**Essay 2: Descendants of John Donohoe c 1790, Coolfin, Abbey Loughrea, Eire**

**DONOHOE/UNKNOWN**

This is the second of what I hope to be a limited series of essays on the descendants of my great, great grandfather John Donohoe who is estimated to have been born in east Galway in the year 1790.

He married Anne, my great, great grandmother whose maiden name is unknown. Their son Thomas is their only known child, although I suspect they had more.

It is not from a lack of endeavour that there has been little progress but more a lack of records and documentation for the era. Therefore, I turned my attention to what should be a more fruitful project. Hopefully, I will return to John and Anne at a later date.

In my previous essay, I suggested that the children of Thomas and his wife Bridget (nee Lyons), my great grandparents, would be a worthy topic for research. My outreach did as I had hoped it would and achieved some very positive results. I have set out below my most up-to-date knowledge of their lives and that of their off-spring.

**DONOHOE/LYONS**

Thomas and Bridget had twelve children all of whom were born in or around the Woodford, Loughrea, Portumna triangle centred on Abbey and in particular the townland of Coolfin. Identified by the ancient castle of the same name which dominates the townscape. As would be expected, some stayed locally within the triangle, where they raised their families, who in turn also remained local. The majority though, set their sights further afield; whether this was due to necessity or choice remains yet unanswered, but I strongly suspect the former. Those that relocated to the USA, settled close to one another, a common feature of migrants. Their chosen location was either Boston or New York. Their death registrations suggest that they did not venture far during their lifetime spent in the USA.

I find that by portraying individual family members on a bare ancestral tree is a barren endeavour because it does not personalise their life story. This is why I chose to start this discourse in order to put some leaves on the tree, or even fruit. To labour the analogy further, hopefully some new seedlings may sprout and give some life to our dead ancestors.

Previously I asserted that Bridget Lyons was attributed with the non de plumes of Bedilia, Bridgita and Delia. To add to the confusion, the latest tranche of information that I have received states that she was also known by the name of Ellen. This poses more questions yet to be addressed and adds further to the enigma that is Bridget.

The opinions here are not set in stone, they are the consensus of other participants. It is my interpretation of their hard work, in providing the necessary documentation from the available resources. I welcome corrections and alternative opinions in order to further our quest.

Five of Thomas and Bridget’s children stayed in Ireland, seven of their children relocated to the USA. My focus in this essay, is on the five children that stayed in Ireland. This is because those that relocated to the USA are very well documented, far more so than those who remained. Of the five that stayed “home” , four were female, and one was male.

Listed in order of age, respectively: **Bridget – Maria – Anne – Teresa – Thomas**

Thomas and Bridget had twelve children. Ten were born in Coolfin and two were born in the Woodford environs. The association with Woodford may suggest that this is the hometown of Bridget Lyons’ family, an avenue yet to be explored.

As might be expected, I have varying degrees of knowledge regarding my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins. Some of whom I was acquainted with on my visits to Ireland over the years, and others on their visits to England during their travels. My long-term expectation is to fill in the missing pieces in what I perceive to be an extremely complex jigsaw puzzle.

Listed below is the most up-to-date knowledge that I am in possession of:

**MURRAY/DONOHOE**

**BRIDGET** Donohoe, born 25January 1860 in Woodford. She married **Michael Murray** at the age of 21 years in Kilnalahan, Abbey, Loughrea. Michael was 21 years of age at the time of their marriage in 1881, witnessed by John Murray and Anne Donohoe. It is estimated he was born c.1861 in Ballygowan, Galway. His father was also named Michael. Bridget and Michael had six children all of whom were born in Ballygowan. A conflicting source states that Bridget was born in Coolfin. If they were married in Kilnalahan, it would have been in the chapel designated for worship in the derelict former monastery; this being prior to the Abbey Church construction in the late 19th century.

1. Theresa was born on the 12 August 1882
2. Mary was born on the 01 July 1884
3. Thomas was born on the 15 April 1887
4. Bridget was born on the 05 August 1889
5. John was born in 1892\*\*
6. Margaret was born in 1898

**Michael Murray** is mentioned as an evictee in the lyrics of a popular protest song of the period. The song “Sweet Ballygowan” depicts the Ballygowan evictions of 1888. Being contemporaneous with the above, I feel this is an important area for research.

\*\* **John (Jack)** was cited as the resident farmer at Carraroe House, Ballinakill in 1939. His age and location would make him a prospective candidate for position number 5.

