



JOHN AND MARY GANNON

They came from all over Europe to Lancaster Co Nebraska. They were the Czechs, the English, the Germans and Irish and settled southwest of Lincoln. Some came straight thru to the area and others made stops along the way, working their way here. One of the Irish families was the Gannons.

Research shows that the first knowledge of them in the area is the 1880 census of Precinct P in Seward Co showing John at age 30 with wife Mary age 25. John was listed as a RR section hand. And data indicated that they had been married in the census year 1880.

By 1900 the family had increased by the addition of Mary in Jan 1881, Maggie in Jan 1885 and Johnnie in Aug 1887. By the 1910 census the family was in Lancaster Co living just west of Denton. Mary and Johnnie are still listed with the parents, but Maggie has either passed away or left home for some reason or gotten married.

Records at Calvary Cemetery in Lincoln show that the elder John and Mary are buried there as well as the children Mary and Johnnie and also a child RoseElla who died in 1889 at age 5.

Knowing from the census that the marriage occurred in 1880, a review of Ohio records shows that John Gannon married Mary Riley on Feb 10, 1880 in Clark County. They had both came to the US in 1872 but it is not known as to whether they knew each other in Ireland.

John and Mary (the parents) died in 1932 and 1938 respectively and Johnnie and Mary continued living on the farm. They were always known as a bachelor and old maid. In the 1950's they left the farm and moved into Denton purchasing the "Denton Mansion" which had grown into disrepair and Johnnie and Mary built a new home over the existing foundation. The young Mary died in 1965 and Johnnie died 1959. When they past away, the house became the property of Clarence and Shirley Honvlez. Clarence past away in November 2010 and Shirley has given items that were Mary Gannon's that had been in the house since her passing to the Denton Community Historical Society. One item dates back to the death of RoseElla in 1889. There are a number of letters from the parents in Ireland to John Gannon and Mary Riley (Reilly) dating back to 1871. A sincere THANK YOU to all involved in this donation.



Shirley Honvlez



Clarence Honvlez

In the Tales and Trails newsletter of March 2008, we did an article on Johnnie and Mary and we are repeating it for those who may have forgotten it and for those new members since March 2008.

JOHN AND MARY GANNON MEMORABILIA

Cathy Sullivan and Marilyn Giles (left to right) are looking through the memorabilia that John and Mary Gannon accumulated through the years. Each of these items will be cataloged and stored in plastic sleeves. Hopefully we can also scan them and have them available for anyone who would like to see copies. If you or your relatives ever sent the Gannon's a birthday or Christmas card it is probably in one of these boxes.





Back row, left to right: Julia (Green) Petsch, Mary Ann Sullivan, Francis Flickinger, Irma Flickinger, Nellie Sullivan, Chris Green, Rena Green, Walter Rapp, Lucy Meyers, Lena Green, Bill Osterman, John Gannon and Mary Gannon

Next row: Mrs. Standish Rapp, Victor Fraas and wife June (Dauwalter) Fraas and son and Mrs. Gannon

Front row: Elaine (Osterman) Thayer, Bernadine (Sullivan) Stransky, Anita (Osterman) Austin, Everett Petsch and older son of Victor and June Fraas

Preface to letter below.

This letter was evidently sent to Mary Reilly's brother James, as he had been in the US before Mary came here. I have taken the liberty of correcting the letter to make it more readable. I can only imagine what joy there was when a letter from Ireland and the home folks arrived here. We tend to imagine that there was no contact between the US and Ireland but this is proved wrong in the number of letters Mary Reilly Gannon saved.

Corglofs June 18 1871

Dear Son, we received your kind letter the 1st of April but as Mary Denin was not ready to go till now, your sister was detained till this day. She expects to sail on the 22nd in a ship named the City Of Brussels. They expect to call Terence Smith, butcher, No. 251 South Brooklin. They wrote to him on this day. We hope you will watch their arrival as Michael intends to leave them in Liverpool. They expect to meet brother Bartholomew there. We are happy to have to let you know that we are all in good health hoping the arrival of this note may find you enjoying the same blessings. Thanks be to God for his mercy to us all. Your Mother returns you her sincere thanks for your present to her. We all join her in sending you our love and blessings. We will say no more at present as Mary can tell you all particulars. We remain, Yours truly

Philip, Mary and Michael Reilly

This preface to Mary Gannon's story is written by Jane Reinkordt

My father, John Bredenberg, wrote the following account in 1982 for the Writing and Storytelling Festival for Older Nebraskans sponsored by the University of Nebraska- Lincoln Division of Continuing Studies and the Nebraska Commission on Aging.

