

## Prominent Lay Burials in St. John Cemetery

The Irish American Archives Society is working with the Catholic Cemeteries Association of Cleveland to spotlight historic St. John Cemetery.

- Profiles of notable Irish Americans buried at St. John have been compiled by Margaret Lynch, PhD., Executive Director of the Irish American Archives Society.
- This project is ongoing; profiles will be added as cemetery burial records are organized for research purposes.
- The information for these profiles is drawn from contemporary newspaper accounts and from profiles contained in *A history of Catholicity in northern Ohio and the diocese of Cleveland from 1749 to December 31, 1900*, Vol. 2. Edited by Michael W. Carr. Cleveland: Press of J. B. Savage, 1903.
- Special thanks to local cemetery buff Bernie McCafferty who has compiled a database of visible inscriptions in St. John Cemetery.

## Luke Brennan

Luke Brennan was born in County Roscommon, in Ireland in 1830. He came to the United States when he was only about 10 years old, settling first in Connecticut. He came to Cleveland as a young adult in 1853 and became a laborer in sewer building and street construction. He obtained the city contract for street cleaning and improvements. He served in the civil war and was active in Irish societies and staunch supporter of the church. He died in 1913 and is buried with other family members, including daughter Anne LeBlond, in St. John Cemetery. Luke Brennan's grandson, C. Hubert LeBlond, became a priest. As a diocesan priest in Cleveland, Fr. LeBlond helped to launch Catholic Charities and found Parmadale as a home for orphans. He was serving as Bishop of St. Joseph, Missouri, at the time of his death in 1959.

## The Family of Mayor Thomas A. Burke

Buried in St. John Cemetery are the parents and paternal grandparents of Thomas A. Burke, who served as mayor of the city of Cleveland from 1945-1953. The men of all three generations were Thomas A. Burke. The first of the name in Cleveland was a captain of a Great Lakes schooner. Born in Ireland, he was in Cleveland at least by 1864, when his son was born here. He died in Cleveland in 1879 and was buried alongside his wife Ellen, who had died in 1876. Although his parents died when he was still young, their son, Thomas A., was able to become a physician. Active in civic affairs, he also served stints on the city's school council and as the county coroner. In 1892, he married Lillian McNeil. He was active in the Hibernian Rifles, the Friendly Sons of St. Patrick, and the Knights of Columbus. His son Thomas A. Burke attended Holy Cross College and received his law degree from Western Reserve University, marrying

Josephine Lyon in 1923. He was appointed Law Chief by Mayor Frank Lausche. Elected mayor in 1945, he served four terms, focusing on such capital improvements as the lakefront airport that still bears his name. Mayor Burke is buried in Calvary Cemetery.

### **James D. Clary**

James Clary was born in County Clare, Ireland, in 1842. At a young age he came with his parents to the United States via New York. He came to Cleveland in 1865, finding employment as a bookkeeper for the Bourne –Fuller Company, wholesalers in iron and steel. He rose to the rank of treasurer of Bourne-Fuller and served on its board of directors. In 1869, he married the former Julia Norton, who had also been born in Ireland, in County Tipperary. He served as a councilman of the Cathedral Parish. He died in 1922 and is buried in St. John Cemetery.

### **Patrick H. Cozzens**

According to his Plain Dealer obituary, Patrick Cozzens arrived in the Cleveland area in 1852, settling in Newburgh. According to his great, great grandson, Fr. Don Cozzens, a Cleveland diocesan priest and a writer, Patrick Cozzens was born in Wexford in Ireland; the family has a copy of a letter he wrote to the Mayor of Wexford from Newburgh, sending a \$5 contribution to help erect a memorial in the Wexford Town Square to those who died there in the uprising of 1798. Though Patrick Cozzens worked as a laborer and coal heaver during his early years in Cleveland, at the time of his death in 1902, he was a director of the South Cleveland Banking Company. His Plain Dealer obituary calls him “a very prominent South End business man and an active worker in Holy Name parish.” He married the former Margaret Moakley, and their son Thomas A. Cozzens ran a grocery store in Newburgh. Patrick Cozzens is buried in St. John Cemetery.

