, is on duty in Corpus Christi, Texas. The Carryls are an all-service family. Henry William Carryl is a chief petty officer in the Coast Guard, and James J. Carryl is a yeoman, first class, in the navy.





Captain Timothy A. Sloan

3X great-grandfather

Captain in the Union Army during the Civil War for the 116th Pennsylvania Regiment, Company E, part of the famous "Irish Brigade." As a Sergeant, he was wounded (shot) while bearing the US flag at the battle of Cold Harbor in VA, one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War.

There was a story written about him during the war where he was sitting down with a cup of coffee in the morning next to a campfire and a bullet knocked the tin cup right out of his hand.



Union Army Captain's Uniform



Edward & Esther Meehan

3X great-grandparents

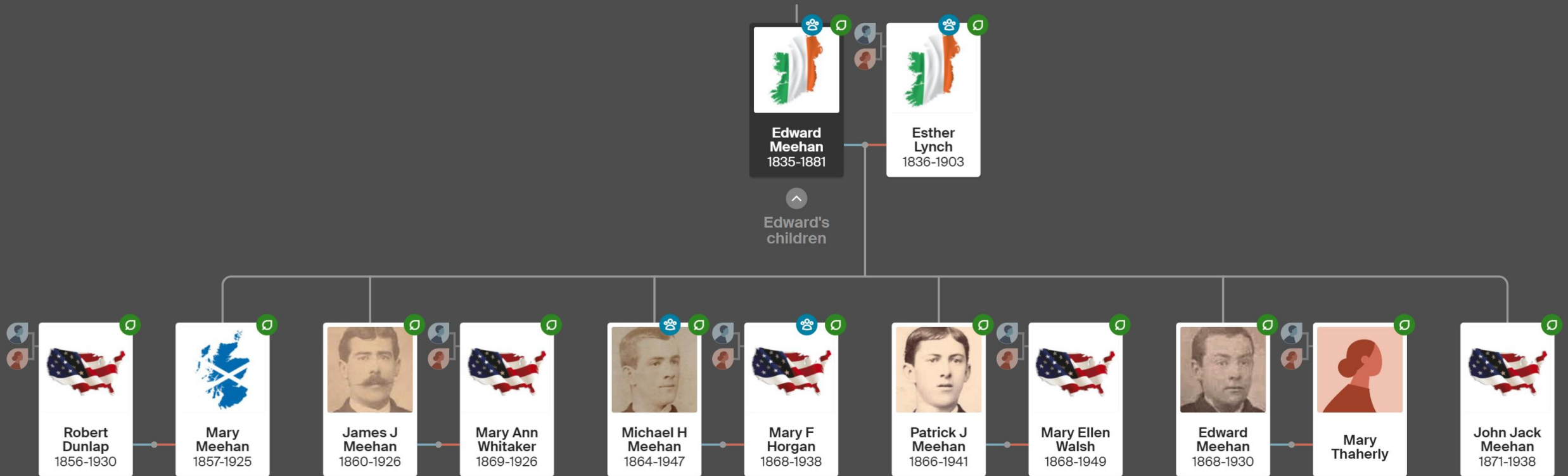
Edward Meehan and Esther (Lynch) Meehan immigrated to the United States around 1858-59 with their daughter, Mary. They spent some time in Scotland before coming to the US, likely so that Edward could gain mining experience before coming to Pennsylvania.

In 1881, Edward passed away at the age of 46 (possibly due to a coal-mining accident or complications from working in the mines). After he died, Esther wrote to a local newspaper saying that a group of prominent men had taken out a policy on Edward's life without permission and made \$126,000 (\$3,660,500 today) upon his untimely death.

Esther Meehan's obituary stated that she was a respected resident of the town. She was said to have been "widely known and esteemed by a large circle of acquaintances."



Edward & Esther Meehan's Children



Edward & Esther Meehan's Children





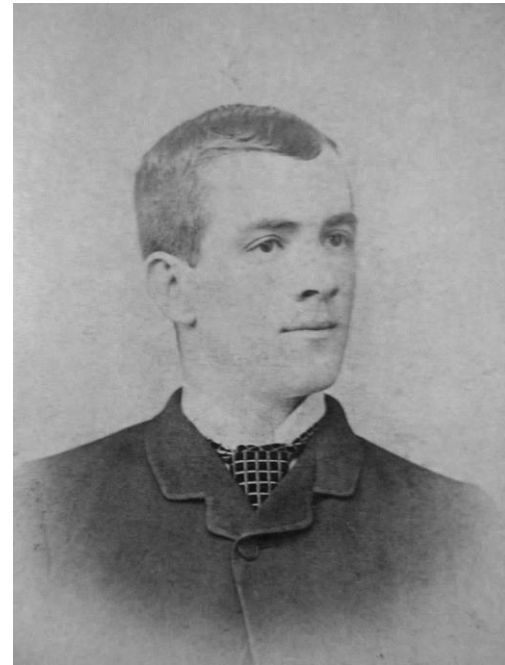
Michael Henry Meehan

2X great-grandfather

Michael Meehan was the son of Edward Meehan and Esther (Lynch) Meehan. He started out working as a coal miner (like his father) and “Keeper of the Main Building” at the Schuylkill County Almshouse. He then went to pharmacy school in his forties (!) and opened his own drug/confectionery store in Mahanoy City, PA which he then moved to Philadelphia, PA. Hard, humble beginnings to a successful business owner for 30+ years.

His son, James, followed in his footsteps and became a pharmacist/drug store owner as well. James’ son, Michael (Grandpop) worked with his father as well.

Michael Meehan was also a talented musician and taught band.





Stories of Survival

It is because of their hard work, sacrifice, and bravery that we are even here today. We owe a great debt to them. I'd like to think they would be proud of what they have built and what has become of the generations that followed because of the incredible risks they took and the immense courage they showed in the face of adversity.

They were up against impossible odds and their stories are stories of survival. That cannot be understated. And I think it's really important that we never forget that.



This Is Us

This is what our ancestors made.