My father was a keen observer who appreciated the local "characters". We grew up listening to him exchanging stories with our uncle Ernest Smith, our cousin, Jim Rosekrans and our neighbor, Lyle Mayer, who with time rightly and proudly claimed to have become one of those "characters" himself. They told stories during big dinners around the dining room table, over coffee at the kitchen table, and lunch in the field. These stories live on, especially in my sister, Ann Bredenberg's memory and telling often only in the form of punch lines. I am glad Dad wrote this down, and that I rediscovered it recently.

MY NEIGHBOR MARY GANNON

By John Bredenberg, Denton Nebraska

With comments by his daughter, Jane Reinkordt

Mary lived on the farm adjoining my father-in-law's. My wife's childhood recollection of Mary is seeing her working in the fields with her brother, Johnny. They were then in their middle thirties. Still living at home with "Paw" and "Maw", their Irish immigrant parents. When the old folks passed on, Mary assumed full charge of the farm. She was a few years older than Johnny, and he was perfectly content to let Mary shoulder the responsibility. He had implicit faith in her business ability. When she was talking, he listened with an air of respect that bordered on worship. Neither ever married, and the brother and sister team prospered by Mary's masterful farm management.

Mary was truly the rough and ready type. In the summer she wore a man's denim jacket and a man's straw hat. In the winter she would be seen wearing a man's heavy sheep-skin coat, heavy boots, and brightly colored stocking cap which did not quite conceal her flaming red hair. In this attire she would attend the farm auctions, and no one was a better judge of livestock than Mary.

Mary's rich Irish brogue always fascinated me. She seldom had anyone's name right, and despite being corrected time and again, she had her own pronunciation and stuck to it. For instance, when I moved into the neighborhood named John Bredenberg, she called ma Johnny Bredenberger, and I was Johnny Bredenberger to Mary and Johnny to the end of their days. One day Mary phoned my wife to report the marriage of a mutual friend. She said, "That there feller Lucy married ain't no Irishman, ner an Englishman, ner a German neither, so guess he's some furriner."

Johnny's colorful language was also priceless. During World War 11 we were discussing the merits of his tractor tires. We both agreed that goods purchased before the war were superior to war-time materials. I observed, "Those are pre-war tires, aren't they Johnny?" "Pre-war, hell! he replied. "I got them before the war."

Mary had no confidence in banks and never had a checking account. She was never without her "reticule," as she called it, a large worn leather handbag in which she carried large sums of cash. She paid cash for everything. The local car dealer reported that when he delivered her new car, she took the cash from her "reticule" and paid him. When ever she received a check for grain or livestock, she and Johnny would go the bank on which the check was drawn and cash it. Many lively arguments ensued when she was asked for proper identification, but she always got the money.

Mary took a lively interest in our children and was always ready to give us the benefit of her vast knowledge of home remedies. Although she never said so, I felt that she took a dim view of modern pediatrics. When our third child passed away suddenly, we received many expressions of sympathy, but Mary's words were different from the rest: "Parents who lose children have something special to look forward to in going to Heaven."

In the 1950's Mary and Johnny rented their farm and built a fine new house in the village not far from the farm. It was equipped with all the modern conveniences and was the finest house in all the town. She told me how the "swells" of the town came to call and of their envious glances at where she had stored several sacks of chicken feed. Also at the large spikes she had driven into the living room wall from which hung large portraits in antique frames of Paw, Maw, and Johnny when a teenager. Her old Irish eyes gleamed wickedly in telling about it.

As Mary grew older, she became crippled with arthritis which necessitated surgery on her knee. She submitted grudgingly and afterwards when relating her experience to me said, "I didn't think they could do me any good, and I told them so just before the operation. I told them that after they'd get me all cut up I'd probably have to go to Heaven in a basket, but this was a hell of a place to be leaving from! Then I heard somebody say, "Give that old fool a shot to shut her up!" Mary was partly right, for she never walked again. For some years she directed the farm business from her wheelchair. Johnny, well into his seventies, took his orders from her as always. He kept his eye on the tenants operating the farm and woe betide the one who did not follow Mary's orders.

Mary was a remarkable person.

SCHOOL PICNIC



The "School Picnic" was enjoyed by about 60 members and friends on May 22nd at the Community Center. There were all the traditional "fixins" with big pans of fried chicken and the required ICE CREAM. The 1938 treasurer's report for District # 108 says that Rose Burgess was reimbursed \$3.20 for ice cream. The school pictures and census records etc were also on display.

