

Larkins of 'Tosa

A Brief Family History



**Mom and Dad's 50th Wedding Anniversary
1991**



Contents

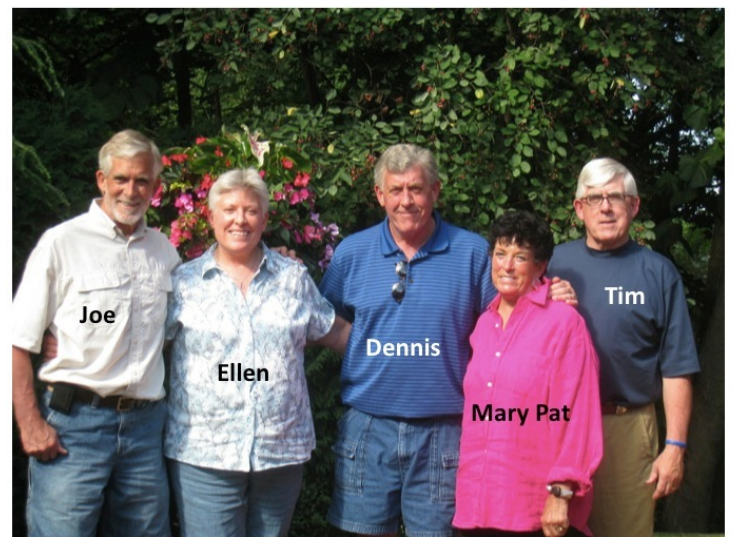
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Foreword

For more than 50 years, Frank and Mary Shinnors Larkin lived with their five children on 69th Street in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. In this booklet, I share what information I have on our ancestors and their various journeys that led to our home in 'Tosa. This story begins in the 1840s on the shores of Ireland and England from where our 16 great-great grandparents set out for America in search of new opportunities, enacting our family's version of the "immigration experience" so often in the news today. It ends in the 1990s when mom and dad closed up their home in 'Tosa and headed for what would be their final home in the neighboring suburb of Brookfield.

Our family history, of course, began long before the 1840s in locations far removed from Europe, and it continues to this day in many scattered locations. However, I leave it to the children or the grandchildren of the Larkins of 'Tosa to extend and to enrich the brief history that is recorded here.

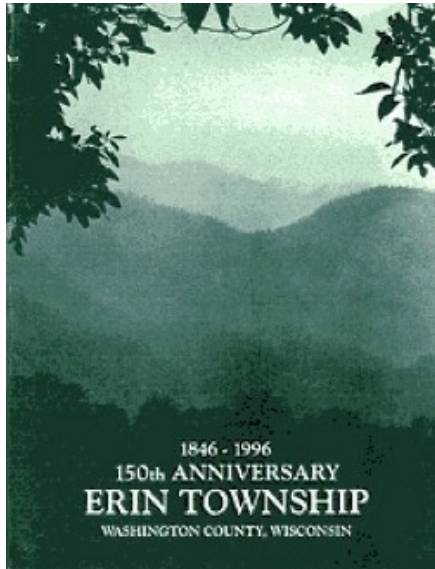
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Introduction

After years of teaching my students about the many cultures and histories that tell the story of America, I suppose it was inevitable that eventually my curiosity would be drawn to my own family history. Well, that spark occurred in the first days of 2006 while I was



on semester break from teaching at California State University at Monterey Bay. With time on my hands, I decided to "browse" a book that had been sitting on my shelf for the past four years, a book that was the only material possession that I had taken when we dispersed mom and dad's estate. It's titled 1846-1996: 150th Anniversary Erin Township, Washington County, Wisconsin.¹

To say that this history of Erin and its early settlers, many of whom were our ancestors, gripped my interest would be an understatement. After reading the book cover-to-cover the first day, and re-reading selected sections the following day, I soon found myself sitting with pencil and paper drawing arrows from one extended family to another. It occurred to me that these were the first steps in at least part of our immigration story that would eventually lead down a road that would

extend all the way to our childhood home in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin. This book was only a start, and it contained many gaps in our family story, but it inspired me to see if I couldn't complete the story through other sources.

Of course, this road through the farm fields of Erin (and the pubs of Monches) would provide us with an accounting of mom's ancestors, but what about dad's roots? Did dad even have roots?! Given the significantly larger size of mom's immediate family compared to dad's one brother, her extensive network of relatives that we encountered with some regularity, and her tendency to be a good deal more expressive about things than dad was, growing up I always felt that mom's history was our history. Dad didn't seem to me to come from anywhere; he was just there, sort of like a passenger on the Shinners train. In light of this feeling, I became doubly intrigued with the idea of seeing if I could find some of the names and places that make up the second road to 'Tosa, dad's road.

Modest Goals

This short book is my way of sharing with my son Trevin and his family, with my brothers and sisters, and with their many children, the information that I've been able to gather over the past month. When I began this project, my goals were rather specific and fairly limited, and those limitations are reflected in this product and should be mentioned.

- First, my intent has been to go as far back as I had to go in order to find our ancestors who had immigrated to the US from Europe, and to try to follow the road from that point forward. Thus, I provide no information on folks' lives before immigration.
- Secondly, I have tried to limit the scope of my inquiry to our immediate blood relatives, and so I make little effort to track the lives of their brothers and sisters or most of their children.
- Thirdly, I offer little information about mom and dad, and none about ourselves or our kids, as we already know about this as part of our living history. Rather, I leave the details of our lives to one day be discovered by our kids or by their kids, should they ever be inspired by curiosity.
- Finally, I have limited my research only to what I have been able to do on my computer. There is a good deal in the paper trail left by our ancestors that has not been digitized or scanned, but which undoubtedly is still available on paper or on microfilm in Wisconsin and beyond. However, I am in California.

Acknowledgements

Most of the information that I have gathered and present on this web site has been found in the extensive databases provided on Ancestry.com, or by Google searches of a much more random nature. In doing this research, however, I have been helped by resources of a more personal nature, and I would like to recognize those. I would begin by thanking Robin Buchmeier and Sally Stapleton for co-authoring the commemorative book for Erin's 150th anniversary that is cited above. Within this book, members of several Erin families contributed short pieces on their own family's history in the area. Among those, I would personally thank the people who contributed to the histories of the Garvey, the Whalen, and the Flynn families, including our very own first cousin, Maureen Shinnors Mitchell. You all taught me that the road to 'Tosa began on many, many different farms in Erin that were owned by folks with many different names.



Also, I was helped by a couple of other related projects that are underway on the Ancestry.com web site. Ancestry.com is an interactive tool that allows users to research and build family trees, to input information from other sources into those trees, and to elect to make their work publicly available to others who might want to look at it. For this

reason, I want to acknowledge and thank Liz Ault for work she has done on other branches of the Larkin family tree, and to express appreciation for the work of an unidentified person who has constructed some information on portions of the Shinnars clan. Both of these projects gave me helpful leads and served to confirm some of my own work.

Joe Larkin

Brother of Mary Pat, Tim, Ellen, and Dennis

Son of Frank and Mary Shinnars Larkin

February, 2006

The Story



As kids growing up in Wauwatosa, we had two parents and four grandparents who, among many other things, served as our personal and familiar connection points with our family history. Indeed, at least for me, they were our family's history. I do have vague memories of mom's eyes lighting up when she would launch into some story with a "Holy Hill" connection, as she seemed to use Holy Hill as a her reference point for situating people and events in her past. And I remember the predictable ritual in which mom would instruct all of us kids to look into the woods for evidence of a decaying log cabin, presumably occupied by one of her ancestors, as dad sped down the two-lane

back highway on our annual trip to the gathering of the Shinners clan on Pike Lake. I also recall, but even more vaguely, dad occasionally referring to names like "Aunt Charlotte", "Uncle Ollie", and "Daisy", but these were not people I knew. In retrospect, it seems that my limited curiosity at the time led me to miss these opportunities to learn more about the branches of our family tree that stretched back further than our grandparents. We were the Shinners and Larkins, and that was enough for me.

Many decades would pass before I finally would begin to wonder about the earlier generations in our family story. (In fact, I write these words on my 59th birthday, and I suspect that aging is not unrelated to my sudden curiosity about our place in the larger scheme of things.) If we had 2 parents and 4 grandparents, then we must have had 8 great grandparents, and 16 great-great grandparents! Who were these people? Where and when did they live? What did they do?

“... we must have had 8 great grandparents, and 16 great great grandparents! Who were these people? Where and when did they live? What did they do?”

In the limited ancestry research that I have had time to devote to these questions, I have been able to find only "bare bones" factual information about our more distant relatives. However, even being able to give actual names to these relatives, and to locate them in specific places during particular time periods, has for me been a fascinating exercise. One that has motivated me to want to share this information with the rest of my family.

In the "Brief Family Sketches" section of this book, I provide what information I have on each of the 15 families (60 individuals) that preceded us in our family tree, going back to

our great-great grandparents' generation. However, in this section I step back from those individual family stories to offer some summary observations on the themes or patterns in these families' lives that might provide us with a more holistic understanding of the various roads that, for us, converged on 69th Street in Wauwatosa.