**FAHY/DONOHOE**

**MARIA** was born in Coolfin on the 27 January 1864. She was married at the age of 22 to **Joseph Fahy** in 1886. Joseph was 28 years of age at the time. Joseph was born c.1858 in county Galway. Maria and Joseph had 12 children, all of whom were born in Galway, probably Tynagh or nearby.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | Anna Marie | Born c.1887 |  |
| 2. | Patrick | Born c.1888 |  |
| 3. | **TERESA** | Born c. 1890 | \*\* She died at the age of 68 years in 1952. Michael, her husband died in 1955 at the age of 82.  |
| 4. | Thomas | Born 1892 |  |
| 5. | Delia | Born c1894 |  |
| 6. | Margaret | Born c.1896 |  |
| 7. | Joseph | Born c.1898 |  |
| 8. | **PETER** | Born on the 01 July 1899 |  |
| 9. | Mary Ellen | Born on the 5th November 1901 in Tynagh  |  |
| 10. | Elizabeth | Born c.1902 |  |
| 11. | Lucy Agnes | Born on the 03 April 1907 in Tynagh |  |
| 12. | Patrick, Ambrose  | ?? |  |

The family tombstone is in Abbey Cemetery

\*\* I cannot account for the contradictory date

More is known about child number eight, **Peter**. It is notable that he was the only known sibling to venture beyond Ireland. He was married at the age of 40 to **Elizabeth Meaney** in New York, on 30th April 1939. She was 39 years of age at the time. They had four children: one son and three daughters. Elizabeth was born in September 1900 in Ireland. Peter died in New York on 21 June 1982 at the age of 83.

**MCDONNELL/DONOHOE**

**ANNE** was born in Coolfin in 1866. She was married at 17 years of age to **John McDonnell** who was 25 years of age at the time, on 06 February 1883 in Abbey. John was born about 1850 and died on 16 April 1932 in Reaghan, Duniry, his father was also named John. Anne died at the age of 56 on the 22 September 1922. Anne and John had 9 children: all male who were born in Reaghan, Galway. William sadly died at five months of age, the cause of his death is unknown. Likewise, the cause of Peter’s premature death is unknown.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. | Thomas | Was born on the 10 Jan 1884 | Died on the 8th Feb 1933 |
| 2. | **Peter** | Was born on the 07 July 1885 | Died 1st Aug 1913 at the age of 28. Listed as an Agricultural Labourer.  |
| 3. | Patrick | Was born on the 24 February 1887 |  |
| 4. | **John** | Was born on the 01 May 1889 |  |
| 5. | James | Was born on the 01 June 1892 |  |
| 6. | Joseph | Was born on the 09 June 1894 | Died in 1963 |
| 7. | Michael | Was born in 1897 |  |
| 8. | **William** | Was born on the 23 March 1900 | Died 25 August 1900 at the age of five months. The cause of death is unknown.  |
| 9. | Francis “Bob” | Was born on the 12 December 1905 | Died 28 June 1954 in Springarden, Tynagh |

**John** was the only known sibling to emigrate to the USA. He married **Catherine F Casey**. She was born about 1866 in Ireland. They had two children, Katherine, Francis was born in 1924, she died in 1997. Mary, Madeline was born in 1926. Both children were born in Worcester, Massachusetts, USA.

**Corrigan/Donohoe**

**TERESA** was born on the 10th May 1872 in Rosdurra, Woodford. She was resident in Coolfin in 1901 (she was not there in 1911). She was 29 years of age and unmarried at this time. She married **THOMAS CORRIGAN** and they had two children, a boy and a girl. There are conflicting reports on her birthplace and her given age, which might suggest an incorrect identification. Further research is required.

**Donohue/power**

**THOMAS** was their youngest child, my grandfather and was born on 20 March 1882 in Coolfin, one month before the death of his father Thomas. In 1905, at the age of 23 he married **BRIDGET POWER** who was born in Cloggernagh in 1878. There is confusing and contradictory reports on both Thomas and Bridget’s residential location at the time of their marriage. They had 9 children, the first being my father, Michael. They were all born in Coolfin, except Michael who was born in the Power family home of **Patrick and Mary (nee Burke)** in Cloggernagh, Portumna. Thomas died aged 82 in 1964. Bridget died aged 93 in 1970. There is something of an anomaly with my grandfather ending his surname in ‘HUE’. My father, according to his birth certificate and his usage ended his surname with ‘HOE’. The reason for this is unknown.