Enjoying the event in this picture are left to right, Erdene Burgess, Clyde Burgess Sr. and Esther (Rader) Pester. Erdene attended grade school at Blue Springs, Nebraska and high school at Lincoln High. Clyde remembers his years at District #69, the Haines Branch School and Teachers College High in Lincoln. Esther was a pupil at Rose Hill School which was a mile east of Sprague and Central High at Martell.

In visiting with Esther, we discussed how and when Lancaster County School were named as each school not only had a number designation but also a name. Does anyone know the answer to this?

MARCH 28, 2012 SOUP SUPPER



The soup was hot and the pies were yummy. Pictured left to right are Virginia Piening dishing up the chili, while Joanie Wittstruck waits for a customer and Cathy Sullivan checks the hot dogs. at our soup supper on March 28.

Upcoming events

July 24—Michael Maas will talk on the Civil War and uniforms . 6pm social hour followed by program

Aug 28—Cloy Stutzman and wife from Milford will give a musical program. 6 pm social hour followed by program

Sept 25—6 pm Walking tour of Centerville Cemetery with Joan Wittstruck . Tailgate refreshments

It was yellowed with age. The paper was only about 6 inches by 6 inches but Mary Gannon had deemed it important enough to cut it out of the Lincoln Sunday Star newspaper dated March 29, 1925. The article and picture was of the Denton Girl's Basketball team. We recognized the picture as one that we had in our photo collection with only a couple of girls identified. Now thanks to Mary's thoughtfulness our photo is complete.

THE LINCOLN SUNDAY STAR

SUNDAY MARCH 29, 1925

Denton High School Girl's Team Has Not Been Defeated For Two Seasons



Top row—Bertha Cameron, Carrie Haase, Coach J.R. Johnson, Marion Reeves, Anna Haase.

Lower row—Evelyn Hocking, Lela Miller, Captain Mary Reeves, Eva Shea, Gladys Cameron

The Denton high school girl's basketball team has not been defeated for two seasons. This year the Denton girls scored 406 points as compared with 139 by opponents.

Denton	50	Pleasantdale	2
Denton	23	Raymond	2
Denton	31	Martel	7
Denton	12	Pleasantdale	2
Denton	36	Walton	19
Denton	18	Havelock	10
Denton	21	Hickman	16
Denton	26	Crete	16
Denton	23	Crete	8
Denton	14	Martel	3
Denton	37	Lincoln Y W	9
Denton	27	Havelock	10
Denton	18	Crete Alumni	13
Denton	23	Walton	18
	406		139

BITS AND PIECES FROM THE LANCASTER COUNTY CITIZEN

Jan 27th 1921—DENTON DOINGS

The Columbus Club of St. Mary's parish met at the Rectory last Wednesday night. Thirty members were present and all enjoyed the very interesting talk given by Mr. Winfred Bixby, formerly Lieutenant in the 135th Engineer Corps. Mr. Bixby had with him more than a hundred souvenirs some of which were implements of war and some of which were spoils of war. Bixby went into detail of the work and hardships of Engineers and soldiers life in general. He related with appreciation the work of the Knights of Columbus, Salvation Army and Red Cross. While war talks are now almost something of the past, Mr. Bixby talk was the most interesting one ever listened to by this writer. Smokes for the evening were served by the club while the bachelor lunch was furnished by Wesley Snell and Paul Sullivan. The servers for the next club meeting will be Jerry Shea and Francis Enright. This Friday night will be the monthly social night for the parish—enough said.

The little son of Patrick F. Sullivan has been very sick but is reported some better at this time.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Maughan are the parents of a baby boy born Saturday January 22nd

EMERALD EPISTLES

Louie Piening celebrated his birthday Saturday evening. Relatives and friends were present.

The neighbors gave a reception for the bride and groom, Mr. and Mrs. Joe Schneider last Friday evening which was attended by Mr. and Mrs. Palmateer, Mr. and Mrs. H.F. Schnell, Mr. and Mrs. L.J. Hohnstein, Mrs. W.R. Grogan, Mr. and Mrs. H.C.W. Jarms, Miss Mary Jones, Miss Gertrude Lee and Mrs. Joe Schneider's sister and her brother and his wife. Ice cream and cake were served at a late hour. Col. Schnell read the mock ceremony..

Editors note; Bride was Marie L. Wilsam

February 3, 1921—WEDDING NEAR HICKMAN

A pretty informal home wedding took place at 12 o'clock Wednesday when Miss Edith Egger, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. J.F. Egger or near Hickman and William Wunderlich of near Roca, son of Mr. and Mrs. S. Wunderlich were married at the home of the bride's parents. Only the immediate relatives of the contracting parties were present. Rev. F.W. Hintz of the Centerville Church officiated. Mr. and Mrs. Wunderlich will make their home on a farm near Roca.