Immigration to America

The land mass that is the United States has been receiving a steady stream of immigrants from all over the world for more than 500 years. So, at least theoretically, locating the arrival of our own ancestors could begin with a pretty wide canvas. Of course, the search is narrowed considerably by the fore-knowledge that our relatives probably didn't come from Africa in the galleys of a slave ship, nor from China through Angel Island in San Francisco Bay, nor from Spain up through the ranchos of Mexico or Texas. No, we know from family oral history that our kin were Irish/English, so we could be reasonably confident that their arrival was at some port on the eastern coast. However, if that narrows the "where", it does little to specify the "when". Given the fact that, as kids, we were never impressed with stories of our deep lineage in the US, which seems to be a practice in families that descended from early settlers, we could probably dismiss the first couple centuries and look for our relatives in the more recent immigration from the English/Irish region of Europe. Still, immigrants from northern and western Europe poured into the US by the millions throughout the 19th Century. Our

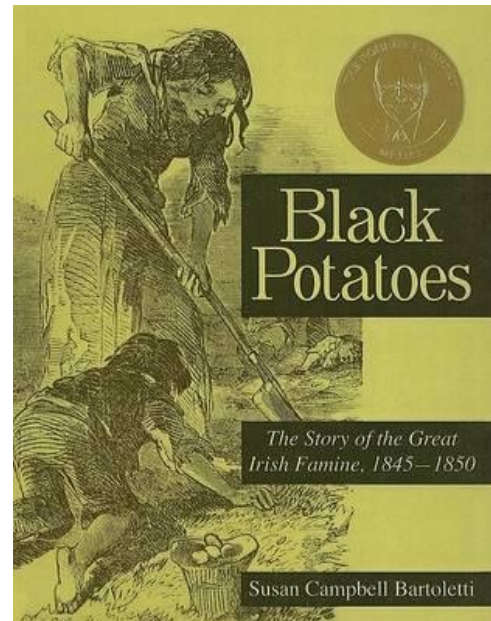


ancestors could have trickled over and been dispersed anywhere among those masses.

Now, I frame this discussion of our ancestors' immigration to America in these very broad terms in order to accent or highlight what struck me as a remarkable finding about the actual immigration experiences of our relatives. I noted in the Introduction section that my goal was to locate our ancestors who had emigrated from Europe to the US, and to "begin" our story with them. What I found was that that **immigration occurred entirely within our great-great grandparents' generation**. Or, put another way, all 16 of our great-great grandparents were born in Europe, and all 16 of them died in the United States. Thus, the Larkins of 'Tosa are unequivocally 5th Generation immigrants!

But, the story is more interesting than that. *Almost all of them came to America in the very narrow timeframe from the early-1840s to the early-1850s.* There are only two exceptions to this pattern. One of our great-great grandfathers, John Whalen, emigrated from Ireland to Boston as a child with his parents in the 1820s, and great-great grandparents William and Eliza Watts and their daughter Emma emigrated from England to the US in the 1860s. In the latter case, quite charmingly, ship records list the Watts family's final destination as "Mill Wokey"!

I don't have any information that might help us understand the personal reasons that these 16 individuals had for nearly simultaneously deciding to immigrate to America, but the political and economic conditions on the island of Ireland in the 1840s make it pretty easy to guess.² At that time, Ireland was under the occupation of British forces, most of its agricultural land had been taken over by English landlords, the Irish people were being subjected to severe political, social, and economic oppression, and Irish revolts against these conditions were constantly recurring events. In short, Ireland was in the midst of a particularly violent phase of the occupation that continues to this day in the northern section of the island. (I've had the opportunity to personally witness British armored trucks "keeping order" in the Catholic section of west Belfast in Northern Ireland.) Then, on top of these conditions, add the devastating Potato Famine³ in which roughly 1,000,000 Irish died from starvation and disease, and it doesn't take much imagination to understand why an estimated 2,000,000 people (nearly 1/4th the population) chose to leave Ireland between 1845 and 1855.



Whatever their reasons, most of our ancestors did choose to undertake the enormous challenges that came with relocating to another continent in the 1840s. In a few cases, individual great-great grandparents made the immigration decision, then met and married one another in the US. However, although it isn't always clear, it seems more common that they were married in their native country, and then together decided on immigration. In any case, it is clear that our great-great grandparents began leaving paper trails in the US in the 1840s, so our family story in America began about 160 years ago.

Just How Irish Are We?

As I began inquiring into the national origins of the members of the immigrant generation in our family tree, I was reminded of a sense of dissonance that I used to harbor about our ethnic heritage as a kid growing up in Wauwatosa. This discomfort

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(which was only minimal) arose from two thoughts or feelings that I had at the time. The first thought was that I was well aware of the fact that we were "Irish" Americans, and that this was an important characteristic of our family. It wasn't that it was important in any practical sense, for there was nothing that was particularly Irish about how we lived. But it did seem to have some kind of symbolic

significance that helped to define us and to connect us to other people, places, and events. Moreover, I was proud of being Irish. I'm sure that I couldn't have offered any reasons for this pride, but I did realize that when people were divided into "those who were Irish, and those who wished they were," the Larkin family was lucky to be on the right side of that divide.

The second thought I remember having about our ethnic heritage was that my first thought might not be true. That is, I suspected that we might not really be 100% Irish. While I can't say that I remember anyone ever insisting that we were fully Irish, I was aware at the time that no other possibility was ever mentioned. Yet, we knew that Granny Larkin's birth name was Marsh, and that never struck me as very Irish. Moreover, this suspicion was reinforced by the fact that dad's side of the family never seemed to engage in the kinds of Irish anecdotes and blarney that were so common on mom's side. And these things made me wonder.

In the end, because I really didn't want to be anything less than 100% Irish, I believe that I simply dismissed the possibility as a mere technicality. A potentially small glitch that had no real importance. After all, if mom's values and style and world view could set the tone for our household, then certainly she could establish her fully Irish heritage as ours, as well. As if transmitting values and genes between the generations occurred in pretty much the same way!

In its most simplistic form, the answer is that the Larkins of 'Tosa are 75% Irish and 25% English. Of our 16 great-great grandparents, 12 emigrated from Ireland, and the other 4 came from England. On mom's side of the family, the question of ethnic heritage is rather clear and unambiguous. All 8 great-great grandparents on that branch of our tree were born and raised in Ireland, and they married each other. Thus, the four children they produced who would later marry (our great-grandparents), and later their two children who would marry (Joe Shinnars and Elizabeth Flynn Shinnars), and still later their daughter (mom), were all thoroughly Irish Americans.



Dad's contribution to our ethnicity is only slightly more complicated. We know that four of the great-great grandparents on that branch did emigrate from Ireland (Grandpa

Larkin's ancestors) and four did emigrate from England (Granny Larkin's ancestors). So, we know that dad was 50% Irish and 50% English. And when you pair this with mom's 100% Irish, you arrive at our own 75/25 split.

Where in Ireland?

Identifying more specific locations within Ireland and England in which our relatives lived prior to immigration is an area in which I have had little luck in my own research. However, a number of the family histories that were included in the 150th Anniversary of Erin Township, which I referred to in the Introduction, did provide this information for about 6 of our 8 great-great grandparents on mom's side of the family. So, as I tend to trust these family histories, I pass on their information. These reported that two of our ancestors came from **Listowel Parish in County Kerry**, two lived in **County Limerick**, one in **County Cork**, and one came to America from the **Aran Islands** off the western coast of Galway. These locations are circled on the map below.



On dad's side of the tree, my own inquiries also came up dry. However, Liz Ault, a member of the extended Larkin clan who displayed some of her own genealogy research in Ancestry.com, seems to believe that two of dad's Irish ancestors came from **County Carlow**. While I do not know the source of this information and cannot confirm it, I pass it on as a possibility.

Now, with at least some knowledge of when and from whence our family tree stretched across the Atlantic from Europe to America, we can turn our attention to the branches of that tree as they wound their way toward 'Tosa.

The Two Roads to 'Tosa

European immigrants arriving in American ports in the middle of the 19th Century, in the main, poured into the emerging urban-industrial centers on the east coast in search of the factory and entrepreneurial opportunities that were widely advertised back home. And it was during this era that such places as New York, Boston, Baltimore, and Philadelphia began to take on their modern shape and form as major American cities. However, some of the immigrants at this time, far fewer but still significant in number, chose to bypass this obvious option, and instead to push on even further to take advantage of the labor opportunities or the reported vast expanses of cheap land that were available in the hinterlands that we now call the Midwest.

For the most part, our great-great grandparents were members of this minority who decided to head west rather than hang around on the east coast. Although, there were exceptions to this pattern. One pair of relatives on mom's side did spend several years

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as youths in Boston before leaving the east, and a couple families on dad's side spent at least a few years at various locations out east before realizing that it would be far better for their descendants to become Brewer fans than end up cheering for the Yankees. But, as a general characteristic, I believe that it would be accurate to suggest that the first American stage of the Road to 'Tosa would appear on a map as a straight

shot from the ports of arrival on the east coast to Wisconsin.

Over the decade of the 1840s, most of our immigrant ancestors began to arrive in Wisconsin. By the end of the 1840s, 12 of our 16 great-great grandparents had settled in Wisconsin, many before Wisconsin even became a state in 1848. So, if any of you are so inclined, our family is legitimately entitled to develop some "old settler" yarns of our own, using Wisconsin, if not the US, as a context. However, once in Wisconsin, the

two major branches of our family tree headed in different directions, so it might be helpful to discuss these Two Roads to 'Tosa separately.

Mom's Branch: Farmers of Rural Erin

When I began browsing through the 150th Anniversary of Erin Township, I did so because we grew up knowing that the Shinners clan came from Erin, just 30 miles or so northwest of our home in 'Tosa. And, I was curious to learn something about them. But, rather quickly, I started to learn things that I really had not thought much about up to that point. (I would later confirm most of these lessons through my own independent research.) The first, and for me the most interesting, is that the Erin blood that feeds our ancestral tree did not all come from Grandpa and Grandma Shinners. Indeed, to the extent that we feel some affiliation with "names" simply because they belonged to our early relatives, I discovered that we have direct family connections to great-great grandparents whose names were Garvey, Cahill, Whalen, Hennessey, Belson, Wallis, and yes, Flynn and Shinners.