### **Captain Michael English**

Michael English was born in County Mayo, Ireland, to parents named Edward English and Mary Mangan. He came to Cleveland in about 1864 and married Celia Gallagher here in 1869. He joined the Cleveland police force in 1871. While the family lived on Spring Street when they first married, they soon settled on Washington Street in the Angle, where they would stay for several decades. Celia Gallagher English died in 1882 when she was only 32, leaving Michael with five children. He rose in the ranks of the police force, serving as superintendent’s clerk in first precinct by 1882 and receiving promotions to Lieutenant in 1884 and to Captain in 1893. A further promotion was stalled as a result of political controversies between the city administration and the police department. After retiring in 1902 Michael English served as a watchman at the iron ore docks for the M.A. Hanna Company, where, according to his Plain Dealer obituary, he “quelled” riots and anarchist protests. He died in 1909 and was buried in

St. John Cemetery with his wife Celia Gallagher English. Also buried with them is one of their daughters, Catherine “Kitty” English, who died in 1944.

### **Joseph Feighan**

Joseph Feighan was born in 1849 in Burrishoole Parish in County Mayo, Ireland. He immigrated to the United States in about 1862. He married Catherine O’Malley, who was also born in County Mayo, in 1868 in Cleveland. After Catherine’s death in 1873, he married Anna Higgins in 1883. He lived on Main Street in the Angle neighborhood and ran a grocery store at the corner of Main and Mulberry Street. He is buried in St. John Cemetery with both of his wives, a son named Joseph who died at age 19 in 1898, and his brother James Feighan and members of James’s family. Joseph Feighan’s son John T. Feighan attended St. Ignatius College (now John Carroll University) and married Mary English, daughter of Captain Michael English, in 1899. John T. Feighan became a prominent Cleveland businessman, helping in 1904 to launch the Standard Brewing Company, producer of the popular “Erin Brew.” He was also a banker for 58 years, primarily at the corner of West 25<sup>th</sup> and Detroit, managing a succession of banks—Detroit Street Savings Bank, Forest City Savings and Trust, and Cleveland Trust Bank. John T. Feighan’s son Michael A. Feighan served in the United States Congress from 1943-1971, and a grandson Edward Feighan also served in the U.S. Congress from 1983-1993.

### **Gallagher Families**

Various members of several inter-related Gallagher families are concentrated especially in Section 7 of St. John Cemetery. Their forbearer was a Farrell Gallagher who lived in a place called Tiernaur in Burrishoole Parish in County Mayo, Ireland. He had at least two sons: John (“Jack”) who married a Mary Moran and Patrick who married a Catherine Gallagher from Achill Parish in County Mayo.

### **Descendants of Jack Gallagher and Mary Moran**

Jack’s children all immigrated to Cleveland; an older daughter Margaret, born about 1818, was supposed to have immigrated in about 1836 and is claimed as one of the first Catholics to settle in Cleveland. She married James Ferguson in Cleveland and died here before 1870. No gravestone marks her grave. Brothers Patrick, Thomas, Edward, Dennis, and Joseph immigrated to Cleveland at the time of the famine, in about 1846. Most of the brothers became “draymen” or teamsters. Patrick, born about 1820, died in 1888. Thomas, b. about 1824, took a variety of jobs—on the docks, on the railroad, with a provisioner’s company—before using his experience as an expressman to launch an undertaking business in about 1866. He was the second Catholic undertaker in the city. He married Limerick-born Catherine Reeves in 1858 and was prominent in support of the church and of Irish societies. He died in 1887 and may be buried in

St. Joseph Cemetery. Edward Gallagher, born in about 1827, married Honora Graham; the two were called “pioneer” Catholics in Cleveland, when their son-in-law, printer Timothy Ward, was profiled as a prominent Catholic in 1903. Edward died in 1901; he and Honorah are buried in St. John Cemetery. Dennis Gallagher, born about 1830, married Margaret Shehan. Margaret Shehan Gallagher’s father Daniel kept a journal during his immigration journey, which is now in the collection of the Western Reserve Historical Society. Dennis Gallagher’s son Tom later served as an Ohio State Senator. When Dennis Gallagher died in 1905, the Plain Dealer headline read: “Last of Old Catholic Family.” Joseph, born in 1836, entered the priesthood in Cleveland in 1861 and became pastor of Holy Name Parish. He died in 1886 and is buried in St. John Cemetery with his mother, who joined her children in Cleveland before her death here in 1877.