The HOUSE OF BURKE are descendants of William de Burge and later the infamous Earls of Clanricarde.

1. **MICHAEL**, their eldest, was born on 29th September 1906. In 1942 he married **BRIDGET COLLINS**, my mother, at the age of 36. Bridget was born in Brookville, Ballygowan in 1915 and was 27 years of age at the time of her wedding in the Old Church, Clonlee, Duniry. My parents relocated to London after their marriage. They had 8 children, all of whom were born in London, except myself, the eldest, was born in Brookville in 1944. Michael died in 1972 at the age of 67. Bridget died in 1988 at the age of 83. Both are interred in London, England. Their memorial is displayed on the Abbey Heritage website.
2. **MARY**, their only daughter was born in 1908. She died at the age of 92 in 2000. Her husband **John Croughwell** of Wellpark, Lacken died in 1966 at the age of 72. The family homestead includes the holy well of Saint Feichin.
3. **JOHN** was born in 1909. He died in 1988 at the age of 76. John was a twin with Patrick (note the three-year error).
4. **PATRICK** was born in 1909. He died in 1995 at the age of 87. Patrick was a twin with John.
5. **EDWARD ‘NED’** was born in 1910. He died in 1995 aged 85. His wife **VIRGINIA MCDONNAGH** died in 2009 aged 96.
6. **JAMES “UNCLE JIM”** was born on the 4th March 1912. He died in Portumna aged 57, on the 26th October 1969. He was a bachelor.

At the height of the mid-20th century exodus when half a million people left Ireland, Jim arrived in England. In the late 1950s he resided in our home for some time before relocating to **Michael and Maudie Croughwell’s** home. He worked in a factory manufacturing motor vehicle windscreens for many years before his illness. Eventually he returned to his sister, Mary Croughwell’s home in Wellpark, Lacken, where he remained until his death. The cause of his death was Bulbar Palsey and cardiac failure. He was a cherished member of our family and was highly regarded by all who knew him. His burial site is in Abbey Cemetery.

1. **WILLIAM** was born 09 May 1913. His son, **Martin** and his wife **Amy Tolley** and their baby, **Stephen**, were tragically killed in a train crash in England. They were returning from visting Amy’s family in Liverpool for Christmas. I knew the family personally, during my time spent in Birmingham. I used to babysit Stephen. The train crash is commonly known as the “Boxing Day Train Crash,1962”. I was meant to board the train that crashed.
2. **TOMMY** was born in 1914. He died in 2001 aged 86. His wife **ANNIE (NEE ?)** died on 25 January 2007 aged 85. Their children are currently resident in Coolfin. This being the ancestral “home” of the Donohoe/Donohue dynasty for at least 230 years. They, like myself, are the great, great grandchildren of John and Anne.
3. **JOSEPH** was born 31 March 1919.

Many of the above are memorialised in the **Donohue** family tomb in Abbey Cemetery.

As can be seen from the many inconsistencies and unknowns, there is scope for further investigations, which I am sure will reveal a more comprehensive study by those willing to take up the challenge.

No census was taken in 1921, because of the War of Independence. The first census of the population of the Irish Free State was taken in 1926. These records are not currently expected to be released to the public until 2027.

For those who relocated to the USA, theirs is also a worthy field of research best undertaken by their descendants in the USA who are in a better position to do so. They are: **Ellen, Eliza, Margaret, John, Agnes, Patrick and Joseph**.

There is of course another chapter to be written, that is, what became of those who emigrated to the “Townlands” of Bootle, Balsall Heath and Cricklewood? But that’s for another day and another essay.

With all historical research hard ‘facts’ are difficult to come by therefore it is subject to speculation and interpretation. If anything is incorrect or misquoted I apologise in advance and welcome your advice and or correction. Any new or better information will be entered in an addendum in due course. As with my previous essay I have not included referencing. This being in order to avoid any preconceived bias and to encourage independent research.

**Families associated by marriage:**

**Casey, Collins, Corrigan, Croughwell, Burke, Fahy, Lyons, McDonnell, McDonnagh, Meaney, Murray, Power, Tolley**

**THE HOUSE OF DONOHOE**



The HOUSE OF DONOHOE, by birthright are descendants of the ancient gaelic tribe of Eóghanact, the Kings of Munster and by extension, the sept of O’Donchada Mór, the Lords of Ross Castle, County Kerry. Lesser septs are found in Galway, Tipperary and Cavan. Genealogists have estimated 300 variants of the name used throughout history.

**NUNQUAM NON PARATUS**

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