Secondly, I learned that all 8 members of the 1st generation immigrants in this branch had settled as the first white pioneers in Erin, both temporarily co-existing with and displacing the native Potawatomi peoples who had resided there for longer than most of us are able to comprehend. In the Treaty of Chicago⁴ signed on September 26, 1833, the Potawatomi were forced to cede their Wisconsin lands to the U.S. government in exchange for money, equipment, and land west of the Mississippi River in Kansas. This treaty required the Potawatomi to leave Wisconsin, including Erin Township, by 1838.⁵



Map Source: Milw. Public Museum

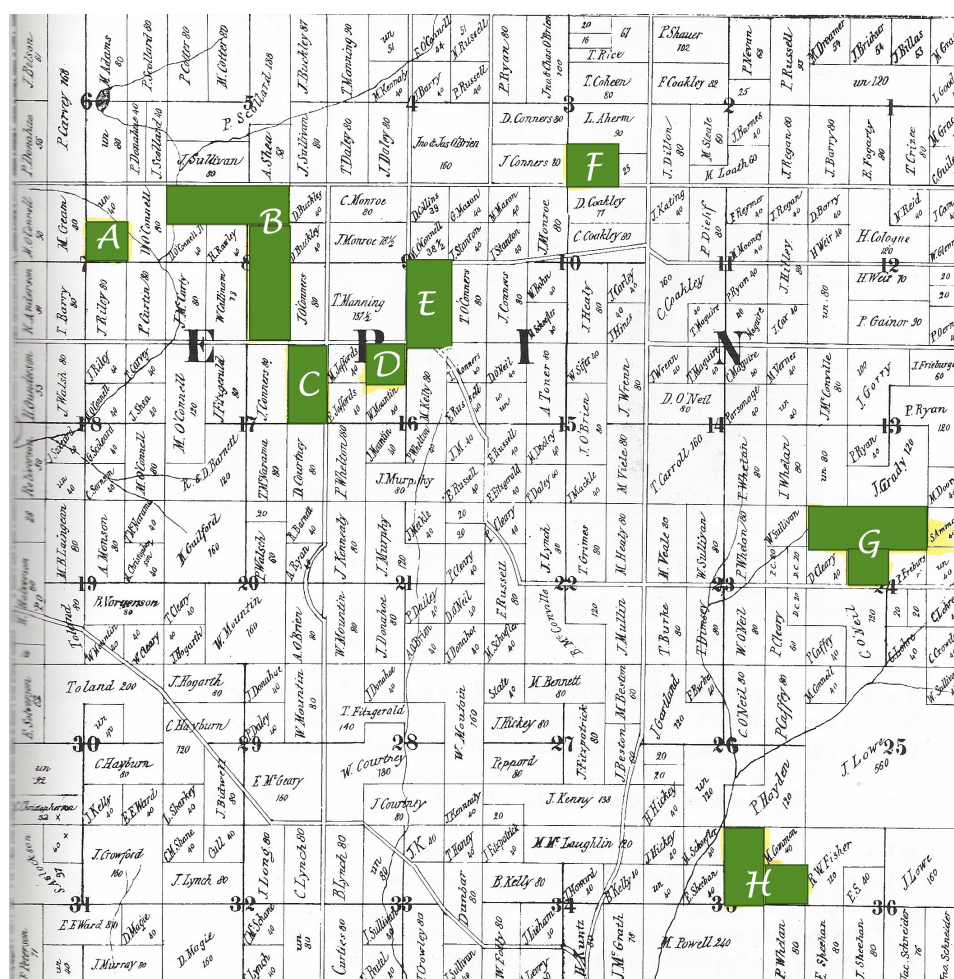
Land had been sacred to the people of Ireland in the 19th Century, particularly to the rural peoples in the southwestern counties of Kerry, Cork, and Limerick whose livelihood and culture had been rooted in the soil. So, it is both ironic and difficult to understand how the Irish people who had been forced off their land by the British would so readily occupy land that the native people of southeastern Wisconsin had been forced to vacate by the U.S. government. I would be most interested in knowing more about how our ancestors thought about that whole process of displacement.

The Irish immigrants who landed in the southeastern corner of Washington County in the 1840s and '50s were actively recruited by government officials and private land agents with offers of inexpensive land and other economic opportunities. To learn more about this process, you might wish to take a look at a popular book of the era entitled *The emigrant's hand book, and guide to Wisconsin*.⁶ And, to personalize the

story, according to the Erin Township web site it was Grandpa Joe's grandfather, John Whalen, who had suggested the name 'Erin' when the town incorporated in 1846.⁷

I would also learn that all of our ancestors of Erin were land-owning farm families who were dispersed around the township. Below is an Erin Township plat map from 1859. On this map, you can see where in Erin most of our ancestors farmed, and how many acres they owned (in green). One source I read indicated that land in Erin was selling (or being given away to attract European settlers) in the 1840s for about \$1.50/acre, or \$60 for the typical 40 acre farm. In today's economy, that would translate into a purchase of \$1,188, for all 40 acres. While I haven't checked, I suspect that folks in Erin today have had a change of mind about the value of that land.

Erin Township 1859 Plat Map⁸



- A** Garvey Family, 40 acres **B** Garvey Family, 240 acres
- C** Garvey Family, 80 acres **D** Shinnars Family, 40 acres
- E** Shinnars Family, 80 acres **F** Flynn Family, 40 acres
- G** Flynn Family, 160 acres **H** Whalen Family, 120 acres

And, I learned that all four families in our second generation (our great grandparents) on this side of the tree would also live their lives in Erin. Thus, from the 1840s until about 1900, the first two generations of this branch would occur entirely within the 6-mile square Town of Erin, a township that shares its southern border with Waukesha County where four of the five Larkins of 'Tosa currently reside!

As families tend to grow geometrically with each succeeding generation, by the time the third generation of Erin came along it had been learned that there are real limits to just how far you can subdivide 36 square miles of farm land. So, many in this generation began moving to other locations. Among them was Joe Shinnors, son of Thomas and Ellen Whalen Shinnors, who by then lived on a rather small farm immediately adjacent to the village of Monches. Whether he had to or wanted to leave the farming life and Erin, I haven't a clue. But, in approximately 1900-05, Grandpa Joe Shinnors at about the age of 20 ended the Erin chapter in our story and moved to Milwaukee where he became a police officer. In 1906, he was joined in Milwaukee by his new wife, Elizabeth Flynn Shinnors, daughter of John and Ellen Garvey Flynn, who had grown up on quite a large farm in Erin just a stones-throw from Holy Hill.

If Grandpa and Grandma Shinnors had left Erin and extended their branch of the road south to Milwaukee, they did not leave behind the farming penchant for large families. Indeed, in Milwaukee they would have ten children between 1907 and 1923. And, unabashedly, the most prominent among these would be their daughter Mary Margaret (1915), who would go on to great fame as the loving mother of the Larkins of 'Tosa. But, before we go there, let's give dad's family a chance to catch up with our story.

Dad's Branch: Craftsmen, Merchants, and City Life

Following the road traveled by our relatives on dad's side isn't quite as simple as finding them all nested in the same small, rural township, at least not initially. Once again, we do learn some new names that are embedded somewhere in our DNA, names like **Gorman**, **Watts**, and **Marsh**, along with **Larkin**. But, the birth names of 4 of our 8 great-great grandparents on this branch remain hidden by marriage and incomplete records. We also learn that their pathways to Milwaukee, and how they made their livings, were somewhat more varied than in the Erin experience.

Three of the four married couples on dad's branch of the tree arrived in America at about the same time as mom's ancestors (early-1840 to early-1850s), but their next moves were different. Mautle and Elizabeth Marsh, from England, seem to have taken a straight shot to Milwaukee, probably arriving some time before 1847. They became our first relatives to inhabit the Brew City, more than a half-century before

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the other branch of our family tree would arrive in the city. By comparison, Elizabeth Gorman and her husband (his first name and her birth name remain a mystery), who arrived from Ireland at roughly the same time, then spent several years living and producing a couple kids somewhere in New York before making the final trip to Milwaukee in the 1860s.

James and Mary Larkin had still another plan. Immigrating from Ireland to the US in the early 1840s, they then jumped around out east from Connecticut to New York to Massachusetts for a number of years, having children at each stop. In fact, we can reasonably blame great-great grandfather James Larkin for using up the entire supply of adventure travel genes before passing the gene pool in dad's direction. Eventually, they would hear the call of the midwest, but there were still more stops to make. By 1850, they were living in Lebanon, in Dodge County, Wisconsin, where they stopped long enough to have a child they called Francis, who much later would become dad's grandfather. The next stop was in Watertown, in Jefferson County, Wisconsin, where they appear to have stayed through the 1860s and perhaps longer. I can't determine if he went with his family or alone, but we do know that son Francis traveled the final leg of this circuitous journey and was set up in Milwaukee by the mid-1870s.