### **Patrick and Catherine Gallagher and descendants**

A younger son of Farrell Gallagher, Patrick Gallagher, came with his own young family to Cleveland in about 1847. His family eventually settled on Washington Street, in the Angle neighborhood. Patrick and his wife Catherine are buried in St. John Cemetery, where the inscriptions on their gravestone mark him as “Born in the Parish of Burrishoole Co. Mayo Ireland” and her as “Born in the Parish of Achil Co. Mayo Ireland.” Patrick died in 1875, and Catherine in 1882. Their oldest son Farrell Gallagher, who was born in Ireland before they immigrated, in 1844, joined the police force in Cleveland in 1871. He rose to the rank of lieutenant and was appointed detective in 1876. In 1899 he filed an injunction on behalf of his brother-in-law Captain Michael English to prevent the latter’s forced retirement. Detective Farrell Gallagher was buried in St. John Cemetery in 1915. Patrick and Catherine’s daughter Celia married Captain Michael English, who is profiled above. Celia and Michael English’s daughter Mary married banker and businessman John T. Feighan. Michael and Celia Gallagher English are both buried in St. John Cemetery. Patrick and Catherine’s other four children—John, Michael, Bridget, Mary—are also buried nearby in St. John Cemetery, along with several spouses and grandchildren.

### **Farrell Gallagher**

This Farrell Gallagher’s Plain Dealer obituary identifies him as a cousin of the detective Farrell Gallagher, who was a son of Patrick and Catherine Gallagher. This Farrell Gallagher was born about 1815 in Ireland and immigrated first to Montreal during the famine, where he survived the “fever sheds” where thousands of Irish immigrants died after being quarantined upon arrival. He made his way to Cleveland in 1847. His Plain Dealer obituary in 1901 identifies him as “one of the original coal bosses along the river.” He was a foreman for the Rhodes & Company coal mining concern and for its successor firm, M.A. Hanna Company, which

expanded into iron ore in 1885. This Farrell Gallagher lived for many years on Main Street in the Angle neighborhood. He died in 1901; a weathered marker in St. John Cemetery suggests burial there but his burial place is in need of confirmation. This Farrell Gallagher's son Thomas Gallagher, a postman, married Annie Feighan, a niece of Joseph Feighan and first cousin of banker John T. Feighan. The children of Thomas Gallagher and Annie Feighan included a diocesan priest--Fr. Daniel Gallagher—and two doctors—Dr. William J. Gallagher who practiced in St. Louis, Missouri, and Dr. Farrell T. Gallagher. Letters that Fr. Daniel Gallagher wrote during a trip to Ireland on the brink of the outbreak of World War I in 1914, along with letters that he wrote a few years later while serving as a chaplain toward the end of the war, have been preserved in the collection of Western Reserve Historical Society.

### **Grace V. Kelly**

Grace Kelly was an artist who served as the Plain Dealer Art critic for 23 years. She was born in 1877 to Irish-born parents; her father Thomas Kelly was born in County Galway, served in the 8<sup>th</sup> Ohio regiment during the Civil War, and married Mary Hart, born in County Roscommon, in Cleveland in 1875. The family lived in St. Augustine Parish, and Grace took her first art lessons at the St. Joseph convent on Starkweather. She attended the Cleveland School of Art, studying under the noted painter Henry Keller and taking part in Keller's summer watercolor classes at Berlin Heights. She graduated from Cleveland School of Art in 1896 and taught at the school until 1904, when she opened a commercial advertising studio. She traveled several times to Ireland and also to Central America and drew on her travels in her work. She died in 1950 and is buried in St. John Cemetery. Her parents may also be buried there but a visible monument no longer marks their graves.