March 3, 1921—EMERALD EPISTLES

The program and box social given at Miss Arville Kleine's school last Friday was very well attended. The amount of over \$65 was taken in.

Quite a number of young folks attended the birthday party of Emma Borgman last Wednesday night. A nice luncheon was served during the later part of the evening and everybody enjoyed a good time.

Miss Marie Borgmann and Mrs. Carl Matthes were united in marriage last Thursday at the Rev. William Harder's church. A nice supper was served at the bride's home at the home of Mr. and Mrs. William Borgmann where many guests were present. The young married couple will make their home near Garland on a farm. We wish the young couple a long and happy married life.

BERKS BRIEFS

At the wolf hunt last Saturday they succeeded in getting one wolf. Henry Sieck got the wolf.

Miss Robinson took dinner at the Strelow home Sunday. Ruth Strelow and M. Esther Robinson and Hannah and Elsie Sieck walked to Albert Kalkwarf's where they spent the rest of the afternoon taking pictures and having a good time. The Kalkwarf's were not home so the girls had a good time alone

DENTON DOINGS

Mrs. Ed Barney gave a surprise party in honor of her husband's birthday. The evening was spent in playing games. Refreshments were served at a late hour. All reported that they had a good time.

The wolf hunt which was held Monday morning was sure a great success. About 100 men attended and 10 wolves were captured.

The Friendship Kensington met with Mrs. Frank Wilson Tuesday afternoon. A goodly amount of work was done after which refreshments were served. The next meeting will be with Mrs. Ed Barney Tuesday afternoon March 8.

A farewell party was given at the William Luckhardt home Saturday evening. Luckhardt's, who have been living in the neighborhood for some time, are moving to Randall, Nebraska. We wish them success and good luck on his new farm which he has purchased there.

EMERALD EARTHQUAKES

The Earthquakes extend their sympathy to the family of Mrs. Merrill in their bereavement.

Alva Shafer moved the fore part of the week to the new home near Malcolm. The community regrets the loss of them as neighbors very much. The home vacated by Shafer's will be occupied by Mr. Roeder from near Hickman.

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OBITUARIES

WW2 Veteran **Robert K. Kleege** past away Aug 9, 2011. He was a resident of San Diego Calif. Born in rural Denton, he attended District #66 and Rokeby Hi School leaving there at age 15 to go to Latvia with his parents. He returned to the US after the war. He had been a DCHS member for many years.

Kenneth Ficke, husband of Beverly Vaverka Ficke died in March. His wife survives as well as four children and their families.

Betty (Best) Wilson, a DCHS member for many years passed away April 7th at age 85. She was a lifetime resident of Crete. She is survived by her husband Wayne, a Rokeby Hi graduate and three children and their families.

Doris (Heusinkvelt) Rotschafer age 81, died in Lincoln on April 11th. She graduated from Central Hi. Her parents were **Gilbert and Orma Heusinkvelt**.

Grace (Horky) Odvody, age 90 of Pleasant Dale died April 22nd. She was the widow of **Norman Odvody**. Norman was a CCC veteran and had been stationed at the CCC camp near Denton.

Rosemary (Nickens) Chase, age 92, passed away May 3rd. She was preceded in death by hr husband **Alfred**. She was a member of the Denton United Methodist Church.

Melvin Schwerr age 85 died in Iowa City Ia. He was the husband of **Kathryn Sieck** who grew up in Denton. They were married in Pleasant Dale on July 11, 1959.

Alyce Lee, widow of Gerald (Jerry) Lee died on June 13th. She was 79 and had lived in the Emerald area for most those years.

Winona Kaar Chrestensen passed away June 19 at her home in Lincoln. A Rokeby graduate in 1938, she is survived by her **brother, Lionel and two daughters** and their families. She was very interested in DCHS and had given us copies of **Kaar family** pictures. Her brother has been a DCHS member for many years. She was 91.

CORRECTION

The March issue of Tales and Trails reported the death of **Dean Versaw** who graduated from Rokeby High. The obituary that was found for a **Dean Versaw was not the Dean Versaw from this area. Dean Versaw, the Rokeby graduate, still is living in Ohio.**

THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW

NEW MEMBERS:

Virgil and Caroline Helget of Lincoln

Jean and LaVonne Uffelman of Lincoln

Steve and Terre Cowan of Lincoln

Jim and Kristi Bertrand of Lincoln



Our web address is:

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nedchs

Lancaster co website

www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nelancas

(School censuses are on this site)



Denton Community Historical Society
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