The Watts Family Was Headed to Mill Wokey

Joseph Cohen	30	son		
Kitty	26	son's wife	Halladay	
Sophia	4	child	"	
Wilmington Martin	55	son's wife	"	
	22	son's wife	"	
Jeremiah O'Brien	17	son's wife	"	
Edward Penny	23	son's wife	"	
William Smith	20	son's wife	"	
William Watts	45	son's wife	"	Mill Wokey
Eliza	47	son's wife	"	
Emma	19	son's wife	"	
Matthew Middlemist	23	son's wife	"	
John Robinson	63	son's wife	"	
Martha	47	son's wife	"	

Passenger List of the Ship Rhine, September 7, 1868

The fourth couple in this immigrant generation, William and Eliza Watts, got a much later start than the others, not leaving England until 1868. Fortunately, realizing their late start, they were wise enough to include in the possessions they brought with them a nearly-grown daughter named Emma. Emma is the only one of our 8 great-grandparents on either side of the family who was not born in the United States. Emma would also become Granny Larkin's mom. Arriving in the Port of New York in the fall of '68, my guess is that the Watts family wasted little time in continuing their trip to their stated final destination of "Mill Wokey".

By the mid-1870s, all of the varied pathways of the immigrant generation on dad's side of the story had converged in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. The sketch below shows that this Milwaukee in the 1870s was already a fairly substantial town, but the excitement was just beginning. Over the next couple decades, a rapid expansion in manufacturing and a massive explosion in new immigration, only a small portion of whom looked or talked like our Yankee or Irish relatives, would drive the population in this metropolis from about 60,000 to more than 200,000 people by 1890. And that number would nearly triple again to 587,000 by 1940.⁹ It was in the context of this burgeoning urban center that the second and third generations of this branch of our family tree would live out their lives.



Milwaukee circa 1879

As we might imagine, even in these early days, Milwaukee did have an eastside, a southside, a westside, and a northside, and these sectors offered new immigrants plenty of options on where to live. So, it's rather interesting that all of our ancestors seem to have been thinking along similar lines. In fact, as near as I am able to determine from the available information, all of them seemed to have lived in an area roughly bounded by the Milwaukee River on the east and about 27th St. on the west, and within several blocks north or south of Wisconsin Ave. So, if I'm correct, these disparate immigrants and their kids settled in an area that was only a fraction of the size of Erin Township. It's also interesting, and of more than just a little importance to us, that it would be within this same central Milwaukee district that Joe and Liz Shinnners would choose to set up their home when they moved down from Erin.

The historical records that I had access to provide at least some insights into how these ancestors made a living. If any of the women worked outside the home, it's hard to tell. Often, forms asked only for the husband's work. And, in virtually every case in which some information was offered about the females, some variation on "housewife" or

"keeping house" was provided. One exception to this was when great-great grandmother Elizabeth Gorman, by then a widow, identified herself as a "tailores" (sic) on an 1870 census form.

Neither laborers nor professionals, most of dad's ancestors worked in the skilled trades.

As for the males in this first generation, "blacksmith", "shoemaker", and "master carpenter" or later "builder" were the designated occupations. Thus, it would appear that our early relatives were grounded in the skilled trades, but that none was working in the professional fields of their day.

Not long after arriving in Milwaukee, the children of the original immigrants on dad's side began meeting and marrying one another. Francis Larkin who had come in from Watertown, and who was now old enough to call himself Frank R. Larkin, married Catherine Gorman who had moved with her mom from New York. At about the same time, roughly the late 1870s, Emma Watts who had come late from England with her parents tied the knot with Robert Marsh whose parents had been in Milwaukee for a long time. It seems that Robert Marsh was a "contractor" who worked out of 770 Racine St. (wherever that is), and later in life as a "superintendent in a chair factory." Frank R. Larkin identified himself at different points as a "reporter in a commercial agency", a "merchant", and as an "assistant manager" with the R. G. Dun Co. (a commercial credit reporting company that would later become Dun and Bradstreet). But more than just that, Frank, residing at 256 Twentieth St., was also designated as a member of Milwaukee's Elite in 1890-91.¹⁰

In browsing the records for these two newly created Marsh and Larkin families, the information I found was, for me anyway, quite surprising. Stretching from the late-1870s through the 1890s, the Marsh family produced 5 children and the Larkins had 9 kids. Now, if we subtract the two among these that will become our dad's mother and father, that means that the remaining 12 would become dad's aunts and uncles. And, if we then assume that some of these aunts and uncles will marry and have kids, then we can

conclude that dad had a rather large extended family, and most were probably living in the Milwaukee area. Yet, this is completely contrary to the impression or perception I had as a kid growing up. Beyond dad's one brother (Uncle Bob) and his family, the discussions about or interactions with dad's wider family that I remember during our years in 'Tosa were minimal. And this led me to believe that dad simply came from a small family, both immediate and extended. However, that turns out not to have been the case.

“... then we can conclude that dad had a rather large extended family, and most were probably living in the Milwaukee area. Yet, this is completely contrary to the impression or perception I had as a kid growing up.”

Having said that, in 1908 or 1909 a highly improbable event occurred in the early life of our family. Frank R. and Catherine Larkin's son, Frank J., met and married Robert and Emma Watts' daughter, Mabel. In doing so, the young Frank J. not only married someone who descended from the dreaded English, but he married a young woman who almost certainly was a Protestant! We can only imagine the conversations that occurred around the kitchen tables in both homes leading up to that union. However, as it seems that Grandma Mabel Larkin lived her adult life and died as a Catholic, I have to assume that she converted to

this religion at some point. Whether she also converted to Irish is less clear. At any rate, the next time we're out, let's be sure to raise a glass to Granny and Boppy Larkin!

**An
Irish Catholic boy
married an
English Protestant
girl!**

The Two Roads Merge!

In the few years preceding their marriage, Mabel Marsh appears to have worked as a stenographer; but, it looks like she gave up that job when she and Grandpa Frank married. He, on the other hand, continued to work most of his life in the wholesale shoe business, but the record is limited. All I could find was that in 1918 he worked for the Tomahawk Shoe Co, and by 1930 he listed himself as "Secretary of a shoe company." Still later, in the 1950s, he would get us discounts at the local shoe store on West North Ave. Early in their marriage, they would give birth to two sons, Robert (1910) and Franklin (1916), and the boys would spend their childhoods in the same central Milwaukee area where their parents and grandparents had lived.

Meanwhile, just blocks away, Joe and Elizabeth Shinnars, who had moved into the area as a couple in 1906, were vigorously populating their own family. It was noted above that Grandpa Joe had started a career as a police officer, but it's hard to say how long he stayed with that. By 1918, he was "self-employed" in the "cartage business" (Shinnars Moving and Storage on what is now the Marquette University campus). Still later, he would serve two terms as Sheriff of Milwaukee County (1933-36 and 1941-44). In between these, he took a run at unseating long-time incumbent Socialist Mayor Daniel Hoan in a 1936 election that he narrowly lost, 111,167 to 95,124 votes. The race even got some coverage in Time Magazine!

While Frank and Mabel Larkin had shown some moxie by breaking through the barriers of ethnicity and religion, they showed still more by being the first in our family line to leave the old neighborhood that had contained their families for decades. By 1930, they had moved with their two sons way out to 49th and Lloyd St. And, some time over the next decade, Joe and Liz Shinnars and their crew would follow suit, moving to 53rd St., about five blocks away from Frank and Mabel Larkin.

I don't know when the Larkin's son, Frank (he was no longer Franklin, because like his father and his grandfather before him, and his first son after him, he had changed his

original name), and the Shinnners' daughter, Mary, actually met each other. It's possible, even likely, that they were aware of each other as early as elementary school. However, we do know that they knew each other in high school, as dad went to school and was friends with mom's brothers, and used to hangout over at their house. We also know that they went to Marquette University together in the late 1930s, where mom graduated with a degree in Social Work and dad earned a Law Degree. In so doing, they became the first generation in our family tree to earn a college degree. And, more importantly to our story, Frank and Mary fell in love!

Welcome to 'Tosa

With their marriage in 1941, mom and dad had a very brief opportunity to engage the professional careers for which their college degrees had prepared them, mom working



as a social worker (which she loved) and dad scrutinizing the fine print on legal forms in an insurance company (which he hated). Things changed fairly quickly, however, with the birth of their first child in 1942, and word that dad's application to the FBI was

approved (which is why he went to law school). Then, to the particular surprise of a new mother, they were assigned to the FBI's San Francisco Bureau office as developments on the west coast were heating up in the early years of WWII, where they would live for nearly a year.



Upon their return to Milwaukee, they quickly learned that the WWII market for single-family homes was slim, and they would have to grab anything they could find. After some temporary rental living, they discovered that there was a house available out in the suburb of Wauwatosa, a modest "Milwaukee bungalow" at 2262 N. 69th Street (pictured here), and that would have to do until the war ended and things returned to normal. So, in 1943, with one child in tow, mom and dad set up temporary quarters at the house in 'Tosa, where they would remain for more than 50 years!

Or, more meaningfully, they set up house within what would be designated as the St. Pius X Catholic Church parish boundaries. 'Tosa and Milwaukee of the 1940s and '50s were a patchwork of Catholic parishes, and those parish boundaries gave us both our geographic bearings and our identities, not to mention our religious ceremonies, our schooling, and our friends.

All five of us grew up on 69th Street, in St. Pius Parish, in Wauwatosa. On the whole, ours was a home filled with love, support, security, and about a thousand pairs of worn out tennies. Indeed, the Larkins of 'Tosa were dealt a most generous hand.

Eventually, of course, we would have to grow up, and one by one through the 1960s and '70s the kids of 'Tosa would begin laying new roads into our own adult lives. But, mom and dad, probably enjoying some of the new elbow room that became available in an empty nest, as well as dad's attraction to inertia, were not quite ready to leave their "temporary" home. So, 69th Street would remain the central locus and convening point for the Larkin family, including by then our 6th generation kids, for many more years.