### **Edward McCart**

Edward McCart was born in Cleveland in 1864. He worked for several wholesale grocers before establishing his own concern, McCart-Christy Company, in the early 1900s. His company became one of the city's largest wholesale grocery operations. In 1895, he married the former Genevieve O'Brien, whose parents had been pioneer Catholic settlers in the area. Genevieve and Edward McCart are both buried at St. John Cemetery

### **Kevin O'Donnell Family**

Erected in 1982, a granite monument inscribed with 26 names of an extended O'Donnell family appears on the right hand side of the main avenue of St. John Cemetery, not far from the front gate. The most recent name is that of Kevin O'Donnell, who died in 2012. The oldest burial in the O'Donnell family plot is that of Kevin O'Donnell's paternal great-great grandfather, John O'Donnell, who was born near Newport in County Mayo, Ireland, in 1778, immigrated to

Cleveland as early as 1836, and died here in 1874. The first John's wife Bridget, who died in 1905, is also buried in the family plot. Other burials in the family plot include John O'Donnell's sons Patrick (1819-1891) and Michael (1821-1893), along with a number of Patrick and Michael's children and grandchildren. The monument was erected by Monsignor William O'Donnell, grandson of Patrick, who was born in Cleveland in St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, attended Cathedral Latin School, and studied at and was ordained in Rome in 1928. He was elevated to the rank of Monsignor in 1953. While Monsignor O'Donnell had numerous assignments in the Cleveland diocese, including serving as the founding pastor of Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, he also taught for a number of years at Fu Jen University in Beijing, China, and served on the Cleveland diocesan Tribunal. Kevin O'Donnell, a great grandson of Michael, was a Cleveland businessman and philanthropist. As a businessman, he rose through the ranks at SIFCO, a steel forge manufacturing company, eventually serving as President and CEO until his retirement in 1994. But he also devoted six years to the United States Peace Corps, first traveling with his eight children to serve as country director for the Peace Corps in Korea, then serving as national director from 1971-72. Among Kevin O'Donnell's many honors, he was named the Mayo Society "Person of the Year" in 2010. He is buried in the family plot at St. John Cemetery along with his father Charles, who had a dental practice the "Old Arcade" downtown and his great grandfather Michael, who was a street grading contractor for the city of Cleveland.

### **Captain James K. O'Reilly**

James O'Reilly was born in County Cork, Ireland, in 1838 and came to Cleveland in 1858 via New York City. He found work with his friend, James Butler, at the Thomas Jones and Sons Marble Monument Co. at E. 28<sup>th</sup> and Prospect. When the Civil War broke out, O'Reilly and Butler, with a third Irish-born friend Thomas Galwey went to the armory of the Hibernian Guards to enlist. The company that mustered there became Company B of the 8<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry. The 8th Ohio fought in most of the major battles of the Potomac Army, playing a pivotal role in the Battle of Gettysburg. In August, 1865, at the war's end, O'Reilly returned to New York City and married Susan O'Brien there. The couple came to Cleveland and resided at 189 Quincy Avenue in St. Edward Parish, where they raised seven children. Despite a disability stemming from sunstroke at Gettysburg, O'Reilly continued to work as a stone carver and is credited with carving the elaborate monument that marks the shared grave of Father John Dillon, the first resident priest in Cleveland, and Father James Conlan, the first resident pastor of St. Patrick Parish. O'Reilly is the maternal great grandfather of the Honorable Kenneth R. Callahan, who served as Common Pleas Court Judge in Cuyahoga County. O'Reilly died in 1900 and is buried in St. John Cemetery. O'Reilly's comrade in the 8<sup>th</sup> Ohio, Thomas Galwey, is also buried in St. John.

### **Charles Patterson**

Charles Patterson was born in Ireland in about 1838 and had settled in Cleveland with his family by 1850. Early in his working life, he found employment in a small foundry. According to his Plain Dealer obituary, "His industry and economy, combined with his quickness of perception, brought a growing income, which he invested in the iron business." Founder of the Patterson Foundry Company and a principal in the Cleveland Foundry Company, he was hailed at the time of his death in 1905 as "Prominent for years in iron circles." He is buried in St. John Cemetery along with numerous other relatives.

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