Yet, in the late-1990s, reliving the lessons of Ireland, and Watertown, and Erin, and the central wards of Milwaukee, mom and dad would close the book on the 'Tosa chapter in our family story and move to an apartment complex for seniors in the suburb of Brookfield, nearer to where most of their kids were living. From Brookfield, on a bright and clear day, you can see the spires of Holy Hill Church as they reach high into the sky from their hilltop perch in Erin Township just twenty-two miles to the northwest. There, in a place called Brookfield Manor, which dad enjoyed referring to as "Stalag 7", mom and dad would live out the few years remaining in their lives.

The End of this Chapter

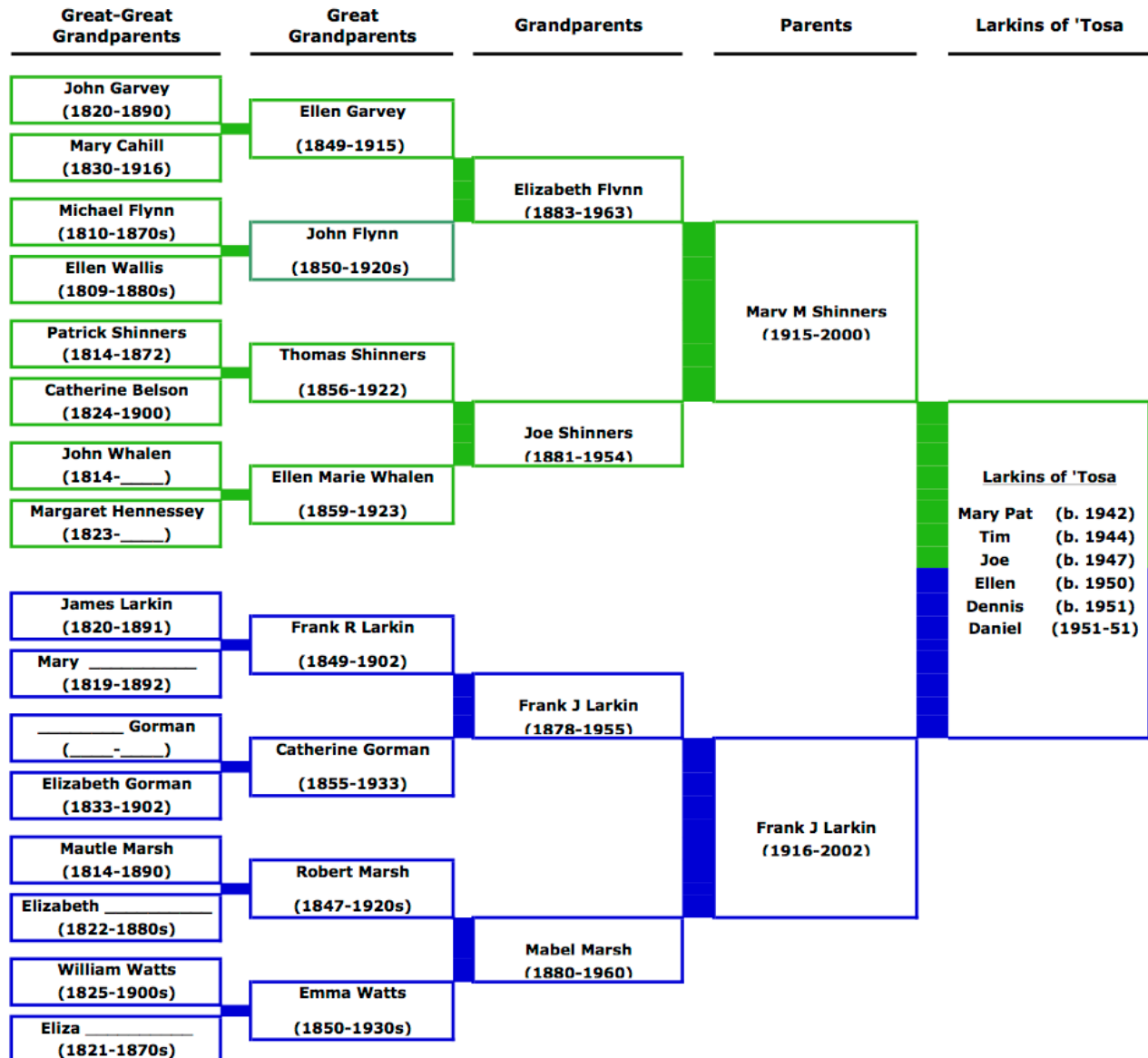
I recount in this summary of our family's history no information on our lives in 'Tosa, nor on the several branches and sub-branches that have been added on to our family tree since those years came to an end. All of that is history that we already know because it is about our lives. So, I leave it to future generations to unearth the vital statistics and other details if and when they are so inclined. With things like divorces, remarriages and blended families, partnerships without marriage, step-children, adoptions, career changes, interstate relocations, and other contemporary complexities all reflected in our more recent family stories, it will be challenging for future genealogists, indeed!

And, all bets are that it will get even more complicated in the years ahead. As I look at our children (6th generation) and at our grandchildren (7th generation), whose stories are already unfolding, it seems to me that one or more of them will almost certainly make the decision to emigrate out of America in search of opportunities in some other parts of our shrinking world. If so, they will be carrying on the one tradition that has persisted over the generations of our ancestors. I trust that it will be an interesting extension to this story.

Family Tree

Below are two versions of our family tree. They contain the same information, but they are formatted a bit differently.

Version I



25



Brief Family Sketches

Below are the families in our Family Tree going back to our great-great grandparents. On the following pages I provide what information I was able to locate on each of these families. Again, I offer little or no information on our grandparents, our parents, or ourselves.

Great-Great Grandparents

John and Mary Cahill Garvey	James and Mary Larkin
Michael and Ellen Wallis Flynn	(?) and Elizabeth Gorman
Patrick and Catherine Belson Shinnors	Mautle and Elizabeth Marsh
John and Margaret Hennessey Whalen	William and Eliza Watts

Great Grandparents

John and Ellen Garvey Flynn	Frank and Catherine Gorman Larkin
Thomas and Ellen Whalen Shinnors	Robert and Emma Watts Marsh

Grandparents

Joseph and Elizabeth Flynn Shinnors	Frank J. and Mabel Marsh Larkin
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Parents

Frank J. and Mary Shinnors Larkin

Larkins of 'Tosa

Mary Pat Larkin Miller
Tim Larkin
Joe Larkin
Ellen Larkin Sternig
Dennis Larkin
Daniel Larkin (RIP)

John and Mary (Cahill) Garvey

Great-great grandparents John Garvey (1820-1890) and Mary Cahill Garvey (1830-1916) were born and married in Listowel Parish in County Kerry, Ireland. They immigrated to America, and it appears directly to Erin Township in Washington County, Wisconsin, by the mid-1840s. At some later point, Mary's parents, "Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Cahill", followed the couple to Erin, and thus became one of only two of our great-great-great grandparents who lived in the United States and whose identity is known or mentioned in this family history.

Over the next forty years, John and Mary Garvey were engaged in farming, neighboring other farms owned by Tim and Thomas Garvey (presumably brothers, cousins, or sons), in the northeastern part of Erin near the village of Thompson.

During their long tenure in Erin, it is clear that John and Mary Garvey produced many children from 1849 to roughly 1870. However, when comparing the names in the Garvey Family History, and in each of US Census records from 1850-1880, the Garvey children's names change faster than the roster of a modern major league baseball team. The Garvey Family History reports John and Ellen's nine children as Mary, Ellen, Margaret, Elizabeth, Timothy, Thomas, Bridget, Hannah, and James. All records agree that daughter Ellen Garvey was born in 1849, and she would later become our great grandmother.

John Garvey died April 25, 1890 and is buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery in Thompson in the Town of Erin. After his death, Mary Garvey continued to live with her unmarried son, James, until her death years later on March 11, 1916. She, too, is buried in St. Patrick's Cemetery.

Sources

- * **1850 US Census**
- * **1860 US Census**
- * **1870 US Census**
- * **1880 US Census**
- * **1900 US Census**
- * **Garvey Family History, 150th Anniversary of Erin Township**

Michael and Ellen (Wallis) Flynn

Great-great grandparents Michael Flynn (1810-1870s) and Ellen Wallis Flynn (1809-1880s) were born in Ireland, but we do not know their specific county of origin. We also do not know the details pertaining to their marriage or exactly when they immigrated to America. What we do know is that by 1843 Michael and Ellen Flynn were living in the U.S. in the state of Massachusetts, where they gave birth to their first child, Michael.

We also know that within two years Michael and Ellen Flynn had managed to relocate over 1,000 miles away to the Town of Erin in Washington County, in the Wisconsin Territory (not yet a state). In 1845, they delivered their second son, Dennis, and in 1846 Michael was a registered voter in Erin. Of course, it would be another 75 years before citizens like Ellen would be allowed to vote. (I would love to know how Ellen and our other great-great grandmothers and our great grandmothers and our grandmothers felt about that condition).

Michael and Ellen Flynn lived on a relatively large farm (160 acres by the 1870s) near the foot of Holy Hill, a farm that would stay within the family and grow over the next several decades. While there, they gave birth to their third and fourth sons (no daughters), Edmond in 1847 and John in 1850. John would later become our great grandfather.

Michael Flynn died sometime in the 1870s, and Ellen Flynn and her oldest son, Michael, lived with another son, John, and his wife and kids for some uncertain number of years. It appears that Ellen Wallis Flynn died in Erin in the 1880s.

Sources

*** 1860 US Census**

*** 1870 US Census**

*** 1880 US Census**

*** 1900 US Census**

*** Flynn Family History, 150th Anniversary of Erin Township**

Patrick and Catherine (Belson) Shinnners

Great-great grandfather Patrick Shinnners (1814-1872) was born in County Limerick, Ireland, where it appears he married his first wife, Ellen Griffin (1820-1845) in the early-1840s. Shortly after their marriage, they immigrated to America and were living in the Town of Erin in Washington County, Wisconsin Territory, by at least 1843. Patrick and Ellen Shinnners produced two sons, James in 1843 and Edward in 1845. However, Ellen Griffin Shinnners died in 1845, perhaps in childbirth.

A year later, Patrick Shinnners married another Irish native living in Erin, Catherine Belson Shinnners (1824-1900). Patrick and Catherine settled on a farm near the village of Thompson in northern Erin Township, and they got busy adding to their family. Beyond James and Edward, noted above, from 1849 to 1859 they would add John, Michael, Lucy, Thomas, Patrick, and William, making lucky Lucy the lone sister among seven brothers. Their son, Thomas, born in 1856, would become our great grandfather.

Patrick Shinnners died in a gruesome accident in September, 1872, in Erin, and the widow Catherine continued living with her son William until her own death in 1900. On the next page, read the Milwaukee Weekly Sentinel news report on Patrick Shinnners' death.

(Note: Catherine Belson Shinnners' death year is provided by an unknown genealogy researcher in Ancestry.com. While it is consistent with my own general estimate based on census research, I cannot confirm the specific year.)

Sources

*** 1850 US Census**

*** 1860 US Census**

*** 1870 US Census**

*** 1880 US Census**

***Shinnners Family Tree, Ancestry.com., author unknown**

*** Files of Cousin Don Shinnners**

Thanks to
cousin
Don Shinnars
for
the newspaper
article to the
right
concerning the
death of
Patrick
Shinnars in
1872.

MILWAUKEE WEEKLY SENTINEL

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 21, 1872

BLOWN TO PIECES

TERRIBLE BOILER EXPLOSION IN THE
TOWN OF ERIE (ERIN)

TWO MEN INSTANTLY KILLED

Tuesday, policeman O'Connell received a letter containing the details of a terrible boiler explosion in the town of Erie (Erin) Washington County, (Wisconsin) last week. The engine was a portable one, and furnished the active power for a thrashing machine, which was owned by a company and was drawn about from place to place on contract to do the work of the farmers in the upper counties of the state. Through some unknown cause the boiler exploded, ejecting the engine and riddling the thrashing machine.

Of the number employed about it, two were instantly killed and several seriously wounded. James McConnell, aged 26, only son of a well-to-do farmer in Ashipen, Dodge County, was thrown a distance of sixty feet, and was horribly mutilated by a large fragment of iron which entered his body in the region of the abdomen.

His companion, Patrick Shinnars, a wealthy farmer of Erie (Erin), was carried off a distance of 124 feet and was found decapitated and so badly cut up that his remains were scarcely recognizable. Shinnars was about 57 years of age and leaves a large family to mourn his untimely and horrible death.

The remains of the unfortunate victims of the accident were conveyed to their final resting places on Sunday, attended by a large representation of the residents of the town and the relatives and friends of McConnell from Ashipen.

Whether the accident was a result of carelessness, or was owing to a defect in the boiler, has not been ascertained, and probably never will be brought to light in view of the fact that the portion that gave way was so completely beat up that but little can be learned from an inspection of the fragments.

John and Margaret (Hennessey) Whalen

Great-great grandparents John Whalen (b. 1814) and Margaret Hennessey Whalen (b. 1823) were both born in Ireland, but they immigrated to America at different times and met and married in the United States. As a 13-year-old, John Whalen came from the Aran Islands off the coast of Galway to Boston in 1827 with his parents, Peter and Mary (Gill) Whalen. Peter and Mary Whalen are one of two great-great-great grandparents who lived in the U.S and whose identity is mentioned in this family history. Margaret Hennessey had lived in County Cork in Ireland, but we do not know when she came to America. We do know that John Whalen and Margaret Hennessey met in Boston and married there on July 3, 1842.

Soon after their wedding, John and Margaret headed west to farm in the Wisconsin Territory in the Town of Erin in Washington County. Arriving in 1842, they were among the very first white settlers to purchase land in Erin. Their farm was on the outskirts of the village of Monches near the southern border of Erin, just one farm away from Waukesha County where many of the Larkins of 'Tosa now reside. It's worth noting that a second, unrelated Whalen family had settled at the same time near Holy Hill, but it is the "Monches Whalens" who are our ancestors.

From 1843 to 1863, John and Margaret would have ten children in Erin. While the census records are incomplete, the Whalen Family History identifies these kids as Mary Jane, Pete, John Jr., Robert, Margaret, Ann, Luke, Joseph, Ellen Marie, and Catherine. Their daughter, Ellen Marie, born in 1859, would become our great grandmother.

The last record we have shows John and Margaret Whalen living on their farm with six of their kids in 1870. However, their paper trail then disappears. We have no information on their lives or their deaths after 1870.

Sources

*** 1850 US Census**

*** 1860 US Census**

*** 1870 US Census**

*** John Whalen Family History, 150th Anniversary of Erin Township**

James and Mary Larkin

Great-great grandparents James Larkin (1820-1891) and Mary Larkin (1819-1892) were both born in Ireland, although we do not know a more specific location within Ireland. We also do not know Mary's birth name. It is not clear exactly when John and Mary Larkin emigrated from Ireland to America. However, it is reasonable to assume that it was shortly before the birth of their first child, John, in Connecticut in 1843. A year later, a daughter, Catherine, was born in New York in 1844. Keeping on the move, they gave birth to another son, James, in 1847 in the state of Massachusetts.

James identified himself as a blacksmith, and apparently this was a portable skill. By the late 1840s, they had relocated once again, this time considerably further away to the village of Lebanon in Dodge County, Wisconsin. While in Lebanon, their last child, a son named Francis, was born in 1849. Francis would later change his name to 'Frank R.', and still later he would become the great grandfather of the Larkins of 'Tosa.

James and Mary Larkin did not plant deep roots in Lebanon. By the 1860s they and their kids were living in Watertown in Jefferson County, Wisconsin. And, at some point, perhaps in the mid- to late-1870s, they made one last move, this time to Milwaukee. After a life of jumping around, their final address was 102 10th Street in Milwaukee.

James Larkin died on November 14, 1891, and Mary Larkin followed on August 10, 1892. They are both buried in Calvary Cemetery.

Sources

- * 1850 US Census**
- * 1860 US Census**
- * Milwaukee Catholic Cemetery Records**
- * Wisconsin Death Records**

Elizabeth Gorman and her Husband

Great-great grandmother Elizabeth Gorman (1833-1902) was born in Ireland, and she immigrated to America in 1852. Unfortunately, however, we know nothing about her husband, except that he was also born in Ireland. We do know that Elizabeth Gorman, and presumably her husband, lived for several years in the state of New York after arriving in the U.S. While in New York, they gave birth to two children. Daughter Kate was born in 1855, and a son named Thomas was born in 1863. Kate would later use the name Catherine, and she would become our great grandmother.

Sometime in the 1860s, the family, with or without the husband, moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin. (Here, the possibility of additional information might be noted. Liz Ault, another genealogy researcher with whom I have corresponded, and who might be a distant relative, raises the possibility that Elizabeth Gorman's birth name was Lawler, and that her husband's name was Patrick Gorman. However, this suggestion presents some inconsistencies and cannot be confirmed.) By 1870, Elizabeth Gorman, with her children Kate and Thomas, had moved cross-country and were living in Milwaukee in the 4th Ward. Her husband was no longer with the family. Elizabeth, as head of the household, identified herself as a 'tailores', suggesting a source of income that could have been earned either in or out of the home. In the late-1870s, Elizabeth's daughter, now Catherine, had married Frank R. Larkin.

By 1880, Elizabeth, as a "widow", moved in with Catherine and Frank and their growing household of kids, and she would continue living with them for the 20-plus years remaining in her life. This family lived at 127 17th Street. Elizabeth Gorman died on May 6, 1902, and she is buried in Calvary Cemetery.

Sources

- * 1870 US Census**
- * 1880 US Census**
- * 1900 US Census**
- * Milwaukee Catholic Cemetery Records**
- * Liz Ault's Family Tree, Ancestry.com**

Mautle and Elizabeth Marsh

Mautle Marsh (1814-1890) and Elizabeth Marsh (1822-1880s) were both born in England, but it is not possible to determine just when they left England for America. Their immigration might have occurred early in their lives, in which case they would have met and married in the United States. Or, they could have married in England, and then immigrated together. In either case, we do not know Elizabeth's birth name.

Whatever their prior experience, by the late-1840s Mautle and Elizabeth Marsh had found their way to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, becoming the first of our ancestors to arrive in the city. They lived in the 1st Ward. Mautle, who was occasionally called 'Mantle' in some records, described himself as a master carpenter, a builder, and as a contractor at different points in time, working at 770 Racine Street in the 1880s.

Mautle and Elizabeth Marsh raised six children during their many years in Milwaukee. These children were Robert (1847), Elizabeth (1850), Mautle, Jr. (1852), Annie (1854), Henry (1859), and John (1864). Their oldest son, Robert, would grow up to become our great grandfather. Mautle and Elizabeth would live right down the block from Robert and his family in their later years.

Elizabeth Marsh disappears from our records sometime after 1880. However, Mautle Marsh died on June 17, 1890 in Milwaukee.

Sources

- * 1850 US Census**
- * 1860 US Census**
- * 1880 US Census**
- * Milwaukee Directory, 1889/1890**
- * Wisconsin Death Records**

William and Eliza Watts

Great-great grandparents William Watts (1825-1900s) and Eliza Watts (1821-1870s) were born and married in England, and it appears that their decision to immigrate to America came a bit later in time, and in their lives, than for our other ancestors in this generation. Moreover, they were accompanied on their journey by their 18-year-old daughter, Emma Watts, who was born in England in 1850. Emma would later become our great grandmother, and the only one of our great grandparents who was not born in the United States.

Ship passenger records indicate that William, listed as a shoemaker, Eliza, and Emma Watts left London on the ship "Rhine" and landed in New York harbor on September 7, 1868. Their final destination was identified as "Mill Wokey". We know from Emma's marriage to Robert Marsh in 1874 that they had arrived in Milwaukee by at least that date.

However, the record of William and Eliza Watts' lives in Milwaukee is extremely limited. In fact, all we know is that William Watts was living with his daughter Emma's family in Milwaukee's 1st Ward in 1900, and that he was gone by 1910. There is a record of the death of an Elizabeth Watt (no 's') in Milwaukee on July 15, 1877, and that might or might not have been our great-great grandmother Eliza Watts.

Sources

- * 1900 US Census**
- * New York Passenger List Records**
- * Wisconsin Marriage Records**
- * Wisconsin Death Records**

John and Ellen (Garvey) Flynn

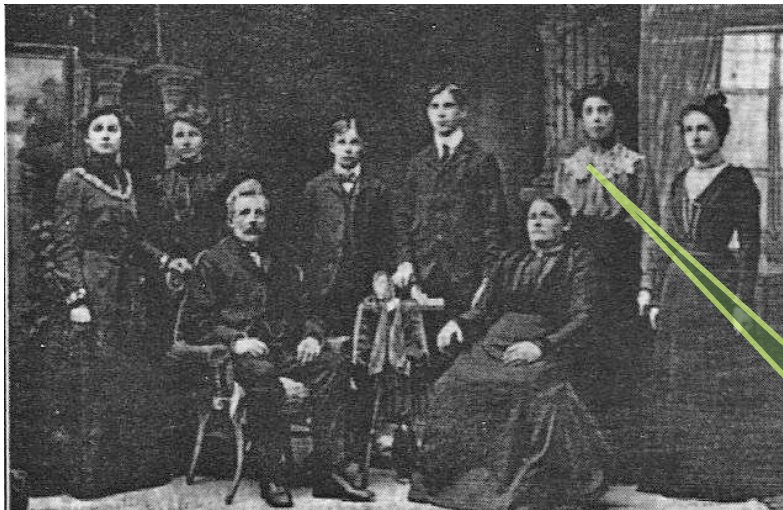
Great grandparents John Flynn (1850-1920s) and Ellen Garvey Flynn (1849-1915) appear to have lived their entire lives in the Town of Erin in Washington County, Wisconsin. They were both children of Irish immigrants who had helped to establish an Irish, Catholic farming community in Erin in the 1840s.

John Flynn and Ellen Garvey married in the late-1870s. Although two separate family histories report their wedding as having taken place in 1887, I revise the historical record here in order to protect the impeccable reputations of John and Ellen and four of their kids who were born prior to 1887, including our Grandma Shinnners!

John and Ellen Flynn lived on farm land first settled by John's family at the foot of Holy Hill. During their working lives, they would help to expand this farm into the 760-acre "Flynn Homestead" by the early-1890s. However, life was not all work. From 1878 to 1888, they would have six children named Mary, Ellen, Barbara, Elizabeth, Michael, and John. Elizabeth, born in 1883, would become our Grandma Shinnners. (See picture below)¹¹

Ellen Garvey Flynn died in 1915, and John Flynn lived with his daughter Mary and her husband, Jacob Kohler, in Erin until John's own death in the 1920s.

These dates suggest that our mom would have had no opportunity to know her grandmother, and little opportunity to know her grandfather, on this side of her family tree.



* Standing (L-R): Ellen, Mary, John, Michael, Elizabeth, Barbara

* Seated: John Flynn and Ellen Garvey Flynn

Sources

* US Census for 1850, 1860, 1880, 1900, 1910, 1920, and 1930

* Flynn and Garvey Family Histories

Granny
Shinnners as a young
woman

Thomas and Ellen (Whalen) Shinnners

Great grandparents Thomas Shinnners (1856-1920s) and Ellen Whalen Shinnners (1859-1920s) were both born in the town of Erin in Washington County, Wisconsin. Thomas and Ellen were each a descendant of Irish immigrants who had initially settled Erin as an Irish, Catholic farming community in the 1840s. Thomas grew up on his family's farm near the village of Thompson, while Ellen lived with her family on their farm on the outskirts of the village of Monches.

Thomas Shinnners and Ellen Whalen married in the late-1870s and, according to a family history, "settled a block west of St. John's Church" (in Monches). Thomas reported himself as a farmer, and a plat map from 1892 shows T. Shinnners owning a small 27-acre farm next to Monches. So, this Shinnners family apparently spent much of their adult lives in the Monches area.

The number and names of Thomas and Ellen Shinnners' children are a bit unclear. One family history indicates that they had four children: Bessie, Frank, Ralph, and Joseph. However, in addition to these four, census records from various time periods identify many other children, including Patrick, Lucy, Mary, Loretta, and Marion. I don't know which is correct, so I offer both for consideration. Importantly for our story, all lists include son Joseph, born in 1881, who would become our Grandpa Joe.

We know that Thomas and Ellen Shinnners remained in Erin until at least 1910. However, by 1920, while in their early-60s, Thomas and Ellen and several of their kids had left Erin and relocated to Milwaukee. In Milwaukee, they lived at 234 N. 13th Street, not too far from their son Joseph and his growing family.

Thomas Shinnners died in Milwaukee in 1922, and Ellen Whalen Shinnners followed a year later in 1923. Both are buried at Holy Cross Cemetery. Thus, our mom would have had a very limited opportunity to get to know either of her grandparents on this side of her family tree.

Sources

- * 1860 US Census * 1910 US Census
- * 1880 US Census * 1920 US Census
- * 1930 US Census
- * Whalen Family History, 150th Anniversary of Erin Township
- * Shinnners Family Tree, Ancestry.com (author unknown)
- * Milwaukee Catholic Cemetery Records

Frank R. and Catherine (Gorman) Larkin

Great grandfather Frank R. Larkin (1849-1902) was born in the village of Lebanon in Dodge County, Wisconsin, one of many places his parents stopped en route from Ireland to Milwaukee. Before Frank was too old, his family had moved again, this time to Watertown in Jefferson County, where he lived until he was a young adult. By the mid-1870s, he had moved on to Milwaukee.

Great grandmother Catherine (Kate) Gorman (1855-1933) was a bit hard to track in her early years. We know that she was born in the state of New York to Irish immigrant parents, and she remained in New York at least until the birth of her brother, Thomas, in 1863. However, the next time Catherine appears she was living with her mother and brother (no father) in Milwaukee in 1870.

Frank R. Larkin and Catherine Gorman married in Milwaukee on June 19, 1877, and they lived at 127 N. 17th Street. From 1878 to 1898, they produced and raised a large family. Their kids were named Jas. F., Mary, Lillian, Charles, Loretta, George, Albert, Oliver, and Cyril. The oldest child, Jas. F., would later reverse his name to become Frank J., and still later he would become our grandfather. Very shortly after their marriage, Catherine's mother, Elizabeth Gorman, would move in with their family and remain with them throughout their married lives. This makes their large family an even more impressive fete!

Frank R. Larkin was the only male among the 12 males in the first two generations of our family tree not to engage in either farming or some skilled trade. Rather, Frank was a business person, although the exact nature of his business isn't clear. Over the years he used fairly generic job titles, like reporter in a commercial agency, merchant, and assistant manager at the R. G. Dunn Company. At the age of only 53, and with a house full of kids, Frank R. Larkin died in Milwaukee on November 4, 1902.

And this must have been a particularly bad time for his wife, Catherine. Just six months earlier in 1902, her mother had also died. So, Catherine went from being one of three adults caring for nine children to being a single mom with nine children. Catherine moved a few blocks away, to 605 N. 17th St., and she remained there with a house full of middle-aged adult children until her own death on April 28, 1933. Frank R. and Catherine Larkin are both buried in Holy Cross Cemetery.

Sources

*** US Census Records of 1850, 1860, 1870, 1880, 1900, 1920, and 1930**

*** Wisconsin Marriage Records, Milwaukee Directory 1889-90, Milwaukee Elite Directory 1891-92, and Milwaukee Catholic Cemetery Records**

Robert and Emma (Watts) Marsh

Great grandfather Robert Marsh (1847-1920s) was born in Milwaukee's 1st Ward to English immigrant parents shortly after they had arrived in Milwaukee. Emma Watts Marsh (1850-1930s) arrived much later. She was born in England (our only foreign-born great grandparent), and immigrated to America with her parents in 1868 at the age of 18 or 19. After arriving in the New York harbor, it appears that the Watts family went straight on to Milwaukee.

Robert Marsh and Emma Watts married in Milwaukee on November 5, 1874. Between that time and 1886, they gave birth to four daughters and one son. The children were Charlotte, Mabel, Alice, George, and Daisy. Mabel Marsh would grow up to become our grandmother. For a period of years around 1880, Emma's father, William Watts, also lived with them.

Robert Marsh was in the construction industry for most of his life. At various points he described himself as a contractor or a builder. Later in his life he became a superintendent in a chair factory.

We do not have dates on the deaths of Robert and Emma Marsh. However, we do know that Robert died at some point in the 1920s. After his death, Emma continued living with their daughter Charlotte. In 1930, Emma, aged 80, was still living with 55-year-old Charlotte in Milwaukee's 1st Ward. Emma Watts Marsh probably passed away in the 1930s.

Sources

- * **1880 US Census**
- * **1900 US Census**
- * **1910 US Census**
- * **1920 US Census**
- * **1930 US Census**
- * **Wisconsin Marriage Records**

Joseph and Elizabeth (Flynn) Shinnners

Grandparents Joseph and Elizabeth Flynn Shinnners are people that we knew personally, so here I provide only vital statistics and a few pictures.

Vital Stats:

- * Grandpa Joe: born in Erin on July 31, 1881, died in Milwaukee on January 3, 1954

- * Grandma Elizabeth: born in Erin on May 24, 1883, died in Milwaukee on May 19, 1963

- * Married in 1906

- * Children

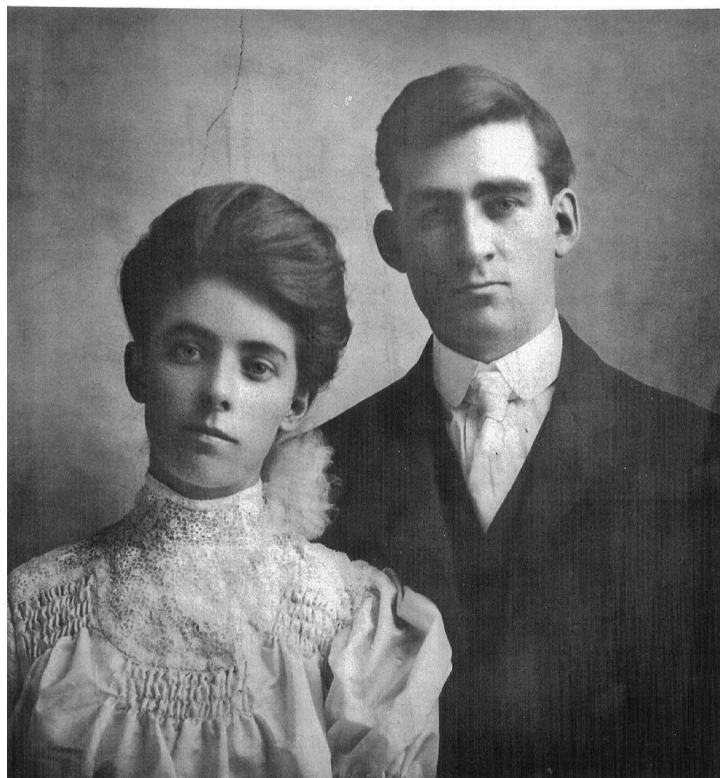
 - o John (1907) o Ellen (1908) o Ray (1910)

 - o Robert (1912) o Alice (1912) o Joe (1913)

 - o Mary (1915) o Charles (1916) o Jim (1919) o Donald (1923)

- * Last Residence: 1953 N. 53rd Street, Milwaukee, WI

- * Both are buried at Holy Cross Cemetery





Grandma Elizabeth Flynn Shinnors and Grandpa Joe Shinnors



L-R: Mary (McConnell) Shinnors, Jim Shinnors, John Cleary, Alice (Shinnors) Cleary, Leo (Thomas) Shinnors, Fr. Joe Shinnors, Fr. Chuck Shinnors, Ellen (Shinnors) O'Haire, Frank Larkin, Mary (Shinnors) Larkin

Frank and Mabel (Marsh) Larkin

Grandparents Frank and Mabel Marsh Larkin are people that we knew personally, so here I provide only vital statistics and a few pictures.

Vital Stats:

- * Grandpa Frank: born in Milwaukee in 1878, died in Wauwatosa on March 23, 1955

- * Grandma Mabel: born in Milwaukee in 1880, died in Wauwatosa on April 19, 1960

- * Married in 1908 or 09

- * Children

 - o Bob (1910)

 - o Frank (1916)

- * Last Residence: Grandpa Frank at 9223 W. North Ave, Wauwatosa; Grandma Mabel at 7311 W. Center St, Wauwatosa

- * Both are buried at Holy Cross Cemetery

**Grandma
Mabel Marsh
Larkin &
Grandpa
Frank Larkin**



More pictures of Grandpa and Granny Larkin



Frank and Mary (Shinners) Larkin

We lived most of mom and dad's history with them, so here I provide only vital statistics and a few pictures.

Vital Stats:

- * Dad: born in Milwaukee on July 12, 1916, died in Brookfield on December 21, 2002

- * Mom: born in Milwaukee on June 26, 1915, died in Brookfield on December 20, 2000

- * Married in 1941

- * Children

- o Mary Pat (1942)

- o Tim (1944)

- o Joe (1947)

- o Ellen (1950)

- o Dennis (1951)

- o Daniel (1951-1951)



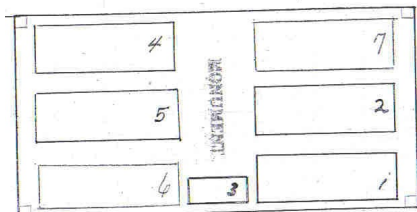
- * 'Tosa Residence: 2262 N. 69th Street, Wauwatosa, WI

- * Last Residence: 695 N. Brookfield Road (i.e., Stalag 7), Brookfield, WI

- * Both are buried at Holy Cross Cemetery in Block 17, Section B, Lot 421. This lot contains seven (7) graves with a single gravestone. The lot map and the gravestone are shown on the next page.

Deed 5024 NAME Joseph Shinneggs
 BLOCK 18 RESIDENCE 111 - 14th St.
 SECTION DATE Dec. 1, 1978.
 LOT 471 SQ. FT. 200 RATE AMT. \$175-
 RANGE TRANSFERRED TO

INTERMENT NO.	GRAVE NO.	INTERMENTS
20419	1	Raymond Shinners
25679	2	Robert E. Shinners
48547	3	Daniel Larkin
52434	4	Joseph J. Shinners
69525	5	Elizabeth Shinners
	6	Ray Larkin
	7	Frank Larkin



Grandpa
Joe Shinners

Dad
Frank Larkin

Grandma
Elizabeth Shinners

Uncle
Robert Shinners

Mom
Mary Larkin

Brother
Daniel Larkin

Uncle
Ray Shinners

Cemetery images courtesy of cousin Don Shinners.

The Family in the 1960s



Guarding the Homestead



Out and About



With Their Kids and Their Kids



Wauwatosa Gothic



With Grandkids



The Larkins of 'Tosa

As we have been living witnesses to the vital events and dates of one another's lives, I provide none of that information here. Rather, for the benefit of any future genealogists that might emerge among our 6th, 7th, or even 8th generation descendants, I want simply to document that each of us is still kicking, and still generating records that might one day be used to reconstruct our lives.

Below is at least one version of what each of us looked like at the tail end of middle age (circa 2010).



Mary Pat Larkin Miller



Ellen Larkin Sternig



Tim Larkin



Dennis Larkin



Joe Larkin

1960s



1970s



1980s



1990s



2007



2009



2014



Epilogue

This family history presentation was originally created as a web site in 2006, and hopefully it is still available in that format at <http://jmlarkin.org/family.html>. Since then, only a few pictures and other small additions have been added. However, because I would like these materials to be available to future generations, and because books last longer than web sites, I decided to convert the Larkins of 'Tosa web site into this booklet in the summer of 2014. I hope it has been interesting.

Endnotes

¹ Robin Buchmeier and Sally Stapleton, *1846-1996, 150th Anniversary of Erin Township*. This book can be ordered from Google Books at: http://books.google.com/books/about/1846_1996_150th_anniversary_Erin_Townshi.html?id=4OIqAQAAIAAJ

² For just one very brief look at British oppression in Ireland in the 1840s, see "Ireland in the Nineteenth Century". HistoryLearningSite.co.uk. 2005. Web

³ Susan Campbell Bartoletti, *Black Potatoes: The Story of the Great Irish Famine, 1845-1850*, 2001

⁴ An electronic version of the Treaty of Chicago can be viewed at: http://www.kansasheritage.org/PBP/books/treaties/t_1833.html

⁵ Those interested in brief discussions of the native peoples of Washington County might take a look at *Washington County, Wisconsin: Past and Present* by Carl Quickert (1912) available at: <https://archive.org/details/washingtoncounty01quic> ; or, take a look at the web site Indian Country: Nations in Wisconsin at: <http://www.mpm.edu/wirp/ICW-162.html>

⁶ An electronic version of this book can be viewed at: <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/search.asp?id=67>

⁷ See <http://www.erintownship.com/>

⁸ I copied this map from the *150th Anniversary of Erin Township*, and I then added the shading.

⁹ Sketch and population data from John Gurda, *The Making of Milwaukee*, Milwaukee County Historical Society, 1999.

¹⁰ 1890-91 Directory of Milwaukee Elite at: <http://linkstothepast.com/milwaukee/1891mkeelite3.php#L>

¹¹ This image of the Flynn family is taken from the *150th Anniversary of Erin Township*, p. 48.

